**Department of Biochemistry & Biophysics**

**Postdoc FAQ**

**Basic Orientation Information**

New postdocs should receive an email from the Biomedical Postdoctoral Programs (BPP) office containing a digital welcome packet. This packet includes contact information for BPP and general resources for Penn postdocs such as policy information, Workday access instructions, and core links. It also includes [information about the greater Penn campus and neighborhood](https://www.med.upenn.edu/postdoc/life-at-penn.html), including campus services, public safety information, transportation and housing resources, and maps of the area. We recommend reading this document in full to get started with your introduction to the university. If you did not receive a copy, please reach out to postdoc@pennmedicine.upenn.edu.

We encourage you to visit the [**BPP website**](https://www.med.upenn.edu/postdoc/) for more information on all the resources they have available, including insurance plans, career management, and more.

BPP also hosts monthly meet and greets as well as orientation sessions. We encourage new postdocs to attend. Their event schedule can be found [here](https://events.med.upenn.edu/postdoc/).

**Departmental FAQ**

The Department of Biochemistry & Biophysics (B&B) has our own FAQ document for new members. This includes instructions on gaining access to your Penn Medicine email address, pay & benefits information, online training links, building access information, and more. For general department information and troubleshooting, we recommend checking [this document](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/assets/user-content/documents/dept-faq-march-2023.docx).

**Communications & Connecting Online**

When you receive your Penn email address, please send an email to sarah.true@pennmedicine.upenn.edu with a headshot of yourself to be added to the department mailing list and photo board. This will insure that you are included in department communications, including newsletters and event announcements.

B&B postdocs have a **Slack Channel** they can use to communicate with one another. This is a great way to meet your fellow postdocs and stay in the know about upcoming meetings and events. Join at [bcbppostdocsupenn.slack.com](http://bcbppostdocsupenn.slack.com/). If you have trouble joining, please email our communications coordinator sarah.true@pennmedicine.upenn.edu to be added.

The department also posts about upcoming events and department happenings on the TV monitors around our lab buildings as well as online. Follow along on the [department website](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/), [Twitter](https://twitter.com/BB_UPenn), and on [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/upennbandb/).

**Funding Opportunities**

Funding is available for B&B department postdocs to apply for to support travel and research opportunities. There are two main forms of funding that the department offers:

**Travel Funding**

Postdocs may request funds from the department to support conference travel and/or registration. This is capped at $2000 total during your time as a postdoc in the department, with a $1000 cap per any one conference. To request funding, please email Kristen Lynch (klync@pennmedicine.upenn.edu) and copy Sarah True (sarah.true@pennmedicine.upenn.edu) with the name of the conference and the amount of funding you require. If approved, Sarah will provide you with the budget code to use for your reimbursement request. A PDF copy of Kristen’s email approving the funding will also need to be attached to the reimbursement request.

**Pilot Grants**

Each year, the department sends out a call for applications to our Mildred Cohn Distinguished Postdoctoral Awards. These awards are designed to spark innovative and collaborative research led by post-docs in the Department of Biochemistry and Biophysics. Research can be in any area of Biochemistry and Biophysics. Proposals that emphasize innovative new directions, sparking collaborations between labs at Penn, or building independence (i.e., piloting an idea to seed an independent direction as a PI) will be prioritized. Application information is typically sent out via email in the summer, with an application deadline of 8/1.

**Seminars and Events**

There are multiple regular seminars and events within the B&B department. All are encouraged to attend, as this is an easy way to engage with our scientific community and expand your scientific knowledge. The following events occur weekly during the school year unless otherwise noted. Click the header for more information and for the current speaker schedule.

[**Raiziss Rounds Seminar Series**](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/raiziss-rounds.html)

Primary department seminar series featuring invited external speakers from institutions across the country.

Thursdays at 12:00pm

Austrian Auditorium, CRB

[**Friday Research Discussions**](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/friday-research.html)

Hosted in collaboration with the BMB graduate group, this series highlights in-house works in progress and features talks from current trainees. Talks are followed by a department-wide happy hour.

Fridays at 4:00pm

JF Library, Anatomy-Chemistry Blgd.

**Getting Involved**

There are a variety of ways to get involved within the department. Postdocs are encouraged to meet with or host seminar speakers. Those interested in doing so can contact sanjukta@pennmedicine.upenn.edu or cornelius.taabazuing@pennmedicine.upenn.edu for more information. The following events are also available to postdocs:

[**B&B postdoc lunch**](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1TrBqu5YSdLbpgLBkbWuWhJZhDvo2c_5gDgNT_Q8vGgA/edit?usp=sharing)

Second-to-last Friday of each month

Time and location vary – confirmation email is sent the day before

[**DEI Committee**](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/dei-committee.html)

Postdocs are encouraged to engage with the department DEI committee and participate in any community building events or outreach opportunities that they host. DEI resources can be found on the [committee website](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/dei-committee.html). Questions or concerns can be directed to any committee member, or submitted using our [feedback form](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/secure/feedback.html).

**Annual Department Retreat**

All department members are invited to an overnight retreat, which is typically hosted on the last week of November or the first week of December. Final dates and registration information will be sent out every fall.

**Summer Picnic**

The department hosts an annual picnic and softball game every summer. This typically takes place in August, and is hosted in collaboration with the Department of Physiology. Specific details will be emailed out and announced online closer to the date of the event each year.

All other events will be announced online, and invitations will be emailed to those of interest.

**Faculty and Staff Introductions**

The department business office is located in 242 Anatomy-Chemistry Building. The majority of our staff are located here and are available to help as you get started in the department. Here is a quick overview of some faculty and staff members who will be useful to know:

**Kristen Lynch****:**

Department Chair and Professor

909B Stellar-Chance Labs

**Ronen Marmorstein****:**

Department Vice-Chair and Professor

BRB II/III, Room 454

**Jim Shorter****:**

Department Postdoc Liaison and Professor

805B Stellar-Change Labs

**Sarah True****:**

Chair’s Assistant

Department Communication Coordinator

909A Stellar-Chance Labs

**Sanjukta Banerjee****:**

Academics and Faculty Affairs

245A Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Lisa Ward****:**

Financial and Administrative Officer

Pay and benefits

243A Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Joy Paulding****:**

Personnel Coordinator

Mail and Shipping

Building access and key ordering

Move and maintenance requests

242 Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Mary Spencer****:**

Purchasing Coordinator

Reimbursements and expense reporting

Purchasing lab supplies and equipment

242 Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Colleen Stephens****:**

Grants Manager

Grants Submissions

242 Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Ed Dingler****:**

Finance and Administration Manager

Dry ice, liquid nitrogen, and core facilities

244A Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Morgan Kelly****:**

Special Programs Coordinator

Penn FERBS, training grants

242 Anatomy-Chemistry Bldg.

**Need Help?**

If you have a question or concern that isn’t addressed here, please connect with Jim Shorter, our Department Postdoc Liaison. If you would like to report an incident or share feedback, please use our [Feedback & Reporting Form](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/secure/feedback.html). Reports sent through this form go directly to the Department Chair, Kristen Lynch. If you would prefer to discuss your concern or input with another person, we suggest reaching out to any member of the [B&B/BMB DEI committee](https://www.med.upenn.edu/biocbiop/dei-committee.html), or the [Trainee Advocacy Alliance](https://www.med.upenn.edu/idealresearch/taa.html) from the IDEAL office.