

GUIDE TO career fairs



ONLINE INTERACTIVE BOOK 



LYNXCONNECT[®]

INTERNSHIPS
STUDY ABROAD
RESEARCH
CAREER SERVICES

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Career Fair Goals

The goals of a career fair are to provide a space for employers and job seekers to meet, establish professional relationships, and discuss internship and job opportunities.

Why Go to a Career Fair?

While many students attend career fairs in search of specific internships or full-time jobs, it's also a great opportunity to learn about employers, explore professional paths, and practice networking. By attending a career fair, you're able to speak with representatives from multiple organizations during one event.

myth: "Job offers are made at the job fair."

truth:

Representatives almost never make an offer at a fair. However, they may offer to schedule an interview so be prepared with your calendar and available dates.



Before the Fair

myth: “You don’t need to prepare for a career fair.”

truth:

You are always welcome to attend the career fair. However, you will get more out of the fair if you come prepared.

Update Your Resume

Review our [Resume Guide](#) for tips on how to write a resume.

After revising your resume, have it reviewed at the Career Center.

- LynxConnect drop-in hours (Monday-Thursday, 1-3pm).
- Schedule an appointment through [Handshake](#) or call our front desk at 303-315-4000.
- [Employer Resume Review Sessions](#) to learn about resume formatting and have your resume reviewed.

Tip!

Look for our weekly Resume Pop-ups around campus! Dates and locations can be found in Handshake.

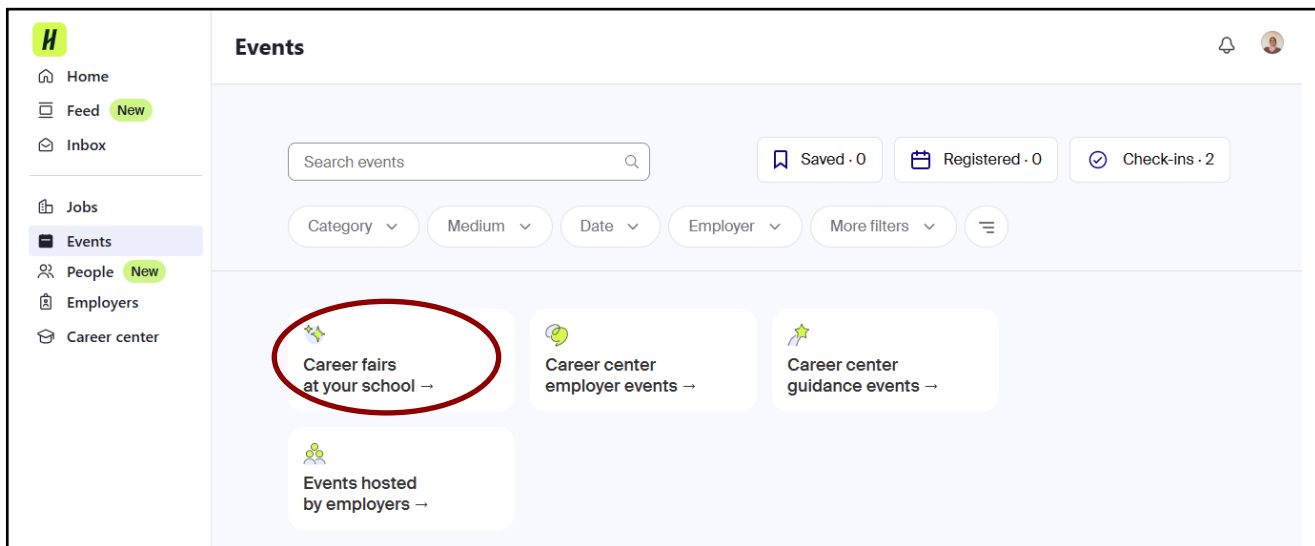
Bring plenty of paper copies of your resume. If appropriate for your industry, update your portfolio and ensure online links are accessible. Digital versions of resumes are frequently requested, so have a copy on your phone as well.



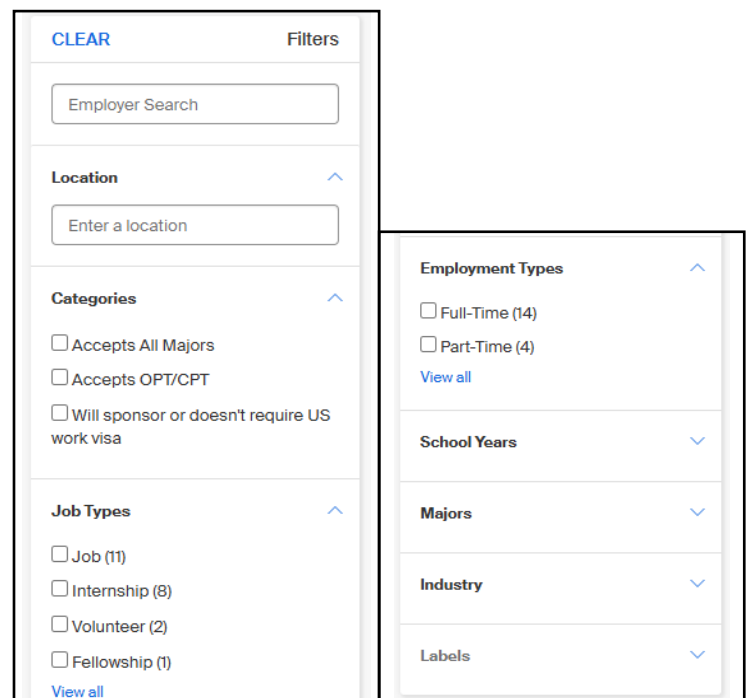
Research

Investigate employers coming to the career fair by using their website, articles, social media profiles, LinkedIn, etc., and prepare thoughtful questions that cannot be easily answered by looking at their website.

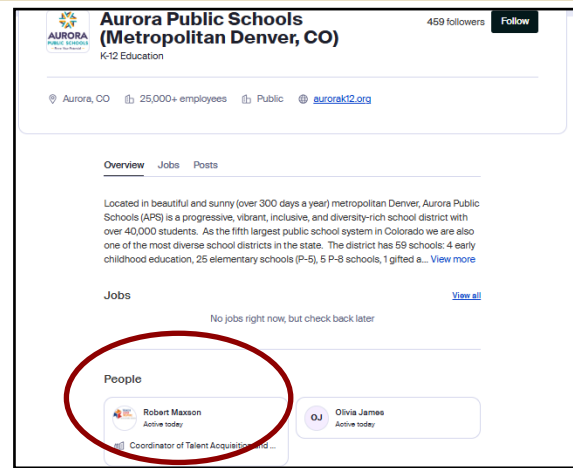
A wide variety of employers participate in the career fair, including large corporations, small businesses, and non-profit organizations. To locate the list of employers attending the fair, go to Handshake and click the “Events” tab on the left. Click “Career fairs at your school” and see when career fairs are going on at CU Denver.



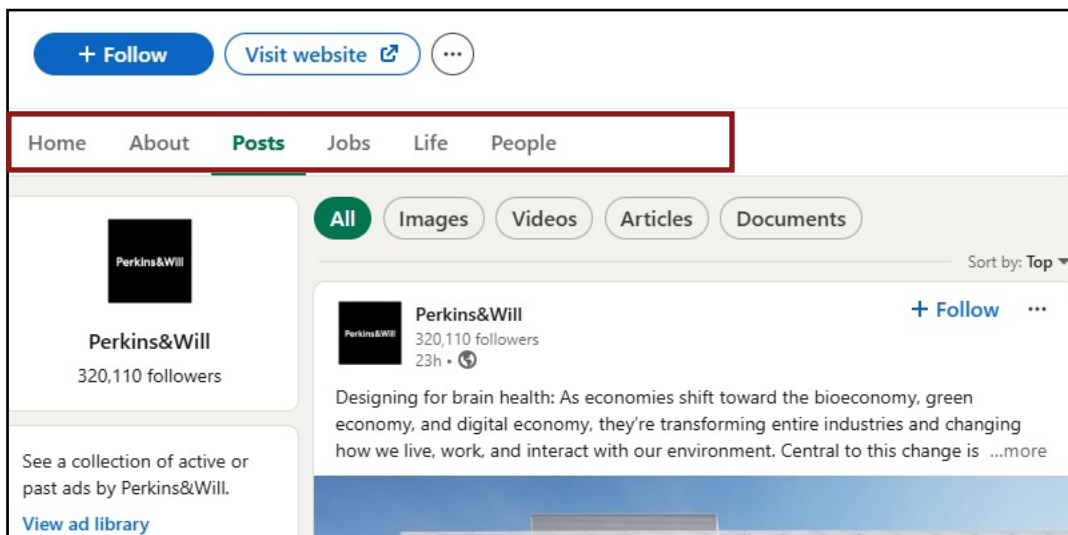
You can narrow down companies by adjusting your preferences in the filter section. Search by your major, job type, employment type, school year, and more to find an employer that fits your requirements.



Learn which recruiters will be at the fair by selecting an employer attending the event and navigating to the “People” section.



Explore various sections of an employer’s LinkedIn profile to gain valuable insights. In addition to reviewing job postings under the “Jobs” tab, you can use the “About” section to learn more about the employer’s mission, values, and culture. The “Posts” tab offers updates on recent news, initiatives, and events, which can help you understand the employer’s current focus. Browse through the “People” tab to see employees’ roles, connect with recruiters, and find potential networking opportunities.



Ask Thoughtful Questions

Asking good questions is an easy way to start a conversation. It shows that you’re prepared and motivated, and their answers can give you new insights. Have a short list of questions ready about organization culture, professional development opportunities, mentorship programs, or anything else you want to learn about.

Take the opportunity to ask questions that give you a deeper sense of what it would be like to work there. Below is a list of potential questions to consider asking to get a better understanding of their culture.

Employer-related questions:

- Do you have regular hiring cycles, or do you post openings year-round?
- What do you like about this [Employer]?
- What opportunities for growth are there at [Employer]?

Tip!

If a representative does not know how to answer a question, ask who they would recommend you speak with?

Role-specific questions:

- In a typical day, what does [Job Title] do?
- What does someone need to be successful as a [Position] at [Employer]?
- I recently read an article about [Event, Announcement, or Project]. What was it like to be a part of that?

You may have time to ask only 1-2 questions. So ask your top questions first.



Identify Favorite Employers

In the spaces below, list 3-5 employers you would like to connect with while at the fair, the position you are interested in, questions you have for them, and their mission and values. Narrow your questions down to the top 2-3 questions you have per employer.

IDENTIFY FAVORITE EMPLOYERS

 **print these pages!**

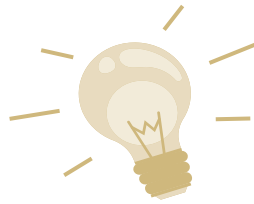
ORGANIZATION NAME	JOB/INTERNSHIP TITLE(S)	TOP 2- 3 QUESTIONS	MISSION AND VALUES
<i>Ex: Perkins and Will</i>	<i>Ex: Architecture Internship</i>	<i>Ex: What are some of the most exciting projects your firm is currently working on? How does your firm support the development of its interns?</i>	<i>Ex: They design spaces in which to live, learn, work, play, and heal with a commitment to sustainability and serving their community.</i>

Great! Now that you've picked out some companies you would like to meet, and practiced writing questions, let's work on an introduction!

Prepare a Personal Introduction

Think of a brief (about 30 seconds) way of introducing yourself, getting across a key point or two, and making a connection with someone.

Example: “Hi, I’m Isabella Martinez, a 4th-year Architecture major. Through my design studio classes, I’ve gained hands-on experience in 3D modeling programs and sustainable design. I’ve brought my portfolio to showcase my projects. I’m really interested in Perkins and Will because of your commitment to sustainable design and would love to learn more about your Architecture Internship. Could you tell me more about...?”



This can also be called an elevator pitch. It’s called an elevator pitch because it takes roughly the amount of time you’d spend riding an elevator with someone.

Here are steps to help you write a personal introduction.

Introduce Yourself

A quick intro (name, year in school, relevant major/minor, relevant certifications):

Plans for the future (“I’m interested in a career in...”):

A step you’ve taken toward your career goals (“Last summer, I interned at...” or “On campus, I am a member of...” or “Through a group course project I...”):

How the employer/position fits into your plan and benefits the employer (“This summer I’d like to work for you because... and I can contribute through...” or “I am interested in this specific position because..., and my experience...”):

Now put it all together.

My Introduction:

Rather than trying to memorize your intro, remember your key talking points. You’ll sound more natural.



Day of the Career Fair

Dress The Part

Business casual is your best bet. You don't need to wear a suit, but you should absolutely skip sweats or athleisure. And wear comfortable shoes!

Don't know what to wear? Check out the employer's website to get an idea of their typical attire, and then aim to dress a bit more professional than what you see.

Need affordable professional attire? LynxConnect offers a donation-based resource called the Career Closet that allows students to pick out some professional attire to keep for free each semester.



Strengthen Connections/Network

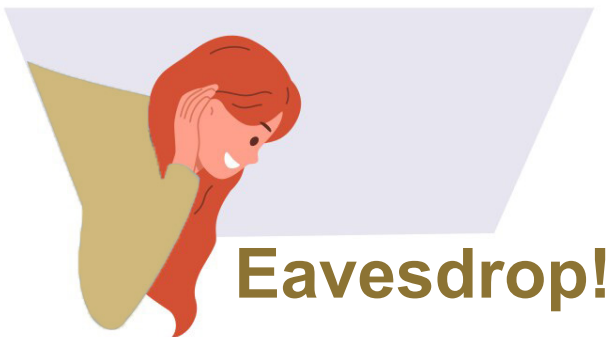
Request the recruiter's contact information or business card and ask to be connected with someone who works in your area of interest for an informational interview. Don't forget to follow up with a thank you email after the fair.

Tip!

Don't know what an informational interview is? Check out our guide on [networking and informational interviewing](#).

Come Prepared and Take Notes

Bring a notebook or printouts with information about the employers you're planning to meet. As a reminder, bring several hard copies of your resume and bring your questions list. Jot down each hiring manager's contact information and notes about your conversation to make for a personalized follow-up!



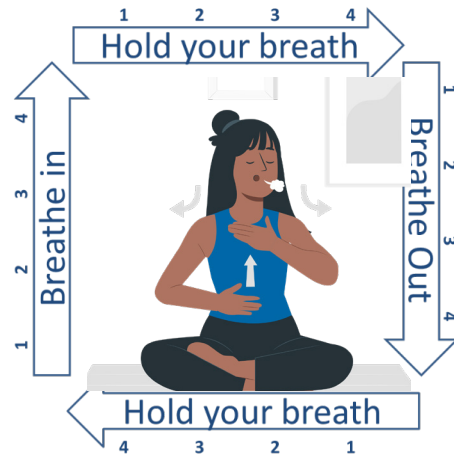
If you're still early in your career, or you are feeling intimidated by the career fair format, you can still find value in listening. As you approach employers, listen in on other conversations. How do other students introduce themselves? What is their body language conveying? Who seems to be having the most success? You can use these observations as you get more comfortable at these events.

Tip!

You may want to practice approaching 1 or 2 other employers before initiating contact with your top employer. You can practice your introduction or approaching employers with a career counselor at the Career Center.

Nervous?

If you're getting nervous, try square breathing to calm your nerves. Breathe in while counting to four slowly, hold your breath for four counts, then slowly exhale through your mouth for four counts, hold your breath for four counts and repeat. Try this when you're feeling stressed or overwhelmed.



During the career fair, LynxConnect sets up a quiet room in the Wellness Center that includes coloring books, markers, and fidget toys. This is a space where students can take a minute away from the crowded room and regroup before having to join a large chaotic environment. The location of the room can change, so ask LynxConnect staff at the fair where the quiet room will be.

If you just want a quick break to grab some snacks and water, you can go to the student lounge. This space is a curtained off portion of the gym so it's not as quiet and closed off as the quiet room but still allows you to take a break. Take this time to review your notes and prepare for more networking!



What to Do After the Career Fair

Send a Thank You Email

If the recruiter shared their contact info, plan to send a follow-up email within 24 hours. Begin your email by thanking them for their time and telling them you enjoyed meeting them. Then, include something specific that you discussed or learned. Finally, let them know what next steps you're taking, such as applying for a job.

Subject: Thank You for Your Time at the Career Fair

Dear [recruiter's name],

I wanted to take a moment to thank you for taking the time to speak with me at the Career Fair at CU Denver yesterday. It was a pleasure meeting you and learning more about the exciting opportunities at Perkins and Wills.

I particularly enjoyed our discussion about the company's innovative approach to sustainability. It was inspiring to hear about your team's commitment to creating sustainable designs.

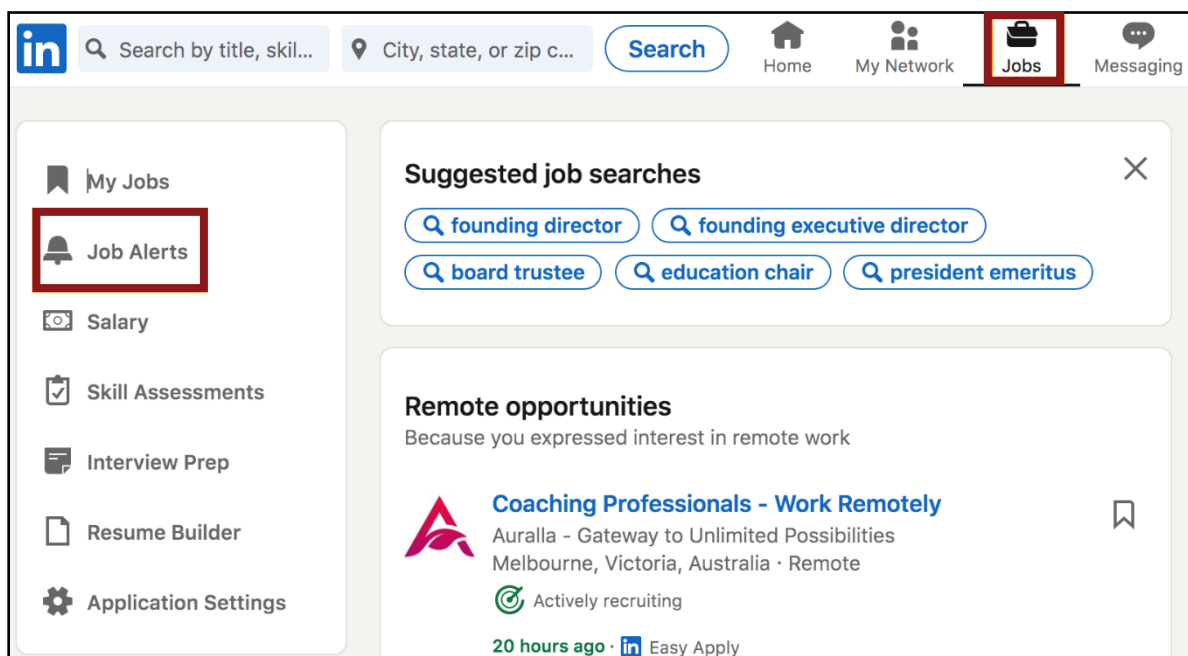
Because of our conversation, I plan to submit my application for the architecture internship on your careers page. I am excited about the potential to contribute to your team. I look forward to the opportunity to further discuss how my skills and experience align with the goals and values of Perkins and Wills.

Thank you again for your time and consideration. I look forward to staying in touch!

Best regards,
[your name]

Follow Employers on Handshake and LinkedIn

If you connected with an employer, go to their Handshake and/or LinkedIn page and click “Follow”. You’ll receive notifications when they post new jobs and events. Plus, when the employer views your profile, they can see that you follow them. Reference the screenshot below to enable job alerts so that you are notified about potential opportunities that match your interests.



Apply to an Open Job or Internship

If you discussed a specific opportunity with an employer, get ready to send your application. If you didn't discuss a job, see what jobs they have posted on Handshake and apply to any that interest you. Before you apply, review the LynxConnect [resume and cover letter guides](#). If you have any questions, make an appointment with a career counselor or peer advisor through [Handshake](#). If you need a little time to get your application ready, save the job you like so you'll get a notification to apply before the deadline. But do not use quick apply options that will simply link your online profile or send your general resume. Write a resume tailored to each unique position for your best chance at an interview.

Congrats!



At LynxConnect, we're here to support you throughout the employment process!

Schedule an appointment in [Handshake](#) to talk with a professional about your cover letter.

Have some quick questions or would like faster assistance from a peer instead? Choose "LynxConnect - Peer Career Advisor" in Handshake for appointment options.

need more help?

CHECK OUT THESE RESOURCES:

CU Denver Career Center

Tivoli Student Union, Suite 439 | 303-315-4000 | ucdenver.edu/lynxconnect/career-center

CU Denver Writing Center

Corner of 12th St. & Larimer St. (CU Denver) First Floor

(303) 315-7355 | writing.center@ucdenver.edu | <https://clas.ucdenver.edu/writing-center/>