Regional Research Institute (RRI) at West Virginia University (WVU)

Visiting Researcher Program

Overview

The Regional Research Institute (RRI) at West Virginia University (WVU) invites applications to the RRI Visiting Researcher Program from individuals who are interested in developing research in regional science and are students in or graduates of a masters or PhD program. The visiting researcher program is a great opportunity to work with researchers at the RRI and develop new research in regional science. The RRI also hosts seminars, provides other professional development opportunities, and can arrange for visiting researchers to sit in on select courses at WVU.

Applicants should generally be in at least their second year of their graduate program with a thesis in progress or have completed a graduate program and be actively engaged in research. All applicants must have an outstanding academic record (including a GPA above 3.0) and strong recommendations. Applicants are also expected to be fluent in English and able to communicate with their peers both orally and in writing while at the RRI. However, the program is also an opportunity for some researchers to improve both their spoken and written English language skills.

The visiting researcher program is designed for those who have specific research ideas that could benefit from collaboration with members of the RRI staff. All applicants commit to submitting a paper for publication related to their research project co-authored with someone at RRI. While publication may take some time, a goal should be to submit the paper within six months of the end of the RRI visit. After leaving the RRI, the visiting researcher will commit to ongoing regular virtual meetings, as needed, to complete the research.

The length of the visit and start date for a visit may differ for each visiting researcher. For visiting international researchers, WVU prefers their visit to begin on scheduled dates each year; however, other start dates are available with prior arrangement. Upcoming scheduled start dates for international researchers are October 2, 2023 and February 5, April 2, June 3, August 5, and October 7, 2024.

<u>Application Process</u>

To apply, potential visiting researchers should submit the following via email to rri@mail.wvu.edu:

- Letter of Intent (Maximum of one page). The letter should indicate when the potential researcher is hoping to visit, for how long, and whether a visa is required.

- Current Curriculum Vitae (CV).

- Transcripts or other evidence of the applicant's academic achievements. Translations are requested, if necessary.

- Two letters of recommendation.

- For current students, a letter from an advisor/mentor at their home institution who will follow the student's learning process while they are at RRI and ensure follow-up takes place upon returning home.

- Research Proposal on a regional science topic. The proposal should be no more than two pages. Page 1 should include a title and extended abstract describing the research. Page 2 should outline how working at the RRI will contribute to the proposed research, such as how the applicant will collaborate with or benefit from working with the RRI or specific RRI staff.

- Evidence of financial support for the applicant during the program (more information is provided below).

- English proficiency test scores (if applicable and available). While currently not required for international visitors, they provide evidence of English fluency.

In some cases, the home university or research institute may require a signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with WVU. Inquiries about MOUs can be directed to the rri@mail.wvu.edu email address.

The review of proposals will be done on a rolling basis. Before selection, applicants will be asked to participate in a virtual interview with the RRI Director and other members of the RRI staff. Selected applicants will be informed by means of an acceptance letter signed by the RRI director.

<u>Costs and RRI Resources</u>

All applicants must have their own financial support to participate in the visiting researcher program. The program is not supported by scholarships or other financial support from RRI or WVU. All applicants must also provide evidence of this financial support and that it is adequate to pay for their own living expenses, including food and lodging, as well as their travel arrangements. Funding may come from the applicant's home university or other source (either directly or in the form of scholarships or research funds that allow for a stipend) or from the applicant directly. For international visitors, there is also the possibility of applying for grants from research funding organizations or from entities that fund exchange researchers such as the Fulbright.

The RRI will provide the necessary research infrastructure, including computers, office space, and mentoring hours by members of the RRI, in addition to any necessary expressions of support for the applicant's stay at WVU, such as referrals to university services for international visitors, guidance on housing and food, etc.

During the application process, the applicant may incur overhead costs related to travel documentation and living expenses. For example, for international applicants, some additional costs should be anticipated, such as the cost of sending documentation to the RRI, which varies from country to country. The J visa also requires a federal fee of approximately US $200.

To cover its costs associated with visas and other direct costs associated with hosting a visiting researcher, the RRI charges a fee of US $800 for visa applicants and US $400 for non-visa applicants. This fee is payable at the time of admission; however, applicants may request a full or partial waiver of this fee by filling out the attached form when submitting their application. A request for a waiver of the fee will not be considered during the application review process.

For international visitors, additional information is available on the website of the WVU International Student & Scholar Services (ISSS) at https://isss.wvu.edu

RRI Visiting Researcher Program Fee Waiver Request Form

Applicant Name: _____.

Home institution and country: _____.

Are you receiving funding for the proposed visit to the RRI?   ( ) Yes ( ) No

Please provide a justification for a full or partial waiver of the application fee and how much you are requesting. Please be as specific as possible.