

What are stepping-stone positions to a faculty position?

Type in one idea per box. If you have the same idea as someone else, you can add an asterisk that idea.

Teaching
postdoc*

Government
research

Federal job?
NASA, USGS,
etc?*****

Research Ship
Technician/Capt
ain

Research
postdoc*****

Adjunct
Position*****

Visiting assistant
professor**

Research
Assistant

Graduate
research fellow

Graduate
teaching
assistant

Lab
technicianLab
coordinator/prepr
ator at a
university*

Research
Associate*

National Lab
postdoc/job**

Tutor*

Fulbright-esque
travel-based
postdoc?*

What are stepping-stone positions to a faculty position?

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Government
Policy
Fellowship*

Lab manager**

Park
guide/ranger

High school or
middle school
teacher***

unpaid service
(sci comm/etc)

Industry
position***

Field engineer

USGS
Mendenhall
postdoc

Creative postdoc
that includes
teaching and
research with
specific advisor

State geologic
survey

Tech
startup/company

Group 5

Teaching post-doc

- Less availability, hard to find
- Blend of research and teaching
“professor lite”
- Can keep publishing while getting teaching experience at the same time
- Flexibility on institution type
- Might be less competitive for R1/R2 positions against research-only postdocs

National lab/government position

- Less opportunities for teaching
- Networking!
- Less agency in choosing research path (pro or con, depending on personality)
- Guaranteed funding!
- Potential inside hires? (pro/con depending on where you are)
- Getting out of the academic bubble

Breakout Room 2

Post-doc

Pro

Research development w.o pressure of grant-securing

Collaboration

Additional research experience

Con

Minimal compensation

Possibility of being trapped in work you're not passionate about

Govt Post-docs/fellowships

Pros

Better pay

Opportunities to be hired on at the agency

Cons

Non-academic/university environment.

No interaction with students.

May or may not be able to publish research if “classified”

Breakout room 7

- Teaching experience through community college or night classes
 - Pros: gain teaching experience
 - Cons: very little research experience included, less pay
- Fullbright postdoc
 - Pros: included travel, research experience, language skills
 - Cons: very competitive, limited positions
- Teaching postdoc
 - Pros: combines teaching and research experience
 - Cons: limited opportunities available
- Volunteer position
 - Pros: demonstrates dedication to field, could volunteer in labs for research experience, citizen science
 - Cons: unpaid service, more with a nonprofit than academic?

Breakout group 4!

Postdoc at USGS/Federal position

Pro - conferences, networking for research, for self advocating and learning about other positions. Ability to "shop around".

Cons - Productive attitude isn't as strong as in an R1 institution. Less access to teaching opportunities. Can be hard to focus on one avenue of research and easy to burn out.

Breakout Room 6

Research/Teaching Postdoc

Pros: Wrapping up research from PhD/writing papers;

Cons: extremely isolating/hard to fit in; fellows might not be eligible for benefits; hard to get and extremely competitive, moving all the time; Temporary living; Hiring freezes

Lab Coordinator at another university

Pros: Hands on teaching and/or material prep experience;

Cons: Poor pay

Visiting Assistant Prof

Pros: some teaching experience

Cons: no time to write papers/publish

Breakout Room 9

Research Postdoc

- Pros:
 - Gain experience in research/publication/grant writing (R1/R2 trajectory);
 - mentoring experience
- Cons:
 - Usually no opportunity to gain teaching experience (PUI/2YC);
 - most of the time only 1-2 years

HS Teacher/Adjunct Professor

- Pros: teaching experience
 - Good beginning for people who want a career at 2YC or liberal arts college.
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- Cons:
 - Do not make a livable wage and no benefits.
 - Usually limited time to work on research
 - Temporary / not guaranteed

Breakout Group 8

Research Associate

- Higher pay for the work
- Additional time to learn how to write grant proposals
- Less time to be professionally involved in service/outreach/etc.

Postdocs

- Limited number of years
- A lot of work for little money

National Lab Positions

- Pay really well
- Potential difficulty moving 'back' to academia
- Classified work potentially can't be published

Breakout Room #1

Biology Faculty at R1

Pros:

- Research Post-doc

Cons:

- Industry (tech startup) or Tech
- Non-tenure track teaching
- Teaching experience

PUI position

Pros:

- Teaching Experience
- Mentoring

Cons:

- Narrow training

Breakout Room 3

Research Postdoc

Pros: Good for R1 ladder, maybe get some teaching experience

Cons: If not at University (at somewhere like Smithsonian, NASA), no teaching opportunities

Teaching/Research Creative Postdoc

Pros: meets advisor's need and gives you teaching experience

Con: the last example we have was someone 20 years ago..., framed it as a bonus for the university (I will do extra work for you if you let me do this)

Adjunct:

Pros: Develop course material and refine

Cons: Might get stuck in adjuncting positions