ASP Policies

Updated 1 October 2014

Obligations of ASP Postdoctoral Fellows:

As described in the job description, ASP postdoctoral fellowships allow recipients considerable freedom to pursue their research interests. Postdoctoral Fellows are not obligated to pursue the research outlined in their proposals to NCAR/ASP, and indeed are encouraged to consider all opportunities available to them before committing to a particular research project. The foremost goal of ASP is to promote the development of the careers of promising early career scientists in scientific areas that overlap with NCAR's mission. We believe that we advance this goal best by developing independence in young scientists and by offering them flexibility at a time in their careers when they tend to be most creative.

This aspect of the ASP fellowship differs from most other postdoctoral positions, in which the postdoctoral scientist is supported by a funded research proposal of an NCAR scientist. The postdoctoral scientist in those cases is therefore obligated to address the goals of someone else's project, often under close direction of the project manager. In the ASP, postdoctoral fellows are instead expected to define their own research projects and to assume responsibility for their successful completion.

ASP, however, does have supplementary goals that we try to promote through the postdoctoral fellowship program. One is to broaden the perspectives of young scientists. We think that research in atmospheric science and related disciplines will increasingly require interdisciplinary approaches, so we encourage postdoctoral fellows to develop a broad appreciation for the full range of research at NCAR. We also hope that the postdoctoral fellows will become familiar with the computational and observational tools available at NCAR, and that they will develop contacts and collaborations at NCAR that will persist after they leave ASP. We try to promote these goals through the various activities (seminars, research reviews, planning meetings, socials, etc.) that we organize for the postdoctoral fellows.

Postdoctoral fellows are expected to participate in the following activities:

* Research reviews (both as presenters and audience members). These are opportunities to learn from other fellows about a broad range of topics and to develop collaborations or exchange advice and ideas.
* The ASP seminar series (ongoing) and the Phil Thompson Lecture Series (one in spring; one in fall). These are designed for the broad education of postdoctoral fellows.
* Meetings with the ASP Director. Fellows must have meetings with the Director on the following schedule:
  + At arrival
  + Within 3 months of arrival, with their scientific mentors, for a research planning meeting to review the status of the fellow's scientific plans. These meetings often result in new ideas, and through them the fellows obtain expert opinions regarding the feasibility and value of their project.
At one-year renewal (one-on-one with the ASP director). Before leaving ASP.

In order to schedule meetings efficiently, the ASP office uses the Google Calendar tool.

Postdoctoral fellows are encouraged to meet with the ASP director through additional appointments, or during "ASP Teas" held biweekly at ML and FL. If you have something you need to discuss, feel free to contact the director to set up an appointment.

At renewal, postdoctoral fellows will be required to provide a review of their activities during the first year of their appointment. This information will be updated by the fellow upon the appointment's end. The ASP uses this information to help evaluate the extent to which the postdoctoral fellowship program is meeting NCAR/ASP objectives.

Policies Regarding the Submission of Manuscripts:

UCAR policies regarding publications are defined in the UCAR Policy and Procedures Manual (https://www2.fin.ucar.edu/policies/3-5-publication-information-dissemination). These policies specify some requirements (including acknowledgment of NSF sponsorship, see below) and in addition require that divisions and programs assume responsibility for the scientific and editorial quality of submitted manuscripts. To meet this requirement, ASP requires that manuscripts submitted for publication should be reviewed by at least one colleague, usually from NCAR, whose comments should be addressed before the manuscript is submitted. ASP personnel should also conform to any requirements established by divisions or programs with whom they are working. If there is no appropriate division or program or if there are no specific guidelines to be followed, then the following should be considered the minimum set of requirements:

1. The lead author should solicit a written review from one colleague.
2. If the review indicates that the manuscript should not be submitted in its present form, the author(s) should not submit the manuscript without the approval of the ASP Director.

The ASP office will request the following publication information:

1. The title and authors of any manuscripts submitted,
2. The name(s) of internal reviewers.
3. The full bibliographic information for any published manuscripts and an electronic version of the published manuscript.

ASP pays page charges for publications by ASP postdoctoral fellows, in accordance with the relevant UCAR policy. Provide the journal payment form, reprint order, and title page and abstract to the ASP administrative office to obtain a purchase request for the page charges. For publications written jointly with authors from NCAR or other institutions, we ask that those authors pay a proportionate share of the page charges. Please have this funding in place before submitting paperwork to ASP.

ASP encourages publication of research results through publications in scientific journals, but also asks that authors consider ways of minimizing page charges because they can be substantial.
You must acknowledge NCAR on any of your NCAR publications. Please put your name and affiliation (NCAR) at the top, and put a * next to NCAR. In the footnote please include *The National Center for Atmospheric Research is sponsored by the National Science Foundation. That statement can be in smaller print, but it must be there. The NCAR and NSF logos must appear on any presentations given external to NCAR.

NCAR maintains its own open access repository called Open Sky and therefore will not pay for open access fees charged by publishers. For more information on Open Sky, please go to https://opensky.library.ucar.edu/. All published manuscripts must be uploaded to Open Sky. The NCAR Library tracks manuscripts and maintains Open Sky. Any missing documents will be requested typically in the fall at fiscal year end.

**Poster Printing:**

If you need to print a poster for a workshop, you will have to use an outside vendor. The simplest way to do this is to work with the UCAR-approved printing company FedEx/Kinko’s. When you are ready to print a poster, please contact the ASP administrative office for information on how to have this direct-billed to UCAR. Please do not pay for posters yourself and request reimbursement; you will incur taxes, and since UCAR is tax-exempt, using the purchase order will save us money in taxes. Printing of posters for presentation at conferences does not impact your travel budget.

**End of ASP Appointment:**

ASP Postdoctoral Fellowship appointments are limited to two years without exception. As your appointment approaches its termination date, you will be asked to update your report of activities and plans and to meet with the ASP Director. The ASP will collect any computer equipment and/or peripherals that have been purchased for you during your time in ASP.

Please note that you may not leave NCAR prior to your term date and use your PTO to extend your paychecks until your term date. Your last day of employment at NCAR must be your last day worked, and any remaining PTO will be issued to you in the form of payment. If you have any questions about this policy, please contact the ASP administrative office.

**Time Cards:**

Employees are required to complete timecards every two weeks. Your first timecard will be a paper timecard, but all timecards after that will be done electronically. In order to submit your timecard electronically, you will need what is called a UCAS password. Please work with your host division to get that password. You may complete your timecard at any time during the pay period; you do not need to wait until the end (pay periods start every other Sunday). If you are going to be away, please make sure that you have electronic access to the timecard system, or arrange to have ASP staff fill in your hours for you. If you forget to complete your timecard, Payroll will use your PTO to cover the pay period.
You will receive a paycheck every two weeks. Generally, paychecks are deposited directly into your bank account. To see the payroll schedule, along with a list of all the UCAR holidays, please go to https://www2.fin.ucar.edu/bf/payroll-schedule-2014

**Vacation and Sick Leave:**

Postdoctoral fellows accrue 20 days of personal time off (PTO) per year (1.666 days/mo). This time is used for both vacation and sick leave. Fellows are considered exempt employees, which means that they are salaried and are not hourly employees. The expectation is that fellows will work 40 hours a week (less any PTO taken). These hours are flexible, as long as there is significant overlap with the hours worked by other fellows and scientists so that research progress is not hindered. Significant departures from normal work hours must be approved by the ASP director.

**Mail/Telephone/FAX/Cafeteria:**

Use the appropriate account code on all business mail. The same account number is needed to place long-distance calls and to send long-distance FAXes. If you are not sure what account code to use, contact your local admin or the ASP administrative office. For personal long-distance calls, please use your cellphone. You can use your employee ID number to send personal packages; the charges will be deducted from your paycheck. Once you are set up in the system, you can use your access card to charge meals in the cafeteria and have them deducted from your pay (15% discount for using card). If you prefer to use cash, you are entitled to a 10% discount – be sure to indicate you are an employee when paying.

**Support for Postdoctoral Fellows**

**Travel Award Policies:**

ASP postdoctoral fellows have a normal allocation of $3500/year to support their scientific travel. The year follows the fellow's year, not the fiscal year. In other words, the fellow's second year of funding will be available to him/her at the time of their renewal. There are occasional travel competitions through which you can request additional funding for specific trips. Funding for trips may also occasionally be provided by your host division.

It is expected that postdoctoral fellows will present a talk or paper at meetings that they attend with ASP support (although exceptions are allowed). The UCAR travel policies apply to all travel that ASP supports. There are many different rules and regulations that ASP must follow, which means that if you want to be reimbursed for your travel, you must ensure that all of the travel procedures are followed carefully. If you have any questions about procedures, be sure to contact the ASP administrative office.

All work-related travel must be approved before departure, even if costs are covered by another organization. The approval process is done by an admin in ASP or your host division, completing a Travel Authorization in the online UCAR Travel application. Please work with the ASP administrative office or your local administrative assistant well in advance of your
departure to complete the authorization. ASP is also available to assist you with airline reservations and other arrangements. In cases where the travel is supported completely by another agency and involves no NCAR funds, a travel authorization is still required because it activates coverage under NCAR's accident policy. No travel authorization form is required for travel within 150 miles of NCAR; it is required if you are staying overnight. It is expected that each fellow will have a personal credit card, as administrative staff are not allowed to incur charges for personal travel expenses (except airfare done through our travel agent, which is direct-billed to UCAR). ASP staff can in some instances pay for registration fees. However, if they require the use of a PayPal account, you must use your personal account and submit a receipt for reimbursement.

There are special procedures regarding use of US airlines for foreign travel (Fly America Act), and keeping receipts, which means that travelers should comply with these requirements in advance of their travel. For more information about Travel, please consult the travel webpage at https://www2.fin.ucar.edu/bf/travel or consult with ASP administrative staff.

You do not need approval for personal trips (e.g., vacation); however, if you are doing anything during that time that could be considered work-related, such as giving a talk at a school or meeting with colleagues at a university, you should get a travel authorization.

Travel advances can be requested to cover the costs of business trips, but such requests must be made AT LEAST two weeks in advance. On completion of a trip, a Travel Voucher will be completed to reimburse you for any allowable out-of-pocket expenses. Please work with ASP or your local administrative assistant to ensure the proper completion and submission of the voucher. If you have attended a professional conference, you must provide one of the following two items:

* a pdf file of the presentation that you made while on travel
* a pdf file of the poster that you presented while on travel

**Preparing and Submitting Proposals:**

At this time, NCAR postdoctoral fellows may not appear as Principal Investigators on proposals. Postdocs may be co-investigators as long as a permanent NCAR staff member also appears as a PI or Co-I. If you are asked to participate on a proposal by an outside organization, you must contact the ASP administrator before agreeing to participate. All proposals, even those without any funding coming to NCAR, must be approved by the ASP Director and the NCAR Budget and Planning office before your name may appear in the proposal. Bottom Line: Contact the ASP Administrator as soon as you asked to participate on a proposal of any kind, with or without funding to NCAR.

**Local and UCAR Meetings:**

ASP will cover the cost of registration fees for internal UCAR meetings such as the WRF Tutorial without the cost impacting the overall balance of the fellow's travel stipend. In addition, ASP will cover the cost of registration fees for one local non-UCAR meeting during the fellow's
two-year term. Some meetings are sponsored by outside agencies, but arranged by local meeting
organizers at UCAR (JOSS or the VSP programs). These meetings are not considered UCAR
meetings. If you are not sure, please contact ASP staff.

**Relocation to Boulder:**

ASP will pay travel costs for fellows and their families to relocate to Boulder. The maximum
shipping allowance is $750 for both domestic and foreign fellows. Domestic fellows may be
reimbursed for either airfare to Boulder, or if they choose to drive, may be reimbursed at the
current mileage rate for one-way mileage for one car from their current home to Boulder, along
with a motel stay for each 400 miles traveled. International fellows and families must be ticketed
by ASP office staff. Your travel must be ticketed on a U.S. Carrier in order to comply with the
mandatory Fly America Act. Per diem is also provided for the employee, spouse and children
(children under 12 receive half per diem). There is no per diem provided for significant others.

**Computer Equipment:**

ASP considers it our obligation to provide appropriate computers for use by ASP personnel. In
most cases, ASP provides equipment but relies on the computing personnel in NCAR divisions
and programs for installation of that equipment and connection to local networks.
Special needs should be brought to the attention of the ASP office.

**Computer Allocations (GAUs):**

ASP postdoctoral fellows requiring access to the supercomputers and mass storage systems will
need an allocation of GAUs. This may come from the ASP allocation, but this resource is modest
and shared among all postdocs. Fellows with large computing needs will need to work with their
respective laboratories to secure the requisite computing resources. The ASP allocation is for
testing and debugging and occasional one-time simulations when other resources are not
available. The intent to run large simulations must be communicated to the fellows to ensure
that there is not an overuse of ASP GAUS.