

Palantir Path: Application

Priority will be given to applications received before Sunday, September 23, 2018 at 11:59PM PST. Anything submitted after this date will be processed after the final deadline, Sunday, October 7, 2018 at 11:59PM PST. Anything submitted after this deadline will not be considered.

All decisions will be made by November 31, 2018.

Palantir Path Application Instructions

Step One: Please prepare short essays (200-500 words) responding to each of the prompts on page 2. In your answers, we're interested to learn about how you approach problems, how you think about technology, and how you reflect on your personal growth. These are open-ended and challenging questions; we hope you find them as thought-provoking as we do.

Step Two: Please do not add your name anywhere on this document. Our evaluation process is anonymized to reduce the potential for unconscious bias. Please save this document as a PDF file and title it "Your First and Last Initials_Palantir_Path_Application". i.e. If your name is Jane Doe, you will title your application file "JD_Palantir_Path_Application".

Step Three: Please attach the following materials to your online application:

- this completed application form
- a copy of your resume
- a copy of your transcripts (unofficial transcripts are acceptable)

All of the above materials must be submitted in order for your application to be considered complete.

If you have questions, please email pathinternship@palantir.com.

Question 1

Word limit: 200-500 words

Describe someone in your life who is both extremely talented at something and also extremely difficult to work with.

As an opinion editor for *The Daily Princetonian*, Princeton's only daily newspaper, I am constantly working with our columnists to refine their arguments. Some of the columnists are able to come up with novel stances and support their beliefs in an articulate manner. However, despite the writing talent that many of the opinion columnists have, they can be resistant to feedback, even when it is constructive.

For example, last spring I worked with one of our award-winning senior columnists, who was writing an article on the inefficiencies of class scheduling. To support his claim, he analyzed all of the classes offered at Princeton, creating data points that showed how there was too much overlap in the times.

When I was making edits on his column, I told him that I found many of his sentences to be confusing. Rather than getting to the point, he would overcomplicate the argument, often times confusing his reader with unnecessary academic jargon. I offered suggestions on how to reframe some sentences. However, the columnist was unable to accept the edits that I made. He believed that his style was the only approach to writing a column and refused to consider feedback from others.

To solve this problem productively, I scheduled a one-on-one meeting with him where we went through each sentence meticulously. I relayed why I found the sentence confusing. Then, I gave him the ability to argue back when he disagreed, so that I could see his point of view as well. While this was a tedious process, this proved to be an effective measure, and we were able to compromise on the edits. In the end, his column still had the data points but presented them in an accessible fashion.

Overall, being an editor has taught me how to accept feedback. Instead of seeing it as an insult, I use feedback as a way to improve my performance. In academic and professional environments, I always try to be proactive and seek out my superiors for their evaluations. Furthermore, I also like to schedule pulse checks one to two weeks after to see if they think I have made improvements in the areas we discussed. Having a constant cycle for giving and receiving feedback has allowed me to develop in a more agile manner. I feel like I have a better grasp of myself and a clearer view of what my goals are.

Question 2

Word limit: 200-500 words

What have you previously worked on or participated in that was the most meaningful to you? What was your contribution to this project? This can be a job, personal project, event, or anything else.

In the fall of 2014 I started E3: Education Equals Empowerment, a local organization that runs after-school STEM workshops for girls in elementary school. I designed a series of hands-on activities, such as binary code bracelets and bridge-building competitions. They were meant to empower girls to take a greater interest in STEM through hands-on experiments and activities. E3 was my brainchild. The organization was inspired by both the lack of concrete STEM education in public schools at the elementary school level and the dwindling number of women in my upper-level STEM classes. I founded E3 as a way to get girls fired up about STEM and to teach them that they have a place in these fields just as much as their male peers do.

This work was meaningful to me because I got to expand it from just an idea to having it become a staple activity in six elementary schools, serving over one thousand girls in the greater Philadelphia area. The process involved meetings with school administrators, designing lesson plans for the students, and finding corporate sponsorships for the various events. At the end of it all, I got to interact with these students who were always enthused about the activities and watched their curiosity grow with each workshop. E3 allowed me to provide these students the opportunities in STEM I wish I had when I was younger.

Of course, founding the organization is something I am certainly proud of, but more than that, I have enjoyed passing it down to other members of the team after I moved to college. This has been important to me because it illustrates the network of supporting women that has emerged from the organization. Not only is E3 helping girls in elementary schools, but it is also convincing the high school volunteers to continue on and study STEM at college. At least for me, seeing the younger students' curiosity renewed my interest in STEM and convinced me to pursue a degree in computer science.

Question 3

Word limit: 200-500 words

Tell us about an opportunity that you took advantage of. How did you make the most of it?

This past summer I worked at the Partnership for Public Service, a D.C.-based nonprofit that focuses on making the federal government more effective and efficient. At the Partnership, I was a Research and Evaluation intern, supporting their work on customer experience and data analytics use in the government. Besides the projects assigned to me on my portfolio, I also was given the freedom to work on an intern project of any scope. This allowed me to develop my own interests—the intersection between technology and public policy—into a research topic.

During my time at the firm, I noticed that they were moving towards focusing on technology in the government. I wanted to use my intern project as an opportunity to create a deliverable that would have a long-lasting impact. Therefore, I chose to analyze the information technology divisions of the fifteen federal cabinet agencies. Because I wanted to strengthen my skills in multiple fields, I took it upon myself to complete all the parts of the project, which fell into different departments of the nonprofit.

To complete the project, I started by collecting the public datasets provided by itdashboard.gov and [Fedscope](https://www.fedscope.gov). From there, I analyzed the data, which included employment details as well as budgetary information. After I finished with the data, I created dashboards in Adobe InDesign for each of the agencies, presenting my findings in an easily comprehensible manner. In addition, I made interactive charts using Tableau. Finally, after completing the project, I gave a presentation to the entire research department.

From the start to finish of this project, I was not only able to enhance my quantitative analysis abilities through the data collection portion, but I was also able to work on my communication and leadership skills.

Even though I could have chosen a project that required less work and effort, I wanted to use this as a chance for professional development and to give back to the Partnership for Public Service. In the end, the dashboards I made will be given to Presidential transition teams in 2020 and will be used to help determine allocations for cabinet IT departments. Thus, I made a significant impact in the firm and on a larger federal level through the independent research that I did.