Outline

• Mission of the Office of Postdoctoral Affairs (OPA)

• OPA’s mission in practice

• Postdoc employment categories at CUMC

• Differences between postdoc employment titles

• Considerations on hiring postdocs at CUMC
Mission of OPA

To holistically support and assist Columbia University postdoctoral researchers and scholars in their professional training and development; to offer in depth guidance and resources to the Columbia University community on matters pertaining to postdoctoral affairs.
OPA’s Mission in Practice

- Design, organize, and provide professional and career development programming and resources for Postdocs across the University
- Counsel Postdocs with respect to careers, funding opportunities, University policies and practices, as well as challenges that arise as a postdoc
- Facilitate new Postdoc orientations, social/networking events, and community building
- Undertake initiatives to increase the visibility of Postdocs at the University and beyond
- Serve as an information repository and liaison among Postdocs, faculty, administrators, and external constituencies
- Offer expert guidance and resources to the University community on the administrative management of postdocs
- Advocate for resources and policies that enhance Postdoctoral training and promote a supportive and inclusive training environment at the University
Workshops/Seminars/Courses/Events

**Academia/Research** – Funding & Grantsmanship, Research Communications, Academic Job Application/Interviewing, Transitioning to Research Independence, Fundamentals of Teaching, Data and Research Integrity

**Non-Faculty Careers** – Industry Career Preparation, Career Panels, Networking Events, Company site visits, Career Fairs, Employer Recruitment Events

**Overall Professional Development** – Individual Development Planning, Networking Skills, Communication Skills for Non-Native English Speakers, Leadership and Management, Conflict Resolution and Negotiation, Career Management

Career Counseling Service

**Individual Appointments and Small Group Workshops** - Self Assessment, Career Exploration, CV/Resume/Cover Letter/Teaching Statement Review, Networking Strategies, Interviewing Skills, Small Group Workshops. Peer Mentoring Groups

**OPA Programming:**
http://www.postdocs.columbia.edu/careerdevelopment.html
Postdoc: 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.” National Postdoctoral Association/NSF/NIH

Postdocs at Columbia are “Officers of Research” – Full or Part Time*

Appointed for 1 year terms (generally) up to 3 years, with 2 additional year terms allowed with approval required from the Provost Office

Four Postdoctoral Appointments:

- Postdoctoral Research Scientists or Scholars (PDRS)
- Postdoctoral Research Fellows (PDF)
- Postdoctoral Clinical Fellows (PCF)
- Postdoctoral Residency Fellows (PRF) – Not supported through OPA
Postdoc Employment Title Differences

Postdoctoral Research Scientists/Scholars (PDRS):
Funded by research project grants, start-up or departmental funds; salaried position with fringe paid. PDRS considered employees and receive typical Officer of Research benefits (no tuition benefits*)

Postdoctoral Research Fellows (PDF)
Funded by fellowships or training grants; receive stipend with no fringe paid. PDFs NOT considered employees, no taxes deducted from paycheck (still tax liable), and only have access to health and dental benefits (full premium pricing*). PDF benefits can be paid for through fellowship allowances, training grant related funds, department funding, or unrestricted funding available from PI. Benefit enrollment done through DA via paper form

PDF benefit policy change in the works which will place less financial liability on PDFs for benefits

Postdoctoral Clinical Fellows (PCF)
Salaried or Stipend position depending on funding source. Generally hold additional rank as Assistant in Clinical. If stipend received, follows PDF rules for benefits. Often receive benefits through NYP
Considerations on hiring postdocs at CUMC

Posting openings in RAPS: Not required but strongly suggested

Recruiting: RAPS, Scholarly Journals (Science, Nature), Conferences, Graduate Programs, Colleagues

Appointments: Approved through Office of Academic Affairs and must adhere to University’s minimum salary/stipend guidelines – ~Year 0 NIH NRSA minimum: [http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/docs/MS_CUMC_ressa15.html](http://www.columbia.edu/cu/vpaa/docs/MS_CUMC_ressa15.html)

Postdoctoral Research Fellows: Ensuring funds available for their benefits

Offer Letters: Likely to soon be required (signed and returned), great way to set expectations, examples: [http://www.postdocs.columbia.edu/appointment.html](http://www.postdocs.columbia.edu/appointment.html)

Re-appointment/Non-renewal: Process initiated by DA, takes up to 3 months, must give 3 month notice of non-renewal
Questions