



2015/2016 GRADUATE APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

All applicants must submit all of the required materials listed below to complete their applications for review. Do not send materials/credentials to departments.

Applicant's name and date of birth should be printed clearly on all paper documents.

Note: All applicants should pay particular attention to requirements that apply to specific departments. Please see graduate admission requirements at admissions.rpi.edu/graduate/admissions.

The following materials **must** be submitted via the online application:

1. Nonrefundable application processing fee of \$75
2. Statement of Background and Goals (see additional essay requirements for Master's programs in the Lally School)
3. Resume or curriculum vitae
4. Two letters of recommendation
5. Writing samples, if required by department
6. Portfolio, if required by department
7. IT Background Evaluation form (IT only)

In an effort to expedite the review of your application, we recommend that the following materials be uploaded via the online application:

1. Copies of official test scores (GRE, GMAT, TOEFL, IELTS, and PTE)
2. Copies of official transcripts and evidence of degrees earned, in English and in the native language, of all post-secondary education
3. Copies of your passport (international students only)

If an applicant chooses to submit the following OPTIONAL materials, they must be sent directly to the Graduate Admissions Office:

1. Official Personal Potential Index reports (optional) – Rensselaer's code is 2757

Admitted students will be required to provide original documents to finalize admission prior to enrollment. Once payment is authorized and your application is submitted, you can no longer make changes or revisions. Therefore, please review the contents of the application carefully before you submit it.

CONTACT US

If you have any questions during the application process, please feel free to contact us Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. – 5 p.m. Eastern time (excluding holidays).

Phone (518) 276-6216

E-mail gradadmissions@rpi.edu

ADMISSIONS PROCESS

Rensselaer seeks diverse and well-qualified candidates for study in all graduate programs. This application may be used for full- or part-time degree programs. All applicants must submit the completed application with all supporting documents to Graduate Admissions.

Graduate Admissions will review all of the documents and forward files to the appropriate department for academic review and an admission decision. Graduate Admissions will notify the applicant of the admission decision by email.

A student's ability to pay for his/her education has no bearing whatsoever on the admission decision. Scholarships, fellowships, and teaching and research assistantships are awarded by academic departments and the Office of Graduate Education for selected full-time students. Both admissions and aid decisions are made on the basis of the candidate's qualifications and suitability to the department's research activities and needs. There is not a separate application for Rensselaer financial aid.

Because admission is highly competitive, and resources for supporting graduate students may be limited, not all admissible candidates will receive offers of financial support. Students who wish to be considered for any form of institutional support should submit the admission application and all required materials no later than the January 1 deadline for the fall or summer semester or no later than the August 15 deadline for the spring semester. A decision of financial support may or may not accompany the admission decision.

INSTRUCTIONS

Applicants may apply only to one degree program per term. Multiple applications for one term are not permitted.

1. Online Application Form

- Please be sure to include your name as it appears on your official documents (e.g., passport)
- Complete the online application for full- or part-time degree programs

2. Nonrefundable \$75 Application Processing Fee

- The application fee is waived for Rensselaer alumni, current Rensselaer students (matriculating and non-matriculating), employees, employee spouses, and any students that are identified with the GEM, McNair, Hopps, or Meyerhoff groups.

3. Statement of Background and Goals (including current work/academic activities) reflecting alignment of interest with selected degree program objectives

- All applicants must upload a one- or two-page statement that includes the following information:
 - Your primary educational and research interests
 - An outline of your research experience and a list of any publications and academic honors
 - A description of your background in fields particularly relevant to your study objectives – include any relevant industrial/work or research experience
 - Information outlining your current work/study activities
 - A discussion of specific research topics and methods you might pursue in your thesis research (not required for Master's programs in the Lally School)

4. Resume

Your resume should include details about your education, employment, and internship history and any pertinent research experience. International students in the U.S. on OPT or CPT should include details about their current activities.

5. Two letters of recommendation

Rensselaer requires two letters of recommendation. You will be required to enter contact information for two recommenders on the online application. Recommendations should be from your academic advisor(s), other professors, academic deans, etc., who can provide an assessment of your likelihood of success at the graduate level in your field of study. If you are currently working or have been out of school for several years, you may substitute a recommendation from a supervisor or co-worker. Rensselaer will send an electronic recommendation request to each recommender and each recommender will be able to submit his/her recommendation electronically. Electronically submitted recommendations do not need to be followed up with paper recommendations.

6. Official transcripts and degrees, in English, of all post-secondary education with transcript key

- Official transcripts of all undergraduate and graduate studies, including course work taken as a non-degree student, must be submitted. Student printed or downloaded copies of transcripts are **not** acceptable.
 1. If you are currently attending a university, a final transcript, **with a transcript key**, must be submitted upon completion of your course work. If you have completed your degree, the award of degree must be noted on the transcript.
 2. If your school does not release official transcripts directly to students, you must request that the school send the official copy directly to Graduate Admissions. The mailing address is: Graduate Admissions, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 110 8th Street, Troy NY 12180.
 3. If transcripts of previous or current study do not include the award of degree, you must submit a certified copy of the diploma or other official evidence that the degree has been awarded.

- All international transcripts must be recorded in English or officially translated into English. Transcripts in the native language must accompany all translated documents. Uncertified translations, or translations by students, will not be accepted.
 - Do not submit secondary school (high school) exam results or transcripts.

7. Minimum requirement for admission consideration

The minimum requirement for admission consideration to Rensselaer's graduate programs is the completion of and the award of a four-year U.S. bachelor's degree or the U.S. equivalent. If an applicant is uncertain of the U.S. bachelor's degree equivalency of his/her degree, he/she may wish to obtain an academic credential evaluation from a U.S. based credential evaluation agency (e.g., WES).

8. Official test scores (GRE general, GRE subject, or GMAT as required by the department)

Rensselaer GRE Code 2757; GMAT Code Q69-LM-28

- Official test scores are required and may be uploaded to your application.
- Web scores are not acceptable.
- GRE or GMAT reports should reflect test scores dated within five years. Older GRE or GMAT scores are not available from the testing agency.
- The average credentials for admitted students include GRE scores of 158 (verbal), 162 (quantitative), 3.8 (analytical).

You will have the opportunity to upload your test score(s) after you submit your online application. Scores taken from the ETS or GMAC website or issued on the day of the test are not acceptable. If you are admitted, you will be required to submit scores directly from the testing agency.

9. Portfolio (Architecture, Built Ecologies, and Electronic Arts only)

10. Official TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE scores, if applicable

The TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE is required of all international applicants whose native language is not English. A minimum TOEFL score of 88 iBT/230 CBT/570 PBT is required for admission consideration for graduate study at Rensselaer. In lieu of the TOEFL, a student may submit IELTS (International English Language Testing System) or PTE (Pearson's Test of English) scores. Only the academic format is acceptable and a minimum score of 6.5 (IELTS) or 60 (PTE) is required for admission consideration. Some departments require a higher TOEFL, IELTS, or PTE score for admission consideration. See <http://admissions.rpi.edu/graduate/admission> for details. Test scores older than two years are no longer available from the testing agency. Rensselaer TOEFL Code 2757.

You will have the opportunity to upload test score(s) after you submit your online application. Scores taken from the testing agency's website or issued on the day of the test are not acceptable. If you are admitted, you will be required to submit scores directly from the testing agency.

The TOEFL **may** be waived for international applicants who are currently in the United States on Optional Practical Training (OPT) or Curricular Practical Training (CPT), or who are currently studying in the U.S. and have been students in the U.S. for at least two academic years. Please note that this waiver will be applied **after** your application has been submitted and reviewed by the Graduate Admissions Office.

11. Personal Potential Index (Optional)

The Personal Potential Index (PPI) is a web-based assessment tool from ETS® that allows evaluators to provide applicant-specific information on six key attributes essential for graduate study: knowledge and creativity; resilience; communication skills; planning and organization; teamwork; and ethics and integrity.

Applicants choosing to submit optional PPI evaluations should know that Rensselaer requires PPI evaluations from **at least five evaluators across at least three departments or organizations**. Rensselaer PPI Code 2757.



FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

- **Merit-Based Funding for Full-Time Study** Funding for graduate study is based on an applicant's academic record, recommendations, and the relevance of the applicant's area of interest to the department's research efforts. The possible sources of financial support are your department of intent, outside fellowships, and Rensselaer's Office of Financial Aid. Academic departments are the most important sources of funding for the majority of full-time graduate students. To be considered for financial aid, be sure to check the appropriate item on the financial aid section of the application form. More than seventy percent of Rensselaer's full-time graduate students are funded by research assistantships, teaching assistantships, corporate, national, or university fellowships.
- Graduate assistantships are awarded to selected **full-time students** by academic departments on the basis of scholastic accomplishments, academic promise, and competence. The positions usually require 20 hours of work each week under the guidance of Rensselaer faculty. Continuation of Rensselaer financial assistance depends on satisfactory academic standing, research or teaching performance, and aid availability.
- **Forms of merit aid include:**

Teaching Assistants Students assist Rensselaer faculty in their classroom and laboratory activities, gaining valuable experience as researchers, scholars, and teachers. Departments provide stipends and full-tuition waivers. Master's students may spend a maximum of one year with internal support; doctoral students may spend a maximum of two years with internal support. Continued support can then be provided by means of research assistantships.

Research Assistants Students work with the faculty in research-related tasks that further the student's own graduate career and development as a researcher, scholar, and professional. Research assistants are paid a stipend and are given a full waiver of tuition.

Graduate Fellowships Outstanding students may be awarded a university-supported Rensselaer Graduate Fellowship Award, which includes a full-tuition and fees scholarship and a minimum stipend per academic year. Incoming students are nominated by their departments for Rensselaer Graduate Fellowship consideration.

Departmental Fellowships and Scholarships Some departments may offer additional opportunities for support of graduate students. Contact your intended department for information concerning eligibility requirements and selection criteria.

External Assistance Applicants to Rensselaer graduate programs are encouraged to seek external funding sources. Many federal agencies, foundations, and corporations offer financial assistance through fellowships, scholarships, and grants to finance graduate study. Contact agencies directly regarding the application process for these funding opportunities.

- **Need-Based Assistance**

Loan Programs – All federal aid programs listed below require the student to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Applicants are encouraged to file online at www.fafsa.gov or call the Federal Student Aid Information Center at (800) 433-3243. Our College Code is 002803. Application instructions for loan programs and eligibility requirements are available at admissions.rpi.edu/aid/info or by directly contacting the Office of Financial Aid.

Federal Direct Loan (Unsubsidized only) U.S. citizens and permanent residents may be eligible to receive up to the maximum amount afforded as a graduate or professional student. Eligibility is determined by the Office of Financial Aid after a review of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA).

Federal Direct Graduate PLUS Loan Maximum eligibility is determined by cost of attendance minus other financial aid. A credit check is required, but a student with limited or no credit history may still qualify. Completion of the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is required.

Private Alternative Loan Many lenders provide a wide variety of loan products for financing educational costs not covered by other financial aid programs. The Office of Financial Aid provides a listing of private lenders that provide excellent customer service, competitive interest rates, and repayment terms.

Veteran's Benefits Veterans and children of veterans may qualify for educational benefits. The veterans' coordinator in the Registrar's Office handles these benefits and should be contacted as soon as the student arrives on campus. The veterans' coordinator will provide forms and information for initiating benefit procedures.

The Office of Financial Aid provides award notifications of Federal financial aid programs upon completion of required forms/documents.

- **Applying for Financial Assistance** Start early. Many external funding sources (e.g., NSF) have application deadlines earlier than Rensselaer's admission and financial aid deadlines. Except for Rensselaer financial aid awards, you will need to file a separate application for each type of financial aid.
- **Acceptance of Financial Assistance** Notification of financial aid is made on a rolling basis beginning in January for the fall semester. The Office of Graduate Education and each department communicate directly with the selected recipients. Rensselaer subscribes to the Resolution of the U.S. Council of Graduate Schools, which sets an April 15 deadline for the offer and acceptance of financial assistance.
- **Office of Financial Aid**
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute
110 8th Street
Troy, NY 12180-3590
Phone (518) 276-6813
Fax (518) 276-4797
E-mail finaid@rpi.edu

INTERNATIONAL APPLICANTS

An international applicant should submit his/her application and all required application materials to Rensselaer by the application deadline. International applicants being considered for admission will need to go through U.S. Export Control screening by Rensselaer prior to receiving an official admission decision. In individual cases, this may delay an applicant's admission decision. International applicants should also be aware that U.S. immigration officers may review visa applications to make sure that individual applicants meet U.S. Export Control regulations. For general information about U.S. Export Control, visit <http://www.state.gov/strategictrade/resources/c43182.htm>.

Admitted international applicants will be required to submit proof of financial support. As financial documents must be dated within three months of the request for the I-20, and are not reviewed with the application, there is generally no benefit to submitting these materials early.

Should you be admitted and choose to study at Rensselaer, you may fund your education through one of the following acceptable sources of support:

- Rensselaer financial award
- Self support
- Parent/individual sponsors
- Government or sponsoring agency

All Rensselaer financial award decisions are made at the department level and are based on your application for admission.