

2025 Annual Report

Office of Postdoctoral Affairs



Baylor
College of
Medicine

GRADUATE
SCHOOL
OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
POSTDOCTORAL
AFFAIRS

Who We Are



Mission & Vision

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs oversees, develops, and manages policies and procedures regarding research postdoctoral scholars and is committed to providing training that aligns with the core competencies identified by the National Postdoctoral Association. Our roles are to:

1

Develop a thriving postdoctoral community consisting of research postdoctoral scholars, mentors, and staff

2

Collaborate internally and externally to provide professional development and skills training

3

Provide avenues for postdoctoral associates and fellows to pursue a diverse range of professional options

4

Assess, research, and provide information to support the training, development, and tracking of postdocs

Value

The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs at Baylor College of Medicine 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.

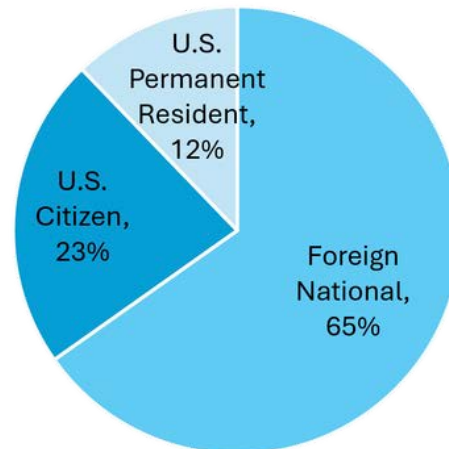
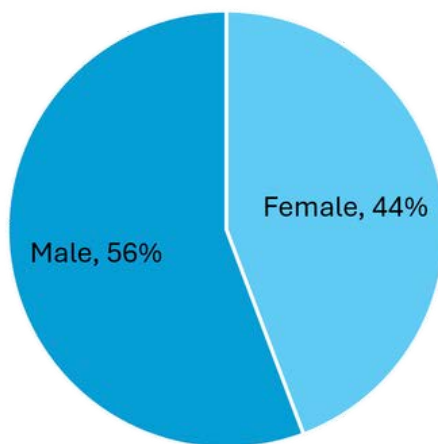
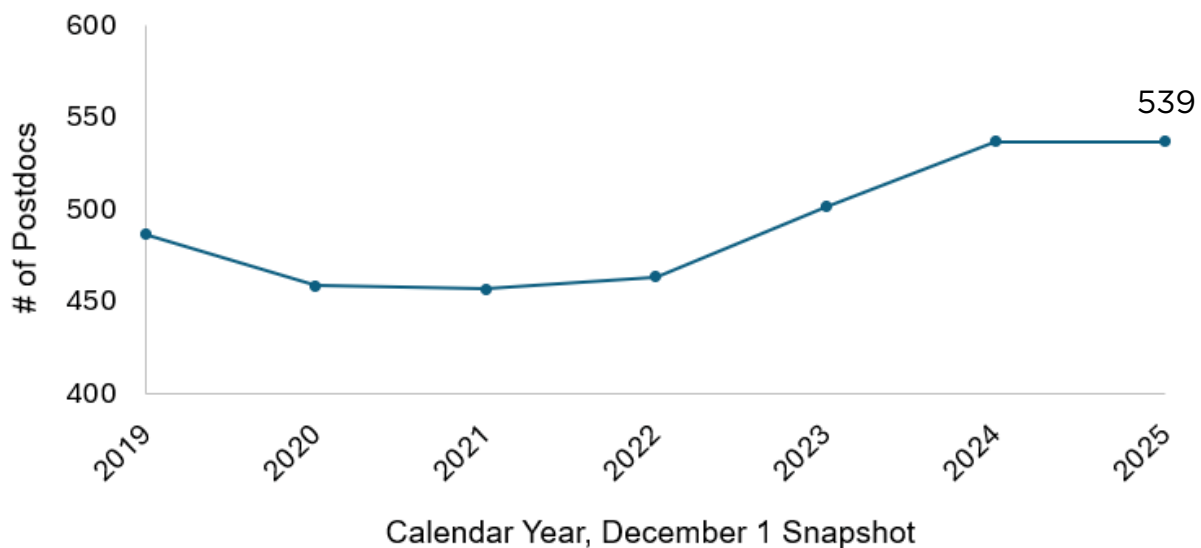
Dear Colleagues,

BCM's postdoctoral scholars make invaluable contributions to our research community through their talent, dedication, and innovation. We are grateful to the faculty, departments, and partners across BCM who help create an environment where postdoctoral scholars can grow and thrive. I am pleased to share the 2025 Annual Report from the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs.

*Sincerely,
Evelin Young, PhD
Director, Postdoctoral Affairs*

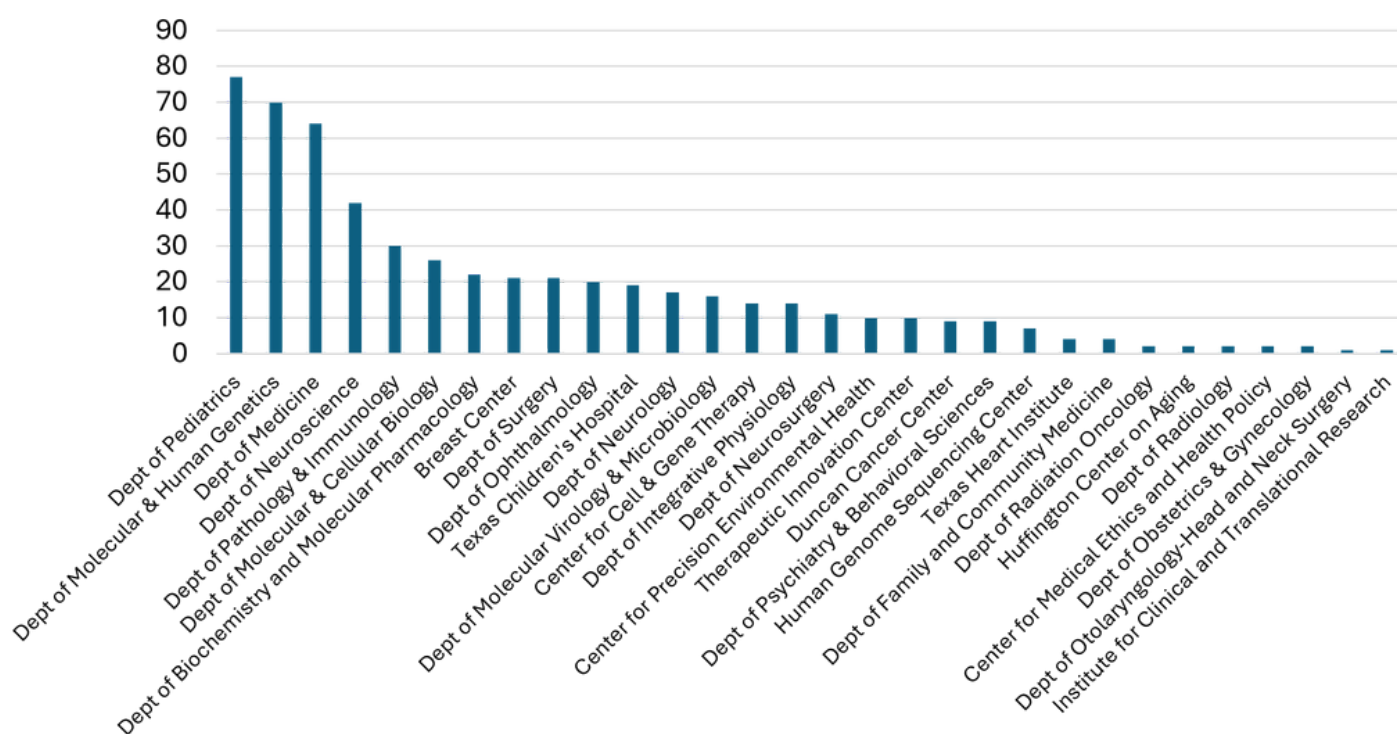
Postdoc Snapshot

The number of research postdoctoral scholars fluctuates throughout the year, with **539 scholars** at the December snapshot. Following a period of growth, the population remained unchanged over the last two years. Research postdocs are 56% male, and 65% are international scholars holding visas. Among visa holders, the top countries of origin are China, India, the Republic of Korea, Japan, Brazil, and Canada.



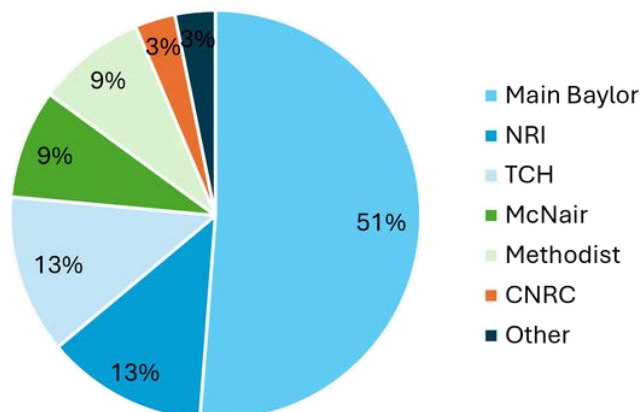
Training Locations

Research postdoctoral scholars train across **30 basic science and clinical departments and centers, representing 256 research laboratories**. Nearly half of all training labs host a single postdoctoral scholar, while **26% mentor two postdocs** and **another 26% mentor three or more postdocs**. The majority of training laboratories (51%) are located at Baylor College of Medicine's Main Campus, followed by the Jan and Dan Duncan Neurological Research Institute (NRI) and Texas Children's Hospital (TCH), each accounting for 13% of training sites.



Lab Size (# Postdocs per Lab)	# of Labs	% of Labs
≥3	67	26%
2	66	26%
1	123	48%

256 Labs



Postdoc Accomplishments

Postdoctoral scholars reported a total of **806 publications**, including research articles, reviews, and book chapters, and as first author on 30% of them, in 2024. Publication reporting for 2025 is in progress. Read about some of their projects below.

BCM'S FROM THE LABS HIGHLIGHTED POSTDOC RESEARCH



ELMIRA KHABUSHEVA, PH.D.

Scientists uncover nuclear droplets that link multiple leukemias, a potential new therapeutic target
PMID: 41192422



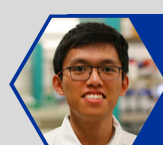
DIVYA NAGARAJ, PH.D.

Human 'mini-noses' help understand why RSV infections are more severe in children than in adults
PMID: 40975328



MENG YU, PH.D.

Estrogen and the brain team up to help mothers adapt to the metabolic demands of nursing
PMID: 40211044



YUEN SAN CHAN, PH.D.

A molecular bridge helps disordered proteins work properly
PMID: 40695292



T'ZU-CHIAO LU, PH.D.

Alzheimer's disease affects an organism as a whole
PMID: 40381615



YING CHEN, PH.D.

Genetics and circadian rhythms: Connecting your DNA to your body's internal timekeeper
PMID: 40341583



ALI H. BERESHNEH, PH.D.

New CDKL genes linked to neurodevelopmental disorders
PMID: 40088891



GERARDA CAPPUCCIO, PH.D.

Neural progenitor cells have been elusive – now researchers have found a way to ID them
PMID: 40845852



LONGLONG TU, PH.D.

Motion sickness brain circuit may provide new options for treating obesity
PMID: 40119169



YAO LIU, PH.D.

Food odors don't just trigger cravings – when they persist, they can suppress appetite
PMID: 40849319



LIQUN YU, PH.D.

Fatty acids promote immune suppression and therapy resistance in triple negative breast cancer
PMID: 40157359



CHENWEI WANG, PH.D.

AI connects mutations, protein modifications and disease
PMID: 40859022



SONI KAUNDAL, PH.D.

Discovering replication hubs of human norovirus
PMID: 39345611



AHMED GAD, PH.D.

Sprinter and marathoner CAR T cells reveal their distinct cancer-killing behavior
PMID: 39792660

In 2025, **13 postdoctoral scholars** were awarded **competitive research fellowships and career development awards totaling \$3.1 million**, including 6 federal awards (\$1.5M) and 7 non-federal awards (\$1.6M). Major funding sources included NIH (F32, K99/R00), American Heart Association and National Multiple Sclerosis Society. Collectively, these and previously awarded grants support over 30 postdoctoral scholars in 2025 through individually secured funding. Additionally, 28 postdoctoral scholars were supported by a T32 grant.

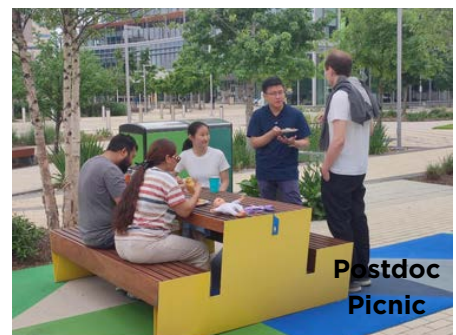
Postdoctoral Association

The Postdoctoral Association is a postdoc-led organization, with a leadership council elected each summer. Their mission is to foster and support the BCM postdoc community with the following aims:

- To enhance the experiences of postdocs at BCM by creating a sense of belonging
- To represent and support postdocs' interests at Baylor College of Medicine
- To facilitate the professional enrichment and development of postdocs



2025 Postdoctoral Association Leadership Council: 1. President – Abie Williams-Villalobo, Ph.D. 2. Vice President – Tagari Samanta, Ph.D. 3. Treasurer – Zhenghao Chen, Ph.D. 4. Professional & Career Development Committee Chair – Ngan Fung Li, Ph.D. 5. Communications Committee Chair – Amanda Engstrom, Ph.D. 6. Secretary – Nicoletta Memos, Ph.D. 7. Engagement Committee Chair – Maria Stegantseva, Ph.D.



2025 New Hires

Comparing 2025 to 2024

- The number of new postdoctoral scholars hired was unchanged at 186 in 2024 and 2025.
- The percentage of scholars who graduated from U.S. institutions increased from 46% to 53%.

126
LABS JOINED

28
DEPARTMENTS
& CENTERS

186
New
Postdocs

35
NATIONALITIES

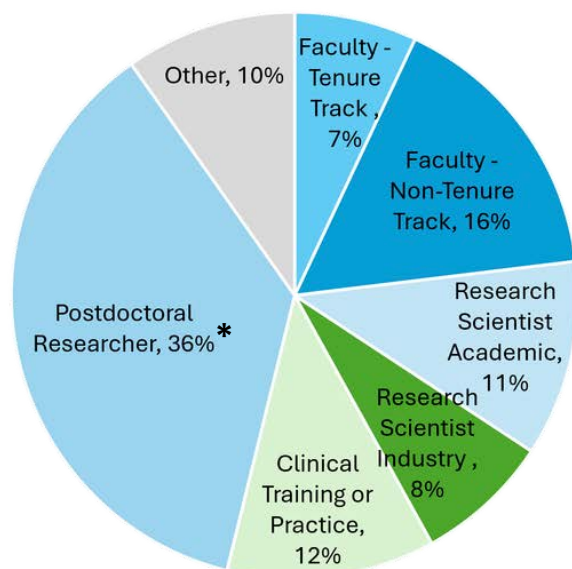
53%
TERMINAL
DEGREES
FROM U.S.

Location of U.S. Terminal Degree Institutions

United States	98
Texas	54
Houston	45
BCM	35

Career Outcomes

Administrative contacts in departments and centers and the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs gather the immediate next position career outcomes of exiting research postdoctoral scholars.



Training Outcome	Median Training Time (yrs)
Faculty – Tenure track	5.2
Faculty – Non-tenure track	3.6
Research Scientist - Academic	3.5
Research Scientist - Industry	1.7
Clinical Training or Practice	1.6
Unknown	2.0
Other	1.0
Postdoctoral Researcher	1.6

143 of 187 Exits had a known training outcome

Examples of Career Outcomes Titles

Faculty

Assistant Professor – Johns Hopkins University
Assistant Professor – Zhejiang University
Instructor – Baylor College of Medicine

Research Scientist - Academic

Staff Scientist – Baylor College of Medicine
Research Investigator – MDACC
Bioinformatics Scientist – Houston Methodist

Research Scientist - Industry

Research Scientist – AstraZeneca
Analytical Chemist – Eagle Analytical
Senior Scientist – March Biosciences

Other – Pharma, Business, Biotech

Medical Science Liaison – Genentech
High Potential Entrepreneur Venture Fellow – Celdara Medical
Principal Software Developer – Oxford Biomedica

Clinical Training or Practice

Medical Resident – NYU Langone Health
Clinical Chemist – Alberta Precision Laboratories
Pediatric Hepatologist – Ben Gurion University

* One-third of the 36% who left BCM for another postdoctoral position moved with a PI who left BCM.

New in 2025



Manuscript Peer Review Training Program Pilot

The Peer Pro Project, led by Dr. Ariel Lyons-Warren in collaboration with Drs. Evelin Young, Dan Gorelick, and Megumi Seese, earned first place in the 2025 Education Innovation Hackathon Pitch Competition. Supported by a pilot grant from the Huffington Dept. of Education, Innovation and Technology, the team designed, developed, and piloted an innovative manuscript peer review training program that teaches how to identify fundamental flaws in manuscripts, give good feedback, and write high-quality reviews. Program development and evaluation continue into 2026.



New Policies

- The **23.2.09 - Research Postdoctoral Scholar Appointment Policy** explains the appointment terms, including degree requirements, workplace arrangements, time for professional development, compensation, and a training time-limit. It also outlines research postdoctoral scholar obligations, research mentor responsibilities, and the sponsoring department responsibilities to maintain an active academic appointment.
- The **23.2.08 - Research Postdoctoral Scholar Performance Remediation and Termination Policy** provides a structured process for addressing performance concerns of new and established postdoctoral scholars, including the implementation of a Postdoctoral Performance Improvement Plan and, when necessary, progressive disciplinary action. Termination procedures and notice period requirements are described.

Ongoing Efforts

Building Community

Postdoctoral Orientation, offered monthly to welcome new research postdoctoral scholars, provides an overview of postdoc-specific policies and introduces scholars to professional and career development opportunities. In 2025, **65% of new research postdoctoral scholars attended orientation.**

The *Postdoc News* newsletter is published twice a month.

POSTDOC NEWS
June 12, 2025 Vol. 5, Issue 11

Baylor College of Medicine
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF BIOMEDICAL SCIENCES
POSTDOCTORAL AFFAIRS

POSTDOC SPOTLIGHT

Xiaoyun Ding, Ph.D.
Neuroscience - Matthew Rasband, Ph.D.

Dr. Ding is originally from China, where she earned her B.S. in Biological Sciences from the Zhiyuan Honors College at Shanghai Jiao Tong University. She then received her Ph.D. in Developmental Biology at Baylor College of Medicine with Dr. Hyun Kyoung Lee and is now a postdoctoral fellow with Dr. Matthew Rasband in the Department of Neuroscience. She was recently named a **2025 Leading Edge Fellow** and also received the **Career Transition Fellowship** from the National Multiple Sclerosis Society (NMSS), which supports promising postdocs transitioning to independent faculty roles. She has also received support from the American Society for Neurochemistry (ASN) and the International Society for Neurochemistry (ISN). Dr. Ding is fascinated by neuron-glia interactions, particularly how oligodendrocyte-axon communication contributes to health and diseases, including aging, CNS injury, and multiple sclerosis. Her work integrates cellular and molecular biology, biochemistry, imaging, mouse genetics, genome editing, and translational and proteomics. Over the next two years, she aims to launch her independent research program studying neuron-glia communication in neurological and psychiatric disorders. Inspired by the excellent mentorship she has received, she is equally enthusiastic about fostering the growth of future scientists. Outside the lab, Dr. Ding is an avid runner and hiker, a creative home cook, and a coffee and cat lover who treasures time spent with friends and her feline companions. Keep up with Dr. Ding via LinkedIn, [here!](#)

POSTDOC KUDOS

Ashley Anderson, Ph.D.
Molecular & Human Genetics - Huda Zoghbi, M.D.

Congratulations to Dr. Anderson, who was recently named a **2025 Leading Edge Fellow** in recognition of her research, "Convergent Molecular Mechanisms in Rare Neurodevelopmental Disorders." The Leading Edge Fellowship supports women and non-binary postdoctoral researchers by providing peer mentorship and professional development throughout the early stages of their scientific careers.

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**25 postdoc
spotlights and
kudos featured
in 2025**

**115 professional
development
opportunities and
events shared across
22 issues**

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Ongoing Efforts



Featured Activities

- **Postdoc Houston 2025**, a multi-institutional virtual postdoctoral recruitment and information event, was held on May 15 and attracted approximately 180 attendees. The half-day program provided participants with opportunities to learn about postdoctoral training in the Texas Medical Center across participating institutions.
- The **Research Faculty Job Search Series** featured six speakers in three sessions: Drs. Qi Ye, Jeff Steimle, Na Zhao, Chloe Chung, Blair Benham-Pyle, and Christophe Herman
- **Mentor Training opportunities** including the CIMER-based Mentor Training & Mentoring Up Training, and the Scientific Communication Advances Research Excellence (SCOARE) Mentor Training were offered by the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs and in collaboration with the Gulf Coast Consortia.
- Fall and Spring cohorts of graduate students and postdoctoral scholars participated in the **PhD Career Ladder** career exploration program and the **Writing Accountability Group** program, delivered in collaboration with the Career Development Center and Academic Success Center, respectively.
- The **Responsible Conduct of Research** course for postdocs is offered by the Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences. In 2025, 62 research postdoctoral scholars completed the 16-hour course.

Guiding Administrative Processes and Data Collection

- **Reviewed 856 postdoctoral appointment requests** for New Appointments, Reappointments, Transfers, and Exits.
- **Coordinated with 128 PAPS Administrative Contacts** in departments and centers who manage departmental responsibilities of the postdoc appointment process in the Postdoctoral Appointments & Profiles System (PAPS).
- **Trained 18 new department administrators** to use PAPS to manage postdoctoral appointments.
- Data collected contributed to **5 institutional training grant submissions** that support postdoctoral training.

Resources

IDP Toolkit

Resources for
International
Postdocs

Research
Postdoctoral
Benefits

Current
Minimum Pay
Scale

Annual
Performance
Evaluation

Responsible
Conduct of
Research for
Postdocs

Emotional and
Mental Health
Wellness

GSBS Course
Registration

Postdoc
Affairs
Intranet

Postdoc
Association

Postdoc News

Grievance
Process
Policy

Time-Off and
Leave of
Absence
Policy

Compensation
Policy

Appointment
Policy

Performance
and
Termination
Policy

Office Contacts



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