

# POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLAR SURVEY

## \*\*Mission Statement of the Postdoctoral Association of Biological Sciences Division

The postdoctoral fellows, research associates and medical fellows of the University of Chicago have formed an organization to address the concerns of this group. This organization, the Biological Sciences Division Postdoctoral Association (BSD-PDA), serves as an information and coordination center and skills development organization for those topics that are important for continued success in the research community. In addition, this association exists to foster communication among its members and to provide representation in the division and University.

### MEMBERSHIP:

The membership of the BSD-PDA consists of all non-faculty persons in post-PhD research capacity at The University of Chicago in the Biological Sciences Division, excluding those persons hired as technicians. This category is recognized by the University as either Postdoctoral Fellows, Research Associates, or parenthetical Research Associates (Instructor/etc). Medical Fellows who are engaged primarily in research positions and have completed their M.D. are also included. These persons are collectively referred to as "postdocs" for the remainder of this document.

Membership begins with the first day of the research appointment and ends either a) on the last day; or b) upon reclassification of an individual's institutional status to a type not mentioned above.

### GOALS:

- 1. To promote effective training and career counseling of postdocs at The University of Chicago.
- 2. To provide a collective voice and liaison between postdocs, faculty, and the administration of The University of Chicago.
- 3. To collect, develop, and disseminate information useful to postdocs including job announcements, seminar notices, and materials on living resources.
- 4. To promote social and research communication among postdocs.

Answers to the following questions will aid in the attainment of these goals. The estimated time to answer all 49 questions is 15 minutes

For the questions below, please mark the appropriate response or fill in the blank. [Don't number the questions on the web-page]

## I. DEMOGRAPHIC/BIOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

(Your name will remain confidential; however, if you are not on our mailing list and wish to receive future mailings email [sgasior@midway.uchicago.edu](mailto:sgasior@midway.uchicago.edu))

### 1. Academic Degree(s)

Degree	Year of most recent degree	Institution, Country
(1) Ph.D. or equiv.	<input type="text" value="---"/>	<input type="text"/>
(2) M.D. or equiv.	<input type="text" value="---"/>	<input type="text"/>

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2. Sex: (1) Female (2) Male

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3. Age

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4. What is your residence status in the U.S.?

- (1) permanent resident/citizen
- (2) application pending
- (3) J1 VISA
- (4) H1B VISA
- (5) F1 VISA
- (6) Other

If (6) Other, please specify

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5. Ethnic identity (choose all that apply):

- (1) Black
- (2) American indian/native Alaskan
- (3) Asian/Pacific islander
- (4) White
- (5) Latino
- (6) Filipino
- (7) Puerto Rican
- (8) East Indian
- (9) Middle Eastern
- (10) Other
- (11) Unknown
- (12) Do not wish to respond

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6. What is your position/title?

- (1) Postdoctoral fellow
- (2) Research associate
- (3) Instructor
- (4) Clinical/medical fellow
- (5) Don't know
- (6) Other

If (6) Other, please specify

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7. What is your BSD Department or Institute affiliation (check all that apply)?

- (1) Department of Molecular Genetics and Cell Biology
- (2) Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
- (3) Department of Ecology and Evolution
- (4) Department of Neurobiology, Pharmacology and Physiology
- (5) Department of Organismal Biology and Anatomy
- (6) Ben May Institute for Cancer Research
- (7) Brain Research Institute
- (8) Howard Hughes Medical Institute

- (9) Gwen Knapp Center for Lupus & Immunology Research
  - (10) Center for Molecular Cardiology
  - (11) Institute for Molecular Medicine
  - (12) BRF Center for Molecular Neurobiology
  - (13) Center for Molecular Oncology
  - (14) Don't Know
  - (15) Dept. of Human Genetics
  - (16) Other
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8. Are you a  (1) full-time or  (2) part-time Postdoc?

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9. What kind of research are you doing?

- (1) Basic science
- (2) Applied science
- (3) Clinical research
- (4) Other(specify)

If (4) Other, please specify

10. How many years of post-doc experience have you completed?

at The University of Chicago

cummulative (previous PDs included)

11. What is the primary source of your compensation (e.g. salary, stipend) NOW?(check all that apply)

- (1) Federal research grant or contract
- (2) Federal fellowship or training grant
- (3) Nonfederal nationally awarded fellowship
- (4) University or state funds (including teaching assistantship)
- (5) Personal sources (e.g. loans, family income)
- (6) Foreign (non-U.S.) government
- (7) Other

If (7) Other, please specify

12. Is the source of your current compensation awarded to YOU rather than to your lab PI or Department?

- (1) yes
  - (2) partially, yes
  - (3) no
  - (4) don't know
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13. If this is your first Postdoctoral position, skip the next two questions. If this is not your first Postdoc: Institutions in which you have held previous postdoctoral position (s)

	Institution, country	Total months
(1)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(2)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
(3)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

14. If this is not your first postdoc appointment, what was the primary source of support for your FIRST postdoctoral appointment? (check all that apply)

- (1) Federal research grant or contract
- (2) Federal fellowship or training grant
- (3) Nonfederal nationally awarded fellowship
- (4) University /state funds (including teaching assistantship)
- (5) Personal sources (e.g. loans, family income)
- (6) Foreign (non-U.S.) government
- (7) Other
- (8) Not applicable (now in your first postdoc)

If (7) Other, please specify

15. Was the source of funding for your FIRST postdoc awarded to YOU rather than to the lab PI?

- yes (1)
- partially, yes (2)
- no (3)
- don't know (4)

16. What is your current annual postdoc compensation (i.e. your gross salary or stipend before taxes; do not include the value of additional benefits provided to you by the University in the form of retirement investment or healthcare coverage, as these are normally not considered part of your salary)?

## II. ROLE OF POSTDOCTORAL SCHOLARS ASSOCIATION'S AT U of C

17. Rate the functions you think the PostDoctoral Association should perform using a scale of: 1-4, with 1=very important, 2= somewhat important, 3=not too important, 4=not important at all.

(1) Help develop a careers office to serve postdocs/students

(2) Provide information manual to incoming postdocs

(3) Provide postdoc representation to U of C administration and faculty groups

(4) Provide information and referrals to postdocs for benefits and rights

(5) Organize postdoc seminar series (research and career seminars)

(6) Organize social functions for interaction with other postdocs

(7) Other comments/suggestions


18. The PostDoctoral Association is compiling an orientation/information manual for postdocs, what information would you like this manual to provide (check all appropriate)

- (1) Transportation to and around U of C
- (2) Housing
- (3) Campus organizations
- (4) Benefits and rights
- (5) Childcare
- (6) Financial Aid and funding
- (7) U of C Administrative structure
- (8) Career and employment referrals
- (9) Scientific resources and facilities
- (10) Arts and leisure activities
- (11) Tax issues
- (12) Visa issues
- (13) Other (specify)

If (13) Other, please specify

### III. TRAINING

19. How many people in the following categories are currently supervised by your PI/mentor?

PhD/MD (postdocs)	<input type="text" value="---"/>
Graduate Students	<input type="text" value="---"/>
Technicians	<input type="text" value="---"/>
Undergrads	<input type="text" value="---"/>

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20. In the most recent year how often did you meet individually with your principal investigator/mentor to discuss your work? (check one)

- (1) daily
  - (2) weekly
  - (3) 1-2 times per month
  - (4) quarterly
  - (5) less than quarterly
  - (6) have not met with PI in the past year
- 

21. Have you received any performance evaluation in the most recent year?

- (1) yes, written
  - (2) yes, oral
  - (3) no
- 

22. How many times per year would you like your performance to be evaluated?



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23. What are the most important aspects of a successful postdoc-PI experience? (rank in order from least important = 8 to most important = 1)

- (1) plenty of time to discuss your work
  - (2) listening to and respecting one another
  - (3) close personal rapport
  - (4) relaxed and comfortable work atmosphere
  - (5) freedom to become an independent investigator
  - (6) large number of high profile publications
  - (7) high caliber research from the lab
  - (8) PI well respected in their field
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24. The majority of your training in each of the following areas comes from (each will have a copy of the same scroll bar)

- lab techniques
- lab management

experimental design	<input type="text" value="---"/>
writing/publishing	<input type="text" value="---"/>
intellectual ,scientific reasoning	<input type="text" value="---"/>
determining the basic direction of your research projects	<input type="text" value="---"/>

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25. Did you and your PI write a plan (proposal) detailing the expectations of your project(s)?

- (1) yes  
 (2) no  
 (3) we are in the process  
 (4) we intend to
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26. During the past year, how many times have you presented your research outside your lab group

at the U of C	<input type="text" value="---"/>
outside the U of C	<input type="text" value="---"/>

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27. Would you like your postdoctoral training to include teaching experience?

- (1) yes  
 (2) no  
 (3) don't know
- 

28. Have you had any experience teaching?

- (1) no  
 (2) yes, at the UofC, as a Postdoc  
 (3) yes, at another institution, as a postdoc  
 (4) yes, both at the UofC and another institution, as a Postdoc  
 (5) yes, but only as a graduate student (TA)  
 (6) yes, but not as a postdoc or graduate student
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29. Have you, as a postdoc, mentored (longer than just to explain a technique) others (choose all that apply)?

- (1) no  
 (2) yes, at the U of C  
If (2) yes, select from below  
 undergraduate student(s)  
 graduate student(s)  
    technician(s)  
    medical student(s)  
    high school student(s)  
 (3) yes, at another institution

If (3) yes, select from below  
undergraduate student(s)

- graduate student(s)
- technician(s)
- medical student(s)
- high school student(s)
- 

30. Do you think there should be more opportunities to practice talks and to teach available for postdocs?

#### IV. JOB MARKET FOR SCIENTISTS/CAREER ISSUES

31. Did you take a postdoctoral appointment within a year after receiving your doctoral degree?

- (1) yes
- (2) no
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32. If you did not take a postdoctoral position within a year of receiving your doctoral degree, did you have difficulty in finding a job or postdoc?

- (1) yes
- (2) no
- 

33. What were the reasons for taking your FIRST postdoctoral appointment? (check all that apply)

- (1) To obtain additional research experience in your doctoral field
- (2) To work with a particular scientist or research group
- (3) To obtain research experience in a different field of research
- (4) Couldn't obtain type of employment position you wanted
- (5) Other reason

If (5) Other reason, please specify



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34. Do you wish to pursue a career in the U.S. if possible?

- (1) yes
- (2) no
- (3) don't know, not sure
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35. In what field do you plan to pursue a career? (rank the following on order that you are considering them, 1=first choice, 13=last choice, you may leave blank any that you are not considering)

- (1) Academic research/teaching
- (2) Academic research (no teaching)
- (3) Biotechnology
- (4) Government research

- (5) Pharmaceutical industry
- (6) Non profit organizations
- (7) Teaching at the College/University level
- (8) Teaching at High School or Elementary level
- (9) Scientific publishing
- (10) Health or technology policy
- (11) Finance/venture capital
- (12) Intellectual property/patent law
- (13) Other

If (13) Other, please specify

36. Which of the following best describes your immediate career plans?

- (1) Not actively seeking new position (skip the next question)
- (2) Actively seeking new position because present position terminates shortly
- (3) Actively seeking new position because of dissatisfaction with present position
- (4) Actively seeking new position because it is time to move to the next stage of my career
- (5) I have already found a permanent position
- (6) Other

If (6) Other, please specify

37. In your search for a permanent position,

How many applications have you submitted?

How many interviews have you had?

Have you prolonged the stay at your current position because of difficulties finding a permanent position?

**Please answer the following questions using a scale of 1-4, where 1=very useful, 2=somewhat useful, 3=not too useful, and 4= not useful at all (put a scroll bar with these options for each answer below).**

38. How useful has your postdoctoral experience at U of C been in preparing you for your intended career?

39. How useful have the following resources been to you in providing information about jobs/careers?

(1) Postdoctoral principal investigator/mentor

- (2) Other members of your lab or group/peers
- (3) Posted announcements
- (4) Advertisements in professional journals
- (5) Advertisements in newspapers or general journals
- (6) Internet or world wide web online listings
- (7) Career/Placement service at another institution
- (8) Private employment agency
- (9) Family, friends
- (10) Other scientists
- (11) Other
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40. What is your perception of the job market for scientists now?

- (1) excellent
- (2) good
- (3) fair
- (4) poor
- (5) don't know
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41. How would you rate your own chances of finding a satisfying career?

- (1) excellent
- (2) good
- (3) fair
- (4) poor
- (5) don't know
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42. Do you think your postdoctoral PI/mentor has a realistic view of the job market for scientists today?

- (1) yes
- (2) no
- (3) don't know
- 

## V. BENEFITS

43. Which of the following do you receive, and what is the primary source of funds for each?

health insurance	<input type="text" value="---"/>
dental insurance	<input type="text" value="---"/>
life insurance	<input type="text" value="---"/>
retirement	<input type="text" value="---"/>
maternity/paternity leave	<input type="text" value="---"/>
other benefits	<input type="text" value="---"/>

If other benefits, please specify

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44. During the past year, how many times have you and your dependants required unexpected medical intervention(besides routine check ups)?

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45. Do you or any of your dependants have a chronic medical condition that require constant medical treatment?

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46. If you have a child, was your child born while you were a Postdoc at the U of C?

- (1) yes
- (2) no, born before appointment at U of C
- (3) no, no children

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47. If you had a child during your postdoc,

what was the length of your maternity/parental leave?

how much of this leave was unpaid?

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48. If you have a child, how would you rate the availability of childcare programs?

- (1) poor
- (2) good
- (3)excellent

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49. What other benefits would you like to see offered to post docs by U of C? (please specify)

<input type="text"/>	
<input type="text"/>	

