

1. What does the Career and Placement Office do to help students with employment and entrepreneurship?

To meet the needs of students and alumni looking for a job or an internship, the Career and Placement Office has set a 3-step program that helps them in achieving their professional goals: Learn, Practice, and Thrive. Since career development is a lifelong process, we offer our services to all of our students and alumni.

Learn: Through a variety of workshops, company presentations, and employers' roundtables, students and alumni will learn about various employment and entrepreneurship opportunities, acquire essential soft skills for the professional world, and learn how to effectively present their skills and experiences to potential employers.

Practice: Twice a year, students and alumni are invited to attend a mock interview with tens of employers each to sharpen their interviewing skills and get first-hand advice on how to present themselves to employers. They are also invited to compete in over 15 entrepreneurship and innovation competitions, which will propel them to the next stage of their entrepreneurial journey.

Thrive: It's time to take off. At this point, students and alumni can start applying for jobs or internships through our portal, <https://alumniusj.org/jobboard>. Every month, over 200 new national and international offers are posted and emailed to students. Students are also supported throughout the process with on-demand one-on-one coaching.

2. What type of workshops do you offer to students and alumni?

The employability workshops follow the job seeker's path. There are four important stages:

- **Goal-setting:** Participants will learn to identify their interests and assess their personalities. They will also learn to understand the workplace and identify different job search platforms.
- **Job hunting:** Participants will prepare important documents (CV, motivation letter, follow-up letter) and prepare for a job interview.
- **Communication:** Participants will improve their presentation skills, body language, email etiquette, and online presence.
- **Landing a job:** Participants will explore emotional intelligence, teamwork, negotiation, and time management, among other skills.

Each of these stages is delivered twice a year, once between January and April and once between September and December. The entire program is free for USJ students and alumni. Each semester, approximately 500 students and alumni participate in training. Aside from the workshops, we hold round tables with employers every semester to discuss market trends. We also invite all students to participate in mock interviews twice a semester, where they can meet with different employers and discuss their career plans.

3. How do you support students who want to start their own businesses?

We provide entrepreneurship training that is divided into four parts:

- Business model and innovation
- Marketing
- Finance
- Pitching

These training are held on six Saturdays twice a year, in October and February, to help students prepare for the upcoming competitions. Following the workshops, and after registering for one or

more competitions, students can request one-on-one mentoring to help them with their business model, pitch, or any other aspect of their business.

4. Aside from workshops, how can students develop their skills?

I would recommend participating in entrepreneurship and innovation competitions because they will learn various skills such as empathy, ambiguity management, and teamwork. They can also consider international programs, extracurricular activities, and volunteer opportunities. These programs promote cooperation, leadership, and working for a cause. Although these activities are not always directly related to the program, they are an excellent way to learn collaboration and strengthen social networks, both of which are important later in one's career and resume.

The Career and Placement Office provides students with a wide range of activities, including competitions hosted by Berytech, Obegi, IAAF, or Resource Group, and international programs like Demola. Students can also read about their peers' experiences in our newsletter. All of the competitions are listed on our website: <https://alumniusj.org/page/entrepreneuriat>.

5. What advice do you have for fresh graduates who are just starting out in their careers?

I have noticed that fresh graduates are too focused on international opportunities. My advice is to seek out learning opportunities to reinforce their professional skills. They are part of their learning curves whether they integrate a multinational corporation, a start-up, an NGO, or a governmental entity. They will learn various skills and disciplines to work as part of a team, be empathic, and find solutions to all kinds of challenges. Internships are another great opportunity, particularly in international NGOs. Students can gain experience working in international organizations and develop their passion for a good cause. Finally, they should pursue their passion, whether it is art, sports, or cooking. These interests will be useful in the future because they will open doors to new connections and reinforce a new set of skills that aren't purely technical.

6. What advice do you have for young graduates who want to start their own business?

I would encourage students and young graduates to participate in an entrepreneurial experience at least once in their twenties, preferably sooner. An entrepreneurial journey can teach them four key lessons. Young entrepreneurs learn how to manage risk, through trial and error. They learn to strengthen their entrepreneurial instincts and make decisions while understanding the risk. They also improve their communication and networking skills, which are important in any profession. They learn it at every stage of their entrepreneurial journey, from talking with stakeholders to planning the project, pitching to a jury, clients, or investors, to receiving feedback and discussing the future of their project with mentors. They learn how to develop and fight for a mission or a cause. They become more empathic and committed to their work. Finally, they learn how to navigate ambiguity and make sense of market data and trends, both of which are important managerial skills.