

Baylor
College of
Medicine

GRADUATE
SCHOOL
OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
POSTDOCTORAL
AFFAIRS

Postdoctoral Training Handbook



2026-2027

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Welcome to Baylor College of Medicine

Thank you for selecting Baylor College of Medicine for your postdoctoral training. As a member of our postdoctoral community, you will be joining nearly 550 postdoctoral scholars engaging in innovative research across 9 basic sciences departments, 18 clinical departments, and 11 centers at the College. We wish you success as you contribute to scientific discoveries, develop as an independent professional, and prepare for a career path that best aligns with your interests and goals.

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs within the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences strengthens the institution's research and education missions by fostering an enriching environment for postdoctoral research training. As a trusted hub for postdoctoral scholars, faculty mentors, and departments, we provide expert guidance on policies and processes, cultivate community engagement, offer structured training opportunities, and promote career development. We are committed to supporting you throughout your training.

This handbook is designed to serve as a guide throughout your postdoctoral experience, introducing postdoc-specific policies, opportunities, resources, and support services available to help you succeed. If, at any time during your training, you have questions or need support, please contact us at postdocaffairs@bcm.edu.

Evelin Young, PhD

Director, Office of Postdoctoral Affairs



2. About Postdoctoral Training

- Definition - A postdoctoral scholar ("postdoc") is an individual holding a doctoral degree who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills needed to pursue a career path of his or her choosing. Postdocs at Baylor College of Medicine are appointed through the [Office of Postdoctoral Affairs](#) upon recommendation from their department chair after they are hired.
- Classifications
 - Postdoctoral Associate: a research postdoctoral scholar who receives a salary funded through grants or other funds that are not specifically designated fellowships or traineeships.
 - Postdoctoral Fellow: a research postdoctoral scholar who receives a stipend from a specific fellowship or traineeship to support their training at BCM.
 - Research Postdoctoral Fellow – MD: a research postdoctoral scholar with an MD who receives a salary funded through grants or other funds that are not specifically designated fellowships or traineeships.
 - Postdoctoral Associate - Specialist: a research postdoctoral scholar with a specialized science background, who receives a salary funded through grants or other funds that are not specifically designated fellowships or traineeships.
 - Postdoctoral Fellow - Specialist: a research postdoctoral scholar with a specialized science background who receives a stipend from a specific fellowship or traineeship to support their training at BCM.
 - Genetic Counseling Research Fellow: a research postgraduate with a terminal degree in Genetic Counseling who is appointed.
 - Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow: A scholar who holds a primary appointment at another institution but is approved by the Office of Research to visit BCM for research training will serve as a Visiting Postdoctoral Fellow. Visiting Postdoctoral Fellows are not BCM employees and are not appointed through the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs but may participate in community and professional development activities offered to Research Postdoctoral Scholars. Visiting Postdoctoral Fellows must receive a salary and benefits from their primary institution or a third-party organization.
- Appointment Terms
 - Degree Requirement: Candidates must possess a doctoral degree, i.e., Ph.D., M.D., Psy.D., D.V.M, or medical degree equivalent, and seek temporary, mentored research experience and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills necessary to pursue their chosen career path. Individuals that are currently enrolled in a research Ph.D. program are not eligible for appointment through the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.
 - Full-Time Equivalent (FTE): Research Postdoctoral Scholar Appointments must be full-time and cannot be less than 1.0 FTE (100% full-time).

- Workplace Arrangements: Research Postdoctoral Scholar Appointments are training positions that are not eligible for full-time remote work. Hybrid working arrangements are allowable and contingent upon the nature of the work, and supervisor and departmental approval.
- Professional Development: Research Postdoctoral Scholars are eligible and encouraged to participate in professional and career development curriculum and opportunities that support their career goals. The Appointment is recommended to have at least 10% of the scholar's time available for postdoctoral professional development guided by the training goals of the scholar's Individual Development Plan.
- Salary: Salary must adhere to the [Research Postdoctoral Scholars Compensation Policy](#) (BCM login required).
- Time-Limited: One-year appointments are renewable on an annual basis, but postdocs are limited to four renewals – a total of five years of postdoctoral training at Baylor. There is an exception pathway available to request an additional year of training, up to 6 years total. There is no expectation of employment after expiration of the Appointment term.
- Postdoc Policies (BCM login required)
 - [Appointment Policy](#)
 - [Time-Off and Leave of Absence Policy](#)
 - [Research Postdoctoral Scholars Compensation Policy](#)
 - [Grievance Process Policy](#)
 - [Performance Remediation and Termination Policy](#)

3. Appointment and Onboarding

- Appointment Process - The sponsoring department is responsible for requesting an Appointment through the Postdoctoral Appointments and Profiles System. The department must ensure that all requirements are met, and documents are completed for review by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs within 30 days of the Appointment start date. After approval, an Appointment Letter is issued.
- Postdoc Orientation – New hires are invited to a postdoc-specific orientation which is held monthly. Postdocs are expected to attend within their first three months.
- New Hire Resources – Postdocs are employees of Baylor College of Medicine. See the employee new hire list here: <https://www.bcm.edu/careers/orientation>. After hire, BCM onboarding resources can be found at [Orientation Station](#) (BCM login required)
- Postdoc Listserv - This moderated listserv provides a forum for the exchange of information and topics significant to postdocs at Baylor College of Medicine. All research postdocs at the College are subscribed to the listserv during their first week.
 - Post Messages - Postings to the listserv can be sent to postdoc@listserv.bcm.edu. Please ensure your email is applicable to the postdoctoral community and has an informative subject line before sending. Topics can include research materials/expertise requests, career and training opportunities, and BCM-TMC news.

4. Roles, Responsibilities, and Expectations

- Postdoc Expectations –
 - exhibit a professional commitment to research training and a high level of technical and cognitive skills;
 - create an Individual Development Plan (IDP) within 90 days of starting the position;
 - update the IDP annually;
 - complete the self-evaluation portion of the annual performance review;
 - discuss career development and progression annually, based on the IDP with their mentor;
 - update the publications and awards list in the Postdoctoral Appointments and Profiles System annually;
 - adhere to ethical standards. Scholars are encouraged to participate in the Responsible Conduct of Research training course for postdocs within the first two Appointments; and
 - in the event of resignation before the end of the Appointment, provide notice to the department in accordance with the [Performance Remediation and Termination Policy](#) (BCM login required); and
 - return all BCM-owned data, documents, and equipment as required by applicable BCM policies when ending a postdoc appointment.
- Mentor Responsibilities - Research mentors are BCM faculty members who are responsible for providing mentorship and regular feedback on performance and establishing a mutually agreed upon research plan with well-defined expectations and goals. They will:
 - provide mentorship and ensure scholar training;
 - adhere to the expectations of the [AAMC Compact between Postdoctoral Appointees and Their Mentors](#);
 - complete an annual performance review; and
 - discuss career development and progression of the scholar annually, based on the IDP.
- IDP – An Individual Development Plan is a tool to communicate goals and action plans for training and project development, professional and career development, and well-being. The [IDP Toolkit](#) (BCM login required) supports a postdoc in creating an IDP through a reflective process with forms and resources.
- Performance Evaluation– annually in the fall, the [Postdoc Performance Evaluation](#) takes place, starting with a postdoc self-assessment and resulting in a performance rating and discussion from their mentor. The goals of this program are to recognize the contributions and efforts of postdocs, align mentor and mentee expectations regarding work, and identify areas for development and support.

5. Career and Professional Development

- [Career Development Center](#) – supports all trainees at the College. Provides free 1:1 coaching services, workshops, and guidance through all stages of career development, from career exploration to job search and offer negotiation.
- [Office of Postdoctoral Affairs](#) (BCM login required) – curates career and professional development opportunities in a bimonthly newsletter, the [Postdoc News](#) (BCM login required), and facilitates trainings and programs around mentoring, communication, and leadership.
- Professional Development Platform – internal online learning system for employees with webinars, courses, bootcamps, and certifications called “[Learning G.P.S. - Grow. Perform. Succeed](#) (BCM login required)”.
- [Graduate Coursework](#) (BCM login required) - postdocs can take up to 15 credit hours of graduate school coursework for credit or audit at no cost.
- [Office of Training Grants and Fellowships](#) – supports graduate students and postdocs in applying for fellowships through webinars, resources, and 1:1 advising. Accepts applications for the \$3,000 [Dean’s Award for Excellence](#) (BCM login required) for trainees who obtain a competitive fellowship award.
- The [National Postdoctoral Association](#) is a professional society dedicated to improving the postdoctoral experience. Baylor College of Medicine has an institutional membership, which provides free individual memberships for BCM postdocs. Members gain access to professional development workshops, leadership and networking opportunities, international trainee resources, and more.
- The [Postdoctoral Association \(PDA\) Leadership Council](#) at Baylor College of Medicine is a postdoc-led group that works to build a sense of community among postdocs and support opportunities to develop skills necessary to be successful in any career path. The PDA Leadership Council is available as a resource to ask questions and share concerns.

6. Research Environment

- State of the art [research resources](#) are available to support scientists.
- Responsible Conduct of Research – the [Responsible Conduct of Research](#) course for postdocs is offered annually in April.
- Policies (BCM login required)
 - [Research Misconduct](#)
 - [Policy on Authorship](#)
 - [Patents and Other Intellectual Property](#)
- [Texas Medical Center Library](#) - for institutional access to journals.

7. Compensation and Benefits

- Salary - a minimum salary scale per years of experience as a postdoc at Baylor is set annually. Generally, increases take place at the time of reappointment. [Pay Scale](#) (BCM login required).
- [Paid Time Off](#) – 15 days of vacation and 24 days of sick time (up to 34 days for reappointments) awarded as a bank when hired and annually thereafter at reappointment; 4 discretionary floating time off days accrued quarterly; and 9 institutional holidays.
- [Benefits and Cost Information](#) – subsidized medical and dental plans, insurance, and work-life benefits.

8. International Scholars

- [International Services Office](#) - facilitates programs that allow the legal admission of international students, scholars, trainees, visitors and faculty to the United States to participate in research, education and clinical services.
- [Resources for International Postdocs Folder](#) (BCM login required) – includes:
 - FAQs with International Services – This document summarizes the results of an annual session where international postdocs receive the latest guidance from ISO regarding immigration, visa status, international travel, and more relevant to each visa type.
 - National Postdoctoral Association’s Guides – international postdoc survival guide, guide to taxes, tips for hiring an immigration attorney, and guide to visas.

9. Support and Well-Being

- Ombuds - [The Ombuds Office](#) promotes a neutral, fair and equitable approach to problem solving, conflict management and consensus building. It is a confidential place for students, trainees, faculty, and staff to express concerns, resolve disputes, manage conflicts, and increase communication skills.
- Emotional and Mental Health Wellness - Postdocs may seek therapy for a wide array of concerns. In addition to services offered through an insurance provider, Baylor College of Medicine provides [two options](#) through which to seek assistance:
 - Student and House Staff Mental Health Service provides in-person care (with telehealth option) by BCM clinicians.
 - Employee Assistance Program
- [BCM Well-Being](#) - creates a culture of healthy living and wellness throughout the College by offering onsite, offsite, and virtual opportunities for employees and learners to participate in events, programs, and workshops.

10. Campus Resources (BCM login required)

- [Dining](#)
- [Campus Shuttles](#)
- [BCM Team Shop](#)
- [Post Office/Mail Services](#)

11. Relocation to Houston

- [Houston Facts](#) – from the [Greater Houston Partnership](#).
- [Living in Houston](#) - Get information on Houston neighborhoods, useful sites and companies to find rentals, and see cost-of-living calculators via the BCM Life in Houston page.
- [City of Houston Relocation](#) – access a relocation packet, learn about schools, utilities, services, and voter registration.
- Transportation
 - Get a Texas [Driver License](#).
 - Public Transportation - Parking and transportation in the Texas Medical Center can be challenging, however, Baylor College of Medicine offers subsidies for those using offsite parking and the [Houston METRO system](#).
 - Bicycling - Depending on where you live, you may want to bike to the Texas Medical Center. View the Houston Bike Map, Texas bike laws, and more at [BikeHouston](#).
 - Some apartments near the Texas Medical Center offer shuttle service.

12. Meet the Office and Association

- Office of Postdoctoral Affairs



Evelin Young, Ph.D.
Director



Gina Baker-Melis
Senior Coordinator

- Postdoctoral Association Leadership Council 2026-2027



Maria Stegantseva, Ph.D.
President
Postdoctoral Associate,
Molecular & Cellular
Biology



Dipayan Sarkar, Ph.D.
Vice President
Postdoctoral Associate,
Molecular & Human
Genetics



Samuel Jesse, Ph.D.
Secretary
Postdoctoral Associate,
Pediatrics - Nutrition



Per Adastra, Ph.D.
Treasurer
Postdoctoral Associate,
TCH Pathology



Megan Mair, Ph.D.
Engagement Committee
Chair
Postdoctoral Associate,
Molecular & Human
Genetics



Amanda Engstrom, Ph.D.
Communications
Committee Chair
Postdoctoral Associate,
Molecular & Human
Genetics



Jessica Watts, Ph.D.
Professional & Career
Development Committee
Chair
Postdoctoral Fellow,
Medicine - Health Services
Research