



WE'RE HIRING

Wild Card Internship Contest – Bring Us the Project You'd Build

LOCATION	mHUB, Chicago, IL on-site, with occasional travel to nearby partner facilities
START DATE	January 2027 or Summer 2027
DURATION	3–6 months (6 months preferred)
COMPENSATION	Paid internship (rate based on experience)
ELIGIBILITY	PhD, master's, or junior/senior undergraduate students, recent graduates, or postdocs in robotics, mechanical or electrical engineering, computer science, chemistry, physics, or related

About Fluid Reality

Fluid Reality builds hardware and control systems that allow human teleoperators to feel what robots feel through gloves and controllers at high resolution. Our advanced haptic feedback actuators use electroosmosis to directly transform electrical energy into mechanical work (pressure and flow). It's a fundamentally new actuation method, unlike electric motors, piezoelectrics, or pneumatics.

We spun out of patented Carnegie Mellon University research at the Future Interfaces Group, and are the first to bring this technology to market. A stack 500 microns thick generates tens of kPa and millimeter-scale displacement at ~10 mW per pixel. We are a small team of PhDs and engineers at **mHUB**, Chicago's hardtech innovation center and one of TIME's Best Incubators & Accelerators of 2026, where we work within an extensive prototyping and testing lab among a thriving community of 300+ hardtech startups and businesses. We manufacture in house and ship hardware globally, and we are moving into a multi-year, well-funded product program.

The Opportunity

Most internships hand you a project. This one asks you to bring the thing that you're passionate about. In early 2027 we will build, test, and deliver next-generation haptic gloves to real operators dexterously controlling robot hands. If you are unusually good at something, we probably have a problem that needs it. Before you start, we'll shape your pitch into a concrete deliverable: a working rig, model, tool, process, or prototype the team keeps using after you leave.

Examples of what a wild card could own (not a limit):

- **Perception & rendering:** turning robot tactile data into touch that feels right

- **Hand tracking:** bend sensors, IMUs, or vision inside a haptic glove
 - **Test automation & manufacturing:** testing rigs, vision inspection, new manufacturing techniques
 - **Modeling & AI:** multiphysics or machine-learning surrogate models of our actuators
 - **Materials & chemistry:** elastomers, films, or surface treatments
 - **Something we haven't thought of:** tell us
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Qualifications

- Student, recent graduate, or postdoc in engineering, physics, chemistry, materials, computer science, robotics, or related
- **A maker's record:** you have built something new on your own initiative (a research project, competition robot, open-source tool, lab setup, or side project), and you can show that it worked
- Unusual depth in at least one area, and the ability to scope a problem and work independently
- AI coding and agents: especially background research, test scripts, plots, and presentation
- Comfort with rapid design-build-test iterations in a fast moving startup team

BONUS:

- Hands-on hardware, electronics, or lab experience; Python, C/C++, embedded, or ML
 - Haptics, robotics, human-machine interaction, microfluidics, or electrochemistry
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What You'll Gain

- Ownership of a real project on a new actuator class, used by teleoperators controlling robots
- Direct mentorship from the founders and technical leads during the push from prototype to product
- Life in Chicago: a world-class city on the lake, without coastal costs
- An ideate-design-build-test cycle on a novel technology to point to for the rest of your career
- Strong interns will be considered for full-time roles

Application Process

Please send the following to hiring@fluidreality.com:

- CV / résumé with links to a portfolio, code, video, or papers
- **Your wild card pitch (≤ 1 page or ≤ 5 slides):** the project you'd own for 3–6 months, why it matters to us, and why you're the one to do it. We are looking for clear thinking, capability, and fit above all. Please don't send us your startup ideas or secret plans, we don't want them.
- **One thing you made that you're proud of:** a photo, a video, or a story about something you built, what tried to kill it, and what you changed
- Availability (start date and duration)