



## The international “flag banner” system at the University of Minnesota Job and Internship Fair

In an attempt to make the University of Minnesota Job and Internship Fair more welcoming and user-friendly for international students, the fair gives employers the opportunity to post a “Flag Banner” (pictured above) on their booth. The flag banner signals to international students that the employer is open to having a conversation about potential opportunities within their organization.

We hope that these banners will allow international students to interact more efficiently and confidently with employers at the UMN Job and Internship Fair.

### What should the flag banners mean for international students at the fair?

1. **You may want to prioritize your time so that you talk with employers displaying the banner first.** If you are a fit for the company and know that they hire candidates with your skill set, these banner-displaying companies could be strong, productive targets for you at the fair.
2. **There may be employers at the fair, willing to hire you, who do not display the banner** (they may be employers too small to know whether they are open to international students, or employers who do not want students only targeting them because they are open). You should still research employers before the fair, and approach any employer for whom you think you are an exceptional fit—and be ready to explain that fit. Even employers who believe they are not open to international students will sometimes make an exception for a student who is a great fit.
3. **You should not assume that all employers displaying the flag banner are open to hiring you specifically.** For example, some employers are willing to hire international candidates with a master’s in computer science or statistics, but not a BA in psychology. Or some employers may have one position that is open to an international candidate, and 4 that are not. Even if the employer displays the flag, you must do your homework and understand how your skills fit the employers’ needs.
4. **Understand that even if an employer is open to hiring international students, you must still *Compete to Win* the job!** There won’t be any employers at the fair with a quota of international students to hire (“I plan to hire 6 students from China” for example). If they display the flag, it means they are open to having a conversation with international students about opportunities within their organization, you still must demonstrate that you are better than all the other candidates—including the domestic candidates—at meeting the needs of the company.