

AV INDUSTRY WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT TOOLKIT

Building the Future of AV Together



 **AVIXA** Foundation



WHAT IS AVIXA?

AVIXA™ is the Audiovisual and Integrated Experience Association, producer of InfoComm trade shows around the world, co-owner of Integrated Systems Europe, and the international trade association representing the audiovisual industry. Established in 1939, AVIXA has more than 11,400 enterprise and individual members, including manufacturers, systems integrators, dealers and distributors, consultants, programmers, live events companies, technology managers, content producers, and multimedia professionals from more than 80 countries. AVIXA members create integrated AV experiences that deliver outcomes for end users. AVIXA is a hub for professional collaboration, information, and community, and is the leading resource for AV standards, certification, training, market intelligence, and thought leadership.



WHAT IS THE AVIXA FOUNDATION?

The AVIXA Foundation was created by AVIXA to help audiovisual (AV) companies find and develop new talent. As a nonprofit, charitable organization, its mission is to increase awareness of AV as a viable career and support the growth of next generation AV professionals.

The Foundation is led by a board of directors composed of esteemed thought leaders. It utilizes AVIXA's vast resources and help from industry volunteers to cultivate growth of AV skills training programs around the world. The Foundation also fosters ties with allied trade organizations, while maintaining global campaigns to inspire passion for AV as a career path.

What the Foundation Does:

- Builds recruitment pipelines
- Supports emerging professionals
- Connects students and companies
- Connects jobseekers with hands-on training

With the help of the entire AV industry, we are creating a future with a diverse, skilled workforce, eager to create integrated experiences everywhere.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This kit is a resource to help you share the story of our exciting, vibrant industry with others. Use these tools to jump start your recruitment of new talent. Integrate the concepts found within to build relationships with schools, nonprofits and career development agencies in your area.

Incorporate the same ideas in your own day-to-day as means of professional development for young employees. It's all about investing some time to help your company and the industry grow.

HOW TO BEGIN

Successful recruitment will take some grassroots efforts on your part. AV is a nontraditional industry, and the skills needed to be an AV professional are not entirely taught in schools. But, there are many parallels to some school programs, as well as student afterschool activities.

It may take some research at first. You can lay some ground work and share the AV career journey to show students that **AV is for everyone.**

STEP 1: Introduce Yourself

STEP 2: Who to Engage

STEP 3: What You Can Offer:

- » Tech Crew
- » Site Visits/Facility Showcase
- » Job Shadow
- » Skills and Drills
- » Internships, Apprenticeships, Co-Ops
- » Building Partnerships

STEP 4: What AVIXA Can Offer:

- » Scholarships
- » Partnership Guides
- » Resources

STEP 1

» INTRODUCE YOURSELF

- **Write an email** to a local teacher (use the template in the [Resources](#) tab)
- **Visit the career center** at technical colleges or head office at a nearby school district – focus on schools with programs teaching skills you need
- **Visit a local school** and meet with administrators
- **Visit tech clubs**, maker-spaces, coding camps, robotics classes, or audio and video production clubs in the area
- **Sponsor an event** for students interested in technical careers to get your name in front of larger groups

Many business leaders before you have found success in sending human resources reps or project leads to meet students at job fairs and established a few regular visits to the classroom. **Remember to think outside the box. The generation you are recruiting doesn't know about AV, but they already have similar hobbies.**

Start small, scale up. Once parents and faculty see the growth in AV year-over-year, and the many different types of jobs students can have during their career, the quicker they'll make the connection.



STEP 2

» WHO TO ENGAGE

Share the story of our industry, what your company does, and how AV jobs are in high demand.

SCHOOL COMMUNITY

Approach the school community as gate keepers. These contacts are your points of access to recruiting students.

- » Teachers
- » Guidance/Career Counselors
- » Administration
 - Principals
 - Deans
 - Headmaster/Headmistress
- » Parents
- » Parent Teacher Associations (PTA)

STUDENT/SCHOOL TYPES

Focus on schools with different age groups to increase interest.

- » Secondary/high school (ages 15/16 and higher)
- » Technical and community colleges (typically two-year trade schools)
- » Undergraduate institutions (look for degrees close to AV)

COMMUNITY GROUPS

There are likely many community and government organizations in your back yard already training youth, veterans, and transitioning pros to join the workforce. Leverage their resources and connections to build pipelines into your company.

- » Youth Organizations
 - Boys and Girls Club
 - Girls Who Code
 - NPower
 - Scouts
 - Year Up
- » Government agencies
 - School boards
 - School advisory panels
 - Dept. of Education
 - Dept. of Labor
- » Local career and employment services

HOW YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Student/ School Types

Secondary/High School
Technical College
Community College
Undergraduate
Institutions

Talk with teachers
Hang posters/flyers
Hands-on exercises/projects
Guest speaker for a class
Participate in career day
Host a site visit
Launch AV tech club
Offer job shadowing/Hire intern(s)
Donate AV equipment
Sponsor trip to AVIXA trade show

Community Groups

Youth Orgs
Government Agencies
Employment Orgs

Talk with leaders about AV
Hands-on exercises/projects
Guest speaker/mentor
Participate in career day
Host a site visit
Offer job shadowing
Hire intern(s)
Donate AV equipment
Sponsor trip to AVIXA trade show

STEP 3

» WHAT YOU CAN OFFER

Offer students opportunities to explore specific careers at your organization and visualize working in the AV industry. You can do this by introducing students to Tech Crew, offering site visits and job shadowing, developing an internship program, and introducing students to AVIXA's scholarship program.



Must be connected to the internet to watch this video

TECH CREW

Starting a Tech Crew at school is a cool, extra-curricular alternative for students. It is a method proven to empower students. The AVIXA Foundation works with secondary and tertiary schools interested in implementing or further developing their own Tech Crew. Participation in Tech Crew allows young adults to deepen their passions, learn new skills, and discover career pathways formerly unfamiliar to them.

Benefits for students:

- Feel empowered
- Learn new skills
- Discover career pathways

Ways to get involved:

- Volunteer to mentor a Tech Crew
- Provide training on technologies and trends
- Offer internships

[Learn more about Tech Crew](#)

SITE VISITS/FACILITY SHOWCASE

Invite groups of students for a special, behind-the-scenes look at your company or project.

This is a great opportunity for local businesses and education organizations to build new connections. Additionally, it's an easy lift with little work involved.

Benefits for students:

- Network with employees
- Gain hands-on experience
- Explore new job opportunities

Benefits for employers:

- Easy lift, low cost
- Get students, teachers, and local officials all in one place
- High volume recruitment opportunity
- Plant your brand for future job seekers



Widen the reach of your event for more return on investment – invite local peer business owners, school officials to co-host with you.

Think differently here too. If you have a flashy workspace, or contributed to a fun location with AV, use it as the backdrop for an event. There are tons of cool spots to show off AV in the community:

- Stadiums
- Event spaces
- Concert halls
- Restaurants
- Corporate brand headquarters

JOB SHADOW

Another simple way to help students connect the dots. You can start small with a few one-on-one opportunities. The important factor here is giving students a chance to see the day-to-day with the experts.

A job shadow program is a way for you to promote the pursuit of careers directly to those most curious or interested in AV once they get excited. Just as it helps new employees, a day-in-the-life of different job roles can really give someone a sense of your company culture, your goals, and gain a deeper understanding of what skills they will need to join the industry.

Establish a defined scope for the visit with teachers and parents. Make sure it's clear on your poster about the day and time, plus the objectives students will accomplish. As always, keep it simple.



See how student Oscar Maguey was able to earn his CTS and begin his career in AV with the help of training and internships.

[View in English](#)

[View in Spanish](#)

SKILLS AND DRILLS

What about hosting a fun skills and drills day? Or even a competition between local school clubs? These are valuable tools for helping students associate what they are learning with practical application in AV.

Don't reinvent the wheel either. If the tech club or robotics team, for example, already worked toward a completed project, you can simply offer the space for the competition.

Host a free event with lunch or snacks after work. Parents and teachers alike are sure to support any event that gives their students hands-on experience for the real world.

Components could include:

- Students compete with other school teams using the valuable skills they're already learning in their classes
- Food and prizes for winners
- Exclusive facilities tours/product demonstrations
- Behind-the-scenes at your company
- Offer space for team competition
- Host a free event with lunch/snacks
- Create events to allow hands-on experience at your company



Exercises to try:

- How a microphone works
- Streaming basics
- Lighting for home movies
- Building your own loud speaker
- How to properly wrap AV cables
- How to set up a sound system for a small concert
- The physics of light and sound
- Build a LAN
- Setting up a projector
- Setting up a home theater

INTERNSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIPS, CO-OPS

Employer-based learning experiences offer supervised practical applications related to academic study. Students, veterans, professionals transitioning fields all want ways to relate their interests to career goals. In the case of AV these can be a great way to show how many types of jobs actually exist.

Internships and Apprenticeships

Avoid higher costs of training and onboarding new employees with a well-designed internship program. A successful program can be a major commitment of time and resources, but beneficial to companies in many ways. You'll want to make sure you have support at all levels of the company. This typically occurs during the academic year or over the summer, depending on regional school calendars around the world.

Cooperative Education (Co-Op)

Co-Ops are another form of internship lasting between one and two academic years. They provide students with a greater breadth and depth than an internship, and can be a great way for you to get them pre-qualified for working at your company.

Consider these options:

Alternating: Student works full-time for an employer. Returns to school on a full-time basis the following term.

Parallel: Student works part-time for an employer and attends college at the same time on a part-time or full-time basis.

Benefits:

- Discover quality talent
- Save time hiring
- Low-cost option to reduce current employee workload
- Improve unseen processes
- Bring in fresh ideas
- Develop stronger leaders and mentors within the company
- Increase talent retention
- Build more recruitment pipelines

Need help starting an internship?

Email us for a guide to help you get you off the ground.



INTERNSHIPS, APPRENTICESHIPS, CO-OPS (CONT.)

AN INTERN IS	AN INTERN IS NOT
A professional in training	A messenger person or clerical support
Capable of contributing to large tasks and projects and working on teams	Solely responsible for copying, filing, or performing other mundane tasks
A student gaining the skills needed to succeed in his or her career field through practical experience	Cheap labor for a company
A student first. Especially during school	A replacement for a member of your staff

Compensation models:

Hourly pay: Most recommended, as interns feel like employees and part of the culture, not temporary help. Hourly rates depending on the industry and educational level.

Stipend: Established monetary sum offered to students through an internship experience. Can be issued upon completion of the internship, or spread throughout the experience in smaller sums.

Course credit: Collaboration with the college or university's career center is required if students are to receive academic credit for their internship experience. Students who are not compensated should be granted course credit. If they receive both, even better!



BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

Collaborations between companies and schools are a core component for career technical education. Partnerships are a great way for you to have a direct impact on recruiting from different communities. Even smaller partnerships can yield big returns.

Some key benefits include:

- Earning notoriety with educators and civic leaders
- Greater brand association when students look for places to work
- Having a say in development of more AV curriculum in schools

- Assisting students with skills training they'll need on the job
- Promoting industry certifications (like CTS)
- Advocacy for high standards of skills
- Serving as seasoned advisors and mentors to students
- Social impact on the future of your community

The best way to secure a partnership is to look at the needs of the school(s) and to try to match those needs to what the AV company can offer. Additionally, an established relationship between the business leader and a specific individual at a school helps ensure mutual benefit for both parties.

WHAT TO DO AFTER ENGAGING WITH SCHOOLS

It all begins with a few simple steps:

1. Start the conversation with institutions in your area.
 2. Help faculty, administrators, career counselors, and nonprofit leaders to better understand our industry's needs through videos, career resources and background info provided by AVIXA.
 3. Introduce your contacts to our AVIXA Foundation staff via:
 - Email foundation@avixa.org
 - Phone +1.703.273.7200
 - Bring them to an industry event
 4. We'll discuss available curriculum options, benefits to students, define partner roles, and sign partner agreements to make it official.
 5. Offer career support for students who enroll in partner programs and complete training.
2. Share your knowledge
 - As an advisor in building new AV skills curriculum based on expectations you have of new hires
 - As a part-time teacher for a program needing experts to teach skills
 3. Help them get real
 - Sit for mock interviews or open houses as business leaders
 - Showcase a product demo for students so they can get their hands dirty
 4. Try an externship for teachers
 - Helps them go back and teach their classes with real-world examples
 5. Donate AV equipment
 - Share your extra stock with a school to help students get hands-on
 - Most charitable giving comes with tax rebates

Ideas you can execute right now:

1. Offer your time for a day
 - Visit the classroom and introduce students to AV and your career story
 - Visit career fairs and field days for job seekers

STEP 4

» WHAT AVIXA CAN OFFER

SCHOLARSHIPS

Over the years, the AVIXA Foundation has given out nearly \$700,000 in scholarships. While attending college or university is not required to join our great industry, we strive to help those who pursue higher education reach their full potential.

eAVate Scholarship

This scholarship is intended as encouragement for women to become active leaders and role models in the industry. The award recognizes a young adult or student determined to leave her mark as an AV professional. This person demonstrates grit and a commitment to her future, displaying a passion for creative solutions to challenges she faces in life.

Michael Vergauwen Scholarship

This scholarship is aimed at students in pursuit of a technical or advanced degree toward an audiovisual career. Michael firmly believed that growth in our industry comes from providing opportunities to anyone with the passion and desire to build a career as an AV professional.



“The Michael Vergauwen Scholarship has helped me to visualize a career in the AV industry, and having these clear goals is very motivating for my continued learning and growth.”

– Jacob Faber, 2017, Michael Vergauwen Scholarship Recipient

Mosaic Scholarship

Our motto is AV is for everyone. We strive for a future where our industry fully represents the world in which we live. This scholarship supports further inclusion of diversity in all forms within our community and is intended to recognize anyone who strives to make a difference in this dynamic, creative field.

[Learn more about the Foundation scholarships.](#)



PARTNERING WITH AVIXA

AVIXA and the AVIXA Foundation want to partner with education institutions to develop a larger pool of qualified talent on behalf of our industry. These collaborative relationships build pathways directly into jobs at companies through:

- Curriculum exchange of AVIXA online and classroom courses – introduces students to fundamentals skills needed on the job
- Resources and preparation toward earning a CTS® certification before entering the workforce
- AVIXA membership for students as an entry point into the industry
- Connections to AVIXA member companies at events, career days, and networking opportunities
- Sponsored trips to trade shows like [InfoComm](#) and [Integrated Systems Europe](#)

AVIXA PARTNER BENEFITS

We offer a full package of benefits for schools and nonprofits seeking partnership and engagement with industry. We see our role as thought leaders, facilitators, and a support network for workforce readiness.

Our commitment includes:

- Complimentary AVIXA student memberships
- Complimentary online AVIXA training
- Scholarship eligibility for enrolled students
- Sponsored attendance for students and/or faculty at regional trade show
- Assist with setting up internships
- Connect to local industry advisors
- Presentations on AV careers by industry ambassador or Foundation staff
- Connect with AV companies for site visits and job shadowing
- Connect with AV companies for equipment donations
- AV career pathways information
- Jobs and industry market data
- Annual Foundation Partner Summit
- Shared online community for teachers and students

Confidentiality

We respect the confidentiality of all enrollees in partner programs or institutions, and offer clearly delineated options for sharing contact information, education, career plans, resumes, and all necessary legal guidelines outlined by governing bodies in regions we operate.

RESOURCES

Use these resources as a conversation starter, help get the word out, and share more about AV careers with anyone who's interested. They are all downloadable, high-quality pieces for you to print and share!

Recruitment Posters

RESOURCES

[Recruitment Email Template](#)

[Additional Resources](#)

RESOURCES

SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDE

Don't forget to follow us and tag our channels as you're out recruiting, at events, and showing behind-the-scenes!

HASHTAGS

Consider using hashtags in your messages.

Popular hashtags include:

- **#AVIXAFoundation**
- **#AVtweeps** (audiovisual community)
- **#AVIXAWomen**
- **#proAV** (audiovisual community)
- **#AVintheAM** (Sunday morning AV discussion)

SOCIAL MEDIA CHANNELS

Follow our social media profiles:

Facebook

Twitter

Instagram

LinkedIn

YouTube

CONTACT US

foundation@avixa.org

+1.703.273.7200

avixa.org/foundation