Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What’s the time commitment?
CHI is an intensive 8-week program. Participants will work at their placement sites 2-3 days a week (or 16-24 hr/wk) and attend a weekly 3-hour seminar. Participants should also allow for occasional site visits, panels or workshops that may be scheduled outside of class time.

Where can I pursue my practicum?
The Center for Civic Engagement has relationships with hundreds of organizations across Chicagoland—and reaches out to new partners all the time. Typically, but not exclusively, we have helped place graduate students at non-profit and governmental organizations. Some past examples include:

- American Indian Center
- American Writers Museum
- Appleseed Fund for Justice
- Art Institute of Chicago
- Asian Human Services
- Bloomingdale Trail (The 606)
- Chicago Cultural Alliance
- Chicago Public Schools
- Chicago Taskforce on Violence against Girls and Young Women
- Chicago Video Databank
- Chicago Youth Shakespeare
- City of Chicago
- City of Evanston
- Congress of New Urbanism
- Ethiopian Community Association of Chicago
- Evanston Scholars
- Field Museum
- Guild Literary Complex
- Haymarket Opera
- Heartland Alliance
- Illinois Humanities
- Kuumba Lynx
- Museum of Broadcast Communications
- Museum of Contemporary Art
- Museum of Contemporary Photography
- National Museum of Mexican Art
- Newberry Library
- NU Press
- Open Books
- ReClaim Chicago
- Shorefront Legacy Center
- Sierra Club
- Street Level Youth Media
- The Nature Conservancy

Students may apply with a specific organization in mind, but this is by no means a requirement. Once admitted to the program, students will work one-on-one with CCE staff to secure a placement that matches their interests.

More information about CHI can be found at:
www.engage.northwestern.edu/programs/chi

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What kind of work will I be doing as part of the practicum?
The Center for Civic Engagement has relationships with hundreds of organizations across Chicagoland—and reaches out to new partners all the time. Typically, but not exclusively, we have helped place graduate students at non-profit and governmental organizations. Some past examples include:

- Develop a toolkit for Illinois public schools to use archival materials related to immigration
- Direct a performance of writing produced by women exiting the Illinois prison system
- Process collections at the National Museum of Mexican Art and Shorefront Legacy Center
- Create a financial aid database for a college-access organization
- Develop a media toolkit for journalists covering sexual violence
- Coordinate a community discussion series around health equity using expertise in GIS and data analysis
- Produce a 90-minute CD for an urban arts organization
- Perform archival background research for public programming at the Newberry Library
- Teach a weekly philosophy seminar to adult learners
- Edit academic manuscripts for NU Press
- Analyze data to help the City of Evanston plot a shuttle route for seniors
- Build curricula for an ESL program serving immigrant and refugee clients
- Script a video marketing campaign for Haymarket Opera

Should I apply only if I'm interested in non-academic jobs?
Not necessarily! Through CCE’s practicum programs, graduate students have seeded research collaborations, refined their dissertation topics, established public-facing work as part of their academic profiles—and have gone on to tenure-track jobs as well as positions beyond the academy.

Still have a question? Contact Ruth Curry, Program Director, at ruth.martin@northwestern.edu.