

Opportunity Title: EPA Understanding Fate of PFAS in Waste Management Systems

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OAR-2026-0013

Organization U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Reference Code EPA-OAR-2026-0013

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
- Two educational or professional recommendations. Your application will be considered incomplete, and will not be reviewed until one recommendation is submitted.

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

Connect with ORISE...on the GO! Download the new ORISE GO mobile app in the [Apple App Store](#) or [Google Play Store](#) to help you stay engaged, connected, and informed during your ORISE experience and beyond!

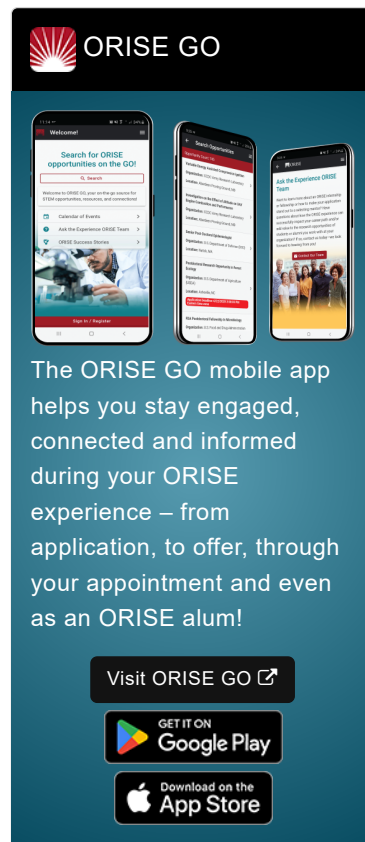
Application Deadline 9/11/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

Description ***Applications may be reviewed on a rolling-basis and this posting could close before the deadline.**

EPA Office/Lab and Location: A research opportunity is currently available at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), located in Research Triangle Park, North Carolina, or Washington, DC.

The mission of EPA is to protect human health and the environment. EPA works to ensure that: Americans have clean air, land and water; National efforts to reduce environmental risks are based on the best available scientific information; Federal laws protecting human health and the environment are administered and enforced fairly, effectively and as Congress intended; Environmental stewardship is integral to U.S. policies concerning natural resources, human health, economic growth, energy, transportation, agriculture, industry, and international trade, and these factors are similarly considered in establishing environmental policy; All parts of society have access to accurate information sufficient to effectively participate in managing human health and environmental risks; Contaminated lands and toxic sites are cleaned up; and chemicals in the marketplace are reviewed for safety.

The Waste Management Branch (WMB) is responsible for developing rules, regulations and policies that cover a wide range of air pollution control strategies for entities engaged in the management, handling, and destruction of hazardous and nonhazardous wastes. These operations include municipal solid waste landfills; publicly owned treatment works (POTW); hazardous waste incinerators; nonhazardous waste incinerators (e.g., municipal waste



Opportunity Title: EPA Understanding Fate of PFAS in Waste Management

Systems

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OAR-2026-0013

incinerators, medical waste incinerators, commercial waste incinerators, temporary-use incinerators, air curtain incinerators); and waste-to-product conversion (e.g., biochar production). WMB establishes regulations under Clean Air Act sections 111 (New Source Performance Standards, NSPS), 112 (National Emission Standards for Hazardous Air Pollutants, NESHAP), and 129 (solid waste combustion). The Branch works collaboratively with other OAR offices and stakeholders to identify and implement opportunities for cost effective strategies to reduce emissions of toxic, criteria, and noncriteria pollutants.

Research Project: You will engage in research activities aimed at assessing the fate of PFAS in waste management pathways and other industrial sectors. You will visit sites, interview experts, review scientific and technical information related to PFAS destruction efficiencies in various combustion environments—such as sewage sludge incinerators, municipal and commercial solid waste incinerators, and hazardous-waste rotary kilns—and will summarize operational conditions associated with PFAS behavior in thermal systems.

You will also examine the fate of PFAS (e.g., destruction, partitioning) in incinerators and landfills, including potential release pathways through gas, ash, and leachate. As part of this opportunity, you will conduct informational interviews with wastewater treatment plant operators, landfill operators, and incinerator operators to document operational practices, constraints, and technology readiness relevant to PFAS waste streams.

You will gain skills in written summaries, identification of data gaps, and the development of materials useful to EPA's future activities on PFAS in waste systems. While you will collaborate primarily with the Waste Management Branch, you will also collaborate with other EPA groups having equities in the fate of PFAS in other industrial sectors. Specific projects may include:

- Literature-based evaluation of PFAS destruction efficiencies across different types of incinerators
- Summaries of landfill PFAS pathways and influencing factors
- Documentation of operational conditions from interviews with facility operators
- Comparison of PFAS treatment technologies and emerging approaches
- Preparation of concise technical summaries to support EPA program needs

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of the mentor, as the participant, you will learn to:

- Review and synthesize scientific and technical information related to PFAS treatment, destruction, and disposal.
- Evaluate landfill gas and leachate information and summarize factors influencing PFAS behavior in landfills.
- Interpret operational conditions and treatment processes used by wastewater treatment, landfill, and incinerator facilities handling PFAS-containing waste streams.
- Prepare written summaries and briefing materials that communicate technical findings to EPA staff and other stakeholders.

Opportunity Title: EPA Understanding Fate of PFAS in Waste Management Systems

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OAR-2026-0013

- Observe EPA organizational processes and coordination efforts related to environmental waste research.

Mentor(s): The point of contact for this opportunity is Madjid Delkash (delkash.madjid@epa.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact Madjid.

Anticipated Appointment Start Date: 2026. All start dates are flexible and vary depending on numerous factors.

Appointment Length: The appointment will initially be for one year and may be renewed three to four additional years upon EPA recommendation and subject to availability of funding.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

Participant Stipend: As the participant, you will receive a monthly stipend commensurate with educational level and experience. **The anticipated stipend range is \$52,693 – \$85,447 yearly.**

Citizenship Requirements: This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

EPA Security Clearance: Completion of a successful background investigation by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) is required for an applicant to be on-boarded at EPA.

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 EPA. Participants do not become employees of EPA, 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.

ORISE offers all ORISE EPA graduate students and Postdocs a free 5-year membership to the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA).

The successful applicant(s) will be required to comply with Environmental, Safety and Health (ES&H) requirements of the hosting facility, including but not limited to, COVID-19 requirements (e.g. facial covering, physical distancing, testing, vaccination).

Questions: Please see the [FAQ section](#) of our website. If you have additional questions about the application process, please email ORISE.EPA.Other@ornl.gov and include the reference code for this opportunity.

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 (environmental engineering, environmental science, chemical engineering, or a related

Opportunity Title: EPA Understanding Fate of PFAS in Waste Management

Systems

Opportunity Reference Code: EPA-OAR-2026-0013

field). Degree must have been received within the past five years, or anticipated to be received by 6/2/2031.

Preferred skills:

- Coursework or experience related to waste management, combustion/thermal processes, or PFAS analysis
- Strong technical writing skills
- Ability to synthesize scientific literature
- Interest in interviewing facility operators
- Ability to work effectively in a team environment

Stipend \$52,693.00 – \$85,447.00 Yearly

Point of Contact [Rachel](#)

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

Requirements • **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, or Doctoral Degree received within the last 60 months or anticipated to be received by 6/2/2031 11:59:00 PM.

• **Minimum Overall GPA:** 3.60

• **Discipline(s):**

- **Chemistry and Materials Sciences** ([12](#) )
- **Earth and Geosciences** ([21](#) )
- **Engineering** ([11](#) )
- **Environmental and Marine Sciences** ([2](#) )
- **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([6](#) )
- **Mathematics and Statistics** ([3](#) )
- **Physics** ([2](#) )
- **Science & Engineering-related** ([2](#) )