Hiring Procedures for Postdoctoral Appointments

Effective May 14, 2019

The College of Agricultural Sciences Human Resources Consultants are the primary resource for hiring departments. We are responsible for ensuring implementation of the procedures and policies for recruitment and hiring of all personnel and ensuring that processes comply with applicable laws, regulations and policies in consultation with the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs, Penn State Human Resources, the Affirmative Action Office, and the Office of Global Programs.

As communicated by the Associate Vice President for Affirmative Action, all postdoctoral appointments must be announced on the Penn State Jobs site.

The recruitment and selection process for hiring a Postdoctoral Scholar or Fellow is managed by the Faculty Supervisor or designee. The title of Postdoctoral Fellow will be used only in connection with appointments financed under a Postdoctoral Fellow Program of a granting agency outside the University. The title of Postdoctoral Scholar will be the usual designation for all other postdoctoral appointments.

When recruiting, the Faculty Supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the recruitment process:

* Involves a search committee with at least 3 members
* Adheres to [Policy HR01 – Fair Employment Practices](https://policy.psu.edu/policies/hr01) and all relevant legislation, including the [Department of Labor-Fair Labor Standards Act](https://www.dol.gov/whd/flsa/)
* Adheres to [Policy HR11 – Affirmative Action in Employment at The Pennsylvania State University](https://policy.psu.edu/policies/hr11)
* Adheres to recruiting and posting requirements as stated below

In accordance with [Policy HR68 – Postdoctoral Appointments](https://policy.psu.edu/policies/hr68), these positions:

* are to be approved by the Deans Office
* must be full-time, but temporary, 48-week appointments
* be granted to appointees who recently were awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate (e.g., Sc.D, M.D., D.D.S., J.D.) in an appropriate field
* provide the appointee with training under the supervision of a senior scholar or a department
* involve substantially full-time research or scholarship; and be viewed as preparatory for a full-time academic and/or research career
* provide the appointee with the freedom to meet the expectation of publishing the results of her or his research or scholarship during the period of the appointment
* have an initial appointment at the University for one year
* reappointments shall be for one year, except when: funding is not available for a full year, the continuation of the project is less than one year, there are visa limitations or to bridge one appointment to another

Postdoctoral appointments are not to be longer than a total of six years, with exceptions granted to meet specific training needs of an individual and only after careful review and approval by the Department Head, Deans Office, and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.

**Financial Considerations**

This [link](https://guru.psu.edu/resources/rates-and-schedules/stipends-for-graduate-assistants-18-19) references the Postdoctoral Scholar or Fellow salary minimum.

Current postdoctoral appointment fringe rates can be found [here](https://www.research.psu.edu/node/724).

If a merit increase is approved by the Penn State Board of Trustees and funding is available, a salary increase may be provided; however, they are not mandatory. The College provides guidance for appropriate increase amounts.

### Steps to Announcing

1) [The College Request to Fill Position (U Park Positions)](https://agsci.psu.edu/hr/interim-hiring-instructions-for-the-college-of-ag/RequesttoFillUPPositions11.11.2017m.mcminn.pdf) form should be filled out for the position and signed by the Faculty Supervisor and Unit Leader. *(Please note postdoctoral appointments* ***do not*** *require the completion of a Job Responsibilities Worksheet (JRW)).*

2) The Faculty Supervisor will submit the above completed form to Lesley Maalouf, lzm6@psu.edu and Whitney Fisher, wdd107@psu.edu.

3) They will verify budget information, obtain approval from the Dean’s office, and notify the hiring unit once all signatures are obtained.

4) The department will then complete the “Request to Post Full-Time Job” form in WorkLion. This form is submitted to Penn State HR Shared Services for them to post and advertise the position. Remember to include the job announcement.

5) The department will be notified once the position has been announced.

**Job Announcement**

Please remember to state if the Ph.D. should be in a certain field of study and/or requires specific experience.

Include the following statements in all announcements:

* “Applicants are required to have a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate in an appropriate field and be able to provide evidence that all requirements have been met for completion of the Ph.D. prior to the effective date of hire.”
* “This is a fixed-term position funded for one year from date of hire with a [good] possibility of re-funding.” [In place of good, may use “no” or “excellent” as appropriate.]
* “This position will be located at Penn State in [University Park, Pennsylvania or wherever the work will be completed, ex: FREC in Biglerville, etc.]

Advertising in a journal of national circulation is recommended to obtain a larger and more diverse pool of candidates.

Advertisements i*n publications, websites, listservs, etc.* cannot be placed without prior approval from HR Shared Services.

**Search Procedure**

Our College requires a search committee with at least three members (who are non-student employees of the University). Please note that current postdocs and graduate assistants may participate on a search committee; however, they must be in addition to the three core members.

Our College requires that search committee members complete search committee training prior to beginning the search process. The training, forms, and additional resources can be found on the [College HR website](https://agsci.psu.edu/hr/search-committee-training-and-resources). After completing the training, individuals should notify the appropriate HR Consultant so our records can be updated accordingly.

The search committee will review applications through the online application system (EJMS). If you receive an application directly from an applicant, they should be directed to apply via the Penn State Jobs site.

The faculty supervisor will be responsible for inviting candidates to interview for the position.

**Steps to Hire**

Once a suitable candidate is identified the faculty supervisor shall review this candidate with their Department Head prior to extending a verbal offer. Providing that the Department Head approves the candidate, the faculty supervisor may extend a verbal offer indicating the offer is contingent upon the successful completion of a background check(s) and providing evidence of a Ph.D.

This [link](https://guru.psu.edu/resources/rates-and-schedules/stipends-for-graduate-assistants-18-19) references the Postdoctoral Scholar or Fellow salary minimum; however, salaries for postdocs receiving pay from NIH grants must be paid in accordance with this [document](https://www.research.psu.edu/sites/default/files/Graduate%20Student%20Comp%20-%20NIH%20%282.19.19%29.pdf).

A postdoctoral appointment shall be granted to appointees who recently were awarded a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate (e.g., Sc.D., M.D., D.D.S., J.D.) in an appropriate field.  As a result, the selected candidate must be awarded and be able to provide evidence of obtaining a Ph.D. or equivalent doctorate **prior to** the effective date of hire.

If the offer is accepted, please discuss and agree upon a tentative start date considering that it will be based on the time it takes for completion of a background check and clearances (approx. 2 weeks) and onboarding. Please keep in mind that the start date may be delayed until visas are processed (if needed). For information regarding visa sponsorship, visit the Office of Global Programs [website](https://global.psu.edu/).

**Once an effective date of hire is agreed upon, visit** [WorkLion](https://worklion.psu.edu/) to complete and submit the Hire Full-Time Employee form.

### Contact Information

**For questions on the recruiting process** and on the processing of the appointment, contact your assigned [HR Consultant](https://agsci.psu.edu/hr/find-your-hr-consultant).