



Rhodes College

Call For Proposals HBCU Student Fellows 2026 Program in the Institute for Race and Social Transformation & the Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies

Rhodes College received an \$800,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation to support the Institute for Race and Social Transformation (iRaST), an intellectual hub for scholarly activity and curricular development around racial equity, discrimination, and justice in Memphis and the region. Grant funds will support three HBCU Student Fellows to participate in the [Rhodes Institute for Regional Studies](#) (RIRS) in Summer 2026. RIRS is an intensive summer research institute that runs June 8 to July 31. Student fellows will be supervised by Rhodes faculty and complete independent research or creative projects. We welcome proposals for contemporary or historical research and creative projects grounded in humanistic, community-involved approaches that confront and explore solutions to racial oppression and elevate the stories of marginalized community members. *We are particularly interested in projects that are focused on issues of race and justice in Memphis and/or the Mid-South Region.* Past RIRS projects have included research papers, participatory action-research projects, program evaluation with a community partner, documentary films, podcasts, graphic novels, museum exhibit curation, and original music compositions and plays. Each fellow will receive a \$3,250 stipend, housing on the Rhodes campus, faculty mentoring, and unparalleled opportunities to explore Memphis and the region through field trips, focused academic research, student-faculty interaction, and more. The fellowship does not include transportation to and from Memphis or meals. Qualified candidates must be full-time rising juniors or seniors and have a minimum GPA of 3.0.

How do I apply?

Applications should be sent as three email attachments by **March 16, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.** to [iRaST HBCU Student Fellow Application](#). **Include your last name in all submitted files.**

1. Application Narrative that contains the following:
 - a. *Cover Page* that includes **your name**, majors, minors and concentrations, anticipated graduation date, email, cell number, and mailing address.
 - b. *Project Proposal* (4-5-pages, approx.. 1000 words) that addresses the following questions:
 - i. What specific topic do you want to explore?
 - ii. What question or questions are you seeking to answer?
 - iii. How do you plan to explore or investigate this topic?
 - iv. How is this topic connected to or inspired by Memphis or the region?

- v. Why is this worth exploring? (Why do you care? Why should anyone else care?)
 - vi. Do you plan to work with community members or a community partner? If so, please specify.
2. Writing Sample – can be a research paper from class or project from a portfolio.
 3. Letter of Recommendation – one letter from a faculty member who can speak to your relevant research experience, academic performance, or creative work.

The selection of student fellows will be announced by **Wednesday, March 25 2026**. Conversations and questions are welcome. If you are interested in learning more about this opportunity or wish to discuss an idea for a project, please contact Dr. Charles McKinney (mckinneyc@rhodes.edu).