

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Advanced Training in Emerging and High-Consequence Zoonotic Diseases

**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-PA-2025-0109

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

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-PA-2025-0109

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

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. 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

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

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**Application Deadline** 12/28/2025 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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

**ARS Office/Lab and Location:** A research opportunity is currently available with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Agricultural Research Service (ARS), located in Manhattan, Kansas.

The Agricultural Research Service (ARS) is the U.S. Department of Agriculture's chief scientific in-house research agency with a mission to find solutions to agricultural problems that affect Americans every day from field to table. ARS will deliver cutting-edge, scientific tools and innovative solutions for American farmers, producers, industry, and communities to support the nourishment and well-being of all people; sustain our nation's agroecosystems and natural resources; and ensure the economic competitiveness and excellence of our agriculture. The vision of the agency is to provide global leadership in agricultural discoveries through scientific excellence.

**Research Project:** The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Agricultural Research Service (ARS), Zoonotic and Emerging Disease Research Unit (ZEDRU), located at the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility (NBAF) in Manhattan, Kansas, invites applications from recent master's graduates to participate in research on high-consequence and emerging zoonotic pathogens.

Emerging zoonotic diseases pose critical threats to public health, livestock health, and agricultural security. NBAF is USDA's premier high-containment

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(BSL-4) research facility, uniquely positioned to investigate these pathogens and their potential impact on agriculture. This appointment offers an exceptional educational experience for participants seeking to expand their expertise in molecular biology, virology, ecology, or bioinformatics while contributing to projects of national importance.

**Learning Objectives:** Under the guidance of a mentor, the participant will have the opportunity to:

- Participate in research projects examining the ecology, molecular biology, or computational biology of emerging zoonotic pathogens.
- Design and conduct experiments or analyses under the mentorship of USDA scientists.
- Apply molecular, ecological, or computational tools to better understand pathogen transmission, host–pathogen interactions, or outbreak risk.
- Collaborate with multidisciplinary teams across USDA, academic institutions, and federal partners.
- Gain experience preparing scientific reports, presentations, and publications.

This program provides access to USDA's only BSL-4 research facility and the opportunity to engage in studies that cannot be conducted elsewhere in the United States. It is particularly valuable for post-master's participants considering careers in research, public health, veterinary medicine, or advanced doctoral training. Participants will gain the skills needed to move confidently into professional or academic roles focused on protecting U.S. agriculture, food security, and public health.

**Mentor(s):** The mentor for this opportunity is Lisa Hensley ([lisa.hensley@usda.gov](mailto:lisa.hensley@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date: 2025/2026.** 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 ARS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

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

**Participant Stipend:** The participant will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated annual stipend range is \$55,000 - \$78,733 for master's level.**

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

**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 ARS. Participants do

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not become employees of USDA, ARS, 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 [ORISE.ARS.Plains@orau.org](mailto:ORISE.ARS.Plains@orau.org) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a master's degree in the one of the relevant fields (e.g. biology, microbiology, ecology, computational biology, bioinformatics, epidemiology, veterinary science, or a related discipline).

**Preferred skills:**

- Hands-on research experience through **master's thesis, lab research, or applied projects/coursework**.
- Familiarity with **molecular biology, virology, ecology, or computational biology methods**.
- Ability to **design and analyze experiments or datasets**.
- Strong skills in **scientific writing, reporting, and presentation**.
- Experience working in a **collaborative, multidisciplinary team environment**.
- Interest in advancing to **doctoral-level research or professional roles** in zoonotic disease or agricultural security.
- Strong motivation to learn, problem-solve, and collaborate in a multidisciplinary research environment.

**Stipend** \$55,000.00 – \$78,733.00 Yearly

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** LPR or U.S. Citizen
  - **Degree:** Master's Degree.
  - **Discipline(s):**
    - **Computer, Information, and Data Sciences** ([17](#))
    - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([51](#))