

Launch Summer 2020

ROBERTSON SCHOLARS LEADERSHIP PROGRAM

Conversation with Robertson Alum by DECEMBER 23, 2019

Launch Coach named by JANUARY 18, 2020

Launch proposal draft and budget due FEBRUARY 26, 2020

All final proposal materials due APRIL 10, 2020

THE LAUNCH SUMMER

“Launch” has many definitions on dictionary.com, and a few are particular relevant for Robertson summers.

Launch can mean:

To set forth, catapult, or release, as a self-propelled vehicle or weapon.

To burst out or plunge boldly or directly into action, speech, etc.

To start (a person) on a course, career, etc.

Whether you burst, plunge, or catapult, your final Robertson summer is about moving forward. This summer will *integrate your varied scholar experiences to launch you into senior year and beyond.*

Planning your Launch Summer will require significant investment on your part, and this will be stressful at times. It will be up to you to identify, pursue, or create the optimal experience. We will hold you to the highest standards. We will expect high-quality materials that are thoughtful, compelling, and delivered within a specific timeframe.

WHAT IS A LAUNCH SUMMER PROJECT?

Your Launch Summer project can take on a variety of forms or be carried out in more than one location, domestically and/or abroad. For instance, you may choose to do research for an honors thesis, pursue intensive service work, take on a pre-professional internship, or produce a piece of creative work. The [resource page](#) has descriptions of previous Launch Summer projects that might be a good source of inspiration and information.

For Launch Summer, we ask you to identify “deliverables”--the product(s) from your summer that will reflect your accomplishment. We are looking for something specific and tangible that you will turn in to us at the end of the summer. These deliverables *must be* relevant to your identified Launch Summer goals and must speak to the role that this summer will play in advancing your leadership development as a Robertson Scholar. You might turn in a research paper, a screenplay, a website, a collection of personal statements for graduate school applications. . . whatever makes the most sense for you.

THE STEPS

You’ll expend significant time, thought, and effort to create the optimal Launch Summer experience. Your Exploration Summer project is excellent practice for a Launch proposal.

The summer resource page contains information to go along with each step outlined below.

- **Fall 2019. Talk with alumni and older scholars about their Summers and your Summer ideas.** You must have at least one conversation with a Robertson alum about Launch Summer during fall semester. The [Launch Summer Alumni Advisors](#) document on the summer resource page gives more information. Record this conversation by **December 23** [here](#).
- **January 18, 2020. Identify Launch Coach.** Provide the name, position, and contact information of the *primary* individual (i.e., at Duke, UNC, or elsewhere) who will help you to develop and implement your Launch Summer project. This person should be an expert who can offer solid assistance integrating your

various experiences and capitalizing on them for your future. An [information page](#) you can share with a prospective coach is posted. Your proposal will be stronger if you start talking with someone right away.

- **February 26, 2020. Submit Launch Proposal draft and budget.** Your proposal should focus on *depth* and *connection* instead of the *exploration* of new experiences or the *discovery* of new ideas. A separate instruction page is available on the [resource page](#). Your proposal must include as much as you can tell us about the following.
 1. Project Title and Abstract
 2. Goals
 3. Leadership Development
 4. Activities
 5. Deliverables
 6. Experience
 7. Logistical Details and Project Timeline
 8. Budget
- **April 10, 2020. Submit Final Proposal materials.** A complete package of materials must include the following:
 1. Comprehensive final proposal and budget, revised according to feedback on the first draft
 2. Launch Proposal cover sheet
 3. Relevant health and safety-related information as directed

OTHER COMMENTS

- *Start now!* You must begin working on your summer plans much sooner than our deadlines.
- We strongly recommend (but do not require) that you have a face-to-face conversation with Vicki as early as possible. Your proposal will be of higher quality if you include us in your planning process early on.
- Find your Launch Coach now! *Do not wait until you've finalized your ideas to ask for support.* We will not fund your project without evidence that you have found someone to work with you.
- Work together! Other scholars are a source of inspiration. Share your ideas. Organize a working group.
- The *rationale* behind your proposed activities is critical. Tell us why this is the absolute best Launch Summer you can conceptualize.
- The Launch Summer does not end in August 2020. In addition to helping you to complete the portfolio of your Robertson experiences, your Launch Summer project will also provide you with material for your senior year, applications for school and jobs/internships, and your Capstone experience in the spring of 2021.

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- **Do I have to do a Launch Summer?** No.
- **Do I have to do an actual internship?** No. You should create a Summer that launches you toward *your* future. An internship might not be the best vehicle for that.
- **Can I pursue a paid internship?** Yes. This is an excellent way to increase the visibility of your work. If you do receive external funding, we will ask you to adjust your Robertson budget accordingly. You will only be funded for expenses not covered by your paycheck.
- **My major (or certificate program) requires me to complete an internship. Is this enough to justify Robertson funding?** No. We want to know what you'll be doing in that internship and why it's important for you.
- **The timeline for the internship I'm pursuing does not fit the Robertson timeline. What should I do?** Apply for the opportunities that best meet your interests, and--at all times--*keep us informed* about any developments. We will work with you as best as we can. However, there will be a date after which your project will no longer be eligible for Robertson funding.
- **What if I apply for an internship and I don't get it?** Most scholars pursue multiple Launch Summer opportunities so all is not resting on one application. Keep us informed.

- **I can't think of any good deliverables.** If you're having trouble thinking of a way to demonstrate what you gained or accomplished, then you should rethink your intended activities.
- **I'm not sure if my idea is good enough for a Launch Summer.** Imagine proposing your ideas to Mr. Julian Robertson directly. How do you think he'd react? How would you craft your project in order to ensure his enthusiastic approval? This is another good reason to meet with Vicki sooner rather than later. She'll be able to help you figure out if you're on a good track.
- **Can I ask for more than the \$6,300 allotment?** No, but you can apply for additional funding through other non-Robertson sources, especially if you're planning a project with a research component.
- **Can I have more than one Launch Coach?** Yes, but you still need to identify the main individual that will help you pull it all together.
- **Does my Launch Coach have to be my research or thesis advisor?** No, but the work that you'll be doing in your senior year might be easier if your thesis advisor and Launch Coach are the same person, and some scholars have expressed frustration over having too many advisors.
- **Will you check on our projects over the summer?** For this third summer, we expect you to reach out if you want to be in touch. We will send at least one Program email or Bulletin during the summer but generally do not contact individual Launch Scholars unless there is a particular issue. We always enjoy hearing from you, but we leave most of the communication up to you. Therefore, do not hesitate to email Vicki or anyone else on staff if you have a question/concern/good news to share or you just want to check in.