

RTI University Scholars Program

Overview

RTI International is one of the world’s leading research institutes, dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice.

Since 2014, the [RTI University Scholars Program](#)¹ has provided partial support for distinguished academic researchers to spend scholarly leave time at RTI, actively collaborating with our experts. The ideal Scholar is a tenured or research-track faculty member at the Associate Professor level or higher with a commitment to collaboration and a strong research record in a field that aligns with RTI’s [practice areas](#) and [services and capabilities](#).

The program’s goal is to foster collaboration and catalyze opportunities for externally funded, joint projects in the future.

This year, the RTI University Scholars Program is open to faculty from Duke University and the University of North Carolina’s 16 university campuses. RTI provides a stimulating environment for individual and collaborative research. Scholars are expected to serve most of their residency at our headquarters in North Carolina’s Research Triangle Park. Scholars should plan to be on RTI’s campus two to three days per week during their residency period.

RTI particularly encourages researchers from traditionally underrepresented groups to apply.

Key Dates for the 2020-2021 Application Cycle

16 October 2019	Call for Applications Released
9 January 2020	Expression of Interest Submission Deadline
24 February 2020	Notification to Applicants
30 March 2020	Full Proposal Submission Deadline
24 April 2020	Notification to Applicants

Support

The RTI University Scholar’s Program covers half of each selected Scholar’s salary and fringe, as well as other direct costs (OTCs) including travel, supplies, publication costs, up to \$5,000. OTCs that exceed the stated threshold will be reviewed for approval by the RTI Collaborator’s host unit. Furthermore, requests for additional RTI internal support must be reviewed and approved by the RTI Collaborator’s leadership, as this would be the responsibility of his/her unit.

The period of performance may begin as early as September 2020.

¹ RTI University Scholars Program: <https://www.rti.org/rti-university-scholars-program>

RTI does not cover F&A costs and the RTI University Scholars Program will not cover the cost of graduate student stipends or tuition.

Process

Expression of Interest (EOI)

The EOI must be submitted as a PDF document via the [RTI University Scholars Program Application Portal](#)² on or before **5 p.m. ET on 9 January 2020**. To be fully considered, the EOI consist of the following elements:

- A two-page description describing the proposed collaborative research project, including
 - The proposed project's title;
 - The name and title of RTI Collaborator(s);
 - The proposed duration of the residency;
 - The proposed project's relevance to RTI's practice area(s) and/or services and capabilities, purpose, objectives, activities, deliverables, and expected results;
 - Specific sources of external funding that will be targeted for future proposals.
- A letter of support from the applicant's department chair;
- The applicant's CV (no limit on length).

There is not a budget requirement for the EOI.

EOIs will be reviewed and ranked by business and research leaders, with the University Collaboration Office (UCO) providing guidance and oversight of the review process. EOIs will be selected based on the following criteria:

Intellectual merit of the proposed activity:

- Alignment to RTI's practice areas and/or services and capabilities.
- Impact of the proposed research program on the advancement of interdisciplinary research.
- Qualifications and track record of the applicant.
- Likelihood that the proposed research project will lead to large-scale research support by government agencies, corporations, industrial consortia or foundations.
- The degree to which the proposed research project advances scientific stature.

Project fit and feasibility:

- How well the proposed research program advances RTI's strategic research areas.
- Likelihood that the proposed research program will be successful.

Full proposals:

Applicants will be notified by **24 February 2020** whether they are invited to submit a full proposal.

If invited, full proposals must be submitted via the [RTI University Scholars Program Application Portal](#) on or before **5.00 p.m. ET on 30 March 2020**.

² RTI University Scholars Program Application Portal: <https://universityscholars.rti.org/>

Full proposals must be organized as follows, and items 3-5 (below) consolidated into **one PDF document** that is uploaded via the [RTI University Scholars Program Application Portal](#)³.

1. Proposal Cover Page (online form): Please complete the online form, *Step 1: Your Information*, of the [RTI University Scholars Program Application Portal](#). Included on the form should be:
 - The project title;
 - The proposed period of performance (start/end dates) and total months;
 - The applicant, university administrators, and RTI Collaborator’s contact information;
 - The RTI practice area(s) and/or services and capabilities to which the project aligns; and,
 - A 200-word (maximum) synopsis of the proposed research project that is appropriate for a broad faculty readership.

2. Budget (online template): Please complete the online template, *Step 2: Budget Proposal*, with justifications for specific expenditures, if necessary.

Note: RTI **does not** cover F&A costs. The RTI University Scholars Program **will not** cover the cost of graduate student stipends or tuition; however, students may participate in the [RTI Internship Program](#).

3. Project Description (up to 8 pages): The project description should identify how the proposed research project aligns with RTI’s practice areas and/or services and capabilities, addresses an existing research gap, and advances scientific stature. It must clearly outline the scope, objectives, and measurable deliverables to gauge success throughout the period of performance, as well as the potential for external funding and ongoing collaboration.

The description should include enough detail such that reviewers can evaluate the appropriateness and feasibility of the proposed activity. Please keep in mind that not all reviewers will be experts in every proposed field of study, and thus project descriptions should be written for a broad audience.

4. Letter of Support from the RTI Collaborator(s): The letter should reflect enthusiastic endorsement of the applicant and project. It should describe the nature of the relationship (new or existing); identify the domain area and field contributions; highlight the potential for scientific stature.

5. CV: No limit on the length. Include experience securing funding as a PI.

Full proposals will be reviewed and ranked by executive, business, and research leaders. The UCO will provide guidance and oversight of the review process. Rankings of full proposals will be based on the following criteria:

Intellectual merit of the proposed activity:

- Alignment to RTI’s practice areas and/or services and capabilities.
- Impact of the proposed research program on the advancement of interdisciplinary research.
- Qualifications and track record of the applicant.

³ RTI University Scholars Program Application Portal: <https://universityscholars.rti.org>

- Likelihood that the proposed research project will lead to large-scale research support by government agencies, corporations, industrial consortia or foundations.
- The degree to which the proposed research project advances scientific stature.

Project fit and feasibility:

- How well the proposed research program advances RTI's strategic research areas.
- Likelihood that the proposed research program will be successful.
- Synergy among the applicant and the RTI Collaborator(s) to enable research of a scope and complexity commensurate with the scale of RTI University Scholars Program support.
- Clear description and feasibility of the deliverables and metrics.
- Reasonableness of the budget.
- Likelihood for long-term sustainability of the research project via extramural funding.

Applicants will be notified of the status of their application on or before **24 April 2020**.

Additional Information

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