

Finding the Perfect Postdoctoral Position:

Tips from the UC San Diego Office of Postdoctoral and Research Scholar Affairs

UC San Diego
POSTDOCTORAL AND RESEARCH
SCHOLAR AFFAIRS

When evaluating potential positions, consider the match of each opportunity to your goals and needs in these **6 key areas**:

The Institution:

Where would like to work?

- University
- Industry
- Academic Research Institute
- Hospital

What **type of research**?

- Basic
- Clinical
- Translational
- Applied

Research Programs:

In the **lab**:

- What specific projects would you work on? How do these fit into the lab focus?
- Does the research program fit with your interests and passions?
- Does the work build on your previous knowledge and experience? Will you be learning anything new?
- Will these projects help you to achieve your long term career goals?

At the **institution**:

- What type of research is being conducted?
- What is the quality of the work of the investigators?
- What is the research network like?
- Are there opportunities for collaboration?

Research Facilities:

What type of **equipment** will you have access to:

- In your lab?
- Within the institution?
- At other locations?

Regarding **shared research resources**:

- Where are they located?
- How are they maintained and funded?
- What services are available?
- Are they overbooked or hard to get access to?
- What are the costs to use the facilities?
- Is training available?

Institutional Support:

Salary

How is salary supported?

How long is support guaranteed?

Benefits

What benefits do postdoctoral fellows/faculty receive?

Do benefits differ based how your position is funded?

Representation

Is there a dedicated postdoctoral/faculty affairs office?

Is there a postdoctoral association or postdoctoral council?

Career Development

Is there programming specifically for postdoctoral fellows/faculty?

What types of career development opportunities are provided?

Environment:

In the **lab**:

- What is the lab structure? (i.e. size, projects, composition, interactions, meetings, collaborations, etc.)
- Are the members of the lab satisfied? Productive? Social? Inclusive?
- Is the PI available? What is the PI's management style?
- What is the PI's seniority at the institution? In his/her research career?

At the **institution**:

- Who makes up the institutional research community?
- Are there opportunities to interact and collaborate?
- What seminars, conference, and workshops are held?
- What are the campus centers and resources?

Location:

- What is the metropolitan area like?
- Is there a lot of traffic? Commute?
- Is there public transportation?
- What is the climate like?
- What are the entertainment options?
- What is the cost of living?
- What types of housing are available?
- Are there parks and areas for recreational activities?
- Can I see myself living there?