

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-APHIS Postgraduate Opportunity in Transboundary

Animal Diseases

**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-APHIS-2022-0205

**Organization** U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

**Reference Code** USDA-APHIS-2022-0205

**How to Apply** *Connect with ORISE...on the GO!* Download the new ORISE GO mobile app in the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#) to help you stay engaged, connected, and informed during your ORISE experience and beyond!

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcript(s) – For this opportunity, an unofficial transcript or copy of the student academic records printed by the applicant or by academic advisors from internal institution systems may be submitted. All transcripts must be in English or include an official English translation. Click [here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- Two educational or professional recommendations. At least one recommendation must be received in order for the mentor to view your application.

**Application Deadline** 12/30/2022 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

**Description** \*Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis.

**APHIS Office/Lab and Location:** A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) located in Orient Point, New York.

**Research Project:** The USDA APHIS FADDL at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, New York, provides diagnostic capability to assist the States and the USDA in diagnosing and responding to Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) threats. Specifically, the FADDL provides diagnostics for vesicular and swine diseases. The selected Fellow will collaborate with microbiologists, veterinarians, statisticians, and biotechnicians to support the diagnostic mission. They will have the opportunity to learn about transboundary animal diseases and their impact on trade, surveillance procedures and methods, diagnostic testing algorithms for testing in series, sample handling and management, as well as how automated platforms are used in laboratories.

**Learning Objectives:** Under the guidance of a mentor, research activities include, but are not limited to:

- Coordinate developmental research studies in foreign animal disease diagnostic testing.
- Analyze data, summarize findings, write manuscripts, and present findings.
- Conduct molecular diagnostics, serology, virus isolation, or other needed studies to developmental diagnostic research.
- Summarize findings on forms, and in reports, and assist in updating and creating standard operating procedures, and other documentation in accordance with ISO-17025 procedure.
- Assist in routine laboratory research to ensure quality programs and maintenance programs are supported.



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- Assist in laboratory diagnostic needs in support of foreign animal disease case investigations.

**Mentor(s):** The mentor(s) for this opportunity is Robin Holland ([robin.holland@usda.gov](mailto:robin.holland@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research please contact the mentor(s).

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date:** As soon as a qualified candidate is determined. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

**Appointment Length:** The appointment will initially be for one year but may be renewed upon recommendation of APHIS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

**Level of Participation:** The appointment is full-time.

**Participant Stipend:** The participant(s) will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The annual stipend for these appointments will be determined upon selection and will range between \$50,000 and \$70,000. Candidates will be eligible to receive a health insurance allowance.**

**Citizenship Requirements:** This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

**Background Investigation Requirements:** Background investigations are required for the selected candidate so the individual can participate in biocontainment without an escort and handle select agents. Adjudication of a Special Agency Check (SAC) is required before the selected candidate can start at Plum Island Animal Disease Center. An advanced BI security clearance will be conducted/adjudicated after start date, allowing for unescorted access to biocontainment. An APHIS Select Agent Clearance is also required so that the selected candidate can interact with select agents. Paperwork for all of these clearances will be sent to the selected candidate after acceptance of the official offer from ORAU.

**ORISE Information:** This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education (ORISE), was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and APHIS. Participants do not become employees of USDA, APHIS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

**Questions:** Please visit our [Program Website](#). After reading, if you have additional questions about the application process please email [USDA-APHIS@ornl.gov](mailto:USDA-APHIS@ornl.gov) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should have received a bachelor's degree in one of the relevant fields (e.g. Agricultural Sciences, Biochemistry, Animal Sciences, General Biology, Cellular and Molecular Biology, Comparative Medicine and Laboratory Animal Medicine, Immunology, Infectious Diseases and Zoonoses, Microbiology, Virology).

Research is performed in a BSL-2/3 laboratory. Interacting with unknown pathogenic agents mandates the use of biocontainment hoods and wearing personal protective gear, which can be strenuous on the individual.

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Individuals will be required to shower out at the end of the day after researching in bio-containment. As a condition of this opportunity, all personnel entering the BSL-3 biocontainment facilities at Plum Island shall not be in contact with specific susceptible animals off the Plum Island premises for a period of five (5) days.

**Preferred Skills:**

- Knowledge of general laboratory practices including aseptic technique and the use of common laboratory equipment (centrifuge, micropipettes, biosafety cabinets, microscope, etc.).
- Ability to demonstrate a level of familiarity with ELISA and PCR testing.
- Proficiency in technical writing, oral communication, interpersonal and organization skills, as well as critical thinking skills to analyze and interpret data.
- Demonstrated flexibility and self-motivation to complete assigned tasks.
- Eagerness to learn from peers and to collaborate in a team environment.
- Proficiency in using basic word processing and data management software.
- A background in cell biology, virology, microscopy and/or foreign animal diseases.
- BSL-3 laboratory experience.
- Experience in working with select agents.
- Experiencing in ELISA assays.

**Eligibility  
Requirements**

- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Communications and Graphics Design** ([1](#)👁)
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([12](#)👁)