Opportunity Title: FDA Research Fellowship in Food Microbiological Safety
Opportunity Reference Code: FDA-HFP-2024-0029

Organization U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA)

Reference Code FDA-HFP-2024-0029

How to Apply ***To submit your application, scroll to the bottom of this opportunity and click APPLY.***

A complete application consists of:

- An application
- Transcripts – Click here for detailed information about acceptable transcripts
- A current resume/CV, including academic history, employment history, relevant experiences, and publication list
- One educational or professional recommendation

All documents must be in English or include an official English translation.

If you have questions, send an email to ORISE.FDA.HFP@orau.org. Please include the reference code for this opportunity in your email.

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Description ***Applications will be reviewed on a rolling-basis.**

FDA Office and Location: A research opportunity is currently available at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Human Foods Program (HFP), located in College Park, Maryland.

Research Project: Sprouts represent a unique food safety challenge because the proliferation of bacterial pathogens, if present, is enhanced due to the high humidity and the ideal sprouting temperature. FDA Produce Safety Rule requires the testing of spent sprout irrigation water [SSIW] or in-process sprouts for pathogens. One regulatory method is available for the testing of 100 ml of SSIW for one serotype of Shiga toxic producing Escherichia coli (STEC), namely E. coli O157:H7, yet outbreaks linked to sprouts consumption have been attributed to different serotypes of STEC. We recently developed a new method for the testing of 375ml of SSIW for STEC. Under the guidance of the mentor, the participant will be involved in comparing the performance of this new method to the 100ml E. coli O157:H7 SSIW regulatory method and to the FDA Bacteriological Analytical Manual STEC method for 125ml bottled water or other non-turbid liquids.

Learning Objectives: The participant will learn about the required standards set by FDA to verify scientifically that a new method is accurate, precise, sensitive and specific enough to reliably identify the target bacteria within the intended sample matrix, to better protect consumers against food borne illness. This opportunity will increase participant's knowledge, skills, and abilities to detect bacterial pathogens using molecular methods, immunological-based and culture-based techniques.

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Anticipated Appointment Start Date: January 15, 2025. Start date is flexible and will depend on a variety of factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for seven and a half months, but may be renewed upon recommendation of FDA and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR) only.

This program, administered by ORAU through its contract with the U.S. Department of Energy to manage the Oak Ridge Institute for Science and Education, was established through an interagency agreement between DOE and FDA. The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. Proof of health insurance is required for participation in this program. Participants do not become employees of FDA, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits.

Completion of a successful background investigation by the Office of Personnel Management is required for an applicant to be on-boarded at FDA. OPM can complete a background investigation only for individuals, including non-US Citizens, who have resided in the US for a total of three of the past five years.

FDA Ethics Requirements

If an ORISE Fellow, to include their spouse and minor children, reports what is identified as a Significantly Regulated Organization (SRO) or prohibited investment fund financial interest in any amount, or a relationship with an SRO, except for spousal employment with an SRO, and the individual will not voluntarily divest the financial interest or terminate the relationship, then the individual is not placed at FDA. For additional requirements, see FDA Ethics for Nonemployee Scientists.

FDA requires ORISE participants to read and sign their FDA Education and Training Agreement within 30 days of his/her start date, setting forth the conditions and expectations for his/her educational appointment at the agency. This agreement covers such topics as the following:

- Non-employee nature of the ORISE appointment;
- Prohibition on ORISE Fellows performing inherently governmental functions;
- Obligation of ORISE Fellows to convey all necessary rights to the FDA regarding intellectual property conceived or first reduced to practice during their fellowship;
- The fact that research materials and laboratory notebooks are the property of the FDA;
- ORISE fellow's obligation to protect and not to further disclose or use

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non-public information.

Qualifications

The qualified candidate should have received a bachelor or master's degree in one of the relevant fields or be currently pursuing the degree with completion expected prior to the start of the appointment. Degree must have been received within the past five years.

Preferred Skills:

Highly competitive applicants may have education and/or experience in one or more of the following:

- Aseptic technique
- Quality assurance and quality control aspects of experimental work in laboratory and assist the principal investigator in maintaining QA/QC records
- Organizational skills to plan and conduct experiments
- Support research in Bio Safety Level 1 and 2 labs

Point of Contact

Ashley Letson

Eligibility Requirements

- **Citizenship:** LPR or U.S. Citizen
- **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree or Master's Degree received within the last 60 months or currently pursuing.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Engineering** (2 👁)
  - **Environmental and Marine Sciences** (1 👁)
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (51 👁)

Affirmation

I am a U.S. citizen, or I have lived in the United States for at least 36 out of the past 60 months. (36 months do not have to be consecutive.)
and
I have read the FDA Ethics Requirements.