The Regional Research Institute is dedicated to multidisciplinary research on the economic and social development of lagging regions. Our area interests cover the globe, with a special focus on our own Appalachian region. Our research focuses on theories and history of regional development, methods for studying regions, and policies for stimulating their development. We seek to advance our understanding of socioeconomic processes and our ability to explain regional differences in rates of growth and levels of development. The Institute creates learning opportunities and provides research support for faculty members and students. It is an internationally prominent center for the advancement of regional science—an interdisciplinary field at the intersection of economics, geography, and planning. Throughout its distinguished forty-four year history, the Institute has been a separate unit, independent of any college. Currently, the Institute brings together thirty-one faculty associates drawn from thirteen departments in five colleges, a core of regional science faculty, an extended network of scholars elsewhere in the United States and abroad, and an outstanding group of graduate students.

The Institute has a long-standing reputation for its many contributions to regional science. Regional scientists use quantitative methods and mathematical models to study economic and social phenomena in a regional setting. The Institute’s forte has been its pioneering research on methods for analyzing regions and its multidisciplinary approach to studying regional development. Visiting scholars and graduate students from abroad are an integral part of the Institute community. The Institute’s Web Book of Regional Science attracts thousands of hits per day from around the world.

The Institute provides research experience and training to students but offers no degree program. Its regional science faculty has long staffed doctoral courses in related departments, and its alumni are among the nation’s leading scholars.

Graduate research assistants are nominated by their departments or by faculty associates. The Institute prefers to hire doctoral candidates who have completed one year of graduate study, but master’s candidates, undergraduates, and entering graduate students are considered. Most students are in economics, geography, or natural resource economics, but history, law, and sociology students are regularly represented, too. The students have an office at the Institute and state-of-the art computing equipment. As their educations progress, so do their roles in research projects. They learn skills, conduct and publish research, and present papers at conferences. The Institute has a well-established student tradition of writing articles or prizewinning papers while serving as research assistants.

For further information about the Institute, contact the Regional Research Institute, West Virginia University, 886 Chestnut Ridge Road, P.O. Box 6825, Morgantown WV 26506-6825; Telephone (304) 293-2896, Fax (304)293-6699, or visit our website at http://www.rri.wvu.edu/.