

# Physics Division Scientific Position Guidelines

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## Introduction

The Physics Division follows the LBNL general policies for searches, hires, reviews, and promotions of Scientific Staff, including postdoctoral appointments, as described in the [LBNL RPM](#), and in the [S & E Resources](#) pages. This document describes additional policy specific to the Physics Division. In addition to the scientific positions described in the [LBNL RPM](#), the Physics Division makes appointments to two Division-specific positions, PDG Staff Scientist and Chamberlain Fellow, which are described below.

## The Physics Division Staff Committee

The primary role of the Physics Division Staff Committee (PDSC) is to verify that relevant searches and promotions in the Physics Division (career and career-track, joint PDG Research/Staff Scientist, Project Scientist, and Chamberlain Fellow positions) follow the LBNL and Physics Division policies. The PDSC shall review relevant search and promotion cases at particular points in the process, as described in detail below, providing advisory reports to the search or ad-hoc committee, the Division Director, and the Division Staff. The PDSC shall provide advice to the Physics Division Staff and Director on matters related to searches, hires, reviews, or promotions, when requested. The PDSC shall work with the HR department to insure supervisors are notified when reviews of supervisees are required. The PDSC shall be appointed yearly by the Physics Division Director, who shall also name the chair. The PDSC shall consist of at least 5 members, chosen to achieve broad representation of the Physics Division research areas.

## Scientific Position Search Guidelines

All searches must be approved by the Physics Division Director before the positions can be opened in HR or advertisements sent out. For career, career-track and Chamberlain Fellow searches, the Physics Division Director shall appoint a search committee to recruit a qualified and diverse pool of applicants and select the best candidate(s) for the position. For Research Scientist and Staff Scientist positions, the committee shall consist of at least three members with appointments at or above the level of the position to be filled, with at least one member from the research group seeking the appointment, and at least one member outside that group. For Divisional Fellow and Senior Scientist positions, the committee shall consist of at least four members with appointments at or above the level of the position to be filled, with at least one member outside the research group seeking the appointment. Chamberlain Fellow searches

are described in a section below. Standard Postdoctoral Fellow and Project Scientist searches are organized and conducted within the research group.

The search committee shall work with HR to create a Position Description and corresponding advertisement for the position. These shall be reviewed by the PDSC and approved by the Physics Division Director prior to posting.

Positions shall be posted and advertised widely to ensure a broad and diverse set of candidates, including:

- The [current job opportunities](#) list on the Physics Division web page
- Posting on widely-used professional employment web sites (e.g. AJO)
- Letters, emails, and advertisements to the physics community, contacts for large experiments, and other universities and laboratories.

In addition, the position may be advertised in journals (e.g. CERN Courier or Physics Today), and posters advertising the position may be printed and distributed.

The Physics Division Scientific Staff shall be notified of all new career and career-track position searches, with contact information for the search committee chair. The Scientific Staff shall be encouraged to provide names of qualified candidates to the search committee.

## Searches for Career or Career-Track Positions

Candidates must provide a complete set of application materials including CV, publication list, and research statement, and arrange for submission of the appropriate number of letters of reference. Candidates shall also be asked to provide a statement describing any activities in education and outreach, diversity and inclusion, and/or community leadership roles. In addition to the references provided by the candidates, the search committee may solicit additional letters of reference from respected members of the physics community.

The search committee chair shall provide an interim report to the PDSC and Division Director, which must be approved prior to inviting short-listed candidates. The report should describe the short list selection procedure, list the proposed candidates and their qualifications, and to the extent possible, provide statistics on the size and diversity of the initial candidate pool and the short-listed candidates. The PDSC shall advise whether the short list selection is consistent with LBNL and Physics Division policies. The Division Director makes the final short list approval.

At least two members of the search committee shall interview each short-listed candidate. Identifying a subset of the Scientific Staff who can interview all candidates is desirable. Short-listed candidates shall be invited to present their research at an [RPM](#) or other suitable venue. The Scientific Staff shall be invited to interview candidates and provide written or oral feedback to the search committee. All application materials for the short-listed candidates shall

be provided confidentially to the Scientific Staff who are eligible to vote on the final selection (see below for definition). Abbreviated materials (e.g. CV and publication list) may be provided to non-eligible Staff and retirees at the Division Director's discretion.

Once the search is complete, the search committee chair shall present a written report to the PDSC and Physics Division Director, including a description of the search procedure and a summary of the qualifications of the top candidate(s). The PDSC shall write a brief report to the Physics Division Director advising whether the search complies with LBNL and Physics Division policies.

Depending on the level of the appointment or promotion, different levels of the Scientific Staff shall be provided the opportunity to vote on career and career-track appointments, for the purpose of advising the Physics Division Director on the proposed hire.

- Senior Scientists and Faculty Senior Scientists may vote on any career or career-track appointment or promotion.
- Divisional Fellows and Faculty Scientists with a joint appointment in the Physics Division may vote on Research Scientist, Staff Scientist and Divisional Fellow appointments. Additional Faculty Scientists may be invited by the Division Director to vote on these appointments within their research group.
- Staff Scientists may vote on Research Scientist and Staff Scientist appointments.
- Research Scientists may vote on Research Scientist appointments

A Scientific Staff meeting of those eligible to vote will be held to discuss the appointment or promotion prior to the vote. Formerly eligible retirees may also be invited to the meeting as a courtesy. The search committee and the PDSC reports shall be made available to the voting portion of the Scientific Staff at least one week prior to the meeting.

The eligible staff will be invited to vote on the case via anonymous ballot. The ballot shall open at the staff meeting and close 48 hours afterwards. The preliminary result of the staff vote shall be reported orally at the end of the staff meeting, and the full vote result shall be communicated in confidence to the PDSC chair. The Division Director will make the final decision on advancing the appointment or promotion based on the search committee report, the discussion at the Staff meeting, the results of the ballot, and funding availability.

## Promotion to Career or Career-Track Positions

The procedures for review and promotion to Career Staff Scientist, Career Research Scientist, or Senior Scientist are described on the LBNL [S & E Resources](#) page, with details in [this document](#). The following are additional policies for the Physics Division. For Research Scientist promotions, the supervisor shall prepare the case and present it to the PDSC and the Division Director. For Staff Scientist promotions, the Division Director shall appoint an ad-hoc committee consisting of the supervisor, plus at least one other Senior Scientist from a different research area, to prepare the case and present it to the PDSC and Division Director. For Senior

Scientist promotions, the Division Director shall appoint a three-person ad-hoc committee with broad representation across the Division programs to prepare the case, and present it to the PDSC and the Division Director. As with appointments, the Scientific Staff shall be provided the opportunity to vote on Research Staff, Staff, and Senior Staff promotions, for the purpose of advising the Physics Division Director, with participation following the guidelines above.

## Joint Particle Data Group/Research Scientist or Staff Scientist Positions

Joint Particle Data Group (PDG) Research/Staff Scientist positions are full-time Research Scientist, Staff Scientist or Senior Scientist positions where half of the support comes from the PDG group and the other half from one of the Physics Division research groups. Search, hire, review, and promotion of these positions follows the LBNL and Physics Division policy for Research or Staff positions, with the following additions.

The Joint PDG/Research Staff Scientist search committee shall include at least one current member of the PDG. The position description shall specify a 50/50 split between PDG work and research. The ad shall encourage applications as broadly as possible for research areas within the Physics Division with the potential to support the 50% research component of the position, consistent with the needs of the PDG.

During the formation of the short list, the PDG and the relevant research groups shall be given access to the application materials. Feedback from the PDG and relevant research groups should be considered by the search committee during the short list selection and in their final selection. The research group that a candidate would join must be consulted before an offer is made. Appointment offers shall be contingent on funding availability in the relevant research group.

Both the PDG and the relevant research group shall participate in midterm reviews and promotion evaluation, with both components weighing equally.

## Project Scientist Positions

Project scientists are non-career-track positions for candidates with more experience than a postdoc, but where the intention is to work in support of a specific project. These are not career positions, and both funding availability and labwide rules limit their terms. To extend a project scientist position beyond three years, the supervisor should initiate a PDSC review by the end of the 2nd year of the appointment. The supervisor shall solicit three informal (e.g. email) letters of recommendation, of which at least two must be from outside LBNL/UCB, and one may be from the supervisor. The supervisor shall provide the PDSC with a career development plan and a current candidate CV. The PDSC shall advise whether the candidate is on track to achieving their subsequent career goal within the extension period.

# Chamberlain Fellow Positions

The Chamberlain Fellow position is a Postdoctoral Fellow position named for the late Nobel laureate Owen Chamberlain. The Chamberlain Fellow search pool provides very high quality candidates across many research groups, so the search is handled as for career and career-track positions, as described above.

Prior to forming the search committee, the Division Director will work with research group leaders to determine which research areas have funds for a hire and shall inform the committee. The Chamberlain Fellow search committee shall have at least one Staff member from each research group with available funding.

The position description shall state that the applicant must not have held a postdoc position for more than 2 years at the anticipated start date. It shall describe a research allowance determined by the Division Director. The ad shall require candidates to provide a research statement. To ensure access to top candidates also applying to other named fellowships, the Chamberlain Fellow search should aim to present offers either in December of the year before, or January the year of the search.

The search committee shall solicit the advice of any group(s) whose research area overlaps with the candidate's research area, when selecting short-listed candidates.

Chamberlain Fellow short-listed candidates shall be invited to give a talk at an RPM or other suitable venue. The Scientific Staff shall be invited to interview short-listed candidates. The search committee shall solicit feedback from the Scientific Staff prior to making final recommendations on whether candidates are consistent with the research excellence of past Chamberlain Fellows.

Initial appointments of Chamberlain Fellows shall be for three years. Extensions will be processed as per general Postdoctoral positions, described below.

# Postdoctoral Positions

General Physics Division practice is to perform a search to fill postdoctoral positions, including posting the position on AJO and the Physics Division job opportunities web page. Postdoctoral appointment terms are dictated by labwide rules, HR policies and union contract rules. Initial postdoctoral appointments are generally for no more than 3 years. Prior to the end of a one- or two-year appointment, the supervisor should inform the Division office of their intention to extend the appointment up to three years. In case an appointment is not extended, the postdoc should be informed as soon as possible, generally a year prior to the end of the appointment.

To extend a postdoctoral position beyond three years, the supervisor shall initiate a PDSC review by the end of the 2nd year of the appointment. The supervisor shall provide three informal letters of recommendation, of which at least two must be from outside LBNL/UCB, and one may be from the supervisor. The supervisor shall provide the PDSC with a career development plan and a current candidate CV. The PDSC shall advise whether the candidate is on track to achieving their subsequent career goal within the extension period. A successful review will allow an extension for two more years making a total of five.

## Other Issues

Full-time GSRA positions generally may be offered only to students who have completed or will soon complete their Prelim exams.

Scientists in other divisions at LBNL may request to transfer their existing position such as Staff Scientist or Senior Scientist, to the Physics Division. Before approving such a transfer, the Division Director or their designee shall present the case for the request at a (senior) staff meeting, and conduct a straw poll and (senior) staff vote, following the same voter eligibility rules as for an appointment or promotion to the transferee's current position as described above. The presentation shall describe the transferee's research achievements, future research plans, and how their research and funding aligns with the Physics Division. The transferee's CV and a brief future research statement shall be provided at least one week prior to the vote.

Staff Scientist appointment cases should include a statement of the candidate's connection to the Physics Division research program. The candidate should have recently presented their research program at an appropriate forum (RPM, INPA seminar, or similar).

Midterm reviews of career-track scientists and Divisional Fellows are required by LBNL, as described on the [S&E Resources](#) page. Midterm review recommendation letters can be informal (email).

The PDSC is responsible for proposing changes to this document. Major changes shall be presented to the career and career-track Scientific Staff, and voted on before being adopted. All changes to this document must be approved by the Division Director before becoming Physics Division policy.

## Search and Interview Conduct Guidelines

Search committees and interviewers should take steps to avoid any bias in identifying and recruiting the best scientists. All search committees should familiarize themselves with [LBNL resources](#) discussing bias in hiring, and should check on these resources at least once a year to see if new studies, materials, and recommendations have been made available. PDSC will

recommend to the Division Director specific training for search committees prior to the hiring season.

When evaluating the appropriateness of application materials, defer to the text of the ad.

When interviewing a job candidate, keep the conversation on issues pertaining to the job and associated responsibilities. Having a consistent set of questions to begin the interview with each candidate is encouraged. Avoid subjects covered by the EEOC such as race or religion, and ignore any such information if it appears in application materials. In case a candidate raises any of these issues, consider deferring to the physics division HR representatives and following up by email.

A link to this policy should be included with the invitation for staff to interview candidates.