NREL

National Renewable Energy Laboratory

- Student Internships
- Postdoctoral Researchers
- Sabbaticals
- Research Associates

Research Participant Program

NREL's Research Participant Program

(for temporary full- and part-time appointments)

Introduction

The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) is the nation's primary laboratory for the research and development of renewable energy technologies. Established in 1977 as the Solar Energy Research Institute, NREL gained national laboratory status and was renamed in 1991 by President George Bush Sr. to reflect its expanded mission and importance. NREL has a staff of approximately 1,000 people and an annual operating budget of roughly $185 million. NREL's research programs include basic energy research, photovoltaics, wind energy, building technologies, biomass power, biofuels, fuels utilization, solar industrial technologies, solar thermal electric, hydrogen, geothermal power, superconductivity, economic and policy analysis of renewable technologies, advanced vehicle technologies, program management, and technology transfer. These research activities support the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy. In recent years, the Laboratory has played an increasing role in the international development of renewable energy.

Purpose

NREL is committed to interacting with educational institutions, industry, and other research organizations through the Lab's Research Participant Program.

The program enables people with new ideas and talents to contribute to research of mutual interest at the Laboratory while also contributing to the transfer of the technology resulting from that research.

Appointments to the program provide the opportunity for qualified university faculty, students, and professional scientists and engineers to participate in the Laboratory's research and development programs, initiate new areas of research, and establish a base for ongoing collaborations. Participants develop expertise in disciplines related to renewable energy research for application at their home institutions or in their future career pursuits.

Appointments to the program are available in the categories described below. Appointment periods, application procedures, and funding options vary with the type of category.

Salary rates are competitive on a national scale. Participants are paid according to their job category, discipline, and experience. Student compensation rates are determined by their major and number of credit hours completed in the semester ending prior to employment.

Types of Appointments

Student Internships

This category is designed for undergraduate and graduate students who are enrolled full time in a U.S. college or university, and who have successfully completed at least the freshman year of school by June of the current year and plan to continue full-time education the following fall term. Students can work 40 hours per week during the summer and breaks, and a maximum of 25 hours per week for undergraduate students and 30 hours per week for graduate students during the academic year. U.S. citizenship or U.S. permanent residency is required.

Postdoctoral Researchers

This category is designed to provide recent (generally within three or fewer years) Ph.D. graduates with practical training in science and engineering. The qualified graduate will have demonstrated superior abilities and interest in research and development areas related to NREL's mission. Initial appointments are generally for one year. However, extensions to these appointments may be granted based on programmatic need and funding availability to a maximum of three years.

Research Associates

This category provides scientists, engineers, and other professionals, generally with 4–12 years experience, opportunities to apply their training or specialized background to topics of research in the science and technology of renewable energy. Initial appointments range from one month to one year. However, these positions may be extended to a maximum of three years.

Sabbaticals

The sabbatical category is designed for senior scientists or engineers with established records of research productivity and accomplishments who are on leave from an academic, business, or governmental institution.
The participants must meet NREL's conflict-of-interest requirement. Participants' employers will pay all or partial expenses. Appointments do not generally extend beyond one year in duration.

Senior Research Associate

This category is designed for the senior scientist or engineer with more than 12 years of experience and with an established record of research productivity and accomplishments. Appointments range from one month to one year.

Note: Other types of appointments may be available. Contact NREL's Human Resources Office for additional information.

NREL's Research Programs and General Degree Requirements

Participants in the program generally pursue studies in the following fields:

Renewable Energy Resources: Radiometry, atmospheric science, meteorology, climatology, remote sensing, metrology, Geographic Information Systems (GIS).

National Wind Technology Center: Aerospace, mechanical, and electrical engineering; and meteorology.

National Center for Photovoltaics: Physics; chemistry; materials science; and electrical and chemical engineering.

Center for Basic Sciences: Physics, materials science, chemistry, electrical engineering, and biological sciences.

National Bioenergy Center: Biochemical engineering, microbiology, molecular biology, chemistry, and chemical engineering related to biomass and derived products.

Transportation Technologies and Systems: Mechanical and chemical engineering.

Buildings and Thermal Systems: Physics, mechanical engineering (emphasis on heat transfer), architectural engineering.

Research Support: Some appointments available for finance; accounting; computer science; environment, safety, and health; program management; technology transfer; enviromental and energy applications; and energy analysis.

For more detailed information on NREL's research programs, see our Web site at: *http://www.nrel.gov/hr/employment/rpp*

Reference Table

Category	Eligibility	Transportation and Housing	Application Deadline	Submission Requirements
Undergraduate and Graduate Student Internships	Must be enrolled in a minimum of 12 credit hours as an undergraduate and 9 credit hours as a graduate student. Must be U.S. citizen or U.S. permanent resident. Preferred minimum GPA of 3.0 in the last completed semester.	May be eligible for round-trip transportation for participant only. Not eligible for a housing allowance.	April of the same year for summer employment. Also accept applications for academic year as positions become available.	Resume, cover letter stating areas of interest, student internship application, and prior semester school transcripts (do not need to be official). Include requisition number on resume if applying for a specific open position.
Postdoctoral Researcher	Must be a recent Ph.D. graduate.	May be eligible for one-way transportation for participant and family (if applicable). May be eligible for benefits.	Accepted all year for possible placement and for specific open positions.	Resume with list of publications and a cover letter stating areas of interest. Include requisition number on resume if applying for a specific open position.
Research Associate	Senior scientist, engineer or other professional with 4–12 years of experience.	May be eligible for round-trip transportation for participant and family (if applicable). May be eligible for a housing allowance.	Accepted all year for possible placement and for specific open positions.	Resume with a list of publications (if applicable) and a cover letter stating areas of interest. Include requisition number on resume if applying for a specific open position.
Sabbatical	Senior scientist, engineer or other professional who is on leave from their home institution. Participant's home institution will pay all or partial expenses.	May be eligible for round-trip transportation for participant and family (if applicable). May be eligible for a housing allowance.	Accepted all year for possible placement.	Resume, cover letter stating areas of interest, and letter of financial support from home institution.
Senior Research Associate	Distinguished scientist, engineer or other professional with more than 12 years of experience.	May be eligible for round-trip transportation for participant and family (if applicable). May be eligible for a housing allowance.	Accepted all year for possible placement.	Resume with a list of publications and cover letter stating areas of interest.

Job Offer Information

Once selected, participants will be extended a job offer by NREL's Human Resources Office. When the job offer is accepted, details (such as the start date) are confirmed and a formal job offer packet with additional information is sent to the participant.

Applications are accepted until April of the same year for summer internships, and continuously throughout the year for all other categories. For specific positions that are open, please access our job postings at: *http://www.nrel.gov/hr/employment/rpp*

Transportation and Housing

Depending on the type of appointment (see table for eligibility), participants may be reimbursed for the lesser of airfare or mileage to NREL. Transportation and housing allowance do not apply to participants in the local area (within 50 miles of NREL). Relocation costs are not reimbursed. Transportation for foreign national appointments will be reimbursed from the appropriate United States port of entry.

Living Accommodations

Research participants are responsible for finding their own housing during the length of their appointment. NREL's Human Resources Office can provide information on apartments and rooms for rent in the local area to assist in the search. Temporary housing information can be accessed at the following Web site: *http://www.nrel.gov/hr/employment/rpp*

NREL/BR-340-30998

Participation in the Research Participant Program does not create an obligation to NREL or participants with regard to subsequent regular employment.

Mail Applications/Resumes to:

NREL
Human Resources Office
RP Program
1617 Cole Boulevard
Golden, CO 80401-3393

NREL is an Equal Opportunity Employer.
Women and minorities are encouraged to apply.

NREL is a U.S. Department of Energy National Laboratory Operated by Midwest Research Institute, Battelle, and Bechtel.