

Opportunity Title: Post-bachelor Opportunity in Foreign Animal Diseases

Opportunity Reference Code: PIADC-APHIS-2018-552-0001

Organization U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)

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How to 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. Selected candidate must provide proof of completion of the degree before the appointment can start. Proof must be sent to ORISE directly from the academic institution including graduation date and degree awarded. All transcripts must be in English or include an official English translation. Click [Here](#) for detailed information about acceptable transcripts.
- A current resume/CV
- Two references – While two references are requested, applications will be considered without reference information. It is preferred that a complete application package contains a minimum of one reference.

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

If you have questions, send an email to USDA-APHIS@orau.org. Please include the reference code for this opportunity in your email.

Description The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) Foreign Animal Disease Diagnostic Laboratory (FADDL) at the Plum Island Animal Disease Center, New York provides diagnostic capability to assist the United States and the USDA in diagnosing and responding to Foreign Animal Disease (FAD) threats. Specifically, the FADDL provides diagnostics for foreign animal diseases.

The selected participant will collaborate with microbiologists, veterinarians, statisticians, and biotechnicians to support the diagnostic mission. They will have the opportunity to learn about transboundary animal diseases and their impact on trade, surveillance procedures and methods, diagnostic testing algorithms for testing in series, sample handling and management, as well as how automated platforms are used in laboratories. Activities may include, but are not limited to:

- Learn and perform high-throughput nucleic acid extraction and real-time polymerase chain reaction (rPCR) methodologies for the detection of foreign animal disease agents
- Conduct diagnostic assay performance characteristic evaluation in support of the validation of foreign animal disease diagnostic assays
- Analyze data, summarize findings on forms, reports, and via presentations
- Assist in routine laboratory duties to ensure quality programs and maintenance programs are supported
- Assist in laboratory diagnostic needs in support of foreign animal disease case investigations



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The appointment is full-time for one year with the potential to renew based on need upon recommendation of APHIS and availability of funding. The maximum length of time a participant can spend in the ORISE program is five years from the initial appointment start date.

Selected candidates will receive a stipend as support for their living and other expenses during this appointment. The annual stipend rate for these positions will be determined upon selection and will range between \$50,000 and \$70,000. Relocation expenses are not available.

Health insurance is a program requirement. Candidates will be eligible to receive a health insurance allowance. Health insurance can be obtained through ORISE.

Background investigations are required for the selected candidate so the individual can work in biocontainment without an escort and handle select agents. Adjudication of a Special Agency Check (SAC) is required before the selected candidate can start at Plum Island Animal Disease Center. An advanced BI security clearance will be conducted/adjudicated after start date, allowing for unescorted access to biocontainment. An APHIS Select Agent Clearance is also required so that the selected candidate can work with select agents. Paperwork for all of these clearances will be sent to the selected candidate after acceptance of the official offer from ORAU.

Research is performed in a BSL-2/3 laboratory. Working with unknown pathogenic agents mandates the use of biocontainment hoods and wearing personal protective gear, which can be strenuous on the individual. Individuals will be required to shower out at the end of the day after working in bio-containment.

As a condition of this opportunity, all personnel entering the BSL-3 biocontainment facilities at Plum Island shall not be in contact with specific susceptible animals off the Plum Island premises for a period of five (5) days after leaving biocontainment. Currently, restricted species are cattle, sheep, goats, deer, other ruminants & swine. Horses, birds (agricultural and pet birds) & rabbits are normally permitted but restrictions may be placed on individuals working with contagious agents affecting these species. Restricted livestock or other restricted animals should not be housed on the premises where the individual under quarantine restrictions lives.

The position requires daily travel to and from Orient Point, NY or Old Saybrook, CT and Plum Island aboard government-provided marine vessels.

This is an equal opportunity program open to all qualified individuals without regard to race, color, age, sex, religion, national origin, mental or physical disability, genetic information, sexual orientation, or covered veteran's status.

The participant will not enter into an employee/employer relationship with ORISE, ORAU, USDA, APHIS, or any other office or agency.

Instead, the participant will be affiliated with ORISE for the administration of

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the appointment through the ORISE appointment letter and Terms of Appointment.

This opportunity is available to U.S. citizens only.

Qualifications To be eligible, applicants must have, at minimum, a Bachelor's degree in:


- Agricultural Sciences
- Agriculture
- Animal Sciences
- Biochemistry
- Biology (General)
- Cellular and Molecular Biology
- Immunology
- Infectious Diseases and Zoonoses
- Microbiology
- Virology

Required skills include:

- Knowledge of general laboratory practices including aseptic technique and the use of common laboratory equipment (centrifuge, micropipettes, biosafety cabinets, microscope, etc.)
- Proficient in technical writing and creating and delivering oral presentations
- Proficient in communication (oral and writing), interpersonal and organizational skills
- Demonstrates critical thinking skills and ability to analyze and interpret data
- Flexible and self-motivated to complete assigned tasks
- Eager to learn from peers and to work in a team environment
- Proficient in using basic word processing and data management software
- A background in biology, virology, and/or foreign animal diseases

Preferred skills include:

- BSL-3 laboratory experience
- Experience in working with select agents
- Knowledge of polymerase chain reaction methodologies

- Eligibility Requirements**
- **Citizenship:** U.S. Citizen Only
 - **Degree:** Bachelor's Degree.
 - **Discipline(s):**
 - **Life Health and Medical Sciences** ([10](#) )