Resident Advisor Application Process

Frequently Asked Questions

1. How do I apply?

Before applying you must attend one of the information sessions. Check out our employment website for dates and locations. You will swipe your ID card on your way out at the end of the session. Within two business days you will be sent a link to our application via email. This is your personal link and should not be shared with anyone. The link allows you to start an application save and return by placing a cookie on your computer. Please only open it from the computer to plan to use to complete the whole application. Once you complete the application you will be invited for an interview.

2. Is this a paid position?

RAs are assigned a single room, and provided a stipend of $500/semester (1st and 2nd semesters of employment), $700/semester (3rd and 4th semesters of employment), and $900/semester (5th and 6th semesters of employment). In addition, RAs receive a 20% discount on meal plan options if enrolled, a micro-fridge in their room, a gym membership after 2 semesters of employment, and a bus pass after the 4th semester of employment.

3. What is the application period?

Information sessions are held in October and November with applications due on November 20th for the following academic year and spring openings.

4. What is the interview process like?

Our interview process, also called carousel, is about 4 hours long and includes individual interviews, group activities, and a short presentation. You will get more detailed information with your interview invitation. You will be required to stay for the full carousel- it is not possible to make up missed sections or to interview outside of the listed times for carousel. We start on time so plan to arrive 15 minutes early to allow for check in of all participants.

5. When are RAs selected?

Candidates may pick up their decision letters on Friday, February 13th at 12 noon from the Residential and New Student Programs main office in Dickson Hall (on the Balch side of the building, near the volleyball courts). This letter will inform you if you have received and offer, will be placed in an alternate pool, or cannot be offered a position at this time. Mid-year offers for Spring 2015 semester positions will be made before winter break via email.

6. Where can I find information about the West Campus SA hiring process?

http://westcampushousesystem.cornell.edu/getinvolved/Students.cfm
7. Interviews are in January but I have a conflict. Can I go to the one in December?

On your application you can indicate your order of preference for the interviews. If you feel December is your number 1 option you will have a chance to explain why you need to attend that session. Please note travel conflicts with flights and being away from campus during the Spring 2015 semester are considered viable reasons. If you are not sure if your request would be approved contact us at reselection@cornell.edu to ask.

8. On my application how long should my essay questions be?

It is more important to have quality answers than long answers. Remember we get a lot of applications and it takes a long time to give each the consideration they deserve. Be clear and let us know what you really mean. These are meant to be short essays (300 words or less).

9. Can I be an RA for one semester?

RA contracts are for the full academic year you are hired and the current application is for Fall 2015 and Spring 2016. You should plan to work the full year. Exceptions to this include staff that are hired to fill positions for the spring semester, RAs who choose to study abroad or away, or other academic opportunities that may take them away from campus.

10. I am interested in a spring opening, how does that work?

You must be of sophomore standing when you begin the position. If you meet that criterion for the spring you may indicate interest on your application. You should also plan to attend the interview carousel in December. All mid-year offers will be made via email by December 12th and acceptances and hiring paperwork will be required to be completed prior to your departure for winter break. More information will be sent to anyone hired for the spring.

11. Is there a GPA requirement to be on staff?

Yes, RAs must be a full time enrolled student with a minimum cumulative Grade Point Average which must be maintained during the selections process and appointment period.

- 2.3 minimum cumulative GPA for students with 30 credits, sophomore standing
- 2.4 minimum cumulative GPA for students with 60 credits, junior standing
- 2.5 minimum cumulative GPA for students with 90 credits, senior standing

Students must be of at least sophomore standing at the time they start the RA position.

12. What are you looking for in RAs?

That is a hard question to answer. Each community has different needs based on the student population and community focus, etc. Each professional staff member may be looking for slightly different things. Most importantly you should be yourself during the process. Honestly share with us why you are interested in the position and what you want to learn by being an RA.
13. How can I improve my chances of getting an RA position?

While there is not a specific thing that will guarantee you an offer we strongly encourage you to take advantage of the opportunities you get to interact with current staff. Open Houses are optional, but highly encouraged. Most RHDs won’t have time to meet with everyone individually who wants to chat with them so make sure you introduce yourself at interviews. Keep your options open, you may have only considered working in the hall you currently live in, but that really limits you to the available openings in that community. Check out some other halls, talk to some other professional and student staff.

14. Can I apply for specific building or community?

On the application you can indicate if you are interested in first year communities, upper level communities, all female communities, or individual Program Houses. We also ask if you have any preferences during the interview process. However you should keep in mind that we are hiring for the whole department and consider applicants’ skills and community fit more than your individual preferences. We may see that you would be a good fit for a community you never considered. Program House applicants are considered for those openings first before any other halls.

15. What if I get an offer for a hall I don’t want to work in can I request to switch?

An offer is for a specific community. If you are not interested in accepting an offer for that community you cannot be considered for a switch to a different community. Your options would be to accept and give it a chance or to turn down the RA position.

16. Should I still apply for housing for next year?

Yes, students interested in participating in General Room Selection, their own community’s in house process for returning students, Program House housing selection or, co-op selection should plan to apply and participate. Many of the deadlines for these processes happen before RA selection is complete. You will likely be informed of your acceptance before you actually choose a room however.

17. I got the job- now what happens to my housing?

If you accept and RA position offer before you select a room through a Housing process then you do not need to participate in the actual selection. If you were planning to block with others you should inform them that you will no longer be participating. If you are offered an RA position after you have picked a room we will work with the Housing Office to move your contract to your assigned RA room.

18. I just got offered a position but I have signed a lease off campus, can you help me with getting out of it?
Sorry, but no we cannot. A lease with a land lord is a binding contract and Residential and New Student Programs has no authority to request a release on your behalf. It is your responsibility to work this out if you want to accept our offer of a position.

19. If I am hired when do I have to return for training?

For fall training staff should plan to return approximately 10 days before the halls open in August. Training will last just over a week including the weekend before the halls open. For spring staff should plan to return 1 day before the halls open. Training will occur during the three/four days following the opening of the halls. More specific details are provided to hired staff.

20. I have worked as a student staff member in Residential and New Student Programs in the past and would like to return to the position, what do I need to do?

Current staff members- Your supervisor will forward you the reapplication form in November. Please complete it by the last day of classes, December 5th.

Former RAs- Reach out to your former supervisor or the email below to have the reapplication form forwarded to you. It is due by December 5th.

Former Summer Programs staff- Attend one of the information session and complete the full application. We will contact you about any adjustments to the interview process.

21. My question wasn’t answered here- what do I do now?

Email us at reselection@cornell.edu to ask or chat with your RHD.