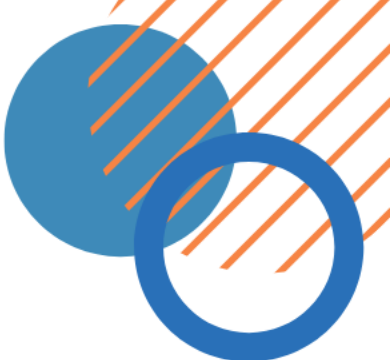




Guidebook: Navigating the Internship and Job Search



**Tips for Autistic Early Career Professionals in North Carolina
(August 2025)**

How to Use this Guidebook

- Since there's a lot of information to take in, NCBCE recommends going through the guidebook in more than one sitting.
- Not every section will apply to everyone—feel free to focus on the parts that are most relevant to for where you are in the job search.
- Even if one has read through the guide once, it can be helpful to revisit it later. Different suggestions and details may stand out.
- Some sections of the guidebook may be especially useful to review with a mentor, therapist, job coach, or family member.



LiNC-IT Collaborative

The LiNC-IT Collaborative supports autistic individuals in North Carolina who are seeking internships and early career employment opportunities. LiNC-IT is made up of multiple organizations including the Autism Society of NC, the NC Business Committee for Education, the NC Department of Office of State Human Resources, the NC Division of Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities, and UNC TEACCH.



NC DEPARTMENT OF
**HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES**



NORTH CAROLINA Office of
State Human Resources



LINC-IT and Work Opportunities

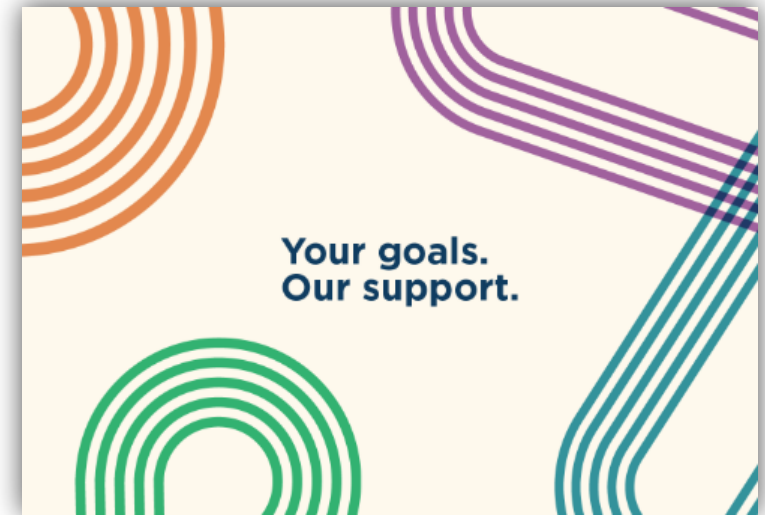
- While LiNC-IT does not offer immediate job placements, it serves as an additional resource and pathway to support individuals in their job search journey.
- LiNC-IT candidates are added to a growing talent pool of individuals on the autism spectrum who are seeking internship and employment opportunities.
- The [LiNC-IT newsletter](#) is one avenue through which LiNC-IT opportunities are shared. Additionally, partner organizations may also reach out directly about relevant opportunities.
- The LiNC-IT process may take time and does not guarantee placement, but it can open doors to potential opportunities and support along the way.
- This [infographic](#) provides an overview of the steps to becoming a LiNC-IT candidate and beginning your journey with the program.

LiNC-IT and Job Coaching

- To be considered as a candidate in the LiNC-IT talent pool, individuals are required to have a job coach.
- Typically, LiNC-IT candidates receive job coaching services funded by Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities (EIPD) through the Autism Society of NC or UNC TEACCH.
- In some cases, LiNC-IT candidates may receive job coaching through another provider that EIPD partners with. Reasons might include:
 - The candidate's location in North Carolina can affect which providers are options for job coaching. The Autism Society of NC and UNC TEACCH provide in-person job coaching in certain counties.
 - The candidate may have a co-occurring disability, and another job coaching provider is more appropriate to support them.
- The Autism Society of NC and UNC TEACCH also serve individuals on the autism spectrum who do not have higher education or who have a co-occurring intellectual disability.
- Learn more on the LiNC-IT website: linc-it.org/interns/#job-coaching

Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities

- Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities (EIPD) helps people with disabilities and chronic medical conditions prepare for work, find a job, return to work, maintain a job, advance in employment, and live more independently.
- EIPD is a part of the LiNC-IT collaborative, and they also serve jobseekers who are not LiNC-IT candidates.
- [Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities](#) and the [Division of Services for the Blind](#) are the two vocational rehabilitation agencies in North Carolina.
- Additional Resources:
 - [EIPD's website](#)
 - [EIPD's Jobseeker Services Overview Flyer](#)
 - [Unofficial Guide to EIPD \(video playlist\)](#)



Receiving Feedback on State Government Job Applications

- For most state government job postings, one can resubmit their application up until the job posting closes. The agency will only look at the most recent version of the application you submitted.
- In some cases, LiNC-IT can ask the Office of State & Human Resources for feedback on LiNC-IT candidates' applications, if they submit them well in advance of the deadline.
- LiNC-IT candidates might then incorporate that feedback in their application resubmission or a future job application.
- If one is interested in receiving feedback on their job application from OSHR, first watch our webinar [Applying to State Government Jobs](#) and review the [handout for LiNC-IT candidates](#).
- If a candidate receives job coaching from Autism Society of NC or UNC TEACCH, email them a PDF of the submitted application and a PDF of the job posting. In the email, make it clear that you are requesting that they ask OSHR for feedback on your application.
- If one receives job coaching from a service provider other than the Autism Society of NC or UNC TEACCH, one may email the NC Business Committee for Education directly (NCBCEadmin@nc.gov) with the PDF of your application and a PDF of the job posting. Then, NCBCE may ask OSHR for feedback on your behalf.

Careers in Early Childhood Education

- In addition to LiNC-IT, the NC Business Committee for Education has other work-based learning initiatives. One of those is [Building Bright Futures](#), which supports people who are interested in becoming early childhood educators.
- Building Bright Futures supports current and future early childhood educators through apprenticeship programs. In apprenticeship programs, an individual learns skills through instruction and on-the-job experience.
- Building Bright Futures worked with the Autism Society of NC to create a supportive career pathway in early childhood education. If you would like to learn more email Morgan Ford (morgan.ford@nc.gov).



Share Updates with LiNC-IT

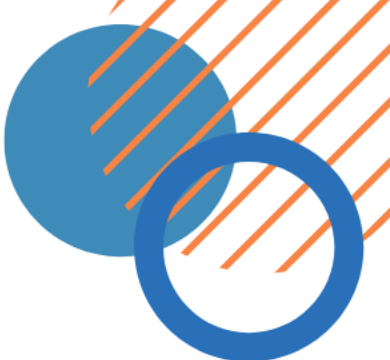
- If one has filled out the [LiNC-IT interest form](#) previously and has updates that they would like to share with the NC Business Committee for Education, they may use the [LiNC-IT Candidate Updates](#) form to do that.
- For instance, one may share their current resume, what sort of job they are looking for, or where they are in the process of opening a case with Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities.
- One may also contact LiNC-IT at NCBCEadmin@nc.gov.
- If one has a job coach, LiNC-IT also recommends regularly communicating with them about the job search.



LiNC-IT Newsletter

- NCBCE sends out the LiNC-IT newsletter via email. We recommend that one checks their email regularly and that they read the LiNC-IT newsletter when it is sent out.
- The LiNC-IT newsletter is sent on an as-needed basis. This one way that we invite candidates to apply to positions.
- View [past LiNC-IT newsletters](#) on our website, and [subscribe](#) to receive future newsletters.
- Typically, LiNC-IT candidates are automatically subscribed to the newsletter.





**Pursue opportunities and resources
outside of LiNC-IT.**



NCWorks

- [NCWorks](#) offers jobseekers assistance with cover letter preparation, interview practice, and other aspects of the job search.
- Their services are offered at no cost.
- They have career centers [throughout the state](#), which are familiar with local job opportunities.
- One can also access resources on the NCWorks web site: www.ncworks.gov
- NCWorks may be able support one sooner in the job search than EIPD, as it can take some time to be determined eligible for EIPD services.
- [LiNC-IT Webinar: How NCWorks can Assist Job Seekers](#)



College Career Center

- If one is a college or university student, their school's career center can be a great resource for the job search.
 - One might still be able to receive career services from your school, even if they are an alumni.
- University career services can support students as they craft their resume, practice interviewing, along with other elements of one's career journey and job search.
- [LiNC-IT Webinar: Navigating College Career Services and Career Fairs](#)

Practicing for Interviews (Part 1)

- Because interviewing is a largely social process, it can be especially hard for people on the autism spectrum, as autism is a social disability.
- Even if one does not currently have any job interviews scheduled, one may want to go ahead and start practice interviewing.
- One could use the internet to compile a list of commonly asked job interview questions and then spend time thinking about how they could reply to them.
- Written notes can be helpful to reference later.
- Consider brainstorming a list of stories from one's life to potentially use in an interview, such as times when one showed leadership, took initiative, problem-solved, and learned from a mistake.
- In addition to reflecting on how one would answer a question, it can be good practice to rehearse answers to interview questions aloud.

Practicing for Interviews (Part 2)

- Some people might want to practice answering a couple of sample interview questions once a week to become more comfortable with interviewing.
- Friends, family, college career advisors, job coaches, mentors, and therapists may be willing to help one practice interviewing. They can also be a great resource to help one reflect on their strengths.
- Interlocutors could also ask potential interview questions for which one has not prepared answers. This gives the future interviewee an opportunity to practice the skill of responding to unexpected questions.
- Also, some jobseekers with disabilities ask employers for accommodations before the interview, such as being provided with the list of interview questions in advance. Read more about the Americans with Disabilities Act and accommodations during job interviews [here](#).
- The interview section of the [NC State Career Guide](#) could also be helpful as one practices for future interviews.

Job Alerts

- Sometimes jobs postings are open for only a short period of time, and sometimes smaller organizations' job postings might not show up on job boards like Indeed.
- Consider setting up email notifications for job postings at employers that one is interested in working at.
 - For instance, for North Carolina's state government, one can sign up for job alerts: [Job Alerts | Careers with the State of NC](#).
- One may also want to check the careers page frequently for target employers:
 - For example, the [jobs' page of Kramden](#) says, "Open positions are listed here as they become available. You can also subscribe to our email newsletter for announcements."

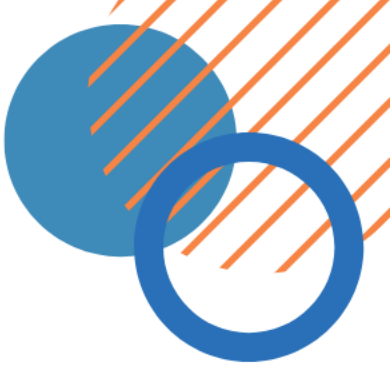
The Job Search

- It is not uncommon for the job search to take a long time, even for people who are not autistic.
- Even if one is advancing the next round of consideration for a position, human resources can move slowly.
- Depending on one's field, it is typical to have to apply to many jobs in one's field to get one. Some job openings have many applicants applying to them.



Technology Employer Highlight

- [NC Department of Information Technology \(NCDIT\)](#)
 - Some LiNC-IT participants have worked for the NC Department of Information Technology.
 - They have a neurodiverse internship program, which receives many applications.
 - Check their [website](#) for updates about the next application cycle.
- [Kramden Institute](#)
 - Kramden is a nonprofit organization in Durham that refurbishes computers. They also offer computer skills classes.
 - Some LiNC-IT participants have worked at Kramden.
 - Check the [Work at Kramden](#) page to see if they have currently have job openings.
 - Kramden also has opportunities for people to [volunteer](#).



Advocate for oneself in the job search.



Self Advocacy and EIPD

- Check out NCBCE's [one-page guide](#) on contacting Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities (EIPD).
- If EIPD does not respond to an email request within 5 business days, one may want to send a follow-up email.
- If one has not heard from EIPD in a while, consider sending them a check-in email. For instance, if Susan has not heard from EIPD in a month, and they are in the process of determining her eligibility for services, she may email her counselor:

Hello Ms. Johnson,

I am writing to see if you have received the documentation from my psychologist and my primary care provider. Let me know if I can be helpful in following up with them and if you need anything further from me at this time.

Thank you,

Susan

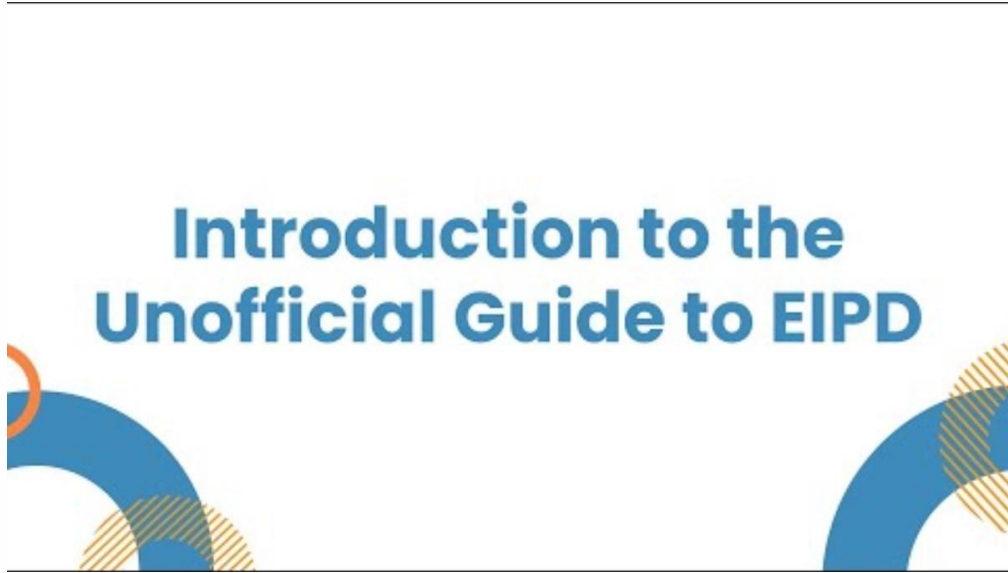
EIPD Funded Internships

- In some cases, Employment and Independence for People with Disabilities can fund the wages for an internship. If you have an EIPD counselor, consider asking them about this possibility.
- Of note, nonprofits, small businesses, and start-ups may tend to be more willing to host someone for an EIPD-funded internship in comparison to larger companies in the private sector.
- In some cases, NCBCE can reach out to employers about the possibility of hosting an EIPD funded internship or suggest employers to reach out to.



Unofficial Guide to EIPD (Video Series)

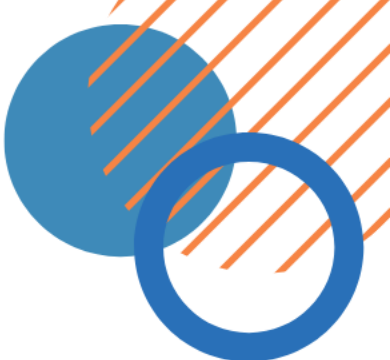
NCBCE created a series of short videos about navigating EIPD and advocating for oneself in that process. View the [playlist](#) on YouTube.



Introduction to the
Unofficial Guide to EIPD

Advocacy Resources

- The [Ignite](#) and [T-STEP](#) programs seek to help participants grow in their self-advocacy skills.
- Some NC Community Colleges have [Access to Achievement Coordinators](#) who can help empower students with developmental disabilities (including autism) to pursue their education and career goals.
- The [NC Client Assistance Program](#) can help advocate for people as they navigate EIPD, including helping to resolve issues that may arise in the rehabilitation process.



**Practice professionalism in one's
digital and spoken communication
during the job search.**

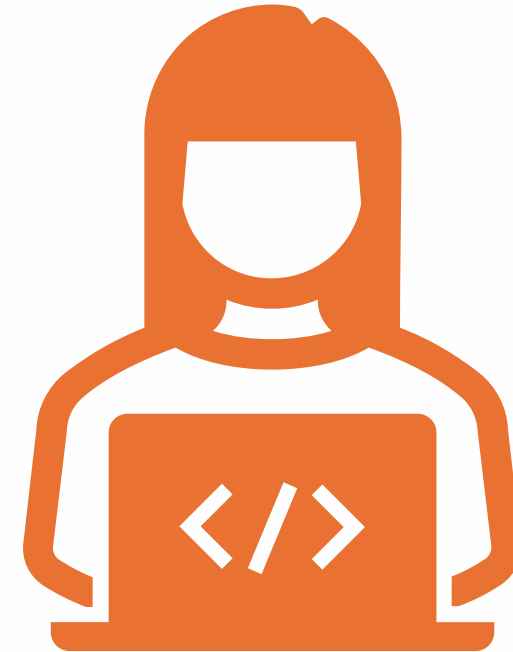


The Importance of Professionalism

- Helpful questions:
 - What would be effective in this situation?
 - What would be effective in helping me work toward my long goals?
- If your goal is wanting to be hired by an employer, communicating with them in a rude manner could cause them to think that they do not want to work with you.
- Similarly, if you are hoping that someone will assist you in the job search, communicating with them in a rude or harassing manner could backfire. That could cause them to not recommend you for internships or jobs. Also, they might stop helping you altogether.

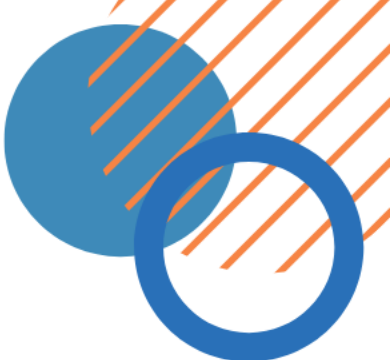
Resources About Professional Email Communication

- [Introduction to Professional Email Etiquette](#)
- [Examples of Polite and Impolite Communication](#)
- [Effective Email Communication](#)
- [Formalizer - GoblinTool](#) -- Goblin Tool's AI formalizer can provide suggestions of how to make one's email draft more formal, polite, or professional.



Professionalism and Job Applications

- It is very important to use proper English conventions (like spelling and punctuation) on one's job application and associated materials.
- Employers may view a candidate's resume, cover letter, and job application as reflecting on their attention to detail, written communication skills, and ability to organize information well. This could also apply to one's LinkedIn profile and personal website.
- Also, if a jobseeker does not use proper capitalization, spelling, and punctuation on their application, an employer might wonder if they rushed through filling out the application and are not seriously interested in the job.
- The [Checklist for LiNC-IT Resumes](#) offers tips for editing one's resume.
- Unit four of this [English course on Saylor Academy](#) addresses writing sentences and English conventions.



**Consider pursuing low-cost ways to
improve one's job applications.**



Professional Portfolio

- Depending on the job, candidates are invited to share work samples as a part of the application process.
- Jobseekers should consider ensuring that have quality work samples to provide to a prospective employer.
- Work samples should be high quality and showcase one's abilities in a positive light.
- While they can include projects or papers that one did in school, they do not have to be from school.
- [CareerOneStop](#) offers suggestions of what types of work samples one may want to share with an employer based on one's profession.
- If one is seeking a job related to computer programming, consider linking to GitHub on one's resume: [Using your GitHub profile to enhance your resume](#).
- In a similar vein, if one links to a personal web site or writing sample on their LinkedIn page, ensure that they are high quality.

Save and Analyze the Descriptions of Target Jobs

- Consider downloading or printing the descriptions of jobs which one is interested in for future reference.
- The state government of North Carolina has a [data bank of sample job descriptions](#) for entry level positions.
- Look at the qualifications and preferences for the jobs and identify the areas in which one may presently be a less competitive candidate.
- Consider ways in which one might be able to grow in those areas, such as taking classes at a local community college, volunteering, using online learning platforms, and participating in internships (including EIPD funded internships).

Online Learning Platforms

- [Coursera](#) and [EdX](#) offer many online courses that one can audit at no cost. (There are also other online learning platforms.)
 - [How to Audit a Coursera Course In 2025 \(Step-By-Step Guide\)](#)
 - [EdX: What is the audit track?](#)
- For instance, if a jobseeker was noticing that multiple positions that they were interested in preferred the applicant to have had experience with bookkeeping or SQL, they may use an online learning platform to grow their knowledge in that subject.

Tech Certifications

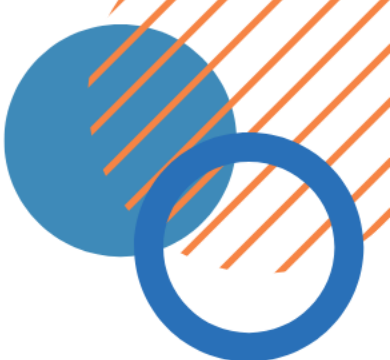
- In some cases, NCBCCE may be able to cover the cost to enroll in a course or take the certification exam.
- Email NCBCEadmin@nc.gov if you are interested.
- View the list of courses and certifications which NCBCCE may be able to sponsor: nctechworks.org (website active September 2025)



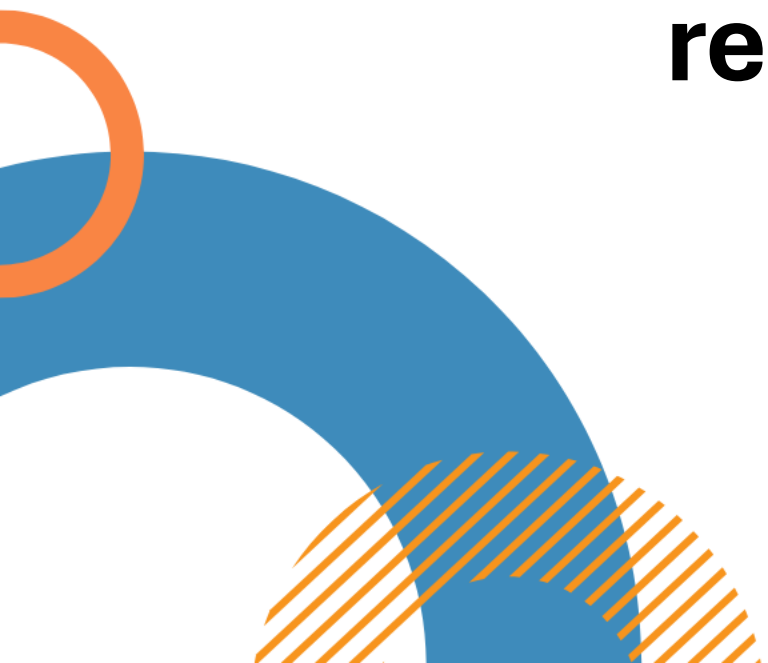
North Carolina Community Colleges

- Taking classes at one of North Carolina's [fifty-eight community colleges](#) can be a great way to reskill or upskill in improve one's job prospects.
- In addition to offering associate degrees, community classes have shorter certificate and diploma programs.
- One can also take individual classes through community college.
- One may be eligible for financial aid, and the classes are generally relatively affordable even without financial aid.
- Of note, before investing time and/or money in higher education, NCBCE recommends researching the current and forecasted job market for the corresponding career, as well as projected earnings.





**Take advantage of online resources
to learn more about topics
related to the job search.**



Recordings of LiNC-IT Webinars

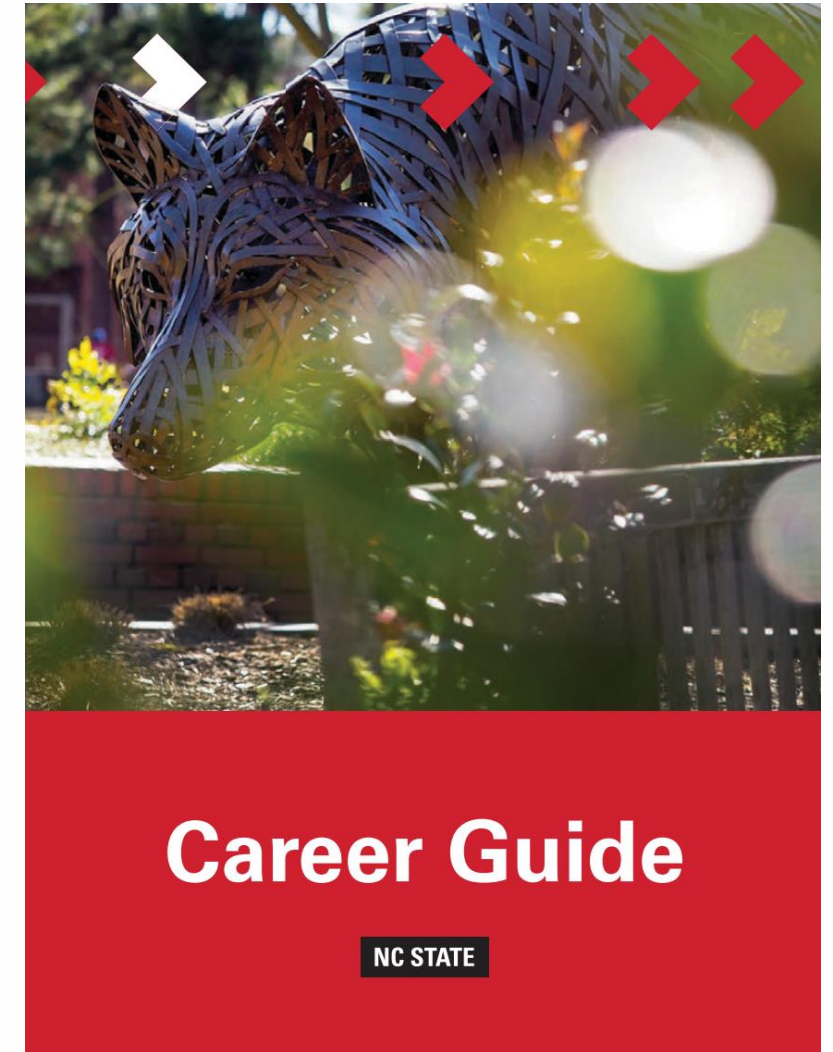
- [Crafting and Enhancing your Resume](#)
- [Applying to State Government Jobs](#)
- [LinkedIn: Crafting Your Profile and Networking](#)
- [What are Registered Apprenticeships?](#)
- [How NCWorks can Assist Job Seekers](#)
- [Navigating Career Fairs and College Career Services](#)



Browse the NC State Career Guide

The Career Guide has information that is applicable for the job search, regardless of whether you are an NC State student.

careers.dasa.ncsu.edu/gain-experience/career-guide/



NC Careers

- [NC Careers](#) offers online resources to help one plan their education and employment path.
- Considering checking out NC Careers' [Explore Occupations](#) feature, which includes data about salary and the number of current job openings for various jobs.
- Of note, the job market is ever changing and can be influenced by a variety of factors, e.g., artificial intelligence and availability of federal grant funding.



Researching and Reflecting on Career Paths

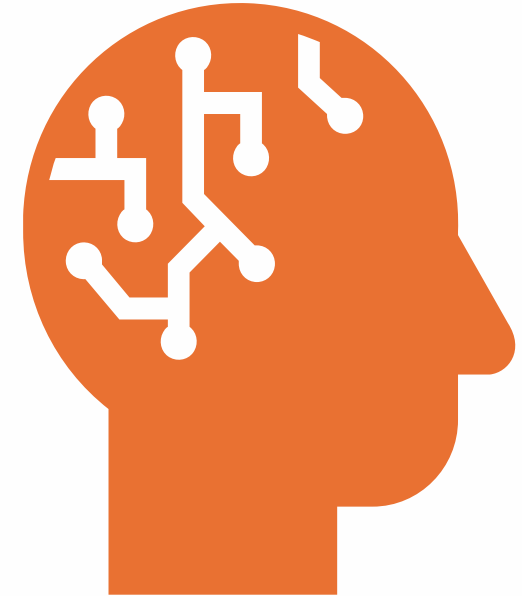
- Consider taking time to research career paths of interest to see what might be a good fit.
- Reflect on one's strengths, abilities, and preferences. That information can be important for evaluating the feasibility and sustainability of various career paths.
 - Of note, within a profession, there may be a diversity of job openings. For instance, some nursing jobs involve working in the night shift, while others work during business hours.
- Ideas of ways to research career fields:
 - Watch day in the life videos on YouTube
 - Read multiple job postings from that field
 - Seek out informational interviews
 - Job shadow
- One may want to ask artificial intelligence for help with identifying career paths given one's preferences and limitations.
- The following slide has examples of questions that one may want to research as they reflect on possible career paths; it is by no means an exhaustive list.

Sample Questions for Researching Career Fields

- What do the job postings tend to list as the physical requirements?
- Does the work tend to be in person, virtual, or hybrid? What portion of the job is computer work?
- Do the jobs often require the employee to have a driver's license?
- What might the work schedule like?
 - How long might the workday be?
 - Do employees typically work during business hours?
 - Do some employees work the night shift?
 - Do the jobs tend to be part time or full time?
- What are the social demands of the job? How important is one's social acumen and communication abilities for success in the career field?
- How competitive is it to get a job in the field?
- Would one likely have to relocate for a job?
- While one might enjoy studying a certain subject in school, they may not enjoy working in the corresponding career field. What might the day to day in the workforce be like?
- What are the opportunities for career growth and advancement within the field?

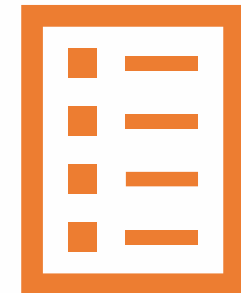
Artificial Intelligence

- Artificial Intelligence (AI) can be an additional resource to help one in the job search. This article offer suggestions of how to utilize it: [Using AI in Your Job Search? Here's How To Do It Ethically](#)
- Consider researching how AI may impact the job market for career fields that one is interested in pursuing.
- Consider learning about ways that professionals in your chosen career field utilize AI in their jobs.



Accommodations for Jobseekers and Employees

- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) addresses accommodations for employees and jobseekers with disabilities.
- [Job Applicants and the ADA](#)
- [Guide to Requesting Reasonable Accommodations for Employees](#)
- [Accommodation Ideas for Employees with Autism Spectrum Disorder](#)



LiNC-IT Website

The participant resource page of the LiNC-IT website links to additional resources: linc-it.org/intern-resources/.

Resources by Category

Creating a Resume

Job Search

Job Accomodations

EIPD

Professionalism

Laid Off from a Job

Transition to Adulthood

Housing

Life Tasks

Health Insurance

Mental Health

Finances

Cybersecurity

Buying a Car

Saving for Retirement

Ways to Connect with LiNC-IT

- Visit our website: [Linking North Carolina with Innovative Talent](#)
- Email us at NCBCEadmin@nc.gov
- Follow us on social media ([Facebook](#) and [LinkedIn](#))
- Sign up for our [newsletter](#)

