

**Opportunity Title:** USDA-ARS Postgraduate Fellowship in Swine Virus Research

**Opportunity Reference Code:** USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0006

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

**Reference Code** USDA-ARS-MWA-2026-0006

**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** 3/13/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

**Description** **\*Applications are reviewed on a rolling-basis. Application reviews will begin on January 31st, 2026.**

**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 Ames, Iowa.

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:** Under the guidance of a mentor, the participant's specific project will involve assessing how pigs respond to viral infections, such as porcine reproductive and respiratory syndrome virus (PRRSV) and porcine epidemic diarrhea virus (PEDV). The research project may be further shaped based on participant's specific expertise, interests, and goals, as well as emerging needs of the swine industry and may be concentrated in areas of laboratory or computational research based on the participant's background. Laboratory research may include preparing

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samples/reagents, handling and collecting samples from pigs, and performing laboratory assays. Laboratory assays may include *ex vivo*, *in vitro*, and *in situ* techniques, such as histology tissue processing, nucleic acid isolations, flow cytometry antibody staining, qPCR, ELISA, bulk RNA sequencing, single-cell RNA sequencing, spatial transcriptomics, immunohistochemistry, RNA *in situ* hybridization, and/or cell culture. Computational research may include analyzing data, such as basic plotting and statistical analysis of laboratory assay readouts, or processing and analyzing transcriptomics data (bulk or single-cell RNA-seq).

**Learning Objectives:** Under the guidance of a mentor, the participant will have the opportunity to contribute to research aimed at understanding immune responses to viral challenges in pigs. This experience will focus on exploring host-pathogen interactions that may inform the development of immunomodulatory intervention and prevention strategies beneficial to the swine industry. As part of a multidisciplinary team, the participant will be immersed in various aspects of the research process, including collecting and processing samples/data, retrieving and analyzing results, and communicating research findings. This hands-on experience provides a unique chance to engage in impactful research while developing valuable skills in the field. Opportunities may include laboratory, computational, and/or animal handling.

**Mentor(s):** The mentors for this opportunity are Jayne Wiarda ([jayne.wiarda@usda.gov](mailto:jayne.wiarda@usda.gov)) and Alexandra Buckley ([Alexandra.buckley@usda.gov](mailto:Alexandra.buckley@usda.gov)). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentors.

**Anticipated Appointment Start Date:** March - July 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 stipend range is \$40,000 - \$60,000 annually. A health insurance supplement will also be included.**

**Citizenship Requirements:** This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens 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 not become employees of USDA, ARS, DOE or the program administrator, and there are no employment-related benefits. Proof of health insurance is

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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.Midwest@orau.org](mailto:ORISE.ARS.Midwest@orau.org) and include the reference code for this opportunity.

**Qualifications** The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received an associate's, bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields. Degree must have been received within the past five years, or anticipated to be received by 5/31/2026.

**Preferred skills:**

- Willingness to learn new skills, self motivation, independence, and enthusiasm for scientific and/or veterinary research
- Ability to collaborate and communicate as a team member
- Knowledge or willingness to learn basic concepts of immunology/virology
- Experience with some wet lab assays (cell culture, cell isolations, nucleic acid isolations, immunohistochemistry, in situ hybridization, RT-qPCR, flow cytometry) **OR** experience with data analysis in command line and R, including basic statistical testing, plotting, and transcriptomics analysis

**Stipend** \$40,000.00 – \$60,000.00 Yearly

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

**Eligibility** • **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only

**Requirements** • **Degree:** Associate's Degree, Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or anticipated to be received by 5/31/2026 12:00:00 AM.

• **Discipline(s):**

- **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** ([12](#))
- **Computer, Information, and Data Sciences** ([17](#))
- **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([2](#))
- **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([51](#))
- **Mathematics and Statistics** ([5](#))

• **Veteran Status:** Veterans Preference, degree received within the last 120 month(s).