RTI University Scholars Program
Phase I: Expression of Interest

Overview

Since 2014, the RTI University Scholars Program has provided support for distinguished academic researchers to spend scholarly leave time at RTI International to actively collaborate with our experts. The program’s goals are to foster collaboration, build scientific stature, and catalyze opportunities for future externally funded, joint projects.

This will be the second year in which the program will strengthen RTI’s commitment to centering equity in research. By situating equity at the forefront of our work, we seek to develop rigorous and inclusive studies and evidence-based solutions to address global systemic inequities and advance RTI’s mission.

The RTI University Scholars Program, administered by the University Collaboration Office (UCO), will prioritize applications for the 2022–2023 academic year from tenured or research-track faculty members at the Associate Professor level or higher with a commitment to collaboration and a research project related to racial and social equity—including climate, economic development, educational, energy, environmental, health, and justice—and policy.

The RTI University Scholars Program is open to faculty from Duke University and the University of North Carolina’s 16 university campuses. Applicants are encouraged to partner with RTI staff to co-create a collaborative research project.

Support

The RTI University Scholars Program covers half of each selected scholar’s salary and fringe, as well as other direct costs—including supplies, publications, and other costs.

Note that RTI does not cover Facilities and Administrative costs, and the RTI University Scholars Program does not cover graduate student stipends or tuition costs.

Key Dates for the 2022–2023 Application Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2021</th>
<th>2022</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday November 17</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wednesday January 26 by 11:59 p.m. Eastern Time (ET)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Request for Proposals released</td>
<td>Deadline to submit Expression of Interest</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Wednesday February 23</strong></td>
<td><strong>Wednesday March 28 by 11:59 p.m. ET</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Notification to all applicants</td>
<td>Deadline for invited applicants to submit Full Proposals</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Friday April 29</strong></td>
<td><strong>Friday April 29</strong></td>
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<td>Notification to applicants who submitted Full Proposals</td>
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*The period of performance may begin as early as September 2022.*
Process

Interested applicants are encouraged to notify 
Amy Vargas-Tonsi in the UCO and their university’s research office.

Applicants are encouraged to peruse RTI’s website to familiarize themselves with researchers working in the same or similar space. Applicants who need help networking with RTI staff should contact Ms. Vargas-Tonsi with a brief abstract of their research interest and a biosketch. A list of former and current RTI University Scholars is available on the program’s website.

An Expression of Interest (EOI) should be developed in consultation and coordination with RTI collaborator(s).

Expression of Interest

EOIs must be digitally submitted using the online form no later than 11:59 p.m. ET on Wednesday, January 26. The EOI does not have a budget requirement. To be fully considered, the EOI must contain the following elements:

1. **EOI Online Form**
   a. **Applicant Information:** Name, university affiliation, email address, and faculty webpage
   b. **Institutional Information:** Department name, department chair’s name and email address, and any other departmental contacts
   c. **Proposal Details:** Proposed project title, alignment to RTI’s practice area(s) and/or services and capabilities, proposed RTI collaborator name(s), and proposed start and end dates
   d. **PDF Upload:** The PDF must include (1) the EOI, (2) a letter of support from the applicant’s department chair, and (3) the applicant’s curriculum vitae. Please see the next column for additional details about these three components.

2. **PDF Upload:** The PDF will be submitted as part of the online form and must include the following items:
   a. **EOI:** This document about the proposed collaborative research project is limited to two pages and must include the following:
      i. Purpose, objectives, activities, deliverables, and expected results of the proposed project
      ii. Discussion of the proposed project’s relevance to racial and social equity—broadly defined—and policy that leverages RTI’s practice area(s) and/or services and capabilities
      iii. Evidence that the applicant has current and/or prior relevant experience as a researcher and collaborator
      iv. Reference to specific sources of external funding that will be targeted for future proposals
   b. **Letter of Support from the Applicant’s Department Chair**
   c. **Curriculum Vitae (No Page Limit) of Applicant:** This document should reflect experience securing funding as a principal investigator or co-principal investigator.

Expression of Interest Evaluation

RTI business and research leaders will review and rank EOIs based on the following criteria:

- Impact of the proposed research program on the advancement of racial and social equity—broadly defined—and policy
- Academic qualifications as well as research and publication track record of the applicant
- Degree to which the proposed research project advances scientific stature
- Alignment to RTI’s practice areas and/or services and capabilities
- Evidence that the proposed research could attract large-scale research support by government agencies, corporations, industrial consortia, or foundations
- Likelihood that the proposed research project will be successful

Invited Full Proposals

Applicants will be notified by Wednesday, February 23, about whether they will be invited to submit a Full Proposal.