

Academic Faculty Job Search: Applying for research track faculty positions



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Career Café
Dept of M&I
10/13/2021

General Timeline:

Advertisements

Applications due

Zoom screening

Sept Oct Nov Dec Jan Feb March April May June July Aug Sept

Interviews – 1 or 2

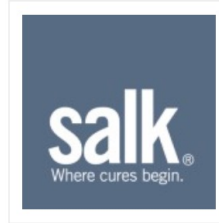
Offers/Negotiation

Cycle #2...



Advertisements

- Nature Careers
- Science Careers
- Twitter
- Society websites (CSI, AAI, ASV, etc)



Assistant and Associate Faculty in Immunobiology and Microbial Pathogenesis

Salk Institute for Biological Studies (Salk)

La Jolla, CA, United States

Posted about 2 months ago

Expires on October 23, 2021

The Salk Institute is seeking faculty members at the **Assistant to Associate level** who are pioneering independent research programs using innovative approaches to study in the broad fields of immunology and inflammation, including host-microbe interactions (mutualistic to pathogenic), infectious disease, neuro-immunology, cancer immunology, autoimmunity, systems immunology, immune engineering, immunometabolism, and other inflammatory related diseases. The candidate will join a group of highly interactive faculty in the **Salk NOMIS Center of Immunobiology and Microbial Pathogenesis**.

Candidates with a Ph.D. and/or M.D. degree and strong record of research achievements are invited to submit an online application through Interfolio with the following materials:

- 1) A curriculum vitae
- 2) A 3-4 page description of present and future research plans
- 3) A 1-2 page statement about diversity and mentoring that articulates your commitment to fostering an inclusive research environment that values and actively promotes myriad facets of diversity. Salk is specifically interested in;

- o Learning about your personal mentoring philosophy

- o How specific experiences, training and opportunities have shaped your commitment to building an inclusive scientific working environment

- o How you will create a training and learning environment that demonstrates respect and understanding for all personal identities and which combats inequity through action.

Three letters of recommendation to be sent directly by the referees through Interfolio dossier services through the online application.

Applications with all required materials will be accepted until positions are filled but applications will begin being reviewed on October 15th, 2021



Tenure-track Assistant Professor in Synthetic Biology and Metabolic Engineering

The University of British Columbia (UBC)

📍 Vancouver, Canada

Posted about 1 month ago

Expires on November 15, 2021

The Department of Microbiology & Immunology (<http://www.microbiology.ubc.ca>) at the Vancouver campus of The University of British Columbia invites applications for one or more **tenure-track Assistant Professor positions in Synthetic Biology and Metabolic Engineering**. Applicants specializing in reconstructing microbial regulatory and metabolic networks, high-throughput genome engineering, or the biocatalytic valorization of biomass are strongly encouraged to apply. The successful candidate is expected to start the position by July 1, 2022.

Applicants should upload a 1) cover letter, 2) a curriculum vitae, 3) a detailed summary of research interests describing two potentially fundable projects (maximum 5 pages), 4) a statement of teaching accomplishments, and interests and 4) a statement describing your experience working with a diverse student body, as well as your contributions to creating/advancing a culture of equity and inclusion on campus.

Apply at <https://www.microbiology.ubc.ca/faculty-opportunities>. In addition, the applicant should arrange for letters from 3 referees to be sent to micb.recruitment@ubc.ca. All inquiries should be sent to the same address with “Synthetic Biology position” in the subject line. Review of completed applications with reference letters will begin on October 15, 2021.



1. Make a spreadsheet (due date, location, dept information, application website, required materials, # of letters, etc).
2. If you need to discuss relocation with a partner, rank applications into bins, so if you have to choose one or another to apply to, you can prioritize easily.
3. Get all of your letters into Interfolio ASAP bc it takes some time to set it up and get letters uploaded.

Applications due

1. CV

2. Research proposal
3. Teaching Statement
4. Diversity Statement
5. Cover letter

What should your CV look like? *order matters! 4-5pg max

1. Personal information
2. Degrees
3. Research experience (dates, supervisors, location, a descriptor)
4. Publications (peer-reviewed, preprints, non-peer reviewed articles, book chapters, other)
5. Funding (fellowships, grants)
6. Awards (travel awards, thesis awards, etc)
7. Patents, GitHub, other contributions relevant to science
8. Presentations (Invited talks, Oral presentations -intl vs domestic, posters)
9. Teaching
10. Mentoring
11. Professional Service
12. Relevant courses
13. Name and contact of referees

Applications due

1. CV
- 2. Research proposal**
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***Prepare a 3-4 pg proposal and get lots of feedback – then revise to 1, 2 or 4 pg*

***Rarely, but some places will specifically ask for Aims for a grant*

Page 1: WOW page

- 1) Overview of your research program and significance and implications (diagram is nice here)
- 2) Major research accomplishments and why this will support your research program
- 3) Summary of planned research program: overview of what exactly you're going to do and how (talk about independence from current mentor's research program)

Page 2-3: Planned research program

-I, II, III major areas of research, a bit of background, and what tools and methods you'll use to carry this out. Flow charts, diagrams are always ++.

Conclusion:

-Bigger implications and how your research program will pioneer something new, push boundaries in a given field, broader applications (translational capacity, etc)

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*** For a research track! VERY different for teaching track or teaching universities.*

Q1: What have you taught?

Q2: What courses can you teach? Immunology? Virology?

Q2: What is your teaching philosophy?

- in the context of your previous teaching experience
- teaching styles that you will incorporate

Q3: How will you account for different styles of learning and EDI?

Type 1: A curriculum for a course you may develop as a faculty

- 1) topics
- 2) teaching methods (presentations, lectures, active learning methods, etc)
- 3) grading based on (participation? Presentations? Written reports? Other?)

Type 2: How would you teach a course that already exists at the university?

- would you teach it as is? Change?
- why are you best fit to teach this course?

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***Look at what EDI efforts are already ongoing on campus*

Rubric to Assess Candidate Contributions to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Knowledge about Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

1 - 2

- Little expressed knowledge of, or experience with, dimensions of diversity that result from different identities. Defines diversity only in terms of different areas of study or different nationalities, but doesn't discuss gender or ethnicity/race. Discusses diversity in vague terms, such as "diversity is important for science." May state having had little experience with these issues because of lack of exposure, but then not provide any evidence of having informed themselves. Or may discount the importance of diversity.
- Little demonstrated understanding of demographic data related to diversity in higher education or in their discipline. May use vague statements such as "the field of History definitely needs more women."
- Seems uncomfortable discussing diversity-related issues. May state that he or she "just hasn't had much of a chance to think about these issues yet."
- Seems not to be aware of, or understand the personal challenges that underrepresented individuals face in academia, or feel any personal responsibility for helping to eliminate barriers. For example, may state that it's better not to have outreach or affinity groups aimed at underrepresented individuals because it keeps them separate from everyone else, or will make them feel less valued.

3

- Individuals receiving a rating of "3" in the "Knowledge" dimension will likely show aspects of both "1-2" and "4-5" ratings. For example, they may express little understanding of demographic data related to diversity, and have less experience and interest in dimensions of diversity, but show a strong understanding of challenges faced by individuals who are underrepresented and the need to eliminate barriers, and be comfortable discussing diversity-related issues.

4 - 5

- Clear knowledge of, experience with, and interest in dimensions of diversity that result from different identities, such as ethnic, socioeconomic, racial, gender, sexual orientation, disability, and cultural differences. This understanding can result from personal experiences as well as an investment in learning about the experiences of those with identities different from their own.
- Is aware of demographic data related to diversity in higher education. Discusses the underrepresentation of many groups and the consequences for higher education or for the discipline.
- Comfort discussing diversity-related issues (including distinctions and connections between diversity, equity, and inclusion), both in writing, and in a job talk session and one-on-one meetings with students, staff, and faculty.
- Understands the challenges faced by underrepresented individuals, and the need for all students and faculty to work to identify and eliminate barriers to their full and equitable participation and advancement.
- Discusses diversity, equity, and inclusion as core values that every faculty member should actively contribute to advancing.

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Track Record in Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

1 - 2

- Participated in no specific activities, or only one or two limited activities (limited in terms of time, investment, or role).
- Only mentions activities that are already the expectation of faculty as evidence of commitment and involvement (for example, "I always invite and welcome students from all backgrounds to participate in my research lab, and in fact have mentored several women." Mentoring women scientists may be an important part of an established track record but it would be less significant if it were one of the only activities undertaken and it wasn't clear that the candidate actively conducted outreach to encourage women to join the lab.
- Descriptions of activities are brief, vague, or describe being involved only peripherally. Or the only activities were oriented toward informing oneself (for example, attended a workshop at a conference).

3

- May have participated extensively in a single activity. Less clear that there is an established track record.
- Limited participation at the periphery in numerous activities, or participation in only one area, such as their research to the exclusion of teaching and service.
- In describing mentoring of underrepresented students, mentions specific strategies used for effective mentoring, or awareness of the barriers underrepresented students face and how to incorporate the ideas into their mentoring
- Membership in a student or professional organization that supports underrepresented individuals

4 - 5

- Describes multiple activities in depth, with detailed information about both their role in the activities and the outcomes. Activities may span research, teaching and service, and could include applying their research skills or expertise to investigating diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Consistent track record that spans multiple years (for example, applicants for assistant professor positions can describe activities undertaken or participated in as an undergraduate, graduate student and postdoctoral scholar)
- Roles taken were significant and appropriate for career stage (e.g., a candidate who is already an assistant professor may have developed and tested pedagogy for an inclusive classroom and learning environment, while a current graduate student may have volunteered for an extended period of time for an organization or group that seeks to increase the representation of underrepresented groups in science).
- Organized or spoken at workshops or other events (depending on career stage) aimed at increasing others' understanding of diversity, equity, and inclusion as one aspect of their track record.
- Served as a leader in a student or professional organization that supports underrepresented individuals

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Plans for Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

1 - 2

- Vague or no statements about what they would do at Berkeley if hired. May even feel doing so would be the responsibility of someone else.
- Describes only activities that are already the expectation of Berkeley faculty (mentoring, treating all students the same regardless of background, etc).
- States that would be happy to "help out" but seems to expect the University or department to invite or assign them to activities.

3

- Mentions plans or ideas but more is expected for their career stage. Plans or ideas lacking in detail or clear purpose (for example, if "outreach" is proposed, who is the specific target, what is the type of engagement, and what are the expected outcomes? What are the specific roles and responsibilities of the faculty member?)

4 - 5

- Clear and detailed ideas for what existing programs they would get involved with and what new ideas they have for advancing equity and inclusion at Berkeley and within their field, through their research, teaching, and/or service. Level of proposed involvement commensurate with career level (for example, a new assistant professor may plan to undertake one major activity within the department over the first couple of years, conduct outreach to hire a diverse group of students to work in their lab, seek to mentor several underrepresented students, and co-chair a subcommittee or lead a workshop for a national conference. A new tenured faculty member would be expected to have more department, campus-wide, and national impact, including leadership).
- Intends to be a strong advocate for diversity, equity and inclusion within the department/school/college and also their field.
- References activities already taking place at Berkeley and in the field, and how additional or new activities would advance equity and inclusion.
- Addresses multiple areas of need (for example, classroom climate, the laboratory, conferences)

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** Should be 1-2 pg max

** On an official letterhead !!!

Paragraph 1:

- 1) What you're applying for (I'm applying for the open-rank faculty position in the department of XYZ at UBC).
- 2) Where did you get your Ph.D. and where are you now?
- 3) Why does your research background align with the research interest of the dept and the how does it fulfill the search

Paragraph 2-3:

- 1) Your major accomplishments and significance/implications
- 2) Relate to building your independent research program
- 3) How does your research program align with the overall research of the department

Paragraph 4:

-What else have you done (mentoring, teaching, EDI work) that you will bring with you to contribute to these areas at this institution

Paragraph 5: Summary, conclusion

Zoom screening

*not all places will have this, but a lot of R1 institutions will do this as a pre-screen

- ~30min zoom/phone meeting with the search committee members (3-4 ppl)
- Different versions:
 - A set of questions that each member will ask in order (can ask in advance)
 - Free-form Q&A (let me tell you about our department, resources, do you have any questions?)
 - General questions about why our institutions, describe your research program, who would you want to meet with during the interview?
 - Very specific questions about your research plan, approach, tools
 - **Will you require special equipment or space or any unique needs?**
 - Need access to CL3 animal facility? Anaerobic chamber? GF facility? Big microscope?
- Still an interview!! Dress properly, book a conference room, PRACTICE, but be comfortable going off script
- Show enthusiasm and ask questions

Interviews

*Usually a 2-day visit (usually lots of back-to-back meetings)

*Sometimes they'll ask you back for another round of interviews

Day 1	Day 2
8:30a: meet with host	8:30: meet with host
9-11a: 1:1 with 4x faculty	9-12: 1:1 with 4x faculty
11-12:30: lunch with faculty	12-1: lunch with students
1-2p: seminar	1-2:30: 1:1 with 2 faculty
2:30-5: 1:1 with 5 faculty	3-4p: Chalk talk
5:15-6: tour of space	4:30: mtg with head
6p: dinner with faculty	6p: dinner with faculty

Total: 15 faculty

Day 1	Day 2
Dinner w/ committee night b4	8-9: 1:1 with faculty
8:30: Breakfast with faculty	9-10: Chalk Talk
9:30-10:30: seminar	10:30-12p: 1:1 with 3 faculty
10:30-12: 1:1 with 3 faculty	12-1: lunch with postdocs
12-1p: lunch with students	1:30-2:15: mtg with chair
1-5p: 1:1 with 7 faculty	2:20-4: 1:1 with 3 faculty
6p: dinner with faculty	

Total: 17 faculty

Interviews

Seminar talk:

- 1) make sure to explain your science for faculty, but ALSO for grad students and postdocs
- 2) Want to give an overview of your research and importance for a broad audience
 - ~85% your postdoc research
 - ~15% overview and future directions

Chalk talk:

- 1) different formats dep on department, so you should ALWAYS ask
 - Go over a project grant (CIHR or NIH- 5yr project grant- aims and approaches)
 - One project grant and one big vision grant (new investigator award type)
- 2) Short term (5yr plans) and long term plans (10+yrs)
- 3) Funding (what funding agency will you apply to for which project)?
- 4) Who will work on what project (Ph.D. students? Postdocs?)
- 5) Collaborators
- 6) Timeline



Verbal Offers/Negotiation

~1 month or sometimes longer

- Verbal offer
- Calculate budget (equipment, reagents, personnel, license fees, etc)
- Make a list of what you need and see if feasible- ask lots of questions!
 - What is the space allocation?
 - Mouse room? Rederivation costs?
 - Teaching load?
 - Job placement for a partner?
 - Start date?
 - Childcare placement? Housing?
 - Tenure clock, leave policy?
- Talk to other new faculty and see what/how they negotiated
- Talk to potential collaborators and see if your research can thrive there
- Talk to housing/relocation/immigration people
- Get all questions answered and then official paper offer will be generated if all things have been discussed



Resources:

1. Future PI Slack (@FuturePI_Slack)
2. Twitter- seriously
3. The Professor is In – Blog
4. Get a lot of sample applications – from your field
5. Your network! If you know people in the depts, reach out and ask for any advice.



FEATURE ARTICLE



RESEARCH CULTURE

A survey-based analysis of the academic job market

Abstract Many postdoctoral researchers apply for faculty positions knowing relatively little about the hiring process or what is needed to secure a job offer. To address this lack of knowledge about the hiring process we conducted a survey of applicants for faculty positions: the survey ran between May 2018 and May 2019, and received 317 responses. We analyzed the responses to explore the interplay between various scholarly metrics and hiring outcomes. We concluded that, above a certain threshold, the benchmarks traditionally used to measure research success – including funding, number of publications or journals published in – were unable to completely differentiate applicants with and without job offers. Respondents also reported that the hiring process was unnecessarily stressful, time-consuming, and lacking in feedback, irrespective of outcome. Our findings suggest that there is considerable scope to improve the transparency of the hiring process.

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How to Write a Teaching Statement That Sings

Almost everybody has to craft one; almost nobody knows how.
Here's a guide that'll get you started.

<https://gradschool.cornell.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/06/Teaching-Statement-Workshop-Slides-2017.pdf>

Support network is KEY:

- Mentors (present and past)
- Mentors that inspire you
- Friends that will cheer you on and give you positive energy
- Friends and family who you can count on when you need to cry
- Other postdocs on the job market.
- If you have kids, babysitters and back-up care that you can trust and count on

Stay true to yourself and have some fun!



Boston Globe: Boston Marathon, 2021

- There is no one right way.
- Look for a good environment that you can thrive in and feel comfortable in.
- Mental health breaks are key (be extra intentional about taking mental breaks from lab and academia).
- You're not alone.