

# Academic Job Search and Early Career Opportunities

## Resource for Doctoral Students

### **Intro**

This document is intended to serve as starting point as you start mapping your academic job search and the different entry level positions available in academia. In this resource you will find information about types of academic roles and when and where to start looking for positions, along with advice on common application documents. The appendix includes a list of additional resources.

Please note that there can be significant differences across disciplines, geographies, and institutions. This document is meant to provide a general overview. Plan to do further research into hiring practices in your field and location of interest.

### **Timing**

Academic hiring cycles are often long. It is not uncommon for as long as six months or a year to pass before an application culminates in a final response – that is an offer or rejection. Therefore, if you are interested in pursuing a career in academia, it is good to invest time in your career development sooner rather than later. This is especially true if you want to have a position lined up for right after you graduate. You will also want to ensure you are aware of the common hiring seasons in your target location(s). To give one example, in the US, academic positions are often advertised in the fall and as late as February, and candidates are screened in the spring, to make sure offers are extended and contracts are signed before the start of the subsequent academic year.

## Types of roles

Academic job roles generally include one or more of the following three components: research, teaching, and academic service (the latter consisting of activities that contribute to developing your skills, such as advising or serving as faculty representative in committees). Depending on the role, duties might involve just one of these or some combination of the three. For example, lecturers might be required to carry out service requirements alongside teaching, while some researcher roles do not include teaching responsibilities.

Before you start applying, it is important that you clarify what you are interested in and what you would like your academic career to look like. Sorting out your own preferences early on will be helpful when your graduation is nearing, and you are trying to simultaneously finish your dissertation and look for open positions. For example, you might be interested primarily in research, in which case the best fit for you might be a role where promotion depends on scholarly productivity and where there are large numbers of students in doctoral programs. If you are interested in balancing teaching and research, you might want to look at institutions that offer graduate and professional degrees. If you are primarily interested in teaching, the best fit for you might be universities that focus on undergraduate programs. Also, it's wise to think in terms of steppingstones. When you are looking into post-docs, pay close attention to whether roles are focused solely on research or whether they also include teaching responsibilities.

There are numerous job titles open to recent PhD graduates (see below for a list of common titles). While some titles such as Post-doctoral Fellow, Assistant Professor, and Lecturer are widely used around the world, academic job titles and career paths, including the progression from title to title, can vary from country to country. Before you start applying, make sure to familiarize yourself with common entry-level academic titles in the location you are targeting.

Doctoral students should also be aware that the number of academic jobs is shrinking around the world. Every year, in most geographical markets, the number of people graduating with doctoral degrees is higher than the number of available positions. Post-doctoral positions don't automatically grant advancement into professorial roles. In addition, many tenure-track and other long-term positions are being replaced with short-term adjunct contracts, often meaning lower salaries, reduced job security, and fewer benefits compared to permanent faculty.

Below is a list of common academic job titles that you might consider as a doctoral graduate. Please note that the list is not exhaustive but rather meant to serve as examples. Positions in this list are also not in any order of seniority or prestige.

- Post-doctoral Fellow / Post-doctoral Researcher
- Post-doctoral Research Fellow / Post-doctoral Teaching Fellow
- Researcher
- Teaching / Research Fellow
- Assistant Professor
- Lecturer / Instructor
- Teaching Assistant
- Associate Professor
- Professor (although rare as an early career option)

### **Job Search – Where to look**

Make sure that you are aware of the latest conversations, debates, opportunities, and challenges within your field of interest. Follow and/or join academic associations, initiatives, and communities offering career development advice and information about job opportunities, conferences, and other events specific to a given academic discipline. Among other things, this allows you to stay up to date on current conversations, research initiatives, and possible funding opportunities in your field. Examples of academic associations include the American Political Science Association (APSA), H-net for Humanities, and the World Economic Association. There are also career development portals focusing on research and academia such as EURAXESS. Please see the appendix for a longer list of academic job boards and other potentially relevant organizations and initiatives.

We also recommend you attend conferences online and in-person and that you talk to your peers and professors about your interests and career aspirations; they might be able to give you useful tips and information and connect you with other academics and researchers. CEU alumni can also serve as great sources of information and inspiration for graduating doctoral students. Make sure that your LinkedIn profile is up to date. In addition, consider using different social media platforms for career development purposes. For example, following other researchers, journals, and publishers in your field on Twitter is an excellent way to stay abreast of the latest conversations and research, and to connect with people.

We also recommend you take advantage of career advising for help in defining your career goals, finding opportunities, preparing strong application materials, and more. You can request a career advising session on the [Career Services Office website](#).

## **Application documents**

Depending on the role you are applying for, you will be required to submit various documents. Check information about the most common application documents for academic positions on the [Career Knowledge Hub](#) page of the Career Services Office website. Keep in mind that academic application packages are often lengthy.

## **Funding**

Some academic positions are fully funded, and others rely on external funding. Even for positions that are funded by the hiring institution, your track record of securing scholarships, project and research funding, and/or other awards and grants can have an impact on the selection process. The ability to secure funding can therefore be a crucial aspect of the academic job search process. It is not uncommon that securing a position is directly dependent on your ability to obtain third-party funding for your research in advance.

At CEU, the [Academic Research and Cooperation Office \(ACRO\)](#) offers some training and resources on this topic.

## Appendix -- Selected Resources

### Job boards / portals with specific information about academic careers:

- <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/> **EURAXESS**, featuring a [jobs&funding board](#) with thousands of vacancies, grants and hosting opportunities for mobile European researchers and non- Europeans coming to the continent for research. The portal also includes links to local EURAXESS contact organizations in different countries, providing advice about topics including characteristics of each job market, visas, relocations, pension, and useful resources. Examples include contact points for the [UK](#), [the Netherlands](#), [Germany](#) , and [EURAXESS Worldwide](#)
  - <https://www.eui.eu/ProgrammesAndFellowships/AcademicCareersObservatory/AcademicCareersbyCountry> **Academic Careers by Country**, country-specific information on topics including career advancement, eligibility for non-nationals, links to academic institutions and research centres, and relevant job portals
    - <https://professorpositions.com/> **ProfessorPositions**, higher education jobs worldwide, including academic posts and research positions
    - <https://careers.insidehighered.com/> **InsideHigherEd**, vacancies in international higher education
    - <https://www.academicjobseu.com/> **AcademicJobsEU**, vacancies for academic and research jobs in Europe
    - <https://academicpositions.com/> **Academic Positions**
    - <https://www.academickeys.com/> **AcademicKeys**, 19 discipline-focused sites including job seeker tools and resources in higher education
    - <https://academiccareers.com/> **Academic Careers**, includes faculty, research, administrative and senior management positions at institutes and schools around the world
    - <https://www.higheredjobs.com/> **HigherEdJobs**, information about jobs and career information in academia, includes also job search tips, institutional profiles, diversity resources, webcasts and salary information
    - <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/unijobs/> **The Times Higher Education**, advertisements of higher education jobs, in addition to topics including higher ed news
    - <https://jobs.chronicle.com/> **The Chronicle of Higher Education**, job-search tips including salary information, vacancies, option to upload CV
    - <https://www.jobs.ac.uk/> **jobs.ac.uk** - a leading international job board for careers in academic, research, science and related professions

- <https://www.academictransfer.com/en/> **AcademicTransfer** - Dutch Academic portal
- <https://www.research-in-germany.org/> **Research in Germany** - comprehensive information about research in Germany, including [funding information](#)
- <https://www.academics.com/>, **Academics.com** - job advertisements for academic and private positions in Germany, Austria and Switzerland
- <https://www.hercjobs.org/>, job portal of the **Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (HERC)** nonprofit consortium of colleges and universities in the US
- <https://www.researchresearch.com/jobs/> - **Research**, vacancies across the UK and Ireland, covering roles in research policy, management, and support
- <https://www.postdocjobs.com/> **PostdocJobs** - a major platform for postdoc recruitment worldwide (although majority of opportunities US based) including positions in Environment and Earth Science

### Discipline/topic specific academic job boards:

- <https://econjobmarket.org/> **EconJobMarket**
- <https://www.aeaweb.org/joe/> **JOE (Job Openings for Economists)**, targeted to participants in the annual economics job market cycle
- <https://maryjahariscenter.org/blog/category/jobs>, global job portal for humanities jobs maintained by the **Mary Jaharis Center for Byzantine Art and Culture**
- <https://www.h-net.org/jobs/>, **H-Net** - academic position announcements in History and the Humanities, the Social Sciences, and Rhetoric and Composition
- <https://www.humanrightscareers.com/fellowships/> **Human Rights Careers** listing fellowships both in academia and in international organizations
- [https://academicjobs.wikia.org/wiki/Queer/Women%27s/Gender\\_Studies\\_2021-2022](https://academicjobs.wikia.org/wiki/Queer/Women%27s/Gender_Studies_2021-2022), **Academic Jobs Wiki** in areas including Queer Studies, Women's Studies, Gender Studies
- <https://www.apsanet.org/ejobs>, the **American Political Science Association (APSA)**'s database of jobs related to political science
- <https://sociology.com/> **Sociology**, career opportunities in schools of sociology, politics, history, and philosophy worldwide

- <http://womenincogsci.org/announcement-categories/job-postings>  
**Women in Cognitive Science**
- <https://www.asanet.org/academic-professional-resources/job-bank>,  
**American Sociological Association (ASA)'s job bank**
- <https://socjobs.proboards.com/> **Sociology Job Market Forum**
- <http://www.themedievalacademyblog.org/category/jobs-for-medievalists/> **Jobs for Medievalists**

#### **Other resources for careers in academia:**

- <https://academicstories.com/category/career-stories> **Academic Stories**, platform for young academics to share their stories and insights, and to inspire more young people to pursue careers in research
- <https://www.imaginephd.com/> **ImaginePhD**, free career exploration and planning tool for PhD students and postdoctoral scholars in the humanities and social sciences
- <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/researcher-career-stories/career-stories> **Vitae's** collection of 150+ career stories from researchers
- <https://theprofessorisin.com/> **The Professor Is In**, advice on conducting an academic job search and all elements of the academic and post-academic career