

So, you want a research* postdoc...



*A few research + teaching postdocs exist

Contributors:

Natalie Gosnell (gosnell@astro)

Greg Mace (gmace@astro)

Rachael Livermore (r.c.livermore@astro)

Adam McKay (amckay@astro)

Typical postdoc application:

- Cover letter
- Research proposal
 - Sometimes split into “Past Research” and “Future Research”
- Curriculum Vitae
- Recommendation letters

Before anything else:

- You've figured out the Big Question you're going to tackle during your postdoc
- You have 3-4 STRONG letter writers lined up
- Your CV is complete, proofread by others, and easily navigated
- You have different drafts of your research proposal ready for various page limits (usually 2 or 3 pages)

Figure out where you will apply:

- AAS Job Register - 1st of every month
- Use and exploit your (extended) network!
- Does location matter? Do you want to go overseas?
- Join “Astronomers” and “Jobs for Astronomers” facebook pages
- When in doubt, apply (and be flexible!)
- Ask to be included in collaborators’ NASA and NSF proposals

Write a strong application:

- Reach out and introduce yourself over email before submitting
- Be confident in written and spoken language
- Astrobetter Wiki: “Honing Your Hubble Application”
- Tailor cover letter and proposal to each institution
- Get feedback on research proposal from multiple sources

Prepare yourself for success:

- Rumor Mill: a blessing and a curse
- Read *A PhD is Not Enough!* and *Marketing for Scientists*
- Prepare / practice interviewing: be ready for anything
- Follow up any conversations at AAS or visits to institutions with a thank you email
- Keep track of deadlines and continuously check in with letter writers
- Figure out what helps you de-stress and keep it up through the job cycle