

Postdoc Guide: Budgeting for a Postdoctoral Fellowship

This guide provides direction for postdocs applying to individual fellowships and who need to provide a budget to fund a postdoc appointment.

Disclaimer: This may not cover all expenses depending on specific research needs and is intended for informational purposes only.

Compensation

As of September 1, 2019, the required minimum compensation for a postdoc is \$62,700. This number will be higher if:

- 1) the fellowship time period crosses over the following September 1st and/or,
- 2) it is a multi-year fellowship.

The minimum funding levels for the 2019-20 year can be found on the OPA website under the **2019-2020 Postdoc Salary Scale** column here: <https://postdocs.stanford.edu/funding-guidelines>. There may likely be cost-of-living/CPI increases each September 1, so the fellowship should also take into account any potential increases. Using between 3%-5% yearly increase estimate may suffice.

Benefits

The benefits cost will depend on whether the postdoc is covering dependents on their insurance. The cost increases as a spouse and/or children are added to the insurance plan. Please review the [2019 Postdoc Benefits Rate Sheet](#). The budget should include Medical, Dental, Vision, and all Disability coverage. Typically, the PI/department is required to cover the cost of benefits, but in cases where the fellowship will be covering these costs, it is required that, at minimum, the Institutional Cost (middle column) be covered by the fellowship. If the postdoc has dependents, we may suggest requesting funds to cover the Total Cost as well since there is an out-of-pocket cost to the postdoc for these cases (third column).

As an example, for a Postdoc Only scenario, the 2019 calendar year cost is currently \$686.86 monthly (\$614.71 + \$41.42 + \$8.47 + \$22.26) or \$8,242.32 yearly. Costs are expected to increase in subsequent calendar years and should be accounted for when budgeting. Using a 5% yearly increase estimate (starting each January 1) may suffice.

Other Considerations

Fringe Rates and/or Indirect Costs: Please work with your department's Grants Manager to determine whether the fellowship will be administered through Stanford and incur these costs.

Research & Lab Expenses: As needed or anticipated.

Conference & Presentation Expenses: As needed or anticipated.

An Example

In a typical scenario for a single postdoc, one might request no less than \$71,400 for salary (\$62,700 + 4%) *plus* an additional \$9,000 for benefits (to account for potential increases in the following year.)