

## Houston Action Research Team

The Houston Action Research Team (HART) is a semester-long program composed of small, interdisciplinary teams of Rice undergraduate students working with a community partner to address a social issue. HART is an Act level program within the CCL scaffolded approach of Learn-Act-Create Change. The program is based in community engaged learning and civic professionalism, which allows for academic preparation and integration and professional, personal, and civic development. Through a social justice lens, community partners propose a project that the student team will work on collaboratively with the community partner, an assigned faculty advisor, a graduate student advisor, and CCL staff for a project that is grounded in engaged scholarship and ethical engagement. As part of the co-educational model of the CCL, students will have the opportunity to learn and engage with a community partner directly throughout the project development, research, and presentation.

**Civic Research** is at the core of the program and is one of five civic practices highlighted within the Center for Civic Leadership. Civic research is participating in inquiry based processes that incorporate methodology and theory for a rigorous study to understand and influence social issues. Civic research falls within the realm of engaged scholarship wherein both students and community partners are knowledge producers and co-creators. Rather than the traditional approach of scholarship that stems from the university outwards, engaged scholarship allows all stakeholders to have a mutually beneficial approach to working with one another.

**Civic Professionalism** is a framework that helps students understand their professional identity in relation to the public responsibility they have and the social good of their work. Regardless of the sector of work, civic professionalism allows students to build transferable skills while understanding the ethical implications of their work in society. Throughout the HART program, students will have an opportunity to develop a civic professional understanding and skills.

### Program Framework

Through an intentionally developed program, students can learn and grow with one another through their projects, the program, and with the support of the graduate student advisor, CCL staff, faculty advisor, and community partner. The program is broken up into weekly meetings, project meetings, and program-wide meetings. These all allow students to develop into civic professionals and ethical researchers within the community.

- **All Hands Meetings** are weekly meetings with the students, graduate advisor, CCL staff, faculty advisor, and community partner. During these meetings, the research plan and development will take priority while providing a space for engaging in critical reflection and feedback to ensure the success of the project. These meetings are held sometime during M-F 9-5
- **Team Meetings** are weekly meetings led by the graduate student advisor to further develop the project, provide mentorship and overall team development and guidance. Workshopping and brainstorming during the team meetings will allow for stronger and more directed All Hands Meetings. These meetings are held sometime during M-F 9-5
- **All HART Meetings** are meetings throughout the semester to help situate the context of the work each team is doing with respect to civic practices, engaged scholarship, and civic professionalism. With a larger focus on supporting student development as civic professionals, these meetings will begin as CCL staff and graduate student run but will translate to open spaces of collaboration between the teams in the latter half of the semester. These meetings are typically held sometime between M-F 9-6:30pm

**Projects** are based in a social justice lens of supporting a community partner in work that is timely, relevant, and of importance to their organization. Each semester, HART offers 2-4 projects that students may apply to based on fit and interest. The community partner perspective is what makes these projects unique from other opportunities on or off campus, as there is an intentional approach to engagement where the community partner plays a large role in supporting the student team in their work throughout the project timeline.

**For the Fall 2022 semester, there are two projects:**

[Registering Youth Voters in Houston](#)

[Black Sub Texts- Archiving Black Life](#)

### **Timeline**

- May 2022- applications released
- Sunday, June 12th at 11:50pm- application due
- Week of June 20th- interviews, via Zoom
- Week of August 29th- first All HART meeting/Kick-Off
- September
  - introduction to program, beginning of meetings, and community building; research brainstorming and development; building of literature review and research questions; understanding the writing process; and sharing research agenda with community partner
- October:
  - work on research agenda, timeline, and communication; research implementation and data analysis begins; writing of report begins; draft shared and progress updates
- November:
  - continuation and finalizing of research, writing, and presentation
- December: final reports and presentation to community partner and key stakeholders
- April: CCL Showcase

### **Application Requirements**

HART Application Form

Updated Resume

Unofficial Transcript

### **Financial Support**

As part of the program, undergraduate students will commit to approximately 10 hours of work each week for a total of 150 hours throughout the experience. Students will receive compensation of \$10/hr. It is important that students fill out all the necessary material as soon as they are accepted into the program to ensure the proper delivery of payments. More information will be shared after acceptance into the program.

**For more information**, please contact Dr. Jessica Khalaf, [jkhalaf@rice.edu](mailto:jkhalaf@rice.edu) , 713-348-4717

## **HART Application Prompts**

1. Which specific HART project are you interested in, and what are your goals in being part of this project and the HART program overall? (1500 character limit)
2. In a HART project, you will be part of a student team focused on civic research, ethical engagement, and civic professionalism. This entails working with a community partner to fully develop and implement a project as well as deliver a report and presentation to the partner and other stakeholders. The importance of how you engage in your team, with your community partner, and with data collection and analysis necessitates a strong understanding of ethics, mutual benefit, and being a professional in the field. As such, what are your motivations in working on such a community-based project? (3750 character limit)
3. As part of a student team, collaboration will be essential. What knowledge, skills, and experiences do you hope to bring to this team and program to allow for an effective project with the community partner?(1500 character limit)
4. There are several areas within any given HART project where your skills will be built upon or developed. In thinking about what strengths you will be bringing to this opportunity, indicate from 0-10, with 10 being most confident, your level with each of the skills below. Note: for your top 3 highest choice, you will explain below
  - a. My understanding of civic practices including but not limited to: advocacy and activism, civic research, service, policy and governance
  - b. My confidence in working successfully with other Rice students toward a common goal through a group project
  - c. My ability to develop a formal written report (e.g., academic papers and/or technical reports)
  - d. My understanding of data analysis and interpretation (e.g., statistic knowledge, statistical software)
  - e. My ability to visualize data that is understandable to a general audience (e.g. graphs, charts, information graphics)
  - f. My confidence in interacting with the stakeholders involved with the project (e.g., conducting interviews, communicating with multiple stakeholders, establishing professional relationships)
5. Explanation of top 3 choices: (1000 character limit)
6. What are areas of growth from the above list or elsewhere that you would like to focus on as part of the HART program? (1500 character limit)
7. If you were to ask a person who knows you well, what would they say about your ability in working on teams and/or on social justice issues? (1500 character limit)