



Ruth J. Simmons Center for  
the Study of Slavery & Justice

BROWN UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE STUDENT

# Handbook

PUBLIC  
HUMANITIES

Master's in Integrative Studies

2024-2025

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**Handbook for Graduate Students**  
**MA in Integrative Studies (Public Humanities)**  
**Brown University**  
**2024-2025**

This handbook provides information about policies and practices for students in the Master's in Integrative Studies (Public Humanities) program. The handbook can also be viewed on the Simmons Center's website.

**REQUIREMENTS FOR THE A.M. DEGREE** \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3

COURSE WORK, REQUIRED COURSES, ELECTIVE COURSES, SUMMER PRACTICUM, INDEPENDENT STUDIES AND PROJECTS IN PUBLIC HUMANITIES COURSES, EVALUATIONS

**ENROLLMENT** \_\_\_\_\_ 3-5

COURSE LOAD AND SEQUENCING, GRADES, CREDIT FOR CLASSES AT OTHER INSTITUTIONS, LEAVES OF ABSENCE, GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

**FELLOWSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT** \_\_\_\_\_ 5-6

TUITION SCHOLARSHIP, PUBLIC HISTORY FELLOWSHIP, SUMMER PRACTICUM FUNDING, PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUNDS, EXTERNAL SUPPORT FOR TRAVEL, FUNDING FOR PUBLIC HUMANITIES CLASSES AND INDEPENDENT PROJECTS, CURATORIAL FELLOWSHIPS

**RUTH J. SIMMONS CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF SLAVERY AND JUSTICE** \_\_\_\_\_ 7

SIMMONS CENTER'S PROGRAMS, GALLERY SPACES, PUBLIC HUMANITIES LIBRARY

**PRACTICUM GUIDE** \_\_\_\_\_ 7-9

OVERVIEW, REQUIREMENTS, PRACTICUM PLACEMENT, DOING THE PRACTICUM, REFLECTIONS, EXPECTATIONS OF WORKPLACE RESPECT DURING SUMMER PRACTICUMS, PRACTICUM STIPENDS

**KEY CONTACTS, FORMS, AND WEBSITES** \_\_\_\_\_ 10-11

## **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE A.M. DEGREE**

Ruth J. Simmons Center for the Study of Slavery and Justice administers the A.M. program in Integrative Studies (Public Humanities) and the School of Professional Studies grants the degree. The Master's in Integrative Studies (Public Humanities) explores the humanities and contemporary human experience through the lens of race, social justice, democracy and decolonial curatorial and knowledge practices. The program is designed to collapse the dichotomy between the languages of practice and scholarship through the creation of an integrated interdisciplinary curriculum integrating both theory and practice, linking current academic debates to conversations taking place in museums and other cultural institutions.

### **Course Work**

Completion of the Public Humanities A.M. program requires eight courses and completion of a summer practicum. Full-time A.M. students typically complete the degree in two years.

### **Required Courses**

All students are required take the following five required courses:

PHUM 2020: Methods in Public Humanities (Fall 2024)

PHUM 2011: Curatorial Practice and Change (Fall 2024)

PHUM 2010: Introduction to Public Humanities (Spring 2025)

PHUM 2023: Nations, Decolonization, and Museums (Spring 2025)

One of the courses below (Fall 2025)

PHUM 2065: Independent Study (to complete the MA Thesis requirement)

PHUM 2060: Projects in Public Humanities (to complete the Capstone project requirement)

In addition, students must take three elective courses approved by their advisor; and complete an uncredited summer practicum.

### **Elective Courses**

Elective courses can be selected from 1000 to 2000 level courses offered at Brown. We recommend that elective courses are taken at Africana Studies, American Studies, or History of Art and Architecture departments. Graduate level courses at RISD and Harvard's Graduate School of Arts and Sciences can also count for credit. Students should aim for a balance of practice, theory, and content among seminars and lecture classes.

All students are strongly encouraged to take at least one class related to public history and museums, one class related to nonprofit management, one class in digital humanities, and one project-based course. Consult the list of relevant courses provided by the Director of Graduate Studies (DGS) at the start of each semester to find recommended courses.

### **Summer Practicum**

Students are required to complete an uncredited summer practicum during the summer between the first and second years. Students do not have to register for the course, so no tuition is charged for the practicum. For details about summer practicum requirements see Practicum Guide on Page 7-9.

### **Independent Studies and Projects in Public Humanities Courses**

#### *Projects in Public Humanities (PHUM 2060)*

This course, which can be taken in the Fall semester of the 2nd year to satisfy a capstone project requirement, allows students to earn credit for projects that they initiate, design, and execute independently. Projects should result in a graduate level initiative—an exhibition, program evaluation, website, public program, tour, etc.—that will significantly enhance a student's education. Any regular faculty member can serve as the faculty advisor and instructor of record. If students do not have a faculty advisor, the DGS can serve as the advisor and instructor of record for PHUM 2060. Appropriate adjunct faculty and professionals can serve as



project co-advisors. Students who enroll in PHUM 2060 should commit a minimum of 125 hours over a semester (approximately 10 hours/week).

To enroll in PHUM 2060, students should have successfully completed PHUM 2010 Introduction to Public Humanities, PHUM 2020: Methods in Public Humanities, and must receive prior approval by submitting a proposal outlining the project and describing the intended outcomes/products and assignments. This proposal should list all participants, including any community or university partners, collaborators, and sponsors; it should also include a tentative weekly schedule and work plan.

Once approved, students must register in PHUM 2060 with an S/NC grading option. Projects undertaken in this class cannot simultaneously count toward a practicum or the requirements of another credit class. Projects in Public Humanities course is limited to public humanities students.

Limited funding is available from the Center for project courses. Permission to register for the class does not guarantee financial support from the Center for the proposed project. Projects requiring funding must include a budget specifying any funds requested from the Center and outlining how additional money will be raised. The Center's contribution towards a project will be between \$200-\$500. To request funding for the projects course, please complete [Public Humanities Funding Request Form](#) by the end of the second full week of classes each semester.

### *Independent Studies in Public Humanities (PHUM 2065)*

Students who chose to complete a master's thesis requirement must register for Independent Studies in Public Humanities (PHUM20265) in the Fall semester of the 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Any regular faculty member can serve as the faculty advisor and instructor of record. If students do not have a faculty advisor, the DGS can serve as the advisor and instructor of record for PHUM 2065. Appropriate adjunct faculty and professionals can serve as project co-advisors.

To enroll in PHUM 2065, students should have successfully completed PHUM 2010 Introduction to Public Humanities, PHUM 2020: Methods in Public Humanities, and must receive prior approval by submitting a proposal. Once approved, students must register in PHUM 2065 with an S/NC grading option.

## **Evaluation**

Students are evaluated at the end of their first summer of Graduate School and at the end of fall semester of the second year. These written evaluations will be drawn from faculty feedback on the student's performance, practicum supervisor evaluations, and/or perspectives from program staff or fellows with whom the student has worked. The student will be notified at the time of said evaluation as to whether they are considered by the program to be in good standing. Good standing will typically be indicated by passing grades in all courses at the time of evaluation, as well as satisfactory completions of summer practicum. Students with warning or satisfactory standing are evaluated at the end of each semester.

## **ENROLLMENT**

### **Course Load and Sequencing**

Students in the Class of 2026 are expected to enroll in two courses per semester. This is the expected course enrollment and registration structure:

Semester 1	PHUM 2020 Methods + PHUM 2011 Curatorial Practice
Semester 2	PHUM 2010 Intro + PHUM 2023 Decolonial Museums
Summer	Summer practicum (uncredited/no registration)
Semester 3	PHUM 2060 Thesis or PHUM 2026 Project + 1 elective
Semester 4	2 electives

The university issues final tuition bills based on actual course enrollment. Course enrollment must be reconciled by the registrar's office to ensure that students are billed correctly. Scholarship support from the Simmons Center will be based on the two-courses per semester enrollment and tuition bill. To ensure that bills are correct, students must communicate their actual course enrollment to Sabina Griffin following each registration and shopping period, or immediately following any subsequent changes mid-semester. Questions about tuition billing should be directed to Sabina.

According to the Graduate School, full-time status entails enrollment in two or more classes each semester. Students should consult the [Master's Funding](#) page of the Graduate School website for information about the impact of a reduced course load on scholarships and outstanding educational loans. Students receiving tuition scholarships and fellowship stipends are expected to enroll in two courses per semester for 2 academic years (or 4 semesters).

### **Grades**

Grades lower than a B are considered unsatisfactory and do not count for credit toward the A.M. degree. Students graded Incomplete will have up to one year to submit all required coursework, with the permission of the instructor. After one year, the grade automatically converts to an F unless a dean approves the issuance of a late grade. In general, students should take courses for a grade. Students may register "Satisfactory/No Credit" for courses which do not have a graded option, or in extremely compelling circumstances, with the permission of the Director of Graduate Studies, but classes for which they receive an NC do not count toward the A.M. degree.

### **Credit for Classes at Other Institutions**

Students should expect to take most of their classes at Brown University. However, the Graduate School allows students to transfer one graduate--level course taken at another school for credit towards an A.M. degree. The form to request transfer of graduate credits can be found on the [Registrar's office website](#). The form requires advisor approval. Undergraduate courses are not accepted for graduate credit.

As the result of a cross-registration agreement, Brown University students may enroll in courses offered at Rhode Island School of Design. Brown also allows students to cross-register for classes at the Harvard University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences. Students who wish to enroll in RISD or Harvard courses must consult and get permission from the DGS, seek permission of the course instructor and follow the cross-registration instructions outlined on the Graduate School's [website](#). Students should take no more than two courses for credit toward their degree at universities other than Brown (RISD, Harvard, etc.).

### **Leaves of Absence**

In accordance with the policy of Brown University's Graduate School, students may request a leave of absence (typically for one semester) through application to the Graduate School. Because the Graduate School requires that A.M. degrees be completed within five years, a leave may affect students' progress toward completion. The DGS must approve all requests for leaves submitted by public humanities students. For further information about leave requests and deadlines, see information regarding [leaves of absence](#) on the Graduate School website.

### **Grievance Procedures**

Grievances should be brought to the Director of Graduate Study and/or the Center Director, and they may be brought individually or by groups which share a grievance. Depending on the circumstances, a student may opt to take grievances to the University ombudsperson, to the Title IX Office, or to a dean in the Graduate School.

## **FELLOWSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT**

### **Tuition Scholarship**

Public Humanities A.M. students are eligible for partial tuition scholarships provided by the Simmons Center. Admitted students who request program aid at the time of application and demonstrate financial need have been awarded a tuition scholarship equal to up to 40% of tuition on the two (2) courses per semester. Students in good standing can expect to receive similar support for their second year. Students will be notified of their scholarship upon acceptance to the program. Students who require additional support are encouraged to visit the [Master's Students Financial Support page](#), which can provide information on student loans and leads on sources of funding beyond Brown University.

In addition to tuition scholarships, the Simmons Center provides other forms of financial support for student activities.

### **Public History Fellowship**

All students who demonstrate financial need and are dedicated to working in museums and other cultural institutions on public history, including issues related to the history and legacy of slavery, are awarded two-year fellowships. The fellowships are intended to help prepare future professionals to help museums and cultural institutions address controversial issues, teaching the public and initiating broad conversations about slavery, race and racism, and retrospective justice. The fellowships cover an academic year stipend of \$25,000 per year for two years.

### **Summer Practicum Funding**

The Simmons, through the generosity of a donor, has been able to award up to \$5,000 in summer funding to partially defray A.M. students' summer living expenses. To request funding, complete the [Public Humanities Funding Request Form](#) no later than April 15. Summer funding awards are paid via stipend at the end of June. Please note that if the request is not received by the April 15 deadline, June disbursement of stipend cannot be guaranteed and may be delayed to the end of July. Students will be asked to provide a description of how the practicum funds were used at the end of their summer practicum.

### **Professional Development Funds**

Each year public humanities A.M. students are awarded up to \$2,000 for professional development. Students are encouraged to use these funds for online webinars, to attend conferences, and to participate in other professional networking and development activities not available at Brown. Students who present at a conference are encouraged to apply for Graduate School Travel funds first (see *External Support for Travel* section below) and use the Center's funds to supplement Graduate School's funding. Professional development funds cannot be used to pay for museum visits, fund course-related expenses, purchase books or electronic/computer equipment, or to supplement practicum funding. The awarded funds must be used by the end of each academic year, and all reimbursement requests must be submitted before June 15 in year 1, and before May 15 in year 2. Students must be enrolled at Brown to qualify for funding.

Pre-approval is required for use of professional development funds, which can be requested by completing the [Public Humanities Funding Request Form](#). Examples of eligible conference/travel expenses: air/train/ground transportation, per mile reimbursement for personal car use, lodging, conference registration fee, and meals. Questions about approved use of professional development funds should be directed to Shana Weinberg (cc: Sabina Griffin). Approved funds will be dispersed by reimbursement - you pay for the approved expenses, then Brown reimburses the payment to you.

Brown University has strict regulations about reimbursements and requires detailed information and receipts showing payment for processing all reimbursements. We must comply with all the rules and regulations when we process payments. Summary of rules and requirements are listed on the [Reimbursement](#)

[Information](#) document, attached at the end of the handbook, and outlined on the reimbursements form. Please read carefully to ensure that your purchases and supporting documentation are aligned with the university's rules. This will help avoid delays in reimbursement processing.

To request reimbursement of approved professional development funds students must complete Reimbursement Request Form (form will be shared in September) **within 30 days** after the payment date or end of travel to allow time for processing. The forms collect all the information required by Brown to process payments. Per IRS regulations, receipts older than 60 days will be processed through payroll as income, and will be subject to all federal, state and local taxes.

### **External Support for Travel**

Students who are making presentations at conferences and students who travel abroad for public humanities projects or practicums may be eligible for the [Graduate School Travel Funds](#). To maximize your funding, apply for the Graduate School travel funds first (if you are eligible), and use the Simmons Center professional development funding to cover expenses not covered by the external funding.

### **Funding for Public Humanities Classes and Independent Projects**

When possible, the Simmons Center will provide partial funding for extracurricular or course projects. Funding is only available for approved projects. Funding to support project-based activities that occur within a course must relate to class requirements and involve extraordinary expenses. The Center's contribution towards a project will not exceed \$200.

Request funding for class and independent projects by completing [Public Humanities Funding Request Form](#). The request must include a note from the faculty member teaching the class, a detailed budget listing reasonable costs associated with the activity specifying any funds requested from the Center, and outlining how additional money will be raised. Expenses may include materials, equipment, design, graphic services production, publicity, commuting travel to project sites outside of Providence, and other expenses directly related to the project. Non-eligible expenses include food for meetings, class parties, salaries, or expenses incurred on class field trips that appear on the course syllabus. Approved budgets for Graphics Service orders, publicity, and catering will be paid by the Center directly. Please consult with Natasha DeChambeau to make arrangements for direct payment.

### **Curatorial Fellowships**

Public Humanities A.M. students have opportunities to be awarded Curatorial Fellowships to bring their expertise in exhibit design, digital scholarship, and public programs to Brown departments, centers, galleries, and libraries. Fellows receive a yearly stipend and work 8- 10 hours per week during the academic year. The curatorial fellowship stipend is paid in nine equal installments, at the end of each month, September – May. Most curatorial fellowships are for one academic year with a possibility of extension into the second year. Curatorial fellowship opportunities change each year, depending on the funding department's needs and available funds. All students who request financial aid will automatically be considered for an available fellowship opportunity. Fellowships are awarded based on a student's experience and expertise specified in the admission application. Additional paperwork is not required.

In 2024-2025, all Public Humanities A.M. students were awarded Brown Arts Institute (BAI) Curatorial Fellowships, working on various BAI projects 8 hours per week during Fall and Spring Semesters. The BAI Fellowships pays \$8,000 stipend for the 2024-2025 academic year.

## **RUTH J. SIMMONS CENTER FOR THE STUDENT OF SLAVERY AND JUSTICE**

### **Simmons Center Programs**

In addition to program requirements, students are strongly encouraged to participate in extracurricular learning opportunities provided by the Center. Every year, the Simmons Center organizes dozens of events like workshops, lectures, conferences, field trips, seminars, and presentations by scholars and professionals working in the field of public humanities. Full list of current projects and events can be viewed on the Simmons Center's [website](#) and [events page](#). These events supplement the curriculum by providing intensive hands-on training or in--depth coverage of topics touched on in classes or essential to finding jobs and working in the field. Interaction with visiting speakers also helps students build professional networks and learn about innovative work in the field. Students should take full advantage of these opportunities and are invited to recommend speakers and suggest topics for programs or special projects to the Simmons Center's Director.

### **Gallery Spaces**

The Simmons Center houses a gallery space and sponsors an active program of exhibitions and programs developed by artists and organizations from Brown, the greater Providence community and beyond. Students are encouraged to engage with the exhibitions organized by the Center and propose ideas for the new exhibitions and programs.

### **Public Humanities Library**

The Simmons Center library, which is independent of the holdings of the Brown library system, contains volumes on the topics relevant to the work of public humanities and the Simmons Center. The books in the library are accessible to A.M. students, fellows, and faculty. The library also contains course reserves for students enrolled in classes sponsored by the Simmons Center.

## **PRACTICUM GUIDE**

This guide describes the curriculum requirements for practicums undertaken by public humanities students, discusses the process for setting up and evaluating a placement, and outlines the obligations of students and of onsite practicum supervisors. Shana Weinberg is the Director of the Practicum Program and will advise students on practicums.

### **Overview**

Practicums are significant professional training experiences, chosen to complement coursework, prior work experiences, and career interests. Practicums allow students to apply theory and practice in a real world setting and encourage fresh insights into their interests and aptitudes. Practicums fill gaps in students' understanding of public humanities professions, providing practical experience and helping them build a resume and portfolio that demonstrates their skills and experiences. Practicums expand students' professional networks as they work alongside and under the supervision of experienced professionals. Practicums constitute a partnership between students, the center, and a public humanities organization and result in outcomes that are useful to the sponsoring organization and beneficial to students. The general parameters should be determined in advance, with students' learning objectives and institutions' goals clearly agreed upon before the practicum begins.

### **Requirements**

Students must satisfactorily complete summer practicum during the summer between their first and second years in the program. Students should expect to work full-time over the span of 8 weeks, totaling 300 hours. At least one experienced professional should supervise and mentor the practicum student, providing



consistent instruction and attention. Since the summer practicum is uncredited, registration is not required. A satisfactory rating depends upon the quality of work performed at the sponsoring institution and other aspects of the practicum such as written reports and presentations.

### **Practicum Placement**

The Simmons Center has a network of local, regional, national and international partner organizations and will facilitate placement for the A.M. students. The list of the partner organizations is typically available in the fall semester. Students are strongly encouraged to complete summer practicums at one of our partner organizations to ensure that they have meaningful work and mentorship opportunities working with supervisors who are thinking critically about the issues in the field.

Students may propose and pursue practicum opportunities at other institutions. Students who want to pursue practicum opportunities at organizations outside of the Simmons Center's network must discuss their proposal with the DGS and Shana Weinberg, and have the proposal approved by the DGS.

The process of identifying a practicum should begin several months before its anticipated start. Applications for summer placements, particularly at large institutions, are often due as early as January.

Some public humanities organizations provide structured and competitive programs and offer a stipend or salary or cover some expenses. In these cases, the sponsoring organization often will determine the internship project(s) in advance and typically have a formal application process with preset deadlines. Other students prefer to tailor opportunities that specifically fit their interests

Students are responsible for contacting potential sponsors, negotiating the general parameters of a project, and seeking input from faculty advisors. Before the practicum begins, the goals and expectations should be defined by the student and the practicum supervisor at the host organization in the Practicum Agreement. This agreement articulates mutually acceptable expectations and specifies any programs, materials, or reports you will be responsible for completing. The agreement should include a beginning and ending date, a weekly work schedule, and any compensation, and must be completed before the practicum begins.

### **Doing the Practicum**

Students should look upon practicums as professional work experiences and comply with expectations established by supervisors including appropriate dress, work hours, and prioritization of tasks. Assume a proactive, rather than a passive, approach to an internship experience, and work to establish a clear dialogue with the supervisor and mutually supportive relationships with other interns and members of the staff. Seek out a broad range of experiences during a practicum, expanding involvement into as many areas of the organization as possible. Through these efforts, students will find that practicums can play an important part in developing skills and building a network of professional contacts. Plan to keep in touch with people from the practicum organization after the assignment is complete.

As with any work experience, students may find that their experiences differ from expectations. Issues such as funding and organizational and personnel changes can alter assigned projects and affect the ability to complete assignments. Practicum supervisors will value flexibility and willingness to handle changing circumstances or follow new directions. Good communication with the organization's staff is important to ensure understanding of the nature of institutional priorities and enable students to perform to the best of their capabilities. The Center staff also can be consulted for advice in handling unexpected situations that occur during a practicum.

Students should take advantage of practicums to produce materials to show to prospective employers. These may include letters of recommendation, press coverage of events or programs, exhibit labels or photographs of exhibits, or other work that students produced. Take the time to document work and accumulate examples of products to add to a professional portfolio.

## Reflections

Engagement in thoughtful reflective practice is a critical component of a successful practicum experience. Through reflection, students connect their practicum work to theoretical and practical learning in the classroom. This reflection should entail honest assessments of competencies, weaknesses, and interests, and attempt to understand a practicum project as it relates to the obligations, challenges, and opportunities of public humanities institutions. Even negative experiences can provide opportunities to reflect upon the organizational, professional, financial, or personal factors that affected outcomes and can help to shape professional goals. Students should consider reflection an integral part of a practicum assignment, not an additional activity, and make it a part of their regular work schedule.

Reflection is built into the practicum experience in two ways:

1. At the completion of the practicum, students must write a 1000-word reflection essay. In addition, students must submit a brief budget summarizing how the Simmons Center's summer practicum funding was used. Please submit the essay and the accounting summary of the use of the summer funds to Shana Weinberg and Sabina Griffin by September 30th).
2. All practicums will conclude with presentations in October that will be shared with center staff, faculty, or students.

Throughout the practicum the Center will maintain communication with students' on-site supervisors, asking for midpoint and final evaluations. Supervisors are encouraged to share their assessments with students.

## Expectations of Workplace Respect during Practicums

Most practicums provide exciting and stimulating work as well as the chance to meet interesting practitioners. But sometimes things don't go as planned. If you ever experience disrespect on the job, we want to know and we will help change your situation, with no consequences for you or your course of study. On the job disrespect might be sexual harassment, including physical, verbal, visual harassment, or sabotage of your work. Work discrimination might also include race, color, religion, gender, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, or national origin. If you are feeling uncomfortable in your workplace, for any reason, reach out right away to Shana Weinberg, who will provide feedback and advice, work with you to improve conditions, or help you find a new placement.

## Practicum Stipends

Because many public humanities institutions do not provide paid compensation to interns, the center offers some financial support to help M.A. students defray living expenses during their summer practicums. For more information, see "Practicum Funding" on Page 5.

To apply, complete [Public Humanities Funding Request Form](#) no later than April 15. Students will be notified about funding decisions by April 30. Any costs or expenses in excess of the funding provided by the Simmons Center are the responsibility of the student.

## KEY CONTACTS, FORMS, AND WEBSITES

### Contacts

Anthony Bagues, Director of the Simmons Center, Director of Graduate Studies, Professor of Africana Studies <a href="mailto:barrymore_bagues@brown.edu">barrymore_bagues@brown.edu</a> 401.863.1782	Advising, lectures and programs
Shana Weinberg, Associate Director for Public Humanities Programs <a href="mailto:shana_weinberg@brown.edu">shana_weinberg@brown.edu</a> 401.863.5085	Practicum advising, projects in public Humanities, public humanities programs and public engagement
Sabina Griffin, Center Manager <a href="mailto:sabina_griffin@brown.edu">sabina_griffin@brown.edu</a> 401.863.5939	Tuition billing, professional development funds, practicum funding, student stipends and payroll
Africa Smith, Events Coordinator <a href="mailto:africa_smith@brown.edu">africa_smith@brown.edu</a> 401.863.5099	Events, scheduling
Kiku Langford-McDonald, Communications Manager <a href="mailto:kiku_langford_mcdonald@brown.edu">kiku_langford_mcdonald@brown.edu</a> 401.863.7658	Communications and publicity, exhibitions
Natasha Astrid Rosario DeChambeau, Financial Coordinator <a href="mailto:natasha_rosario@brown.edu">natasha_rosario@brown.edu</a> 401.863.5477	Reimbursements, supplies ordering, direct payment for approved expenses
Reina Thomas, Manager of Education Programs <a href="mailto:reina_thomas@brown.edu">reina_thomas@brown.edu</a> 401.863.5863	K-12 programming and public engagement, High School Summer Institute

### Simmons Center's Forms

#### *Funding Requests*

[Public Humanities Funding Request Form](#) (for Professional Development, Summer Practicum, and Course/Projects Funding requests)

#### *Reimbursement Requests*

[Reimbursement and Funding Request information](#)

[Reimbursement Requests Form](#) (submit all reimbursement requests within 30 days of purchase or end of travel to allow timely processing before the 60-day Brown deadline)

## Helpful Websites

Brown University's Expense Reimbursement Policy (and related policies)

<http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/financial-aid/>

Center for Master's Student Excellence (resources and support for Master's Students)

<https://masters.brown.edu/student-life/student-support>

Conference Travel

<http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/conference-travel>

Financial Aid

<http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/financial-aid/>

Graduate School

<http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/>

Leaves of Absence

<http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/academics/student-status-issues/leaves-absence>

Master's funding

<http://www.brown.edu/academics/gradschool/financing-support/masters-funding>

Registrar

<http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/>

RISD cross-registration

<http://www.brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/course-enrollment/registration#risd>

Transfer credit approval forms

<https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/registrar/degree-guidelines-0/transfer-credit-approval-forms>