Hello,
My name is Hala Baba, and I graduated Reed in 2020, before the COVID-19 pandemic I
was given the opportunity to do fieldwork for my undergraduate thesis. But in order to
complete this research I applied for funding. This funding came from two sources. The first
being the Initiative Grant for Undergraduate research and the other being the Anthropology
fund.
Without the Anthropology fund would not have had enough funding to go abroad to
Australia, and conduct ethnographic work with Syrian Refugees on the process of immigrating
to Australia and their experiences there. Without this fund I would not have been able to do
this thesis at all and would have had to focus more closely on primary sources, it would have
been much more book based than fieldwork based.
This grand allowed me to work outside the Reed curriculum in that it provided me with
hands on research experience that was grounded in theory rather than being solely focused on
theory. This ethnographic study helped me see what it is like to be an anthropologist in the
field. It also allowed me to view policy through the eyes of people having to deal with
bureaucratic structures to inform their everyday lives.
This was a wonderful opportunity granted to me by the Anthropology department and I
would not have changed it for the world, it brought information about the immigration process
to Australia to the forefront and discussed the refugee experience from their perspective which
is not often done in the literature on immigration. And it allowed me to have a better
relationship and mentorship with my advisors, who have all conducted research and gave me
insight to a different side of Anthropology.