



NATIONAL POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION

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ASSOCIATION



Considerations for Selecting Your Postdoctoral Position

What Is a Postdoc?

A postdoctoral scholar (“postdoc”) is:

- an individual holding a doctoral degree
- engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training
- working for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills needed to pursue a career path of his or her choosing
- pursuing basic, clinical or translational projects but whose primary effort is devoted toward their own scholarship
- essential to the scholarly mission of the mentor and host institution
- is expected to have the freedom to publish the results of their scholarship.



Think Before You Start

- Consider your long-term goals prior to deciding what postdoctoral fellowship to consider
 - Principal Investigator/Bench Scientist
 - Drug Developer
 - Administrator
 - Pharmaceutical/Biotechnology CEO
 - Educator
 - Science Writer/Journal Editor
 - Consultant to Lobby Groups



Choose a Sector

- **Academia** - individual effort
- **Private industry** - team effort
- **Government agency** - individual/team



Choose a Fellowship Type

- Basic Research
- Teaching
- Administration



Academia - Setting

- Research I Institution
- Hospital
- Medical (or Other Professional) School
- Liberal Arts



Academia - Experience

- Bench science
- Administrative
- Teaching
- Responsibilities & Duration



Academia - Funding Mechanism

- Independent - Agency fellowship
- Dependent - Funding through PI



Industry Experience

- Bench Science - Part of Development Team
- Administrative - CEO/Decision-Makers
- Responsibilities & Duration



Government Experience

- Bench Science -
 - Traditional, Single PI
 - Shared Postdoc, 2 Labs
- Technology Transfer
- Science Policy
- Science Writing
- Responsibilities & Duration



Other Considerations

- U.S. postdoc versus overseas
- Options for foreign nationals in the U.S.
 - Limitations on government fellowships
 - NPA Survival Guide
- Options for U.S. nationals overseas
 - Mainly in Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Canada
- Trends in Compensation/Benefits
- Institutional Policies (Favorable to Postdocs)



Finding Postdoctoral Opportunities

- NIH and NSF websites
- Sciencecareers.org and Naturejobs.org
- GrantsNet
- E.U. Commission Research Website
- Word of mouth/personal recommendations



Obtaining Your Postdoc

- The application
- The interview
- The negotiation
- The letter of appointment
- The IDP



Remember

*Tailor your fellowship based on **YOUR** long-term goals!!!*