**Serrala Program for AI Readiness & Knowledge (SPARK)**

*Igniting operational AI innovation across Serrala*

**AI Research & Development Internship Program**

**A SPARK Track Initiative**

**Program Summary**

The AI Research & Development Internship Program is a strategic track within the broader SPARK framework (Serrala Program for AI Readiness & Knowledge), focused on empowering interns through structured learning, hands-on experience, and guided collaboration. This 4-month unpaid internship provides participants with the opportunity to explore AI tools and techniques in active use within Serrala Treasury Services (STS) and to contribute to SPARK-aligned initiatives through guided learning and prototyping.

Interns will collaborate directly with members of the STS team to observe, engage with, and learn from ongoing projects in areas such as prompt engineering, process automation, chatbot development, and dashboard creation. Interns will then apply these learnings by prototyping their own tools—creating deliverables that demonstrate their fluency in operational AI concepts, workflows, and practical applications.

**Intern Learning Journey**

Interns will:

* Shadow STS team members working on active SPARK initiatives
* Learn foundational concepts related to large language models (LLMs), automation platforms, and AI-enhanced reporting
* Use curated learning resources from the SAKES repository, including:
  + Video tutorials
  + Certification program overviews
  + Prompt libraries
  + Glossaries and onboarding guides
* Participate in reviews and feedback cycles
* Apply learnings through self-driven prototypes
* Share outcomes through GitHub portfolios and LinkedIn posts

**Key Objectives**

* **Foundational Learning**: Interns will gain structured exposure to the most relevant operational AI tools and use cases.
* **Applied Prototyping**: Each intern will be encouraged to design and build at least one automation workflow, dashboard, or chatbot based on their learning and STS guidance.
* **Public Demonstration**: Interns will document and publish their projects on GitHub and post progress updates and learnings on LinkedIn.
* **Knowledge Feedback Loop**: Interns will act as early users of STS’s curated onboarding materials, helping evaluate the clarity, sequencing, and impact of certification guides and video content.

**Learning & Collaboration Areas**

1. **Prompt Engineering & LLM Fluency**
   * Tools: ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot
   * Activities: Study prompt libraries, observe STS usage, create sample prompt libraries
   * Deliverables: Custom prompt sets tailored to selected use cases
2. **Automation Workflows**
   * Tools: Zapier, Microsoft Power Automate
   * Activities: Analyze STS-built flows, prototype similar automations for new internal use cases
   * Deliverables: 1–2 documented automation flows with demo walkthroughs
3. **Chatbot Design**
   * Tools: Microsoft Copilot Studio
   * Activities: Learn from STS chatbot design work and create a prototype chatbot for internal FAQ use
   * Deliverables: One working chatbot prototype with setup guide
4. **Dashboards & Visualization**
   * Tools: Power BI, Tableau, React (optional)
   * Activities: Explore STS dashboards, contribute ideas, and build their own metric-focused dashboard
   * Deliverables: One operational dashboard shared via GitHub or internal preview
5. **Certifications & Training Review**
   * Tools: Coursera, YouTube, Microsoft Learn
   * Activities: Enroll in two certifications, write reviews, and complete summary reflections for inclusion in SAKES
   * Deliverables: Certification overviews + personal review write-ups

**Visibility & Recognition**

* Interns will:
  + Maintain a GitHub portfolio to showcase their prototypes
  + Publish at least 2 LinkedIn posts per month highlighting their learning journey
  + Receive a completion certificate titled "AI & Automation for Treasury Services at Serrala"

**Mentorship & Support**

* The internship is guided by STS team leads including Peter Wolf (Managing Director, STS; Advisor to the Board on Operational AI), Gilles Gilmart (Senior Manager), and Bart Borek (Manager), who will serve as mentors and project advisors.
* Interns will receive hands-on guidance, attend team syncs, and participate in peer reviews

**Outcome for Interns**

* Fluency in core operational AI technologies and use cases
* Improved visibility and professional credibility through active publishing
* Experience collaborating with enterprise teams on emerging AI strategy
* Completed certifications and public project portfolio
* Awarded a formal Certificate of Completion from Serrala recognizing successful participation in the AI Research & Development Internship Program, a SPARK initiative

**Success Indicators (Informal Evaluation Criteria)**

* While the internship is non-graded and non-compensated, the following indicators will be used informally to gauge engagement and learning outcomes:
* Completion of at least two certifications and associated review summaries
* Delivery of at least one functioning prototype (workflow, chatbot, or dashboard)
* Active GitHub portfolio with documented project outputs
* At least two LinkedIn posts reflecting learning and outcomes
* Participation in mentorship sessions and peer reviews

**Program Duration**

* **Timeline**: May–August 2025
* **Participants**: 3 unpaid interns (1 full-time, 2 part-time)
* **Format**: Remote collaboration with structured onboarding and weekly mentorship sessions

**Appendix: Legal Framework for Unpaid Internships**

In the U.S., it is permissible to offer unpaid internships to students or graduates if they meet the **Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)** criteria. The Department of Labor applies the "primary beneficiary test" with the following seven factors:

1. **Expectation of Compensation**: Internships must be clearly unpaid.
2. **Educational Training**: Interns receive training akin to academic environments.
3. **Ties to Formal Education (if applicable)**: Students may earn credit; graduates must gain significant learning value.
4. **Academic Accommodation (if applicable)**: Programs should align with academic calendars for students.
5. **Defined Duration**: Internships must be time-bound for learning purposes.
6. **Non-Displacement**: Interns cannot replace paid staff; the role must be educational.
7. **No Employment Guarantee**: Internships should not imply future employment.
8. **No Immediate Employer Advantage**: The employer should not derive an immediate advantage from the intern’s work.

**Additional Considerations**

* **Documentation**: All terms and educational objectives must be formally recorded. In addition, all internship activities will be tracked using individual learning plans and project templates provided by STS to ensure structure, compliance, and clear progress tracking.
* **Structure and Supervision**: The program must be well-defined, time-bound, and include experienced supervisors.
* **Compliance Oversight**: All onboarding must be executed in coordination with Serrala’s HR team following formal program approval.