

**Columbia University Guidelines for
Incidental Career Development Activities for
Postdoctoral Research Scientists, Scholars and Fellows**

Columbia University recognizes that postdocs, including Postdoctoral Research Scientists, Scholars, and Fellows¹ (“Postdocs”), play a unique role at the University as their activities encompass both research and professional training. This dual role has been recognized nationally and in federal regulations.^{2,3,4} To facilitate career development experiences for Postdocs, and in compliance with applicable federal regulations, the University has established the following guidelines for Postdoc incidental career development activity (“PD Incidental Career Activity”):

1. Postdocs may engage in PD Incidental Career Development Activity at Columbia above and beyond their sponsored research responsibilities.
2. Subject to any sponsor or regulatory limitations, Postdocs may be paid additional compensation by the University for PD Incidental Career Development Activity where appropriate, e.g.,
 - Occasional guest lectures, grading, occasional assistance with lab sections, or other incidental teaching activities at the University.
 - Technology transfer internships (work completed on a flexible schedule outside regular business hours).
 - Teaching in University-led K-12 science programs, e.g., the Science Honors program (typically weekend programming).
3. To qualify as PD Incidental Career Development Activity, the activity must be limited to no more than 10 hours per week and must be clearly separate and distinct from any sponsored project activity of the Postdoc. In general, PD Incidental Career Development Activity may not last longer than one year during the period of the postdoc training.
4. Repeated requests for additional compensation for the same activity might require the reassessment of a Postdoc’s appointment and salary. When the PD Incidental Career Development Activity is recurring, it may no longer be considered incidental, may

¹ These roles are defined at <https://research.columbia.edu/content/definition-postdoc>.

² 2 CFR § 200.400(f)

³ National Institutes of Health (2012) *Biomedical Research Workforce Working Group Report*, National Institutes of Health, Bethesda, MD, USA

⁴ National Academy of Sciences, National Academy of Engineering, Institute of Medicine (2014) *The Postdoctoral Experience Revisited*, National Academies Press

require an appropriate secondary appointment, and will likely require a reduction in effort charged to sponsored projects.

5. Compensation for PD Incidental Career Development Activity must be appropriately documented. If such compensation is to be charged to a sponsored project, it must be specified in the budget or prior approval must be obtained from the sponsor.
6. PD Incidental Career Development Activity as defined here does not include teaching a course at Columbia. Teaching a course is not incidental. To ensure compliance with regulations and funding agency requirements, teaching a course must be approved on a case-by-case basis by the Offices of the Controller, Sponsored Projects Administration, and Research Compliance and Training, in addition to the appropriate academic unit and Office of the Dean/Executive Vice President. Teaching a course generally requires a reduction in effort charged to sponsored projects.
7. Postdocs on visas must first obtain approval from the International Students and Scholars Office on their respective campus (Morningside, Manhattanville, Lamont or the Medical Center) before obtaining any other approvals.
 - Are you employed on a non-immigrant visa (J-1, H-1B, O-1, TN, or E-3) sponsored by Columbia? If yes, a representative from ISSO or ISSO-CUIMC must sign this form to validate that the activity in question is allowed under the terms of the postdoc's visa status. Please contact your ISSO advisor ([Morningside/Manhattanville, Faculty and Scholar Services](#) or [ISSO-CUIMC, Student and Scholar Services](#)) for their approval.
8. Non-recurring PD Incidental Career Development Activity, e.g., a one-time lecture per year, need only be approved by the postdoc's Principal Investigator.
9. All other PD Incidental Career Development Activity must be approved by:
 - The Postdoc's Principal Investigator
 - For Postdocs who are funded on fellowships and training grants, the Office of Sponsored Projects Administration.
 - If on a non-immigrant visa sponsored by Columbia, ISSO on Morningside or ISSO-CUIMC at Medical Center
 - The administrator of the Postdoc's home department
 - The administrator in the department where the activity is occurring
 - The appropriate approver in the office of the relevant Dean or Executive Vice President
 - The Provost's Office of Academic Appointments (Morningside, Lamont and Nevis) or the CUIMC Payroll Service Center (CUIMC), as applicable. If the Activity spans both campuses, both Offices must approve the work.

10. The Office of Academic Appointments (for Morningside, Nevis, and Lamont) or the CUIMC Payroll Service Center Payroll (for CUIMC), as appropriate, should be copied on emails circulating the attached Additional Compensation Approval Form, and such offices will monitor the approval process on their respective campuses to ensure efficient progress. The Office for Postdoctoral Affairs and Early Career Research will assist in resolving approval delays.
11. On a regular basis, these Guidelines will be reviewed to ensure that it is working as expected and to assess whether any adjustments are required.

For questions about these Guidelines, please contact:

Office for Postdoctoral Affairs and Early Career Research

postdocaffairs@columbia.edu

212-305-4073

<http://postdocs.columbia.edu/>

Other Resources:

[Sponsored Projects Handbook](#)

[Columbia University Policy on Charging Compensation to Sponsored Projects](#)

[Office of Sponsored Project Administration](#)

[Office of Research Compliance and Training](#)

[Office of the Controller](#)

**Postdoctoral Incidental Career Development Activities:
Additional Compensation Approval Form**

This approval form is to be used for Postdoctoral Research Scientists/Scholars and Fellows (“Postdocs”) who plan to participate in PD Incidental Career Development activities (as defined in the Columbia University Guidelines for Incidental Career Development Activities for Postdoctoral Research Scientists, Scholars, and Fellows), that involve payment of additional compensation. This form must be completed with all required signatures **PRIOR** to the commencement of the intended activity. This is the only form that will be accepted for approval of additional compensation for postdocs stemming from incidental career development activities.

To be completed by the Postdoc:

Postdoc Name: _____ **UNI:** _____

Administrative Department: _____

Description of Postdoc Incidental Career Development Activity (indicate department in which work will be done if different from Administrative Department):

Hours Per Week (no more than 10): _____ **Start & end dates (no more than 1 year):** _____ **to** _____

(Note: the period of incidental activity cannot extend past the end date of the postdoc appointment, even if the postdoc appointment is expected to be renewed.)

Total Compensation for Period of Incidental Activity: _____

1. Are you receiving a stipend through a fellowship or training grant? Yes No

If yes, provide the fellowship name or funding mechanism (e.g. NSF Biology Fellowship or NIH T32):

If the Postdoc is on a fellowship/training grant, please scan this form and email it to spa_addcomp@columbia.edu in the Office of Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA) for a review of the policies governing the fellowship/training grant. SPA must validate that the activity in question is allowed under the terms of the fellowship/training grant by signing this form and returning it to the Postdoc.

SPA Representative (Print Name): _____ **Title** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

2. Are you employed at Columbia on a non-immigrant visa (J-1, F-1, O-1, TN, or E-3)? Yes No

If yes, a representative from ISSO or ISSO-CUIMC must sign this form to validate that the activity in question is allowed under the terms of the postdoc’s visa. Please contact your ISSO advisor for their approval ([Morningside/Manhattanville, Faculty and Scholar Services](#) or [ISSO-CUIMC, Student and Scholar Services](#)). **H-1B visas generally do not allow participation in any work activities outside the normal job duties.**

ISSO/ISSO-CUIMC Representative (Print Name): _____ **Title** _____

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

3. **Postdoc’s Principal Investigator (Print Name):** _____

PI Title _____ **Signature:** _____ **Date:** _____

The signed form must be returned to the Postdoc for further approval.

**Postdoc Incidental Career Development Activities:
Additional Compensation Approval Form (p. 2 of 2)**

Once the above portion of the form is completed, the Postdoc should submit a copy of the form to the departmental administrator of his/her administrative department to obtain the additional approvals below. To ensure prompt processing, the Postdoc should also email a copy of the form to Zeid Sitnica (zs2152@columbia.edu) or Carmen DeLeon (cd28@columbia.edu) Associate Provosts of Academic Appointments (for Morningside, Nevis or Lamont); or Lenard Ruiz (lmr131@cumc.columbia.edu), Sr. Executive Director of CUIMC Payroll Service Center (for CUIMC), if on the Medical Campus.

The departmental administrator of the Postdoc's administrative department must complete the remaining portions of the form by obtaining the indicated signatures *within a two-week time period*. The completed form must then be emailed to Zeid Sitnica (zs2152@columbia.edu) or Carmen DeLeon (cd28@columbia.edu) Associate Provosts of Academic Appointments (for Morningside, Nevis or Lamont); or Lenard Ruiz (lmr131@cumc.columbia.edu), Sr. Executive Director of CUIMC Payroll Service Center (for CUIMC). Final approval will be communicated to the Postdoc and applicable Departmental Administrator by the Associate Provost of Academic Appointments or the CUIMC Payroll Service Center as applicable. If two weeks have passed without approval granted, the Postdoc should email the applicable office. In the event of further delays, the Postdoc should contact Ericka Peterson (ep2806@columbia.edu), Executive Director, Office for Postdoctoral Affairs and Early Career Research.

1. Approver for Department in which Career Development Activity will take place (Print Name and Title)

Compensation Funding Source (if the funding source is a sponsored project, please provide the project name and number and confirm that the project's budget reflects that individuals may be compensated over and above institutional base salary):

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

2. Approver for Postdoc's Administrative Department (Print Name and Title):

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

3. Approver for Dean/EVP (Print Name and Title)

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

To be completed by the Associate Provost for Academic Appointments OR the Sr. Executive Director of the CUIMC Payroll Service Center:

Associate Provost for Academic Appointments

Date: _____

Signature: _____

CUIMC Payroll Service Center

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Additional information can be found at: <https://research.columbia.edu/postdoctoral-forms> See also Columbia University Guidelines for Incidental Career Development Activity for Postdoctoral Research Scientists, Scholars, and Fellows: <https://research.columbia.edu/research-policies-and-handbooks>