

**Opportunity Title:** Study of returned extraterrestrial samples  
**Opportunity Reference Code:** 0216-NPP-MAR26-JPL-PlanetSci

**Organization** National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)

**Reference Code** 0216-NPP-MAR26-JPL-PlanetSci

**How to Apply** All applications must be submitted in [Zintellect](#)

Please visit the NASA Postdoctoral Program website for application instructions and requirements: [How to Apply | NASA Postdoctoral Program \(oua.org\)](#).

A complete application to the NASA Postdoctoral Program includes:

1. Research proposal
2. Three letters of recommendation
3. Official doctoral transcript documents

**Application Deadline** 4/2/2026 6:00:59 PM Eastern Time Zone

**Description** About the [NASA Postdoctoral Program](#)

The [NASA Postdoctoral Program \(NPP\)](#) offers unique research opportunities to highly-talented scientists to engage in ongoing NASA research projects at a NASA Center, NASA Headquarters, or at a NASA-affiliated research institute. These one- to three-year fellowships are competitive and are designed to advance NASA's missions in space science, Earth science, aeronautics, space operations, exploration systems, and astrobiology.

**Description:**

We are in an exciting era that diverse samples are being returned by multiple missions. A geological sampling of Mars will be performed by the Mars 2020 mission and returned in the near future. Two missions are returning or already successfully returned samples from the surface of asteroids. These samples greatly expand the collection of returned extraterrestrial samples, which offer scientists the best opportunity to understand the origin, evolution, and processes of the solar system. This opportunity is to join Dr. Yang Liu at JPL to study surface and interior processes of the parent bodies from which samples were collected and returned. Example science areas include but are not limited to volatiles, mineralogy, petrology, and geochemistry of these returned materials. The successful candidate will be expected to identify and carry out an innovative research program in one or more of these science areas, or that could stimulate new research areas.

For references, see

Ma, C., Liu, Y. 2019. Discovery of a zinc-rich mineral on the surface of lunar orange pyroclastic beads. *American Mineralogist* 104, 447-452.

Liu, Y., Chen Y., Guan Y., Eiler, J.M., Ma C., Rossman, G.R., Zhang, Y. 2018. Impact-melt hygrometer for Mars: The case of shergottite Elephant Moraine (EETA) 79001. *Earth & Planetary Science Letters*, 490, 206-215.



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Liu, Y., Baziotis, I.P., Asimow, P.D., Bodnar, R.J., Taylor, L.A., 2016b.  
Mineral chemistry of the Tissint meteorite: Indications of two-stage crystallization in a closed system. *Meteoritics & Planetary Science*, 51, 2293-2315.

Liu Y., Guan Y., Zhang Y., Rossman G.R., Eiler J.M., Taylor L.A. 2012a.  
Direct measurement of hydroxyl in the lunar regolith and the origin of lunar surface water. *Nature Geoscience*, 5, 779-782.

Liu, Y., Floss, C., Day, J.M.D., Hill, E., and Taylor, L.A., 2009a.  
Petrogenesis of lunar mare basalt meteorite Miller Range 05035. *Meteoritics & Planetary Science*, 44, 261-284.

Liu, Y., Park, J., Schnare, D., Hill, E., and Taylor, L.A., 2008a.  
Characterization of lunar dust for toxicological studies. II: Texture and shape characteristics. *Journal of Aerospace Engineering*, 21, 272-279.

**Location:**

Jet Propulsion Laboratory  
Pasadena, California

**Field of Science:** Planetary Science

**Advisors:**

Yang Liu  
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(626) 437-6532

**Applications with citizens from Designated Countries will not be accepted at this time, unless they are Legal Permanent Residents of the United States.** A complete list of Designated Countries can be found at: <https://www.nasa.gov/oirr/export-control>.

Eligibility is currently open to:

- U.S. Citizens;
- U.S. Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR);
- Foreign Nationals eligible for an Exchange Visitor J-1 visa status; and,
- Applicants for LPR, asylees, or refugees in the U.S. at the time of application with 1) a valid EAD card and 2) I-485 or I-589 forms in pending status

**Questions about this opportunity?** Please email [npp@oraui.org](mailto:npp@oraui.org)

**Point of Contact** [Mikeala](#)

**Eligibility Requirements** • **Degree:** Doctoral Degree.