

To: Research Community

From: Ian Billick

RE: Prioritizing Housing

Date: Oct. 2, 2015, with small updates by RMBL Staff May 13 and July 12, 2016

We have revised the housing policy to the process below. After posting the policy on the RMBL PI listserv we received a number of comments. Those comments were passed along to the Research Committee for consideration. This feedback resulted in the revised policy below. We will assess the situation after the summer of 2016 and determine whether any additional changes are needed.

Here is a summary of the changes:

1. We have reduced the length of stay needed to bump an RA into category one to 7 weeks.
2. We dropped the bit about PI's adding people through supplements on grants. That was a bit open-ended and could lead to an exception for very large group sizes.
3. We limited the number of people a PI can bump up in priority through a supplement on a grant run by RMBL to 1. This reduces the disparity between scientists who run grants through RMBL and those who can't and eliminates the possibility of using supplements to create a very large group.
4. We changed the length of stay in category three for new scientists asked to be housed onsite from 4 weeks to 3 weeks to parallel the language in category one.
5. We made some minor edits for clarity.

GENERAL PROCESS

Prioritizing Individuals

We will house all individuals within a higher priority category before housing individuals in a lower category. In the section "Prioritized Categories" we list categories in terms of priorities.

Unless Post-docs and graduate students have their own research plan, they will be treated as a research assistant in terms of prioritization of housing. Post-docs must have research plans that are independent of their PI's research for them to be placed in the top priority category.

RMBL reserves the right to request that individuals adjust their stay by 7 days or less, regardless of what category they are in, if that enables us to accept someone else in one of the first three categories for a length of stay of 4 weeks or more.

Different groups of individuals within a category will be treated the same, except we will prioritize among all individuals using the criteria articulated in the section "Priorities Within Categories". The only exception is category 4.

PhD scientists with an approved research plan can submit a written statement to the Science Director requesting that their PhD collaborators and/or graduate students without research plans be treated as if

they have an approved research plan. PhD collaborators must be fundamentally important to the field program at RMBL. Graduate students must be conducting field work at RMBL in support of their theses.

The Process of Interpretation/Decision-making/Mistakes

Housing assignments will be handled by the Science Director. Final decisions, including interpretation of the guidelines, will be made by the Executive Director.

In order to provide certainty for planning, once housing has been public posted/finalized, RMBL reserves the right to not correct mistakes.

RMBL reserves the right to interpret these guidelines. Individuals may request written clarification of the policies. RMBL will do its best to communicate promptly and clearly with individuals whose housing requests cannot be filled.

Clarifying Length of stay: Length of stay is adding up cumulative stays during a summer, length of stay does not need to be a continuous stay. E.g., two 3 week stays is a higher priority (= 6 wks) than a continuous 4 week stay.

Special Circumstances/Exceptions

Our objectives are to support a diversity of high quality research, support long-term research, encourage new scientists to join the RMBL community, and to promote ethnic and cultural diversity. If in the opinion of the Science Director handling a housing request in a manner different than laid out within this memo would better achieve our objectives, s/he can request that the Research Committee make a recommendation to the Executive Director about a specific situation.

Future Changes to Policy

If we reach the point where we are unable to house everybody in category two, we will re-evaluate our approach.

PRIORITIZED CATEGORIES

Category One

Returning PhD scientists and families that meet all of the following criteria:

- The scientist has her/his own approved research plan
- Requesting extended length of stay (3+ weeks)
- Request equivalent housing to previous year
- Clear need to be housed in Gothic based upon field work

Returning graduate students that meet the criteria above
Students (40)

Staff that need to be housed onsite, either because of the nature of their position, or as needed to recruit critical staff

Category Two

Two research assistants for PhD scientists (either new or returning PhD scientists) that meet all of the following criteria:

- PI's have their own approved research plans
- RA's are requesting extended length of stays (7+ weeks)
- The primary focus of the RA is conducting field work for the PI

Individuals running a federal grant through RMBL will receive priority for a third RA that meets the criteria above

New graduate students with approved research plans and staying at least 3 weeks.

Up to five more students (taking the total to 45), including returning students receiving RMBL support to work as research assistants

One individual per PI (e.g., undergraduate researcher/REU, faculty from non-research institution/ROA, teacher/RET, high school student/RHSS, or equivalent) supported by a supplement on federal grants run through RMBL and staying at least 3 weeks

Category Three

New PhD scientists and families that meet all of the following criteria:

- Approved research plans
- Requesting extended length of stays (3+ weeks)
- Clearly need to be housed in Gothic based upon field work

Returning scientists requesting significantly different housing from previous year (in terms of quantity or quality)

Families of returning graduate students accepted under Category One.

One research assistant for graduate students that meet all of the following criteria:

- Graduate students have approved research plans
- Requesting extended length of stay (7+ weeks)
- Primary focus is conducting field work

Category Four

Everybody else.

Within category four, PhD scientists have the highest priority, international graduate students were next, and then international RAs have the next priority.

PRIORITIZING WITHIN CATEGORIES

Once we have insufficient spots to fill a category, we will use the following criteria to assign the remaining spots in order of priority to individuals in that category:

1. Whether or not the primary purpose of the person is to conduct or support field research.
2. How well the research plan was reviewed by the research committee. Individuals associated with a research plan that is put in a higher quality category will be given priority.
3. Length of stay; individuals requesting at least one week more than another individual will be prioritized).
4. Individuals working on a federal grant, (not including subcontracts), that is run through RMBL.
5. Within the RA category, new graduate students without research plans are a higher priority than all other RAs.
6. We will randomly assign spots to remaining individuals.