



Professionalism and Networking Initiative (PANI)

INTRODUCTION

The Black Students' Association is a socio-political culture club, striving to enhance the social and academic experiences of Black students at Western University. In recent years, we have increased programming to target the academic and professional development of students.

PURPOSE

Our members often express challenges in connecting with professors. We've found the black students often feel isolated from campus and have trouble navigating aspects of career development. We invite all professors, faculty members and staff across Western to support our pilot program "Professionalism and Networking Initiative" (PANI).

PANI seeks to create meaningful work experiences for students. We also seek to bridge the gap between students, faculty and staff members. The program will be a minimum 3-month apprenticeship or mentorship opportunity for students with a partnering staff/faculty. If preferred, the initiative also supports the ability of students to assist graduate students with their research.

SPECIFICATIONS

Student's role

- Minimum 3-month project in which you can support and engage the student
- Timeframe at which the project occurs and the length of the term is up to you
- The proposed time commitment from the student is 5-10 hours per week. If you would require more, please note this in [the interest form](#)

Your role

- Faculty and staff can participate in PANI in different ways to support students (i.e. apprenticeship, work-study posting, professional mentor, connecting students to assist graduate students)
- Paid or volunteer student role? Completely up to you and what you can support.
 - If you would like to list a work-study role, please note this in the additional comments

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- Occasionally complete feedback and project evaluations based on your experience

GOALS

1. Firsthand experience working in fields-of-interest
2. Guidance for professional development post-undergraduate
3. Potential academic references for future endeavours
4. Create a unified and interconnected professional environment within Western

WHAT WE NEED FROM YOU

Complete support form ([Project PANI Interest Form](#)) by January 1st.

Recruitment is ongoing even after the launch of PANI. But the exact time commitment required for the student is up to you and should be indicated on the interest form.

CONCLUSION

Thank you for taking the time to read this. We hope you appreciated the program we have proposed. If you do have the capacity to engage a student, please complete the [Project PANI Interest Form](#).

If you know of any colleagues as well who would be interested in supporting the program or looking for student assistance, please feel free to share this document and Google Form with them as well.

If we receive enough interest from supervisors to launch the program, we plan to release the list of PANI-supporting supervisors in February. Your information would be in a Google spreadsheet with your answers from the PANI Support Google Form. Students would then personally reach out to supervisors in their field(s) of interest.

If you have any questions, please email us at blackstudents.club@westernusc.ca and please include the word “PANI” in the subject line.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

I typically take on students through the Western work-study portal. Is this eligible with PANI?

- Yes! Think of PANI as a resource guide for students on current and potential opportunities for professional development. Many students are also not aware of the work-study program. This will be a great opportunity for students to utilize Western programs

The January 1st deadline for signing up for PANI has passed. Can I still join?

- Yes! This deadline was set as a primary assessment to determine if there is enough professional support for PANI, not as a hard deadline for supervisor enrollment

Can this opportunity only occur in-person on Western University Campus?

- Projects can be done remotely or external locations. If the work would need to be in-person, please note that in the question regarding the location in the sign-up form.

I do not have active projects/research at the moment. How would I still contribute to PANI?

- Supervisors can contribute to PANI in different ways. Perhaps you have graduate students who would like student assistants for their work. Alternatively, you can also contribute to PANI as a professional mentor listed for students. Feel free to also help spread the word that we are looking for supervisors to colleagues.

How are the participating students chosen for PANI?

- Once we gather enough names of supervisors to launch PANI, we will release a spreadsheet of the information you all listed in the sign-up form. Afterwards, it would be the student's responsibility to reach out to whoever interests them

I am not Black-identifying. Am I still eligible to participate in PANI as a staff or faculty member?

- Yes! We welcome and encourage all faculties and departments at Western to be a part of the initiative. We strive to create an inclusive and unified professional environment at Western between students, staff and faculty.