



A U.S. Department
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News Release

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For immediate release

Argonne named a 'Best Place' to work for postdocs

ARGONNE, Ill. (Feb. 23, 2009) — The U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory was recently ranked as the 13th best place for postdocs to work by *The Scientist*, a life sciences magazine. The magazine's seventh annual Best Places to Work for Postdocs survey recognizes this year's award winners as trailblazers in bettering postdocs' professional experience among hundreds of labs and institutions.

"Educating future scientists is of the utmost importance in fulfilling the Department of Energy's overarching mission of advancing the national, economic and energy security of the United States," said Harold Myron, Director of Argonne's Division of Educational Programs. "We can truly aspire to continued success for Argonne and its postdocs and help our nation address some of the grand challenges in energy and the environment."

The survey finds that top ranked institutions, such as Argonne, have found creative ways to improve postdoc benefits, while also fostering a thriving atmosphere. Argonne's ranking in the survey jumped seven slots, from 20 to 13, in one year. "Argonne works hard to continually improve the postdoc experience," added Myron. "We are honored to be recognized for our efforts and are thrilled by the progress we have made."

Acknowledging improvements that institutions make is an important part of the continuing effort to enhance the postdoctoral experience. "Postdocs are the lifeblood of academic science," said *The Scientist* Editor & Publisher Richard Gallagher. "Our survey is one of the few global efforts to assess their needs and desires and to recognize excellence in postdoc programs."

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Argonne National Laboratory is a U.S.
Department of Energy national laboratory
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Best Place for postdocs—add one

Postdoctoral Programs Coordinator Giselle Sandi said a key aspect of the success of Argonne's postdoctoral programs has been a commitment by the laboratory to create a rewarding and productive tenure for all of the approximately 150 postdocs currently working at the lab.

Argonne has three main postdoctoral programs: the Named Postdoctoral Fellowship Program, Director's Postdoctoral Fellowships and Division Postdoctoral Appointments. The Argonne Named Postdoctoral Fellowship Program awards annual fellowships to outstanding doctoral scientists and engineers from around the world who are at early points in promising careers. The fellowships are named after scientific and technical luminaries who have been associated with the laboratory, its predecessors and the University of Chicago since the 1940s.

Director's Postdoctoral Fellows are selected based on their research and academic accomplishments, as well as the strength of their research proposals. They are given the opportunity to collaborate with Argonne scientists and engineers on existing programs and on new initiatives. Director's Postdoctoral Fellows are selected three times per year.

Division Postdoctoral Appointments are hired on a continuous base and typically conduct research on existing Argonne science and technology programs. Candidates are selected based on their academic background and possible input to the research program as described in their proposals.

The Lab-Wide Postdoctoral Committee plays a vital role in the selection and recommendation of the postdoctoral fellows and associates. Their hard work and input is invaluable to the success of the program. Argonne also puts special emphasis on enhancing the postdoctoral experience. "It is important," Sandi said, "that the time a postdoc spends at Argonne is not only academically rewarding, but also socially fulfilling."

The survey is published in the March issue of *The Scientist*.

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Best Place for postdocs—add two

The U.S. Department of Energy's Argonne National Laboratory seeks solutions to pressing national problems in science and technology. The nation's first national laboratory, Argonne conducts leading-edge basic and applied scientific research in virtually every scientific discipline. Argonne researchers work closely with researchers from hundreds of companies, universities, and federal, state and municipal agencies to help them solve their specific problems, advance America's scientific leadership and prepare the nation for a better future. With employees from more than 60 nations, Argonne is managed by UChicago Argonne, LLC for the U.S. Department of Energy's Office of Science.