



## PRESS RELEASE

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## European Youth Forum Guide tackles poor quality internships

**Brussels, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2015 // The European Youth Forum and leading employers last night launched their Employers' Guide to Quality Internships, a "how-to guide" for employers wishing to establish quality schemes – with the aim to address and increase the quality of internships across Europe. The Employers' Guide to Quality Internships has been developed with the contribution of the European Youth Forum partners Abbvie, Adecco Group, EPACA, EUK Consulting, Microsoft and TITAN CEMENT GROUP, who attended the launch event.**

The Guide, which was launched at a reception hosted by the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium, outlines key criteria that make an internship a good experience for both the young person and the employer. Through ensuring that an internship provides a learning experience with proper supervision, a positive working environment, and the opportunity for career development, employers can not only contribute in a socially responsible way to the development of young people, but can also improve their own reputation, increase the confidence of their team, and discover opportunities for public-private partnerships.

Undertaking an internship has become the norm for young people, but the quality of such internships is often unacceptable, with many not providing an educational experience. According to data from the European Commission, whilst almost half of Europe's young people have done an internship, only one third of these are paid and 35% of them are not working under a contract. The Youth Forum and its partners work towards making internships a valuable stepping stone into the workplace, rather than having young people being used to replace paid, entry-level jobs.

The Employers' Guide gives case studies and real examples from the employers that collaborated on it, including innovative internship schemes which are already in place as well as "top tips" for creating similar good quality schemes. Martin Schulz, the President of the European Parliament and Marianne Thyssen, European Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility introduce the Guide.

At the launch event, Adecco Group became the latest signatory of the Youth Forum's [European Charter for Quality Internships and Apprenticeships](#). The Charter advocates for employers and politicians to commit to quality standards and to apply a clear and coherent code of conduct.

**Johanna Nyman, President of the European Youth Forum**, said:

"Internships and apprenticeships can be a valuable step in the transition from education into work. These days, however, interns are too often seen as free labour! That is why we are delighted to launch our Employers' Guide, developed with employers and for employers to help tackle the current situation. We hope that many more organisations will follow the lead of those that have worked on the Guide to establish their own internship schemes which provide a good learning experience for young people and a stepping stone into the working world. When they work well, internships are win-win for the young person and the employer!"

**Glenn Vaughan, CEO from the British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium**, said:

"We are committed to ensuring we offer quality internships, because it's good for our business and good for the people who work with us. This practical guide is a great way to help more companies offer great opportunities for young people."

**Mark De Smedt, Chief HR Officer, Adecco Group**, said:

"Quality internships provide young people with work experience and enable employers to build the workforce of today and tomorrow. As the global leader in HR solutions, we are proud to sign the European Quality Charter on Internships and Apprenticeships and to have contributed to the development of the Guide. They are both key to making internships successful for all and will assist like-minded companies, looking to act as good employers of interns. Adecco Way to Work™ 2015, our own initiative dedicated to improving the employability of young people through work-based training, also references the Guide's principles".

**Laurent Freixe, Executive Vice-President Nestlé, President of AIM-The European Brands Association**, said:

"Consumer brand manufacturers are amongst the most sought after employers for young people. Most members of AIM have ambitious quality internship and apprenticeship programmes and have created innovative projects supporting youth employability. Therefore, we are pleased to launch a joint initiative called "Skills for the future" with the European Youth Forum to encourage interested companies to use excellent tools such as the guide presented today and develop new tools that will help companies continuously enhance their programmes."

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**Notes to the editor:**

The Employers' Guide to Quality Internships can be found [here](#).

More information on the Youth Forum's work on internships, as well as its Charter can be found here: <http://www.youthforum.org/quality-internships/>

The British Chamber of Commerce in Belgium is also organising the [Ambassador's Gala](#) - a large charity event in support of youth employment - in October 2015, where the European Youth Forum, as CSR partner of the event, aims to spread the

message of quality internships further across both the political spectrum and the private sector.

### **About the European Youth Forum**

*The European Youth Forum is the platform of youth organisations in Europe. Independent, democratic, youth-led, it represents 99 National Youth Councils and international youth organisations from across the continent. The Forum works to empower young people to participate actively in society to improve their own lives, by representing and advocating their needs and interests and those of their organisations towards the European Union, the Council of Europe and the United Nations. For more information, visit [www.youthforum.org](http://www.youthforum.org)*

### **About the Adecco Group**

*The Adecco Group, based in Zurich, Switzerland, is the world's leading provider of HR solutions. With more than 31,000 FTE employees and around 5,100 branches in over 60 countries and territories around the world, Adecco Group offers a wide variety of services, connecting more than 650,000 associates with our clients every day. The services offered fall into the broad categories of temporary staffing, permanent placement, career transition and talent development, as well as outsourcing and consulting. The Adecco Group is a Fortune Global 500 company.*

*Adecco S.A. is registered in Switzerland (ISIN: CH0012138605) and listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange (ADEN).*

### **About AIM, The European Brands Association**

*AIM represents brand manufacturers in Europe on key issues which affect their ability to design, distribute and market their brands. AIM's membership groups some 1800 companies of all sizes through corporate members and national associations in 21 countries. [www.aim.be](http://www.aim.be)*