**Nuclear Science Laboratory’s Postdoctoral Mentoring Policy at the University of Notre Dame**

The Postdoctoral experience at the University of Notre Dame Nuclear Science Laboratory is viewed as a continuation of education and training! Outstanding and a diverse group of postdoctoral fellows have been easy to recruit given the international/national reputation of the Joint Institute for Nuclear Astrophysics (JINA) and the Nuclear Science Laboratory at Notre Dame. Postdoctoral fellows at the NSL are trained for future careers in academia, medicine, industry, and national laboratories.

**Orientation:** Before arrival at the NSL, each postdoctoral fellow has a main mentor in the person of one of the faculty PIs or Co-PIs who arranges the introductions and orientation for the newcomer. Members of the NSL (all students (graduate and undergraduate), postdoctoral fellows, technical personnel, and faculty) meet **twice weekly**: once for a meeting to discuss the state of the laboratory, to hear about science projects that are being proposed for beam time, and an informal assignment of beam times. A second meeting occurs for nuclear seminar with a social (coffee/cookies) beforehand. The new postdoctoral fellow is encouraged to give a seminar and invited to participate with the formal interactions in the laboratory and the more social gatherings at lunches/dinners associated with seminar and colloquium speakers. We feel that this essential to broadening their contacts. Postdoctoral fellows are also highly encouraged to participate in experiments of interest to them with all users of the NSL. Many of the faculty have joint research programs and it is often the experience that a postdoctoral fellow in nuclear structure participates in and takes leading responsibilities on a nuclear reaction or a nuclear astrophysics experiment. We have migrated away from individual postdoctoral appointments to laboratory postdoctoral fellow model allowing the postdoctoral candidate an opportunity to pursue multiple interests.

**Terms of contract:** Postdoctoral fellows are hired with one-year contracts with potential to renew up to three years. Typically, a new postdoctoral fellow is guided in choosing and developing a project by the direct faculty mentor, assisted by the senior technical personnel of the laboratory, and transitioned into being a senior member of the scientific staff at the NSL. Postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to make presentations to become acquainted with the graduate students and faculty of the laboratory, encouraged to attend meetings, and assisted with all aspects of living arrangements. Some postdoctoral fellows have asked to teach undergraduate classes and typically they mentor graduate students in the laboratory. Postdoctoral fellows are given more responsibility to lead experiments and have some degree of freedom to choose scientific challenges of interest to them beyond those of the group that they have joined.

**Professional Development**: Postdoctoral fellows are prepared for a variety of careers. Some recent placements include tenure-track faculty positions, health-physics directors, and staff at national laboratories. Postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to give talks elsewhere, attend conferences, and aided with more permanent placements starting in their second year. Postdoctoral fellows are invited to participate in all aspects of the research, education, and outreach components of life at the NSL. Postdoctoral fellows are not required but encouraged to help in writing grant proposals and to participate in new technical developments of the laboratory. New proposals or equipment developments are made with the full participation of the faculty, the postdoctoral fellows, and other research staff. The postdoctoral fellows are often involved in making the recommendations, contacting the vendors for estimates, and finalizing the plans. We also continue to have joint projects with our former postdoctoral fellows after they have their permanent positions. There is, in addition, assistance (financial and mentoring) available to all of our postdoctoral fellows as they develop their research programs if they become faculty or laboratory staff personnel. As an example, former postdoctoral fellows who are in non-research universities sometimes spend summer research months at the NSL either through an RUI or through other channels.

**Benefits:** Postdoctoral fellows in the NSL are paid at competitive rates commensurate with their experience along with full health benefits for themselves and their families.

**Evaluation:** Postdoctoral fellows are evaluated informally with their direct mentor and more formally by the director of the NSL (Presently Prof. M. Wiescher). The JINA web page also holds a listing of available jobs.