

Opportunity Title: USDA-ARS Postdoctoral Research Opportunity in Influenza

Virology, Pathobiology, and Vaccinology

Opportunity Reference Code: USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0385

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

Reference Code USDA-ARS-SEA-2026-0385

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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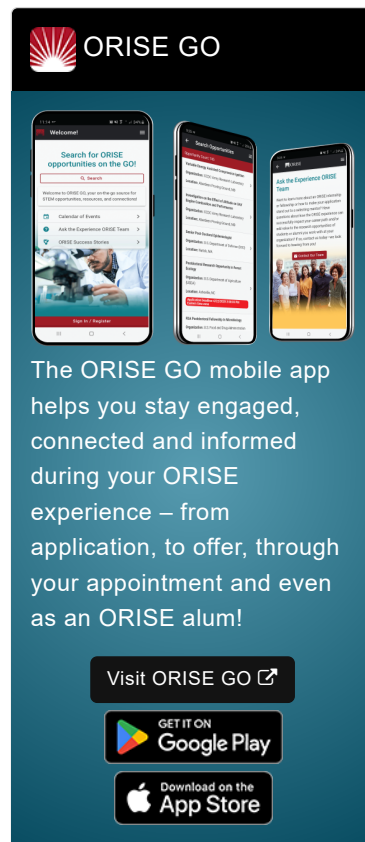
Application Deadline 12/4/2026 3:00:00 PM Eastern Time Zone

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 Athens, Georgia.

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 Exotic and Emerging Avian Viral Diseases unit is part of the USDA-ARS, US National Poultry Research Center. The vaccinology, pathobiology, transmission dynamics and diagnostics for highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus in poultry and livestock are a primary research focus of the unit. You will be part of the team which is evaluating and developing vaccines against HPAI. Currently, the US is experiencing one of the largest HPAI outbreaks and there has been serious consideration for the use of vaccines as a component of integrated control programs.



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You will evaluate the efficacy of commercial and experimental vaccines. The project involves studying the potential of field viruses to infect and spread in vaccinated animal and evaluating DIVA (Differentiation of Infected from Vaccinated Animals) strategies to show that vaccinated animals have not been infected with field virus. The project also involves studying the immune correlates of protection and antigenic relationships between vaccine and field viruses.

Learning Objectives: Under the guidance of a mentor, you will:

- Learn about highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) in poultry and livestock, including its transmission, disease impacts, and role in current outbreak-response efforts.
- Gain experience supporting the evaluation and development of commercial and experimental HPAI vaccines.
- Learn how vaccine efficacy is assessed, including measuring protection against infection, disease, and virus transmission in vaccinated animals.
- Develop familiarity with studies that evaluate whether circulating field viruses can infect or spread among vaccinated poultry or livestock.
- Gain knowledge of DIVA strategies—Differentiating Infected from Vaccinated Animals—and their importance for vaccination-based disease-control programs.
- Learn how diagnostic approaches can distinguish vaccine-induced immune responses from evidence of field-virus infection.
- Develop an understanding of immune correlates of protection, including how immune responses are associated with successful vaccination outcomes.
- Gain experience examining antigenic relationships between vaccine strains and field strains to inform vaccine selection and effectiveness.
- Build collaborative research skills within a multidisciplinary team focused on avian-influenza vaccinology, pathobiology, diagnostics, and transmission dynamics.

Mentor(s): The mentor for this opportunity is

Chang Lee (chang.lee@usda.gov). If you have questions about the nature of the research, please contact the mentor(s).

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 ARS and is contingent on the availability of funds.

Level of Participation: The appointment is full time.

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

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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 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.Southeast@orau.org, and include the reference code for this opportunity.

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

Stipend \$64,625.00 – \$86,007.00 Yearly

Point of Contact [Janeen](#)

- Eligibility**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
- Requirements**
- **Degree:** Doctoral Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([51](#) )