

# Snowmass2021 - Letter of Interest

## *Resources for Academic Jobs*

☑ (CEF2) Career Pipeline & Development

☑ (CEF3) Diversity & Inclusion

### **Elements of Interest :**

- Postdocs and graduate students are expected to understand the possible career paths in academia, but without the personal experience that may be a hard task
- Efforts of the field seem to focus on non-academic opportunities
- We suggest the creation of a centralized information hub for career-related information, e.g. career development training, information for jobs in both academia and industry.

There seems to be an overall idea that academic career paths are clear to the whole community, but that's not true. People hang on to an outdated idea that Advisors are the ones that should be the source of this information, but often that's not the experience of the Early Career community. Many great career development resources are available, however, many of them are not well known by the members of our community. This information is fundamental for students and postdocs being able to manage priorities in different projects.

Looking through the career related efforts that are advertised in the field one can find a lack of events and talks that try to inform early career members about the possible academic careers. It's clear that there's a great preoccupation in keeping that audience informed about possibilities of jobs in the industry. That disparity can also be seen in the interests listed by the CommF2 Topical Group. The objective of this LOI is not to undervalue the resources and efforts that exist towards non-academic opportunities, but rather bring awareness that there's also a need to mentor and guide our postdocs about academic career paths.

While some responsibility for mentoring (beyond advising) should rest on individual institutions, there are some straightforward ways to address the problem on a community scale. For example, at large conferences, during parallel sessions, there could periodically be a session for early career people to hear about the progression of academic careers, and helpful resources. These sessions are well attended at AAS meetings, and have grown into series with different topics and levels presented on different days. It is also great to host a panel discussion in the evening, where academics with different career paths share their experience, then socialize with the attendees afterward in a reception. It is also great to encourage early career people from different institutions to talk to each other, which naturally lends to discussions about career prospects, hopes, and plans.

To understand the possibilities academia can offer becomes more important to foreign

nationals. Most temporary visa status do not allow for gaps in between positions, forcing postdocs to plan way ahead than their American colleagues and, often, to accept less than optimal jobs solely because of timing. This also plays a role into the diversity of the field. In a political climate that tends to repress immigration, it's a responsibility of the field to provide information and equal opportunity of access. According to data available by NSF, in 2018, 54% of the total postdocs in science are temporary visa holders (and this number has not fluctuated much since the early 90's). It's not a stretch to say that the big majority of those have not been part of the American educational system at any level, lacking any experience with Academic jobs besides the research side of it.

One of the major hubs for job information in Physics is the APS Careers website. It would be helpful to enforce as a condition of using that service that all job posters in a given academic cycle (defined by starting date range) post by a given date, announce acceptance by a given date, and may not pressure applicants for a decision until after the latter date has passed. The AAS Job Registry already uses such a system to create an even playing field to the extent possible by such measures. Similarly, applicants prefer to find listings on sites with such protections for the applicants. It allows each applicant to accept their best offer, rather than being forced to favor whatever offer comes first. While some people have the ability to apply in multiple cycles, others must support themselves financially.

In summary, we suggest this to be added to the discussions of the group. A possible solution can be the creation of centralized hubs of information as well as a cultural shift to make sure we keep Postdocs and graduate students informed about academic career paths. Information could be passed in student sessions in APS meetings, workshops, events. Some of the Snowmass Early career initiatives are working in collaboration towards the organization of such events that could set the example for APS.

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