



## National Evolutionary Synthesis Center

2024 W. Main St., Suite A200  
Durham, NC 27705 USA  
<http://www.nescent.org>  
919-668-4551

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### The Postdoctoral Program at NESCent

We welcome you to the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent). NESCent represents a collaborative effort by three universities in North Carolina's Research Triangle: Duke University, North Carolina State University (NCSU), and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (UNC-CH). Our goal is to facilitate a broad synthesis in evolutionary science by fostering cross-disciplinary interactions. Each of you will have a primary project of your own design; but as a whole, the group will have a great deal of "free energy" to take advantage of new opportunities for synthesis and collaboration as they arise.

#### Major Questions Arising About the Postdoctoral Program

Please be advised that this is a relatively informal section and is here to provide guidelines—it is not intended to cover everything, and special cases always arise. You should always feel free to discuss any questions about the Center with one of the Directors.

#### What role does the “entrance interview play”?

Within a month or so of your arrival at NESCent you will meet with 2-3 NESCent Directors and Operations Committee members to discuss your career as a postdoctoral fellow. At this meeting we will discuss your general goals, in terms of your NESCent project as well as your career. At this time, the NESCent Directors will advise you on local resources and upcoming events at and visitors to NESCent that may be of interest. We will answer any questions on funding, NESCent opportunities and expectations for you as a postdoctoral fellow. Finally, you, along with this committee will propose a mentorship and collaboration plan. In this plan you will identify local and national individuals that can best help you achieve your scientific goals. You will also set forth a plan to contact and establish appropriate collaborations with these individuals. Within a month after this meeting we will expect that you will submit this mentorship and collaboration plan to this committee.

#### What are the expectations in the first and second year?

As a postdoctoral fellow it is critical that you make the transition to become a fully independent scientist. Therefore it is important that you establish your own ability to assess the requirements for the kind of career you wish to achieve and begin to meet those requirements. There is no checklist for success in academic science beyond the fact that a successful scientist has made a significant contribution to the intellectual growth of his or her chosen field.

That being said, what do we look for in your annual reports? As a NESCent postdoctoral fellow you have few demands on your time, and a high level of productivity is expected

- We expect after the first year that you will have made substantial progress towards meeting the goals of your proposed project.

- We expect that you will have acted on your mentorship and collaboration plan, and have established the necessary contacts.
- We expect you to have developed new collaborations, with other NESCent postdoctoral fellows, sabbatical scholars, and scientists affiliated with working groups and other activities, that are likely to generate collaborative products (publications, software, new research directions).
- We expect that you will have publications beyond the “in prep” stage (published, accepted or submitted) either from your postdoctoral work, your dissertation, or other activities. Publications are the currency of academic science and you’ll never have as much time as you have now.
- We expect you to participate in Center activities. This includes attending and presenting seminars in the lunchtime series, contributing to the journal club and attending other NESCent events; helping organize outside speakers or NESCent generated workshops or meetings. We expect you to work with our EOG in Center outreach activities, and expect you to meet with visiting groups such as our advisory boards, NSF officials, and site visit teams.
- We expect you to interact with the local scientific community. This means giving seminars at local universities (if you need help in making contact, ask your mentor or one of the Directors) and participating in lab meetings or study groups in areas that are close to your interests. We expect you to establish collaborations, as appropriate, whether locally or remotely.
- We expect you to show tangible professional development. You should be applying for jobs in your second year (even if you hope to obtain a third year of funding); it is advisable to begin applying to appropriate positions in your first year. You should be attending and presenting papers at scientific meetings. You should be giving research seminars at other universities and institutions.

Your career is your responsibility. While the above are items that we look for in assessing your progress, they are the same items that will make you a successful scientist long after you leave NESCent.

### **Must I do the project I initially proposed?**

One generalization that can be made about science is that you can never fully plan on how your project will evolve. Any scientist knows that during the course of a research program unexpected new opportunities may arise; aspects may prove unproductive; and new ideas appear. Thus, we expect that your project will evolve during the course of your postdoctoral fellowship and your exposure to the wide range of evolutionary scientists at the Center. That being said, if you anticipate a significant change in course, you should discuss the matter with Susan Alberts, Allen Rodrigo, and Craig McClain. In cases of radical change, we may ask that you prepare a modified research plan as part of your annual review.

### **What role does my NESCent mentor play?**

When you arrive, an informal NESCent mentor is assigned to you. This mentor is generally one of the Directors or an at-large member of the Operations Committee (OC). We expect you to meet with your mentor informally a couple of times a semester to help answer questions, assess your progress, and give you informal advice. It is your responsibility to set up these meetings. Your

NESCent mentor will be responsible for helping the OC assess your annual reports and should be willing to read drafts and advise you on the preparation of these reports.

In most cases the NESCent mentor is not intended to substitute for scientific mentorship or be your sole or major scientific advisor. With the NESCent Directors and your NESCent mentor you will establish a mentorship and collaboration plan that can help provide you with detailed scientific advice. Your NESCent mentor should be able to help you identify the best options from among the local universities and help you make contact if necessary. He/she can also help you set up seminars and local opportunities to speak.

We realize that it is sometimes difficult to meet with mentors that are not often at the Center. This is a two way street, and you should take the initiative. If you feel you don't have sufficient time to talk to your mentor, send an email asking when that person will next be at NESCent. Set up a time to go across the street for a cup of coffee or lunch. You know better when a discussion would be productive than your mentor does. However, you don't have to wait until you have a set of questions—simply set up informal “get to know you” sessions.

Our major goal in assigning the mentor is to make sure you know there is an individual that you can go to for advice and questions. There is no particular checklist on what you can and can't ask; so if in doubt, ask. On the other hand, the mentor is not expected to be your sole source of contact. You should feel free to contact any of the Directors at any time, in particular Allen, Susan, or Craig for general questions about the Center, the postdoctoral program, or your career, and Todd if there are issues regarding IT support and informatics. Finally, if you have established a good working relationship with a member of the OC who is not your mentor or if you are having difficulty in communicating with your mentor, you should feel free, at any time, to talk to Joel or Kathleen about a switch.

### **What is the role of visiting scientists and sabbatical scholars?**

We also ask that visiting scientists work with postdoctoral fellows as informal mentors. This will vary, however depending on the particular people on sabbatical at any time. In addition David Swofford is at NESCent as a senior scientist, and supported by the core grant. One of his major roles at the Center is to work with postdoctoral fellows both as a formal advisor for issues involving phyloinformatics, and also as an informal advisor. You should feel free to talk to him about scientific or career issues.

### **Can I attend working groups and catalysis meetings?**

We encourage postdoctoral fellows to participate in working groups and catalysis meetings as appropriate. However, we also expect you to treat these groups seriously. If you are interested in participating in such a group, you should write to the leader well ahead of the meeting, introducing yourself, and stating your specific interests. It is good if you specify the kinds of background and expertise you bring to the group. This is particularly important for working groups, which are smaller and depend more on the right dynamics and chemistry for success. Particularly for working groups if you do participate, you should discuss with the leader how you intend to contribute. With catalysis meetings, it is easier to simply “drop in” by sitting in the back; however even in this case, it is good if you introduce yourself to the leader before the meeting. If an issue arises regarding your participation, please let Susan or Craig know, and we'll communicate with the group leader. For NESCent generated events (e.g., hackathons, workshops,

Darwin Day, etc.), we actively encourage the participation of postdoctoral fellows from the beginning stages of organization.

### **Can we invite outside speakers and visitors to the Center?**

We expect to be able to invite 4-6 outside speakers a year. This means that every postdoctoral fellow should be able to invite and host an outside speaker during their 2 years at NESCent. At this time external speakers are coordinated through Jory and Craig. You should contact them about the specific process.

Additionally, NESCent will be organizing a variety of symposia, workshops and events such as Darwin Day. We hope/expect/desire the participation of postdoctoral fellows at all stages of the organization of these events. If you have a good idea, speak up!

Finally, NESCent's new short-term visitor program is an ideal way for you to bring collaborators and visitors to the Center for short term visits. This program funds visiting scientists for 2 weeks to several months. If you have collaborators, encourage them to apply. However, we expect that one use of your research funds is to pay for you to visit collaborators, or to bring collaborators to the Center.

### **How do I go about getting IT support?**

Postdoctoral fellows are eligible for the same level of IT and informatics support as sabbatical scholars. The support policy is described more fully in the IT support document available on the website and intranet.

Upon arrival, an IT Entry Interview is conducted to assess what special needs, if any, you may have. You should also feel at liberty to request special support at any time by contacting Todd or Hilmar or sending an email to [support@nescent.org](mailto:support@nescent.org). The kinds of support that NESCent can provide may include such things as acquisition of specialized software, use of Duke's high-performance computing cluster, development of custom scientific/statistical programs, databases or web applications. Allocation of IT resources is assessed on a case-by-case basis, and while there is no guarantee that every need can be accommodated, the Center will do its best to enable the project that you came here to do.

Some frequently asked questions about IT are also answered on the NESCent intranet: <https://www.nescent.org/intranet/FAQs>

### **What roles does the E&O group play?**

Our education and outreach group has a number of roles of major significance to you. First, the group provides a variety of professional development resources. These include the formal postdoctoral professional development series that is part of the Brown Bag lunch series. If you have topics of interest, feel free to suggest them to Jory or Craig. The EO group can advise you on lectures and seminars; they can help set up teaching opportunities; they will give you advice on teaching statements as you apply for jobs. Second, the EO group can provide you with advice on the general issue of "broader impact". All federal agencies now require that applicants show that they have engaged in activities beyond their science, and to propose broader impact activities in their applications. This can be a murky topic, but our EO group can provide advice. They are often recruiting individuals for outreach activities, and if you'd like to participate, let them know. Please keep in mind that we do have a formal requirement for all postdoctoral fellows to participate in

education and outreach. The nature and extent of this is defined by the fellow. Finally, Robin is NESCent's "press officer". She will draft and distribute press releases about your research and publications, and will make sure any noteworthy paper or achievement is highlighted on our website. Make sure you keep her informed of your activities.

### **How do I suggest purchase for the library or shared software?**

There is a postdoctoral committee that makes suggestions for book or other media purchase for the library; right now Trina is chairing it. If you have suggestions, pass them onto her; every 6 months or so we make a purchase. If a new book comes out that you believe is of immediate interest to the Center, send an email to Craig. For shared software, send an email to Todd or Hilmar.

### **How about teaching experience?**

Many NESCent postdoctoral fellows inquire about the chance to obtain teaching experience. Although you are not allowed to accept any formal teaching position during the course of your NESCent funding (obviously you cannot "double dip" and be paid twice, and we expect you to focus your time on the activities of your postdoctoral fellowship), there are ample opportunities for improving teaching skills. These include presentations in the NESCent postdoctoral professional development series, the opportunity to present guest lectures at local Universities, individual mentoring in lecture and presentation skills by the EOG group, and the chance to mentor undergraduate or graduate student research projects.

### **What benefits are NESCent postdoctoral fellows eligible for?**

NESCent postdocs are employees of Duke University and are eligible for benefits (health insurance, etc.) as Duke University employees. Information of Duke University employee benefits may be found at: <http://www.hr.duke.edu>. Duke University is currently putting in place a policy regarding postdoctoral compensation and benefits; when finalized, this will apply to NESCent postdoctoral fellows. Further information may be found at: <http://www.postdoc.duke.edu>.

### **What is expected order to receive a third year of funding?**

A third year of funding is only granted in cases fully justified on scientific grounds. You should not assume that your NESCent postdoctoral fellowship is three years. In deciding on whether a third year of funding will be granted we take into account three major components.

**The first** has to do with your intellectual development. Is a third year going to help you develop your science in a significant manner? We do not favor a third year simply to finish your initial program or to allow you to do more of the same. We are looking for evidence that your project has been successful and you will be able to extend it to address new and exciting synthetic questions by the development of new approaches, methods or data sets.

**Second**, we look to see that you have been productive. In order to get a third year of funding we expect to see that the original project as proposed (or appropriately modified) has been successfully brought to near conclusion. We expect to see that you have submitted appropriate publications (or made appropriate software available) from that work, the data have been made publically available, and that you have met the expectations listed above for scientific and professional development.

**Third,** we look for evidence that NESCent has been a good match for you. Specifically, a third year will not be granted simply because there are no other options. NESCent is not the ideal environment for everyone. We need to see that NESCent has made you a better scientist, and that a third year of funding will continue to do so. Likewise, we need to see some evidence that you make NESCent a better place, i.e. that you have a significant role in the community. We want to see that you are appropriately interacting, and that we can expect you to take a leadership role as a third year postdoctoral fellow. In many cases we may decide it is simply time to move on, even if you have been successful in achieving some of your initial aims.

**Fourth,** we look for evidence that you have contributed to the scientific education and communication with (or even without) involvement with our education, outreach, and communication group. We want to see that you have taken an active role in engaging various communities.

## **NESCent Postdoctoral Policy**

Below is information that will be useful to you during your two-year appointment with us. Please review these policies and let us know if you have any questions.

### **APPOINTMENT, REVIEW, AND THIRD YEAR TERM**

NESCent typically hosts 15 postdoctoral associates a year. Postdoctoral fellows are appointed for two-year terms.

The **first year evaluation** will take into consideration the scientific progress of the postdoctoral fellow as well as the implementation of the mentoring and collaboration plan and the meetings with the NESCent mentor. Two months before your anniversary date, you are required to submit a brief (3-4 pages) annual report on your activities, progress and plans at NESCent. Your mentor will prepare a written review for the Operations Committee. The Director will prepare a response to you outlining the review by the Operations Committee. You will meet with the Director, Associate Director of Science and your NESCent Adviser to discuss your progress. After approval of your report, funding for the second year of your fellowship will be released with a 3% salary increase effective on your anniversary date.

A **third year of funding** is appropriate when a convincing case can be made that a third year at NESCent will help the postdoctoral fellow complete or expand the aims of their projects and receive real benefits in their scientific training. We suggest that you talk over your plans with your mentor and either Craig McClain or Susan Alberts. It is also a good idea to get some help in writing your request (from your mentor, your peers and appropriate NESCent directors).

Postdoctoral fellows who would like to request a third year of funding should:

- Request in writing that their appointment be extended for a period of up to a year. You begin thinking about you're the extension 6 months prior to your 2-year end date. A due date for your proposal will be determined by you, your mentor, and Craig McClain
- In this request (which should be ~ 3-4 pages) summarize the progress on your current project, list all of your publications and datasets (with doi's and urls) during your tenure at NESCent, describe your outreach and communication efforts, and specify how the third year will allow you to either complete or expand the aims of your project. The request must be justified on scientific grounds.
- A draft of this should be submitted to Craig McClain and mentor first for review. After revisions and their approval, the proposal will be forwarded to Directors and Operations committee for review and decisions.
- We may also ask you to give a 45-minute (BBL) presentation of your research and continuing plans to the NESCent community including the directors (<http://www.nescent.org/dir/leaders.php>) and operations committee ([http://www.nescent.org/dir/operations\\_committee.php](http://www.nescent.org/dir/operations_committee.php)). The talk should be divided between speaking on the progress of your current project and your third year research proposal. At a minimum the split between these two should be 50/50 but should likely favor more your third-year proposal. Part of the third year decision will be made on the content and quality of this presentation.
- This extension will not be available to a postdoctoral fellow who has already secured a faculty position.

### **MENTORING AND COLLABORATION PROPOSAL**

Within the first month of arrival, each postdoctoral fellow will meet with an "entrance" committee. This committee generally will be composed of the Director, Associate Director of Science, Assistant Director of Science and a fourth member drawn from the NESCent operations committee. At this meeting the postdoctoral fellows research plan will be discussed, general NESCent expectations will be conveyed, a NESCent mentor identified and a scientific mentoring and collaboration plan drafted. This mentoring and collaboration plan will specify the individuals, within NESCent, locally and nationally, that the postdoctoral fellow intends to consult during his or her time at NESCent. After this meeting the postdoctoral fellow will be expected to submit a formal mentoring and collaboration proposal that describes how input from and communication with mentors and collaborators will occur.

The postdoctoral fellow will be expected to meet at least twice a semester with his/her NESCent mentor during the first year. It is the postdoctoral fellow's responsibility to set up these meetings.

The first year evaluation will take into consideration the scientific progress of the postdoctoral fellow, as well as the implementation of the mentoring and collaboration plan and the meetings with the NESCent mentor.

After the first year review, the postdoctoral fellow will meet with the Director, Associate Director for Science, Assistant Director of Science and the NESCent mentor to discuss progress, issues for improvement, and the ways NESCent can best further the postdoctoral fellow's scientific career.



## DISCRETIONARY FUNDS

You will have access to \$5,000/year in discretionary funds. These funds may not be carried over between years. This support can be used for travel, page charges, reprint costs, books, special furniture needs, computers, software, etc., associated with NESCent, but not for field research. All items purchased with these Federal (NSF) funds are considered property of Duke (for the benefit of the person's use on the project). At the end of your appointment, items purchased, such as laptops and computers, can be turned over to Duke's Surplus Office and purchased at a reduced price for your own use. Barbara Mitchell, our Financial Analyst, will provide you with assistance regarding use of these funds, your account balance, and your retention of any purchased items.

If you have money left from your research allowance when you leave NESCent, you may use this for costs associated with publishing the results of your NESCent project. We would expect that this would include primarily page charges. When you do leave NESCent, if you have any remaining funds, please make sure you drop a note to Karen and Barbara telling them that you'll be reserving these funds for this purpose. You will have one year after your departure to use these funds for publication costs. They cannot, however, be used for other kinds of costs, such as travel to meetings, further research, etc.

## OTHER NESCENT SUPPORT

- **Publication Costs:** For any publication cost of over \$1,000, NESCent will pay half, and ask you to pay half out of your research discretionary funds. This includes open access charges, and also high page charges for top journals. Should you have page charges of \$995, please address your needs with one of our directors.
  - If the publication is in a Gold Open Access journal then the postdoctoral fellow can apply for publication support from a specially designated NESCent account. A Gold Open Access Journal is, as spelled out in Duke Policy, "any peer-reviewed journal that is listed in the Directory of Open Access Journals, is a member of the Open Access Scholarly Publishers Association, and is published in a fully open access format based on a published schedule of article processing fees." An overall annual limit exists for this account and funds will be dispersed on a first come basis. To request these funds please email Todd Vision and cc Barbara Mitchell and Craig McClain.
- **Supplemental Support:** Once a fellow has spent his or her initial \$5,000 research allocation, he or she may request additional funds, which may be spent for: 1) attendance at meetings at which you'll be presenting a paper or poster (or are invited in some other capacity), 2) open access charges, 3) page charges. We expect that this will be limited to a maximum of ~\$1,500 per year and is of course subject to the availability of funds. This is in addition to our Publication Costs policy described in #1 above. Postdoctoral fellows requesting such funds should send a brief email to Craig McClain specifying that your research funds have been spent, briefly summarizing how they've been spent, and providing a specific justification for additional funds. Craig will make a recommendation to the Associate Director for Science and the Director for final approval.
- **Student Research Assistants:** NESCent will support your hiring an undergraduate assistant. Our general expectation is that you will each be eligible for one student; however, NESCent is willing to provide a second on request (send a brief email outlining the projects to Craig). This program is designed to give you some help for routine research assistants, and also to provide a way to bring more undergraduates into the Center. This kind of assistance should not be more than about \$1000 a semester, or 10 or so hours a week. An annual Duke Job Fair is held each August. Postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to prepare position description flyers and attend this event.

## **SCHOLARLY ACTIVITIES AND PUBLICATIONS**

Your primary responsibility while at NESCent is to fulfill your goals regarding scholarly research as outlined in your proposal. In addition to your first year annual report, a final report should be completed within two weeks of your departure.

Although we recognize that research and professional development activities require travel, we expect that NESCent postdoctoral fellows will largely be physically in residence at the Center. Any extended absence from the Center must be approved in advance by the NESCent directors.

We ask that you ensure that support from the Center is acknowledged in all publications that you produce, or to which you contribute, and copies of published articles should be provided electronically to the Center. Your address should be given as NESCent in publications resulting from work done while in residence at the Center, even if these publications appear after the end of your appointment. This is important for our annual reports to NSF and to other funding agencies.

The following citation may be used in this regard: **Supported by the National Evolutionary Synthesis Center (NESCent), NSF #EF-0423641.**

## **POSTDOCS SUBMITTING GRANT PROPOSALS**

There are three levels of regulation/concern we have to deal with regarding NESCent postdoctoral fellows submitting grant proposals. The **first level** is Duke regulations. Duke will in some cases allow postdoctoral fellows to be PIs. The department must certify why the fellow should be a PI, and then it must be approved by the Vice Provost for Research. We believe that if NESCent elects to permit a postdoctoral fellow to serve as a PI, NESCent can make the argument to obtain approval. The issue revolves around the fact that the grant actually goes to Duke and not to you—they have to take responsibility for many aspects of a grant, such as scientific ethics, various spending rules, etc. They also are guaranteeing that you have a stable job for the duration of the grant and that you have the facilities to do the work supported.

The **second level** is NSF rules and percent effort requirements. Your NESCent postdoctoral fellowship is considered 100% effort, which basically means you cannot receive additional salary from another source, or commit time to work on a project that is significantly different from the one NESCent is funding you to work on while funded by NESCent. This is a federal regulation and violating means trouble for both NESCent and the fellow.

The **third level** is NESCent policy. We assume you'll work basically at NESCent on the project you proposed for the time we are supporting you. Because of space limitations, we cannot guarantee you space indefinitely, even if you have your own funding.

Below are some scenarios that illustrate the issues.

- One, is the possibility that you might want to apply, perhaps as a co-PI with someone, for a grant that is closely related to your NESCent project. Say your co-PI will be gathering data and you'll be analyzing it, using techniques that are in your NESCent project. You will be doing the work at NESCent, with perhaps a trip or two a year to the other lab; maybe you will switch to a full time postdoctoral fellow (funded by that grant) at that institution when your NESCent postdoctoral fellowship is finished. As long as you are not receiving any salary on the grant while you are paid by NESCent ("double dipping") and are basically working on the general project we funded you for the grant would not essentially change your NESCent status for the duration of your postdoctoral fellowship. In that case, the grant would be processed entirely

from that other institution and no funds would be coming to NESCent/Duke. Whether or not you could be listed as a co-PI would be up to that institution. It would probably be good to have a letter in the grant from our Director saying NESCent approves the arrangement.

- Another possibility is that you see an exciting extension to your work at NESCent, and would want to apply for a grant to extend it, perhaps to work with our informatics program to hire a dedicated programmer, and pay your salary for a year or so after your NESCent funding was over. This would be a grant that is run through NESCent. We would consider this and if we all approve, we would try to get Duke to give you PI status. Whether it is acceptable would depend on the details.
- A grant where you would be undertaking a major new project while at NESCent that would involve a lot of data collection, a lot of time away, either by yourself or in collaboration with someone else, or would pay you salary while a postdoctoral fellow here would not be permissible—in part because of the effort regulations from NSF, and in part because it violates our basic understanding in funding you.
- Finally, if you are writing a grant for work to be done after leaving NESCent (i.e., if you have a job or another postdoctoral arrangement), that is not our concern. It would be administered through the institution you'll be going to, and we don't need to be involved.

The bottom line is that if you are considering a grant, it would be best to talk to the Director or Associate Director of Science, preferably the two of them together, to see how to proceed. Because of the complexities of regulations, we cannot have a blanket policy. Within the regulations, we'll do all we can to aid your professional development and your science.

### **DUKE UNIVERSITY BENEFITS, VACATION SICK LEAVE, ABSENCES**

You will be a Duke University employee and, therefore, it is your responsibility to sign up for Duke University benefits and to attend the New Employee Orientation on campus within thirty days of your initial appointment date. The Duke University Human Resources web site (<http://www.hr.duke.edu/benefits/main.html>) has comprehensive information on available benefits.

Duke developed a Postdoctoral Policy document effective April 1, 2008. See this document for further information on leave policy for Postdoctoral Fellows. Please inform Karen in advance if you intend to be absent for any length of time for personal or professional reasons.

#### **Vacation/Personal Leave and Holidays**

- accrue 1.25 days/month equaling 3 weeks/yr
- receive 10 designated campus holidays + 3 discretionary holidays
- may not accrue more than 20 days
- no payout of unused vacation days at end of your appointment

#### **Sick Leave**

- accrue 8 hrs/mo or 12 days/yr
- no payout of unused sick leave at end of your appointment

#### **Parental Leave**

- may use any or all accrued sick leave or vacation, or take time without pay during the 3-week waiting period; then eligible for 3 weeks paid parental leave
- must be taken within 3 months of the birth or adoption
- must be employed 1 year before eligible for parental leave

### **NON-U.S. RESIDENTS/CITIZENS AND VISA INFORMATION**

Typically, Postdoctoral Associates and Sabbatical Scholars who are non-U.S. residents will obtain a J-1 visa. We understand that in some cases, Postdoctoral and Sabbatical Fellows will be subject to the Two-Year Home Country Physical Presence Requirement. In these cases, we will encourage you to apply for a waiver of the requirement. This waiver cannot be processed until after receipt of the J-1 visa. In some cases, where it is likely that certain countries will not approve a waiver request, we will consider applying for an H-1B visa for a Postdoctoral Associate. Generally speaking, applications for H-1B visas will be supported only for permanent employment.

Also, in some circumstances, we may request a Postdoctoral Associate to investigate an extension of an F-1 (student) visa which is an OPT (Optional Practical Training). This would be effective for one year, while an application for a J-1 or H-1B is processed.

You are responsible for maintaining and updating your visa status during your stay at the Center; be aware of this status before you plan any trip. You may wish to check with Duke Visa Services, <http://www.visaservices.duke.edu/>. If you are issued a visa through Duke University, it is your responsibility to inform Duke Visa Services each time you exit and enter the U.S.