

Your NVEEE Interview Guide

How to prepare, how to answer the most common questions, and how to follow up. Read this before you schedule your interview.

What your NVEEE interview looks like

- A 45-minute Zoom interview with NVEEE's Executive Director. Camera on, from a quiet space.
- Questions about NVEEE, your committee, and your experience, plus a 10–15 minute live skills exercise with your screen shared.
- AI tools are not permitted during the interview unless the skills exercise calls for them.
- Every interview is a real hiring decision. If you are not prepared, reschedule through your Calendly link at least 48 hours in advance.

1 Know the role before you prepare anything else

Re-read the page for your first-choice committee on nveee.org/internships. Write down the three to five skills it asks for, then match each one to something you have done in a class, job, club, or volunteer role. Those matches become your answers.

2 “Tell me about yourself”

This is almost always the first question. It is not a request for your life story. It is a request for a short, focused introduction that explains why you are a good fit for this internship [1][2].

Use Present → Past → Future

- **Present:** your school, major, and year.
- **Past:** two or three experiences that relate to the role.
- **Future:** why this internship is your logical next step.

Aim for 60 to 90 seconds. Practice it out loud until it sounds natural, not memorized [3].

Leave out

- Childhood stories and personal history unrelated to the role
- Family details and hobbies, unless they clearly connect to the work
- Complaints about past jobs, teachers, or employers
- A word-for-word recital of your résumé

Example (Marketing & Communications)

“I’m a junior studying communications at the University of Central Florida. This year I manage Instagram for my university’s volunteer club, where I plan a monthly content calendar and design our posts in Canva. Last summer I helped a local food bank write its volunteer newsletter. I’m applying to NVEEE because I want to use those skills for a youth-focused mission, and I’d like to help tell the stories of students in PALS and PALP.”

Your 30-second pitch

A 30-second pitch is a shortened version of the same answer: who you are, what you offer, and what you are looking for. Record yourself, listen back, and cut anything that does not support the role. Employers often form a first impression within the first 30 seconds [4].

3 Answer behavioral questions with STAR

Questions that begin with “Tell me about a time...” ask how you handled a real situation. Answer with a specific example using the STAR method [5]:

S

Situation: brief context
(about 20%)

T

Task: your responsibility
(about 10%)

A

Action: what *you* did; say
“I,” not “we” (about 60%)

R

Result: the outcome and
what you learned (about
10%)

Example: “Tell me about a time you met a tight deadline.”

S: Two days before our club’s fundraiser, our flyer designer left the team. T: I was asked to finish the flyer and the social media posts. A: I listed every deliverable, built the flyer from our existing brand colors, asked our president to approve it the same evening, and scheduled the posts for the next morning. R: Everything went out on time, and 40 more students attended than the year before. I learned to ask for approval early instead of waiting until the end.”

Prepare three to five stories you can adapt to different questions: leadership, teamwork, a deadline, a mistake, and learning something new. If a story did not end well, focus on what you learned and what you would do differently [5][6].

4 Common questions and what we are listening for

Question	What a strong answer shows
Tell me about yourself.	A clear, relevant introduction connected to the role [1].
What do you know about NVEEE? Why NVEEE?	Real research beyond the mission statement, and a genuine connection between your experience and our work [7].
Why this committee?	That you read the committee page and can name the skills you would bring.
What are your strengths?	One honest strength, with an example, tied to the role [6].
What is a weakness you are working on?	Self-awareness: a real weakness and the steps you are taking to improve [6][8].
Tell me about a time you missed a deadline or made a mistake.	Ownership, what you learned, and how you prevent it now [6].
How do you handle disagreement on a team?	That you address problems early, calmly, and directly [9].

How do you stay organized and motivated when working remotely?	Specific habits and tools, and a quiet place to work [10].
Tell me about a time you had to learn something new quickly.	Willingness to learn and to ask for help when needed [11].
What questions do you have for us?	Curiosity and preparation. "No questions" is a weak answer.

5 Questions to ask your interviewer

Strong questions

- What does a typical week look like for an intern on this committee?
- What qualities do your most successful interns share?
- What would success look like in my first month?
- How do interns receive feedback?
- Which projects would this committee be working on this term?
- What challenges do new interns most often face?
- What are the next steps in the process?

Avoid

- Anything answered on our website, such as the hours or what PALS is
- "How few hours can I work?" or other questions that focus only on your convenience
- "Do I have to attend the meetings?"
- Questions about time off before you have an offer [12]

6 Before, during, and after

The week before

- ☐ Research NVEEE (see Guide 2)
- ☐ List the skills your committee needs
- ☐ Draft three to five STAR stories
- ☐ Practice out loud, ideally on camera
- ☐ Prepare three to five questions

The day before

- ☐ Confirm the date, time, and time zone
- ☐ Test Zoom, camera, microphone, and screen sharing
- ☐ Set up good lighting and a clean background
- ☐ Have free Google and Canva accounts ready
- ☐ Save internship@nveee.org in case of tech problems

During

- ☐ Join two to three minutes early
- ☐ Look at the camera when you speak
- ☐ Give full answers with specific examples
- ☐ Ask for clarification if a question is unclear
- ☐ Keep your phone silenced and out of reach

After: send a thank-you email within 24 hours [5][13]

Subject: Thank you – NVEEE [Committee] internship interview

Dear Ms. Sanders,

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today about the [Committee] internship. I especially enjoyed learning about [one specific topic from the conversation]. Our discussion confirmed my interest in [one specific contribution you could make]. I look forward to hearing about next steps.

Sincerely,

[Your full name]

Sources and further reading

[1] Northwestern University Career Advancement, Common Interview Questions. <https://northwestern.edu/careers/jobs-internships/interviewing/common-interview-questions.html>

[2] Yale Office of Career Strategy, Tell Me About Yourself. <https://ocs.yale.edu/channels/tell-me-about-yourself/>

[3] University of Cincinnati, Mastering the Job Interview: A College Student's Guide. <https://www.uc.edu/blog/job-interview-tips-for-college-students.html>

[4] U.S. Department of Labor, Skills to Pay the Bills (interview and 30-second pitch activities, pp. 41–48). https://www.dol.gov/sites/dolgov/files/ODEP/topics/youth/softskills/508_Skills_to_Pay_the_Bills_10152024.pdf

[5] MIT Career Advising & Professional Development, The STAR Method for Behavioral Interviews. <https://capd.mit.edu/resources/the-star-method-for-behavioral-interviews/>

[6] University of Cincinnati, STAR Method for Behavioral Interviews. <https://www.uc.edu/campus-life/career-co-op-support/interviews/biginterview/star-method-behavioral-interview.html>

[7] Idealist, Interview Q&A: Why Do You Want to Work Here? <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/interview-qa-why-want-work-here>

[8] Idealist, One Thing I Wish I Knew Before the Big Interview. <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/one-thing-wish-knew-before-big-interview>

[9] Harvard Extension School Career Services, Interviewing Guide. <https://cdn-careerservices.fas.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/161/2025/07/2025-HES-interviewing-edited.pdf>

[10] Idealist, Interviewing for a Remote Job? Here's What You Need to Know. <https://www.idealists.org/en/careers/interviewing-for-a-remote-job-heres-what-you-need-to-know>

[11] The Muse, Internship Interview Questions and Answers. <https://www.themuse.com/advice/internship-interview-questions-answers>

[12] The Muse, 10 Interview Questions You Should Never Ask (and 5 You Always Should). <https://www.themuse.com/advice/10-interview-questions-you-should-never-ask-and-5-you-always-should>

[13] UCSF Office of Career and Professional Development, Thank-You Notes. <https://career.ucsf.edu/node/4671>