RISE Grant Proposal Guidelines   **Updated 9-29-25**

What is a RISE grant?

Randolph's Innovative Student Experience (RISE) grants provide the opportunity for students to pursue their unique passions. Every Randolph College undergraduate student may apply for a grant of up to $2,000 for research, creative work, experiential learning, and other scholarly pursuits.

Students have used the RISE award to travel to singing competitions, purchase cancer cells for biological research, travel to the U.S. Virgin Islands to study water samples, research antioxidants in fresh fruit, and study abroad. For many students, this grant provides more than just money—it gives them an invaluable experience.

All RISE projects fit one of the following categories: independent study/research, senior capstone, internship, summer research program, enhancing a class project, domestic travel (such as attending a conference or traveling for research), or study abroad.

An *internship* is a learning experience offered in a professional setting that provides meaningful, practical work related to a student's field of study or career interests. Independent study is a credit-bearing course with a faculty mentor that appears on an academic transcript. *Study abroad* is defined as an organized academic program or course of study that is sponsored by Randolph College or a nationally or internationally accredited program.

If the RISE experience is not academic credit-bearing, then it must have the components of an academic experience that include a learning component, an experiential component, and a reflection component, and those must be described in the essay. The student may register for a one credit Independent Study overseen by a faculty mentor to qualify them to apply for RISE funding for which they are otherwise ineligible.

What can a RISE grant be used for?

- **Registrations.** Conferences, program fees, admittance to performances, museums and archives, etc.

- **VISAs and passports.**

- **Lodging and taxes.** For conferences and short-term travel related to a project, applicants are expected to find a reasonable rate for lodging. For general guidelines on cost of lodging, see https://www.gsa.gov/travel-resources. If living away from home or school during an internship, applicants are expected to find a long-term solution such as living with friends or family, or finding a sublet and paying reasonable rent. In order to receive reimbursement for rental/lease fees, grant recipients must provide a legal lease agreement, signed by both lessee and lessor. Lease payments will not be made to family members.

- **Food.** When staying in lodging without access to kitchen facilities, the maximum allowance is $45/day. If lodging has access to kitchen facilities, then the allowance is $20/day for the purchase of groceries for food preparation; this does *not* include fast food, meal delivery services and fees, and restaurant purchases. If a student is living on campus with a meal plan, funds for food are not provided. ***Please note: alcoholic beverages are not reimbursed.***

- **Supplies for daily living.** Students traveling to a new city or country for an extended period of time may need to purchase items such as toiletries or basic kitchen supplies.

- **Travel.** To get from home to the destination and back or travel directly connected to the project. This category includes:
  - Car rentals
  - Commercial fares (planes, buses, trains, etc.)
  - Personal vehicle mileage reimbursement (.63 per mile)
  - Parking
  - Local transportation (Ubers, cabs, subways, etc.)

- **Project equipment and supplies.** Funding may be requested to purchase equipment and supplies that are not available at Randolph College. Be sure to indicate who keeps equipment after the project (the student or department) and explain that this has been discussed and agreed upon by all relevant parties when the RISE proposal is submitted for consideration. This category may include:
  - Supplies and materials (plants, inks, craft items)
  - Media

- ○ Software
- ○ Hardware (see **note about the purchase of hardware** below)
- ○ Third-party services fees (e.g., portal access, mTurk, etc)

A note about the purchase of hardware. Any single hardware equipment purchase should not exceed $1200 unless justified. If a student demonstrates that the purchase of a **computer, digital camera,** etc. is essential to their project, they may apply for RISE funds but are limited to $1200 per item. The difference will be the student's responsibility (i.e., out of pocket.)

What CAN'T a RISE grant be used for?

- **Randolph College tuition (including summer courses) or general College fees**

- **Required textbooks covered by other forms of financial aid.** Please note that supplemental texts for courses of study (when not covered by other student aid) or books related to a project are eligible.

- **Test fees.** Although students may use RISE funds to complete training or professional development leading to a certificate or license that complements their academic program, students may not use RISE funds to pay for a standalone exam.

- **Expenses related to job searches.**

- **Individual graduate school application fees.**

- **Over-the-counter medications.**

- **Souvenirs.**

Please also note that there is no retroactive funding. If the money has already been committed or spent, it is not appropriate to apply for RISE.

Who is Eligible for a RISE grant?

All full time undergraduate students with a GPA of 2.0 or greater are eligible to apply for a RISE grant of up to $2,000. Students may apply at any time to use a RISE grant for projects beginning in their second year. If a student has transferred to Randolph, they must earn a minimum of 12 credit hours at Randolph before applying for a RISE grant. Students transferring away from Randolph the semester of or immediately following their RISE-funded project will be required to return the RISE funds.

Students are eligible to receive a RISE grant only once, regardless of the amount awarded. The only exception is if an initial award was less than the full $2000, then the

student may apply a second time to access the remainder of the initial award for the purpose of presenting at a conference.

Randolph graduates who did not receive any RISE funds as an undergraduate student and who have matriculated into one of Randolph's graduate programs are eligible to apply for $500 to fund a project during their graduate program. Graduate students must be in good academic standing when they apply for funds. All RISE guidelines apply.

When do I submit a RISE grant application?

Students must submit a RISE proposal a minimum of four weeks before the need to expend funds for the project. Applications are not reviewed over winter and summer breaks; if access to the grant is needed during break periods, the application must be submitted two weeks before the end of Session 2 or Session 4 so that it may be reviewed in time.

Students must arrange for a faculty or staff sponsor before submitting the application and should share their proposals with both their sponsor and their faculty academic advisor. The sponsor and advisor will be emailed a copy of the proposal when it is forwarded to the Student Scholarship Committee for review.

How do I apply for a RISE grant?

Here is the checklist of all of the required components for the grant proposal (all templates are available at: http://www.randolphcollege.edu/research/rise/apply/.

1. Google form application

2. Essay - using the template provided on the RISE web site
Be sure to ask your advisor to proofread and/or help edit essays before it is submitted.

3. Project timeline - using the template provided (**required** for research, independent study, enhancing a class project, and internships). Refer to the example document of timelines for guidance.

4. Budget Form - using the template provided on the RISE web site linked above.

5. Unofficial Transcript (from the student portal). If there is a hold on the student account, then contact the Registrar's office and request a copy of the transcript be provided to the Center for Student Research.

If applicable:
6a: If the project is an internship, internship documentation must be included in the application. If not a Randolph College internship, documentation from the sponsoring agency or internship supervisor must be provided detailing what work will be done and how it relates to the student's course of study.

6b: Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Institutional Animal Care and Use Committee (IACUC) approvals must be approved before RISE funds are spent. Documentation of full approval from the appropriate board/committee should be sent to lbcarrera@randolphcollege.edu.

6c. International students should contact the Business Office to determine their tax status **prior to** RISE grant submission. Tax implications will not affect the College's decision to make RISE awards, but documentation from the Business Office indicating tax eligibility must be submitted prior to RISE funds being spent.

All questions regarding RISE should be addressed to Luisa Carrera, Administrative Coordinator for the Center for Student Research (lbcarrera@randolphcollege.edu). Questions/clarifications may be escalated occasionally to the Director of the Center, Dr. Crystal Howell, or the Student Scholarship Committee (SSC) and may take up to two weeks before a policy determination is made.

When/how is a RISE grant approved?
All communication regarding RISE grants will be through Randolph College email. RISE grants are reviewed by the Student Scholarship Committee (SSC). The Student Scholarship Committee may request edits or clarifications to proposals. If acknowledgements to SSC revision requests and/or questions are not received within a week, then re-submission of the entire proposal will be necessary.

POST-AWARD REQUIREMENTS AND STIPULATIONS

RISE recipients will not be reimbursed for purchases made prior to the approval of their grant request (retroactive reimbursements are unacceptable).

Applying for the RISE grant indicates students have read and agreed to the reimbursement process and that they agree to submit a final report and present their project at a Randolph College event. In cases when a student's financial constraints make reimbursement problematic, some purchase(s) may be arranged through the Center for Student Research. Prior purchase is not feasible for food expenses and only occasionally for lodging, depending on the hotel/site.

Up to ten percent of the RISE grant award may be reallocated to cover purchases outside of the scope of the originally proposed project budget *if the request is made in advance* by the RISE recipient's advisor via the Center for Student Research.

If RISE grant recipients do not complete the project as stated in their proposal, they will be held responsible for repaying the College any expended funds. In the event of such an occurrence, the amount will be billed to their student account. Exceptions will be considered for extenuating circumstances.

If Randolph College policies or the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia are violated during a RISE funded experience or project, the RISE grant is forfeited and the funds must be returned to Randolph College.

Reimbursement, Final Report, Campus Presentation

Expense Information
- Reimbursement may be requested at the time of purchase(s) and/or at the end of the project.
- Receipts should show what/where/when and what payment method was used for each purchase.
- If a personal vehicle is used for project related travel, calculate the mileage via plotting the route(s) on Google Maps, and print capture the map to demonstrate total accrued mileage.
- Food purchased for other people is not reimbursable with RISE grant funds.

Reimbursement Process

Download and electronically complete both the "summary" and the "detail" tabs of the [RISE reimbursement form](#).

Complete the **Final Report** using the template provided on the [RISE site](#). **The final report is expected within two weeks of the end date of the project or experience.**

This essay is shared with the Student Scholarship Committee and the RISE project mentor. Email it to the [Center for Student Research](#).

Students must present at a public event on campus within a year of completing the project The Center for Student Research (CSR) coordinates various opportunities, or

permission may be sought from the CSR in order to present at an alternate venue. If a final report is not submitted, RISE funds must be returned.

Campus Presentation

Each student awarded a RISE grant must present their project at a suitable Randolph College event such as the MARCUS, Symposium of Artists and Scholars, Study Abroad Fair, Involvement Fair, Family Weekend, or other event approved by the Student Scholarship Committee.

Acknowledgement of affiliations and funding
- When presenting research or creative work, always acknowledge the affiliation with Randolph College and any collaboration with other institutions.
- If the work is financially sponsored by an institution or granting organization, recognize that sponsorship as well. For example, if funded by a RISE grant, include the text "This work was funded by the Randolph College RISE Program" on your slideshow or handout.