Begin Your ORNL Career with a Distinguished Staff Fellowship

Oak Ridge National Laboratory's Distinguished Staff Fellowship program—a highly competitive, prestigious early-career research opportunity—aims to cultivate future scientific leaders by providing dedicated mentors, resources, and enriching research opportunities at a national laboratory.

Targeted Research Directions

Distinguished Staff Fellowship candidates must demonstrate their ability to contribute to one (or more) of the following cross-disciplinary research initiatives:

- Scale computing and data analytics to exascale and beyond for science and energy
- Deliver transformational R&D on integrated energy systems
- Discover and design next-generation materials and chemical processes for energy
- Advance the impact and application of neutron science
- Understand complexity in biological and environmental systems
- Provide strategic capabilities in isotope R&D and production
- Achieve breakthroughs in nuclear science, technologies, and systems
- Deliver science and technology to address complex national security challenges
Fellowship Benefits

Our Fellows represent a broad range of disciplines and are found in research groups spanning the Laboratory's research missions. We offer many opportunities!

Our mentorship plan is designed to facilitate the successful integration of each Fellow into ORNL's scientific community and to align each Fellow's research activities with DOE missions. We want DSFs to build long-term careers at ORNL!

Our DSFs Excel at ORNL

Those who stay at the Lab after their Distinguished Staff Fellowship find out that the vital support they received as DSFs continues, paving the way for them to make important contributions as full-time research staff members.

Our DSFs go on to:

• Win prestigious awards, including the DOE Early Career Award, Presidential Early Career Award, Gordon Battelle Prize, and UT-Battelle Significant Event Award
• Patent new technologies and partner with industry
• Become leaders and elected fellows within national and international professional societies related to their research fields
• Head up new ORNL programs and serve as technical points of contact for DOE programs
• Serve as principal investigators, managing project staff

Ideal Location

Located near the Great Smoky Mountains, ORNL's campus is just 1 hour away from the national park. The city of Oak Ridge has 150 miles of shoreline for water recreation, rowing, and boating, and nearby Knoxville is home to the thriving research campus of the University of Tennessee and an historic downtown known for its dining, theaters, shopping, and festivals.

Within a day's drive of all major cities on the East Coast, ORNL provides the best of both worlds: proximity to the great outdoors and urban centers with diverse cultural attractions. In addition, East Tennessee is affordable, with a cost of living roughly 8% lower than the national average,* and there's no state income tax, which provides our employees with more take home pay.

* According to data provided by erieri.com on 1/1/2021.
**Testimonials**

“My fellowship allowed me to conduct independent research, broaden my scientific interests, and develop my professional network.”

—Chengyun Hua, R&D associate, Materials Science and Technology Division

“My fellowship provided me with resources and freedom to pursue the most impactful research possible, which gave my career a jump start that I believe would be hard to find anywhere else.”

—Joe Lukens, research scientist, Computational Science and Engineering Division

“Being a Wigner Fellow has allowed me to grow my professional network, develop cross-disciplinary research collaborations, and continue on the path of becoming a thought leader in my research area.”

—Jacky Rios-Torres, R&D associate, Buildings and Transportation Science Division

“My fellowship allowed me to become both a technical expert and an independent thinker. I ventured into new research areas, connecting to fields previously unknown to me. Even a decade later, many of my fellowship experiences continue to drive new ideas and scientific exploration.”

—Petro Maksymovych, R&D staff, Center for Nanophase Materials Sciences

“My fellowship enabled me to help build the neuromorphic computing research area at ORNL. I also had the opportunity during my fellowship to focus on research that interested me and to build a base of work to support funding bids as I continue neuromorphic computing research at ORNL.”

—Katie Schuman, research scientist, Computer Science and Mathematics Division

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**Total Rewards and Amenities**

Combined with competitive salaries, ORNL offers employees and their families a comprehensive and valuable benefits program. ORNL also has numerous on-site amenities that make life more convenient.

- 401(k) Retirement Plan
- Generous Vacation and Holidays
- Pension Plan
- Parental Leave
- Medical Plan (Dental, Vision, and Health Savings Accounts)
- Employee Assistance Program
- Wellness Programs
- Employee Discounts
- Flexible Working Hours
- Life Insurance
- Educational Assistance
- Disability Benefits
- Relocation Assistance
- Legal Insurance with Identity Theft Protection
- Bank
- Coffee Shop
- Cafeteria
- Gym
- Exercise Classes
- On-Site General Medical Clinic
- Walking Trails
Questions? Contact recruiting@ornl.gov.

Watch ornl.gov/careers/distinguished-fellowships for announcements

What You Need to Know to Apply

When you apply, you should:

◰ Have received your PhD in a STEM field before you begin the fellowship
◳ Be no more than 5 years beyond receiving your highest technical degree when you apply.
◲ Have demonstrated leadership skills such as creativity, delegation, responsibility, and the ability to cultivate diversity of thought

Current ORNL postdoctoral researchers and ORNL staff members are not eligible to apply.

There are three application cycles per year (January, May, and September). When applications are open, a link will be available on jobs.ornl.gov.

Find your Big Science Opportunity as an ORNL Distinguished Staff Fellow!

Fellowship Namesakes

Our fellowships are named for three renowned scientists who made significant contributions to their scientific field and held leadership positions at the laboratory: Liane B. Russell, Alvin M. Weinberg, and Eugene P. Wigner.

Russell Fellows are typically in the biological sciences, biomolecular chemistry, computational biology, and environmental and ecosystem sciences. Dr. Liane B. Russell was a groundbreaking geneticist at ORNL (1947–2002), and in 1973 she was the first woman to receive the internationally awarded Roentgen Medal. She achieved international recognition for her contributions to our understanding of basic mammalian genetics.

Weinberg Fellows generally align with the applied, experimental, and computational sciences and demonstrate competency in chemistry and chemical engineering, radiochemistry, materials science and engineering, nuclear science and engineering, and manufacturing science and engineering. Dr. Alvin M. Weinberg, ORNL’s longest serving director (1955–1973), was a passionate advocate for nuclear energy with a strong interest in science policy.

Wigner Fellows are typically in the fundamental sciences and demonstrate competency in advanced materials, chemistry, computational science, neutron scattering, nuclear physics, and plasma and fusion energy sciences. Dr. Eugene P. Wigner was a 1963 Nobel Laureate in physics and ORNL’s first director of research and development (1946–1947).