Opportunity Title: FDA Research Fellowship: Neurodevelopmental Assessment of Prenatal Analgesic Exposure Using Translational Models
Opportunity Reference Code: FDA-CDER-2026-0131

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

Reference Code FDA-CDER-2026-0131

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.CDER@orau.org. Please include the reference code for this opportunity in your email.

Application Deadline 8/14/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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

FDA Office and Location: A research opportunity is available immediately with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), located at the National Center for Toxicological Research (NCTR) in Jefferson, Arkansas, approximately 30 miles south of Little Rock.

The Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER) performs an essential public health task by making sure that safe and effective drugs are available to improve the health of people in the United States. As part of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), CDER regulates over-the-counter and prescription drugs, including biological therapeutics and generic drugs. These efforts cover more than just medicines.

Research Project: NCTR is conducting developmental neurotoxicology studies at the request of CDER to assess a compound of particular regulatory importance. Findings from this research may directly inform guidelines on medication use during pregnancy.

Two related projects are currently underway at NCTR investigating this compound. The first examines histological and molecular endpoints in a guinea pig model, while the second focuses on behavioral outcomes and their underlying biological factors in the rat following perinatal exposure.

Under the guidance of the mentors, you will engage in many aspects of the research process, including experimental design and interpretation, in-life data collection, endpoint validation, data analysis, and dissemination of results. You will also regularly present and discuss findings at internal meetings attended by NCTR and CDER staff, providing opportunities to engage in the breadth of regulatory research.

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Learning Objectives: As a participant, you will gain hands-on experience with numerous methods used in neurotoxicological research including basic histology, immunohistochemistry, light and confocal microscopy, molecular biological techniques to assess gene expression and protein quantification, advanced behavioral assessments, and an introduction magnetic resonance imaging. These are large studies that will involve numerous parts. You will gain practical experience in project organization, coordination, and execution. There will additionally be opportunities to present findings at internal and external meetings and contribute to manuscript preparation.

This offers a unique training experience in both basic research and regulatory science. Regulatory-style assessments are conducted within a structured framework designed to inform policy decisions as opposed to academic style studies focused on preventing and alleviating harm. Direct access to the perspective of the regulator is rarely gained outside of regulatory institutions and industry. As an ORISE participant, you will have the opportunity to develop a strong understanding of how to generate and evaluate toxicological data within a regulatory context, collaborating alongside scientists who apply this expertise daily. Upon completion, you will be well-positioned to pursue careers in basic neurotoxicity research, regulatory toxicology, or industry.

Mentor: The mentors for this opportunity are John Talpos (john.talpos@fda.hhs.gov) and Timothy Flanigan (timothy.flanigan@fda.hhs.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentors.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: 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 FDA 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.

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens, Lawful Permanent Residents (LPR), and foreign nationals. Non-U.S. citizen applicants should refer to the Guidelines for Non-U.S. Citizens Details page of the program website for information about the valid immigration statuses that are acceptable for program participation.

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

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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 non-public information.

Qualifications The qualified candidate should be currently pursuing or have received a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree in the one of the relevant fields.

Degree preference:

1. Has *received* a bachelor's or master's degree within the past three years at the time of appointment, or;
2. Has *received or be currently pursuing* a doctoral degree.

Point of Contact Ashley

Eligibility Requirements

- **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree.
- **Discipline(s):**
  - **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** (5 👁)
  - **Engineering** (2 👁)
  - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** (16 👁)
  - **Social and Behavioral Sciences** (3 👁)

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.