

This press release is strictly embargoed until March 1st 2011

***The Scientist* announces the results of the 2011 Best Places to Work for Postdocs**

The Scientist, F1000's magazine of the life sciences, announced today the results of its 9th annual Best Places to Work for Postdocs survey. Increasingly, postdoctoral positions are required training for the next generation of scientific leaders in academia and industry. The postdoctoral years are critical in any budding scientist's career, and this year's survey showed that striking the fine balance between independence and guidance is important to a successful postdoc experience.



The Scientist invited readers who identified themselves as non-tenured life scientists working in academia, industry, or non-commercial research institutions to take part in this web-based survey. The survey received 2,881 responses and a total of 93 institutes were ranked. Respondents were asked to assess their work environment and experience by indicating their level of agreement with 38 criteria in 9 different areas. The results were collated and compiled to show rankings for the best US and international institutes.

Having been ranked in the top three for the past two years, the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research in Cambridge, Massachusetts, topped the rankings for U.S. institutions this year, with high scores for facilities and infrastructure, and funding opportunities. This year's survey saw the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution in Massachusetts and the Van Andel Research Institute in Grand Rapids, Michigan ranked in the top three for the first time.

University College London, 'London's Global University,' placed first among the top international institutions, also scoring highly for facilities and infrastructure, and funding opportunities. Novartis International and the Biotechnology Center at TU Dresden were ranked second and third among international institutions respectively.

This year's postdoc respondents said they value creative freedom and individualism when rating the working environment at their institutions. As Amy Apprill, a postdoc at the No. 2-ranked Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, commented: "It's such an academically stimulating environment. Postdocs are treated as junior colleagues, so we're able to come in and start new projects."

"The postdoctoral years are extremely important in helping young scientists mature into competent lab leaders," says *The Scientist's* Associate Editor Jef Akst, who oversees the Best Places surveys. "Our survey provides information about both the strengths and the weaknesses of institutions in training PhDs for that transition -- straight from the postdocs themselves."

Top 15 US Institutions:

1. Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Cambridge, MA
2. Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, MA
3. Van Andel Research Institute, Grand Rapids, MI
4. Argonne National Laboratory, IL
5. Novartis Institutes for BioMedical Research, Cambridge, MA
6. Oklahoma Medical Research Foundation

7. The J. David Gladstone Institutes, San Francisco, CA
8. Fox Chase Cancer Center, Philadelphia, PA
9. Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, Seattle, WA
10. Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN
11. Emory University, Atlanta, GA
12. US Environmental Protection Agency
13. University of California, San Francisco, CA
14. National Cancer Institute, Bethesda/Frederick, MD
15. Institute for Systems Biology, Seattle, WA

Top 10 International Institutions:

1. University College London, United Kingdom
2. Novartis International, multinational
3. Biotechnology Center TU Dresden (BIOTEC), Germany
4. Max Planck Institute, Germany
5. University of Queensland, Brisbane, Australia
6. Center for Regenerative Therapies, Dresden, Germany
7. University of Dundee, Scotland
8. MRC National Institute for Medical Research, London, United Kingdom
9. Instituto Gulbenkian de Ciência, Oeiras, Portugal
10. Nederlands Kanker Instituut, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The full article with detailed survey results can be found at www.the-scientist.com/bptw and in the March print issue.

About *The Scientist*

The Scientist, F1000's magazine of the life sciences, has informed and entertained life science professionals around the world for over 24 years. We provide print and online coverage of the latest developments in the life sciences including trends in research, new technology, news, business and careers. We reach the leaders in academia and industry that are interested in maintaining a broad view of the life sciences by reading insightful articles that are current, concise, accurate and entertaining. For more information about *The Scientist*, visit www.the-scientist.com.

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