



The Passionate Leaders Project

OVERVIEW

The **Passionate Leaders Project (PLP)** supports undergraduate students seeking to enrich their academic and professional interests by funding learning opportunities beyond the boundaries of the traditional classroom. Students may request up to \$4,000 through the PLP to fund a variety of self-directed projects, including independent research projects, unpaid internships, service projects, creative endeavors, and other ambitious undertakings.

Beyond taking classes – what scholarly, professional, or creative goals would you like to accomplish during your time at Simmons?

ELIGIBILITY

Second semester sophomores, juniors, and seniors are eligible to apply. Although there is no GPA requirement to access PLP funding, students must be in good academic standing. Undergraduate students may receive PLP funding only once during their time at Simmons.

Students cannot simultaneously receive PLP funding and additional support from another URF program during the same term. Students must close out their PLP grant prior to receiving support from other URF initiatives.

TYPES OF PROJECTS

The PLP typically provides funding for three types of projects:

Unpaid Internships

- Students may build projects around unpaid internships with nonprofit organizations, research labs, or service organizations.
- The PLP award may support a stipend to partially compensate the scholar's time working on behalf of an outside organization while developing the project.

Independent Research Projects

- Independent projects include data science projects, research projects, service learning

projects, collaborations with community organizations, and other student-driven initiatives.

- May also involve the continuation of existing research led by a faculty member, researcher, or affiliated organization
- The PLP award may support materials, supplies, conferences, transcription services, subscriptions, or travel and lodging expenses related to the project.

Creative Endeavors

- Creative endeavors include graphic design projects, studio art projects, documentaries and films, digital art, concrete installations, literary works, and other forms of creative scholarship and investigation.
- The PLP award may support materials, supplies, conferences, transcription services, subscriptions, or travel and lodging expenses related to the project.

APPLICATION DEADLINES

For the 2023-2024 academic year applications will be due:

- Fall 2023 application deadline—Monday, October 6, 2023
 - Spring 2024 application deadline—Monday, February 5, 2024
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Application Instructions

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Proposal Narrative
- Project Supervisor
- [Budget](#)
- Resume
- Additional Materials (i.e. Internship Letter, IRB Approval)

Submit your completed application materials through the [PLP Application Portal](#). Please combine the proposal narrative, budget, resume, and additional materials into a single PDF, and label the file using the following naming convention: **PLP_YourName_Fall2023**. Email files over 10MB to ugprogram@simmons.edu.

APPLICATION COMPONENTS

Proposal Narrative

- **Project Narrative (3 pages max, double-spaced):** This narrative should include the following components:
 - Issue (what is the central question?)
 - Goals (what do I want to accomplish?)
 - Process (how will I strive to accomplish my goals?)
 - Deliverables (what will I create?)
 - Impact (why does it matter?)
- **Project Timeline**
 - Develop a realistic, concrete timeline of your plan to carry out your project
 - Can be week-by-week or monthly
 - Be sure to factor in the time it may take to acquire supplies or learn new skills and technology
 - It's ok if the timeline changes! Nothing is set in stone.
- **Personal Essay (2 pages max)**
 - How does this project relate to my personal and/or professional interests?
- **Budget**
 - Make a copy of the [PLP Budget Template](#)
 - Use the PLP budget template to create your project budget

Examples of Deliverables:

Your deliverable is a product, presentation, or service that represents what you learned during your PLP experience. Examples include:

Not a deliverable	Deliverable
Internship at a neuropsychology children's clinic	Brochure specifically designed for children, to help them understand the procedures they will be experiencing at the clinic
Research about Simmons's involvement in the suffrage movement	Series of pop-up exhibits about Simmons's involvement in the suffrage movement
Collaboration with nonprofit organization to create and deliver a free childbirth class to Boston community members	Leading a free childbirth class to low-income individuals and young mothers

Formatting

Each essay should utilize 12pt Arial or Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins, and single spacing. You may include citations and appendices in addition to the page count in each essay.

Project Advisor

Students will be required to identify a Simmons staff or faculty member, or an external internship supervisor who will be able to advise them on their PLP project: they will be expected to share their project proposal with their advisor at the beginning of their grant period and their deliverables and outcomes at the end. Advisors should be available for light coaching throughout.

Resume

Students must provide an updated resume listing all professional, academic, and co-curricular experiences.

Additional Materials

Additional items will be required depending on the project:

- **Internships:** Students participating in internships or volunteering at an organization must submit an offer letter or letter of invitation/affiliation from the organization. This letter should discuss the student's role at the organization. Organizations must submit an evaluation of the intern's work at the end of the internship or service opportunity. Students should consult with Undergraduate Research and Fellowship staff prior to signing contracts with any organization.
- **Research Projects:** Students participating in an independent research project that involves human subjects must receive [IRB approval](#) prior to the start of the project. Once you submit your materials to IRB, the approval process will take a minimum of 10 days. **Please note that while IRB approval is not required at the time of application, you should initiate the review process as soon as possible.**
- **Travel:** PLP projects involving international travel are required to receive prior approval from the Center for Global Education (CGE). Travel to [Level 3 or 4 Advisory States](#) is not funded under any circumstances. **Students should reach out to cge@simmons.edu as soon as possible to initiate the approval process, submitting the following details:**
 - **Program:** A description of and link to the proposed travel experience.
 - **Purpose of Travel:** Explain why travel to a particular location is essential to academic studies, research or work.
 - **Proposed Travel Itinerary:** Must include lodging arrangements, transportation to

- and from the location within the region, and day-to-day transportation.
- **Communication:** Comprehensive list of emergency contacts, both US-based and in-country, local contacts.
 - **Additional materials:** Any additional materials that would be useful for the CGE in making a decision, such as any prior relationships that have been established with a site or host institution or maps of the region.

After the submission of materials, Undergraduate Research and Fellowships may require students to take additional steps, or modify their projects in order to obtain approval. Students may receive a conditional approval for PLP funding, pending the submission of required materials. All of the required documentation for the project must be submitted and approved prior to the disbursement of any funding.

Student Agreement

Prior to receiving PLP funding, each student must sign a Student Agreement form which outlines PLP expectations, the student's role and responsibilities within the project, and safety and wellbeing in the field. Each student must also attend a meeting with URF staff to review responsibilities and expectations.

Award Disbursement

Awards will be disbursed as a check payment deliverable via USPS. Budgets for independent research projects and creative projects will be disbursed in a single check payment upon successful completion of the pre-disbursement requirements. Stipends for unpaid internships will be disbursed in two installments: half upon completion of the pre-disbursement requirements, and the remaining half upon satisfactory completion of the internship and supervisor assessment form.

Closing Your Grant

PLP grants received during the Fall 2023 semester must be completed by Friday, October 4, 2023. Graduating seniors must close out their grant by May 15, 2024. This includes the following:

- Students must submit all receipts to Simmons University. Failure to submit receipts may result in a charge to the student.
- Students will be required to submit at least one deliverable that represents skills and knowledge obtained or outcomes achieved during the project.
- Students will complete an evaluation for the PLP, which will assess overall learning and satisfaction with the experience.

- If you are a senior graduating, you must close out your project prior to Commencement.