

Next Steps After Receiving Offers

Questions to Ask

- In-Person Requirements - Can you work remote? Is this flexible?
- Clarify institutional access to observatories and computing clusters.
- Ask about opportunities and funding for student mentorship.
- Confirm visa requirements (e.g., whether the institution sponsors H1-B visas).
- For General Postdocs:
 - Contact previous or current group members to learn about their experiences in the research group.
 - Inquire about the specifics of the project, including expectations, timelines, and potential collaborators.

Negotiation Points

General Considerations

- **Travel Funds:** Ensure there is adequate funding for conferences and research-related travel.
- **Relocation Support:** Ask about relocation assistance, including temporary accommodations until you find a permanent place, and whether they provide a house-hunting trip in advance.
- **Start Date:** Negotiate a start date that works for both you and the institution.
- **Office Space:** Discuss preferences for your office setup, such as having windows or specific furniture arrangements.
- **Decision Timeline:** Request sufficient time to accept the offer if you are waiting on responses from other opportunities.
- **Hardware:** Confirm what equipment (e.g., laptops, monitors) will be provided.
- **Office Setup:** Ensure that basic office needs, such as monitors or other peripherals, are covered.
- **Salary:** Some positions may allow for salary negotiations; this depends on the specific institution and funding source.

Private Funding (e.g., Heising-Simons Funding)

Private, non-government-based grants may offer more flexibility in negotiations. For example, it may be reasonable to ask for:

- Higher relocation fees.
- Early provision of a laptop or other research tools.

- A salary match with other job offers you've received.
- Expanded travel or research funds if relevant.
- Guaranteed access to computing resources.

Tip: If you have competing offers, you can leverage the benefits offered by other institutions to negotiate with the organization offering private funding.

Fellowship vs. General Postdoc

- **Personal Research vs. Specific Topics:**
 - Fellowships often allow for more focus on personal research, while general postdocs might be tied to specific projects.
- **Time Allocation:**
 - Fellowships may provide more freedom to dedicate time to your own projects compared to general postdocs that may have functional or collaborative work requirements.
- **Level of Guidance:**
 - Consider whether you prefer more guidance and structure or greater independence as a postdoc.
- **Combining Fellowships:**
 - If you have two fellowship offers, inquire if a joint position can be arranged between the two fellowships and institutions.

Preparations Before Arrival

- **Email Ahead of Time:**
 - A few months before arriving, contact your new institution to:
 - Set up email accounts and computer access in advance.
 - Ask about relocation resources and possible accommodations.
- **Connect with Other Postdocs:**
 - Request to be introduced to other postdocs at your new institution to build your professional network and get familiar with the environment.

Use these tips to make informed decisions and confidently navigate your postdoc application process.