



The Nuts and Bolts of Academic Job Search

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Academic cycle

- Preparation of application packet as early as possible
- Most decisions occur during academic year
- Submit application packet (Sept./Oct. – some at end of July)
- Attend field specific meetings (Fall - EMBS, BMES, MRS etc.)
- 1st Interview (usually December to March)
- 2nd visit (usually March to May)
- Negotiate and accept/decline offer (May-June)
- Start position (July/August/Sept)



Where to find advertised positions?

- Academic journals (Science, Nature, etc.)
- Society newsletters, journals and websites
 - Pulse, BMES, SFB, MRS, TERMIS, AIChE, ACS
- Departmental websites
- Emails to your department head/advisor
- Conference postings
- Talking / networking
- Other sources:

<http://www.academickeys.com>

<http://www.bmenet.org>

[“http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/cdc/”](http://nextwave.sciencemag.org/cdc/)

The screenshot shows a banner for the Career Development Center for Postdocs and Junior Faculty. At the top left is the Science logo, followed by the Next Wave logo. To the right are navigation links: ABOUT US, SUBSCRIPTIONS, FEEDBACK, SIGN IN, and AAAS. Below these are links for SITEMAP and E-MAIL UPDATES. The main text of the banner reads "Career Development Center for Postdocs and Junior Faculty". To the right of this text are logos for the Burroughs Wellcome Fund, Howard Hughes Medical Institute, and the HHMI logo. At the bottom of the banner, a blue bar contains the text "This week at the Career Development Center..."



What are they looking for?

Why would they pick you over the other 200 applicants?

- Great reference letters
- Publications!
- Presentations, grants/fellowships, awards
- Does your research plan fit in with their wants and needs?
- Relevant background, ability to teach core curriculum
- Pedigree
- Ability to work in multiple areas (funding)



Application package

(Ask your friends, lab mates, mentors for examples and have them review)

- Cover letter
- CV
- List of references (3-5)
- Research plan (1-15 pages)
- Teaching statement (~1 page)



PROPOSAL

Why would they pick you over the other 200 applicants?

- You should aim for a good story (VISION)
 - what is hot in your field (nature, science)
 - what are key limitations of your field
 - complements existing expertise
 - Proposal may have 3 core ideas
- 5 page proposal
1. STORY (how do three ideas connect)
 - 2-4. Motivation, aims, strategy (like grant)
 5. References



Interview day

- 1-2 days long
- 20-30 minute meetings with faculty
- Seminar
- Teaching?
- Research plan seminar (i.e. chalk talk)?
- Meetings with students
- Meetings with department head, dean

- 2nd trip usually with an offer



Interview Day Tip



“This is the job that I have always wanted and I am going to get it”

“I am a leader in this field and have vision with a significant impact”

It **WILL** be tiring, but also **FUN**...



Interview killers

- Lack of enthusiasm
- Inability to interact well with the faculty
 - You are becoming a part of their family
 - Be personable
- Do not fit the vision or direction
- Do not have the background to teach



Interview killers

- Lack of original or clear research plan
 - Lacking focus and originality
 - Know the specific aims of your first proposals
 - Have a timeline about which grants and when you want to apply?
 - How is your research different than others in the field?
 - How is what you're doing significant?



What's included in the offer?

- Salary (9-months+some summer salary)
- Equipment/supplies money
- Graduate student support
- Lab space
- Reduced teaching load during 1st year
- Get everything in writing!



Additional things to consider

- Room to expand in the offer commensurate with indirect costs
- Administrative support
- Ability to be diverse in research
- Mentorship – who?
- Proximity of lab space



“Negotiation” Time

- It is best to have a competing offer!
- Talk to your friends and mentors and LISTEN
- Figure out: what is considered “reasonable”?
what you need to succeed?
- Find out: lab space considerations
 - salary for grad students and others
 - startup



Sign it
&
Let the fun begin 😊

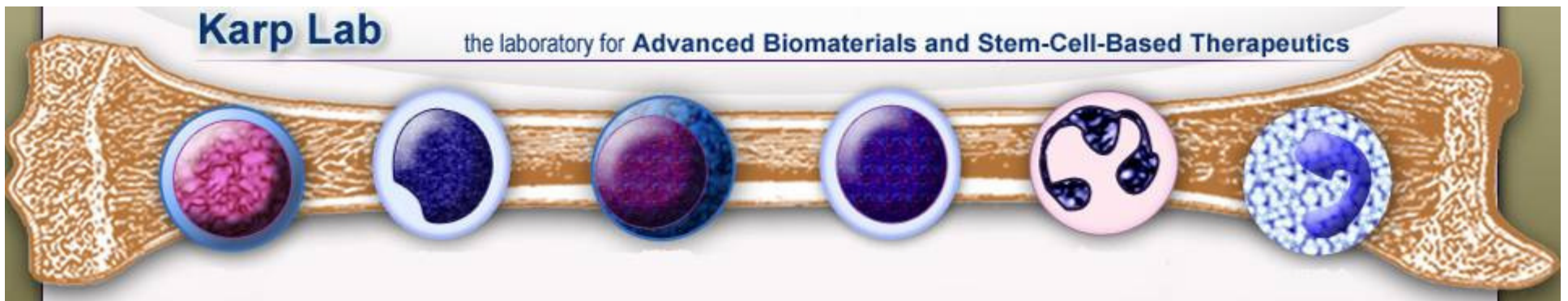


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