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King County Road Services Grant Intern

Brie Vogler
Western Washington University

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COLLEGE OF THE ENVIRONMENT



Internship Title: King County Road Services Grants

Student Name: Brie Vogler

Internship Dates: 6/21/22-9/21/22

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STUDENT SIGNATURE *Brie Vogler*

DATE: 9/21/22

Brie Vogler

Road Services Grants Internship

Advisor: Dr. Grace Wang

Road Services Grants Internship

I entered my internship with King County with the goals of:

- Establishing an updated documentation strategy for the Road Services Division Grant Program
- Providing data visualization support through developing and maintaining reports and Power Bi dashboards.
- Collaborating with team members regularly to support and maintain communication hubs via SharePoint and MS teams
- Support strategic initiatives to update leader standard work procedures and documents
- Experience collaborating with subject matter experts to analyze and update grant program reporting and;
- See an overall enhancement of my data analysis skills

In my short time at King County, I feel my responsibilities and interactions have taught me all I wished to learn and much more. I have been fortunate enough to experience such a wide breath of knowledge and expertise in my grant program intern role. My internship primarily was broken up between long-term projects and small tasks given when needed. I started with more administrative responsibilities, and as I got aquatinted with the terminology and the cycle of grant work, I was given more challenging tasks.

My first project spanned close to a month and allowed me to get comfortable with the general work of the grants team and work done in the Strategic Business Operations Section of the King County Road Services Division. This project had me focus on renaming and standardizing all the active grant-related files kept in the King County file network. I learned the difference between state and federal grants, the hierarchical process the county has to go through to apply for grants, the level of collaboration necessary for a successful grant application, and the different granting agencies for King County Road Services. The biggest revelation I had during this project is that not one grant application is the same; there are always new expectations or updates in governmental standards that create a very dynamic and collaborative process. Upon completing the project, I determined the faults in the current standardization process and compiled a list of all necessary documents that need to be tracked down and placed in the correct files. I found that the prior standardization system was unclear and not intuitive for those outside our section. I felt accomplished upon completing the project; overall, it was a great starter project to familiarize me with the program.

The small tasks I completed throughout my time as an intern provided some great learning experiences and gave me good insight into the world of grants. One of the first official tasks I was assigned was writing a grant summary. The grant I was assigned was created through the Federal Infrastructure Bill. In this grant summary, I was able to provide a summarization of the grant, the amount of funds the county is supposed to supply in addition to the grant award, and the limit of grant funding we are allowed to allocate for each stage of the project, the number of applications permitted, along with many other time-sensitive requirements. I continued to help with grant summaries as the internship progressed.

I have also been given many opportunities to explore other work areas within the roads division. The internship program allowed the interns to interact with other division members. We were given the opportunity to attend lunch and learn programs and coffee hours with people like the head of the environmental unit, the communications unit, members of the engineering section, and even the director of the division, Tricia Davis. These meetings have already allowed me to establish connections and even a possible career path after my graduation in the fall. I have also been very fortunate enough to be able to see some of our grant-funded capital improvement projects in person. The interns along with other personnel visited six sites in July and five in August, with one being an active construction site. Some of the projects serve to improve sole access roads and bridges to communities in rural King County.

The second half of my internship was dedicated to the most dynamic project I completed in my time at the county. My supervisor and I started out with a goal to provide an at a glance view of all ongoing active grants and provide helpful information on grant calls and budgeting. The audience for this project was the project managers and anyone in the division who needs basic information about a grant or grant-funded program. This was the most challenging yet exciting part of my internship since I will be able to acquire new skills in data analysis programs and also learn new ways to display data visuals. The end result was the completion of two very detailed and interactive power bi dashboards which have become tools for the project managers and leadership throughout the division. The first dashboard was geared to provide an overview of the status of our active grants and the second dashboard was created to have the project managers have a more interactive and intuitive tool to review any grant information that may pertain to their projects, rather than having them dig through excel files. I ended this project with an 8 minute presentation about my work to nearly 100 staff members of the Roads division. The

widespread approval and compliments the grants team received about the dashboards led me to start a restructuring of our SharePoint page to make the dashboards more accessible for members of staff.

I believe that this has become the most impactful internship I have had the pleasure of completing. I feel my work has been able to positively impact members of the grant team and those in the policy and planning section of the roads division. The support and opportunities provided for me through this internship were beyond what I would have ever expected and has built my admiration for the county. The successes I experienced in the internship has led me to continue working with the county as a program/project manager 2 through my final quarter with the hopes that it can be turned into a full time position upon completing my degree. I would highly suggest this program to anyone in the environmental and policy and planning field; it gives excellent insight into the world of regulation and provides hands-on experience in the formulation of regulatory policy.