

CAMPUS BOUND

PREMIER COLLEGE ADMISSIONS
and FINANCIAL AID SERVICES

Rhode Island School of Design

Two College Street, Providence, RI 02903-2784

FAST FACTS

Website: www.risd.edu
Public or Private: Private
Campus Setting: Small City
Total Enrollment: 2,258
Undergraduates: 1,878
Male/Female: 35% / 65%
SAT CR Range: 530 – 660
SAT Math Range: 570 – 680
ACT Range: N/A
Applicants: 2,512
Accepted: 35%
Enrolled: 47%
Returning Freshmen: 95%
Living on Campus: 33%
Admissions Contact:
401-454-6300
admissions@risd.edu

NEARBY SCHOOLS TO VISIT

[Brown University](#)
[Roger Williams University](#)
[Salve Regina University](#)

FOR MORE INFORMATION

[Campus Bound](#)

617.769.0400 (in Mass.)
888.843.5560
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Quincy, MA 02169

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The Quick Overview

Located in downtown Providence's "College Hill", Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) is known across the country as an art hub. RISD guarantees that both the artistic and academic work is rigorous, creating an environment where the bar is set high for artistic production, creative thinking, and learning in the liberal arts.

History, Mission, and Geography

Rhode Island School of Design (RISD) is situated in Providence's East side, a sector known to be more academic and upscale than other parts of town. RISD's thirteen-acre campus is small, yet appears larger as it is adjacent to the beautiful campus of Brown University. The campus is made up of Colonial style buildings that are mainly red brick with white trim. Many of these buildings have acquired a touch of artistic flair as many have gained the additions of murals, sculptures, and mosaics through the years. In recent months, the school has purchased a group of buildings that will be home to studio space for graduate students as well as a new campus center complex. Students can walk just steps down the hill to downtown Providence, a city that has revamped its image in the last few years to become a city that is both clean and safe, while also offering residents and tourists artistic and cultural events. Providence is an ideal location as both Boston and New York City are not far, and beaches and mountains are only a car ride as well.

Academics

Before students can dive into their major of choice, all first-year students must participate in RISD's Foundation Program during their first semester. A group of twenty first-year students share three studio arts classes (focusing on drawing and technique) as well as two liberal arts classes. In culmination of their studies of one, two, and three-dimensional design, all students must build a boat from artistic material that can actually float and be used. Classes are very small at RISD and students create strong friendships fast. "Having all your

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Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)

main classes with the same twenty students during freshman year gives you twenty close friends in an instant.” Studio classes are never larger than twenty, and once students begin their major, classes average from two to nine at the higher levels. RISD gives students the opportunity to cross-register just up the hill at Brown University, yet scheduling can be difficult because Brown runs on a slightly different calendar. Classes at RISD, meanwhile, are said to be challenging; as one student says, “At RISD they want you to understand technique and the context of which art comes from. For many artists, integrating these ideas can be quite tough.”

RISD encourages students to study abroad, especially during their winter session which is a one-month period where students can take an intensive class, study abroad, or complete an internship. The majority of students (85%) complete an internship in the arts, and while it is perceived that art students are mainly destined to make little money and have struggling careers, the future for RISD students is quite different. An admission officer says, “Ninety percent of our graduates are employed within one year of graduating and high powered companies such as Nickelodeon, MTV, Nike, and Reebok aggressively recruit students on this campus.” Simply put, RISD’s reputation is so strong that recruiters from the nation’s top companies come from near and far to take on RISD students in fields such as animation, graphic design, architecture, and apparel design.

Student Body

As you might expect, RISD students are a unique bunch. Calling themselves “Risdees” or “Risoids,” students stand out among the crowds of students from surrounding Brown University. The student body at RISD can be described as very liberal, and as one student says, “The words ‘republican’ or ‘conservative’ are just as good as swear words on this campus.” About 55% come from the Northeast, making it a campus where students stick around Providence on weekends. A student describes her peers: “Students are not competitive here because everyone’s work is so unique. Overall, students really support each other by critiquing and praising one another’s work.”

Campus and Residential Life

While RISD would not be classified as a party school, students are plenty active. Student life at RISD tends to revolve around the arts, making the school’s film society one of the largest and most well-attended clubs. RISD students enjoy free admission to the RISD art museum which is home to over seven floors of art from virtually every different time period. One student says, “The museum is utilized as a part of your learning experience, but students also go on their own. Whether or not we’re in the classroom, art is a part of who we are.” Students can literally walk right down a hill where they will find the city of Providence. While it is a small city, Providence offers jazz clubs, bars, and a luxurious mall. In the spring and summer months, the city lights up for “Water Fire” one Friday a month when the city’s main canal is lit up by large fires and both vendors and restaurants open their doors to patrons. Also, students can enjoy free music and gondola rides on these nights as well. Students look forward to a unique graduation where they receive their caps and gowns a week early in order to decorate and/or alter them in any way they chose. One student says, “Students really go all out; it’s great!”

About a third of RISD students live on campus and freshman are required to do so. Dorms are said to be “pretty nice” and most have common studio areas where students can work on their art work. All students who live on campus are required to purchase the meal plan which includes one main dining hall and other small eateries on campus. The majority of upper classmen live off-campus in nearby apartments or in an apartment building actually owned and managed by RISD.

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Athletics

Students who wish to compete athletically at the college level will be disappointed as there are no official NCAA sports teams. There are a few teams, however, that play for fun. Their student-run hockey team, “The Nads” (Yes, students yell “Go Nads!”) is said to be a lot of fun, but in true RISD form one student says, “It’s not even required that you know how to skate to make the team!”

The College in a Nutshell

While RISD students may have their own ways of doing things, the rigor and reputation of their school is undisputed. Students are committed to becoming successful in their field of choice, and this motivation as well as love for the arts often replaces partying or socializing the way traditional college students do. One student says, “It’s so amazing to be around other students that share my passions. I can really be who I really am here.”

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