

WELCOME POSTDOC!



Greetings and welcome to Columbia University!

We're glad that you've chosen to take this next step in your career with us and one of the most prolific research communities in the world. Columbia University has five campuses throughout the NYC area with over 1800 Postdocs, who are active contributors to our prestigious research program. As the newest member of this community, we wanted to offer a guide to planning for your time here.

BEFORE YOU ARRIVE

GET APPOINTED

In order to be appointed at Columbia, you will need to sign an employment contract. From there, your department administrator (DA) will assist you in submitting paperwork to the appropriate office. Once you are appointed, be sure to ask your DA for your UNI (University Network ID) as this will offer you access to online resources and trainings before you physically arrive at Columbia. It is important to note the end date of your appointment as you will need to make sure that reappointment paperwork is starting to be processed 90 days before your contract end date.

GET INFORMED

Make sure to talk to your PI about expectations around work hours, project guidelines, department policies, procedures for scheduling vacation or taking sick days, payment schedule, necessary keys to rooms/labs, etc.

GET A PLACE TO LIVE

It is advised that you start your search for housing at least one month before you move to NYC. If you are interested in on-campus housing, there are limited housing opportunities available to postdocs through a lottery system depending on your campus affiliation (i.e., medical campus or Morningside campus). Click [here](#) to learn more about on-campus housing options for postdocs.

Off-campus housing is also a viable option with many postdocs living in neighborhoods throughout the 5 boroughs. Click [here](#) to learn more about off-campus housing options.

INTERNATIONAL POSTDOCS

You will need to contact [ISSO](#) to ensure that all appropriate forms have been completed. Make sure to also request a letter from your DA to enable you to obtain a Social Security Number (SSN). Click [here](#) for more information about obtaining a SSN. Please also review ISSO's website for information about taxes.

ONCE YOU ARE HERE

GET ACCESS

You'll need several pieces of information in order to gain access to Columbia buildings and resources. You should have already received your UNI from your DA. Next, you will need a Columbia ID card. If you are on the Morningside campus, after your DA has forwarded your nomination package to the Provost's Office, visit the ID Office in Kent Hall, Room 204. If you are on the medical campus, after your nomination package is sent to the Office of Faculty Affairs, take an identification letter from your DA to Public Safety Office in the P&S Building (located at 630 W. 168th St).

GET CONNECTED

There are many ways to connect with other Columbia postdocs, including the postdoc society: [CUPS](#), LGBTQIA affinity group: [PostdoQs](#), underrepresented postdoc group; [URPostdocs](#), and Postdoc Parenting Group.

GET TRAINED

Complete necessary trainings through Columbia's [research compliance training finder](#). You will also receive an email about completing the mandatory [Anti-Harassment, Discrimination, and Title IX training](#).

GET COVERED

Sign up for health insurance **within 31 days** of your appointment date. Eligibility is contingent upon your title. Learn more about postdoc eligibility for benefits such as vacation days, flexible spending accounts, dependent care, life insurance, and retirement plans by clicking [here](#).

GET SUPPORT

Funding opportunities can be found through [PIVOT](#) and [InfoED](#). Support for research initiatives can be found through the many [research support offices](#). Other helpful resources include: [International Students and Scholars Office](#), [Office of Work/Life](#), [Ombuds Office](#), [Center for Teaching and Learning](#)- among many others!

GET MOTIVATED

[The Office of Postdoctoral Affairs \(OPA\)](#) offers a multitude of programming to assist with your career goals. Check out the [Individual Development Plan program](#) and some of the many other [career development offerings](#), including an Academic Application Boot Camp, individual career counseling, Career Advancement Series, and more! OPA also offers regular wellness programming to support the mental health and well-being of the postdoctoral community. Check out the [OPA events calendar](#) to see what programming is coming up soon!

DON'T FORGET!

Once you arrive on campus, please make sure to attend an upcoming OPA orientation for more specific information about the benefits and resources available to Columbia postdocs. In the meantime, you can review the [Postdoctoral Handbook](#) and the [Faculty Handbook](#) for more detailed information. Please review [essential policies](#) for the Columbia community. Also, remember to mark your calendar 3 months before your appointment ends to initiate reappointment paperwork if appropriate.

Joining the team of researchers at Columbia University is an exciting next step in your career. Congratulations on this accomplishment. We look forward to supporting you during this phase of your career.