Positions: (see all the latest jobs on the ASA Job Web)

1. (For students) NASS Research Student Trainee
2. Department of Biostatistics, West Virginia University: faculty position (non-tenure track)

Funding:

1. NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)
2. NIH Request for Information: Precision Medicine Cohort
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Other opportunities:

1. World Statistics Day to be highlighted in Significance magazine
2. JSM Docents
3. SAMSI: Forensics - Opening Workshop
4. Student travel awards to ICHPS
5. Advice on doing peer review

(1) (For students) NASS Research Student Trainee

NASS has opportunities for mathematical statisticians currently enrolled in a graduate program. Positions are open for Ph.D. students in the Research and Development Division and in the Methodology Division.

The Research and Development Division conducts research to improve current NASS processes. This division has a wide variety of research needs, including modeling (Bayesian, classical, linear models, generalized linear models, etc.), time series analysis, small area estimation, missing data, editing, imputation, geospatial analysis, remote sensing analysis, sample size determination, design of experiments, survey design and analysis, non-response bias, CART, propensity scores, and more. The Methodology Division incorporates and uses the methods, including those developed in research, in the production process.

Job Title: Research Student Trainee
Department: USDA  
Agency: National Agricultural Statistics Service  
Closing Date: April 29

Here is a link to the job posting:

https://www.usajobs.gov/GetJob/ViewDetails/401657800

Questions? Please contact Linda.Young@nass.usda.gov or Mark.Gorsak@nass.usda.gov.

(2) Department of Biostatistics, West Virginia University: faculty position (non-tenure track)

The Department of Biostatistics in the School of Public Health at West Virginia University (WVU) seeks an outstanding consultant and educator to coordinate the consulting activities of the Department as well as contribute to its teaching mission. The Department of Biostatistics in the newly established School of Public Health (SPH) is a vibrant and growing department with close collaborative ties to multiple research centers including the West Virginia Clinical and Translational Science Institute (WVCTSI), the CDC-funded Injury Control Research Center, the WV Prevention Research Center, and the Mary Babb Randolph Cancer Center. We are adjacent to, and a frequent research and educational collaborator with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health. The Department offers an MS and an MPH in Biostatistics, as well as an Applied Biostatistics Certificate. In addition, the Department will teach classes in the recently approved Bachelor’s of Science Degree in Public Health (BSPH).

The Consulting Coordinator/Instructor is expected to coordinate the consulting activities of the department that primarily arise from the WVCTSI. The successful candidate will be expected to work with the Department Chair to manage the requests for biostatistical assistance and delegate projects across the members of the Clinical Research Design, Epidemiology, and Biostatistics (CRDEB) Program of the WVCTSI. The candidate will be expected to oversee the Biostatistics students employed by the CRDEB Program and direct the consulting experiences of other Biostatistics students as required in their degree programs. The candidate will be expected to develop and implement statistical plans for projects across a variety of disciplines, thus strong statistical skills as well as intellectual curiosity are essential. This position will also be expected to lead, co-lead, or assist in the instruction of various courses offered by the Department and/or the CRDEB Program throughout the year, including courses in the MPH, MS, and BSPH Programs. Required minimum qualifications are an MS or equivalent degree in biostatistics or a related discipline and/or two years of experience consulting in an academic environment. We seek individuals with strong communication and organizational skills. Strong statistical computing skills in programming languages such as SAS and/or R are required. Experience with teaching is desired but not necessary.
This is a non-tenure-track faculty position funded by both state funds and the WVCTSI. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. The position is a twelve-month academic appointment.

West Virginia University is a comprehensive, land-grant, Carnegie-designated Doctoral Research/Extensive public institution with 32,000 undergraduate, graduate, and professional students. The Health Sciences Center includes the Schools of Public Health, Medicine, Pharmacy, Dentistry and Nursing, each of which offers professional and graduate training programs. The newly-established School of Public Health currently has 53 faculty members and over 150 students enrolled in its CEPH-accredited MPH program. In addition, the School offers an MS degree in School Health Education, MS degree in Biostatistics, and a PhD program. Patient care facilities include a 460-bed teaching hospital, a Level I trauma center, children's hospital, 70-bed psychiatric hospital, and affiliated facilities statewide. Morgantown is consistently rated as one of the best small towns in the U.S. with affordable housing, excellent schools, a picturesque countryside, many outdoor recreational activities, and close proximity to major cities including Pittsburgh and Washington, DC.

The confidential online application requires a cover letter, curriculum vitae, and contact information for at least three references. Interested candidates may direct any questions to the search committee chair, Dr. Leann Long (dllong@hsc.wvu.edu; 304-293-2265). Applications will be accepted until a successful candidate has been identified. Finalists will be asked to supply letters of recommendation. Send files by email to tharvey@hsc.wvu.edu.

WVU is an EEO/Affirmative Action Employer-Minority/Female/Disability/Veteran and the recipient of an NSF ADVANCE award for gender equality.

Funding

(1) NSF Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU)


Full Proposal Deadline Date: August 26, 2015

Deadline for REU Site proposals except those requiring access to Antarctica

Fourth Wednesday in August, Annually Thereafter

SYNOPSIS
The Research Experiences for Undergraduates (REU) program supports active research participation by undergraduate students in any of the areas of research funded by the National Science Foundation. REU projects involve students in meaningful ways in ongoing research programs or in research projects specifically designed for the REU program. This solicitation features two mechanisms for support of student research: (1) REU Sites are based on independent proposals to initiate and conduct projects that engage a number of students in research. REU Sites may be based in a single discipline or academic department or may offer interdisciplinary or multi-department research opportunities with a coherent intellectual theme. Proposals with an international dimension are welcome. (2) REU Supplements may be included as a component of proposals for new or renewal NSF grants or cooperative agreements or may be requested for ongoing NSF-funded research projects.

Undergraduate student participants in either REU Sites or REU Supplements must be U.S. citizens, U.S. nationals, or permanent residents of the United States.

Students do not apply to NSF to participate in REU activities. Students apply directly to REU Sites or to NSF-funded investigators who receive REU Supplements. To identify appropriate REU Sites, students should consult the directory of active REU Sites on the Web at http://www.nsf.gov/crssprgm/reu/reu_search.cfm.

(2) NIH Request for Information: Precision Medicine Cohort

Request for Information: NIH Precision Medicine Cohort

[This is not a solicitation]

Notice Number: NOT-OD-15-096

Release Date: April 20, 2015
Response Date: May 7, 2015

Issued by National Institutes of Health (NIH)

Purpose

This Request for Information (RFI) seeks feedback to help guide the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in creating a longitudinal cohort of 1 million or more Americans who have volunteered to participate in research as part of the President's proposed Precision Medicine Initiative. Participants will be asked to give consent for extensive characterization of biologic specimens (potentially including cell populations, proteins, metabolites, RNA, and DNA whole-genome sequencing, if/when costs permit) and behavioral and environmental data, all linked to their electronic health records (EHRs). Qualified researchers from many organizations will, with appropriate protection of participant confidentiality, have access to the cohort's de-identified data for research
Precision medicine is the application of prevention and treatment strategies that take individual variability into account. This is not a new concept but opportunities for evidence-based precision medicine have greatly expanded recently due to the development of better large-scale biologic databases and computational tools, among other things. What is needed is a research resource for developing and validating new approaches to precision medicine that could be used to guide clinical practice ultimately to improve health. The goals of the NIH Precision Medicine Cohort are to enable better assessment of disease risk, understand disease mechanisms, and predict optimal therapy for a broad range of diseases through the study of a large group of people who have volunteered to provide data and biospecimens over time to a cadre of researchers pursuing these research goals. These data will also enable observational studies of drugs and devices and potentially prompt more rigorous interventional studies that address specific questions.

Characteristics of such a large-scale study that might maximize its research value may include: 1) a sufficiently large number of participants to achieve adequate power for common disorders and reasonable representation of rare disorders; 2) intentional over-sampling of populations underrepresented in research to permit meaningful inferences about these groups and to study health disparities; 3) a broad age range to provide information on disorders from infancy to old age; 4) a broad range of genetic backgrounds and environmental exposures; 5) a broad array of clinical and laboratory information, not limited to any single disease, as well as patient reported outcomes; 6) sophisticated dietary, other lifestyle, and environmental exposure assessment, preferably provided directly from participants using mobile devices and wearable sensors; 7) access to comprehensive electronic health data on participants for baseline, follow-up, and possibly also retrospective (prior to study entry) data collection, as well as return of actionable results for use in their clinical care; 8) return of appropriate information and results to participants as they desire; 9) collection and storage of biological specimens; 10) access to study data and biologic materials to qualified researchers to empower research on many diseases by researchers in many sectors; 11) community engagement in the design and implementation of the study, including a state-of-the-art consent process, to allow multiple uses of the data, regular feedback to participants about findings and progress; and 12) a study design that ensures a high follow-up rate.

Sharing data consistent with achieving the goals of this project and in accordance with the NIH's data sharing policies will be expected.

Background Information

On January 20, 2015, President Obama announced a new Precision Medicine Initiative for fiscal year 2016 in his State of the Union address, and expanded on the announcement at a White House event on January 30, 2015. On that same day, Drs. Francis Collins and Harold Varmus published a Perspective in the New England Journal of Medicine, "A New Initiative on Precision Medicine." Opportunities and obstacles for
developing such a cohort were explored in a preliminary way in a February 2015 NIH workshop, "Building a Large U.S. Research Cohort." Steps arising from that workshop include establishing a Working Group of the Advisory Committee to the Director (ACD), NIH, to develop a plan for creating and managing this large research cohort. To ensure that the Working Group's contributions can be incorporated into the funding plan for fiscal year 2016, a report will be delivered to the ACD in September 2015. Funding solicitations to establish the cohort, if warranted, will be developed shortly thereafter for award in mid- to late fiscal 2016.

Information Requested

The NIH seeks information on characteristics, purpose, or other overall aspects in the development and implementation of a large U.S. precision medicine cohort. Information is also sought regarding existing and potentially new entities that have the capability to identify and follow ideally 10,000 or more participants and, if combined with other research entities, could comprise a longitudinal cohort of 1 million or more Americans. The participants should consent to joining this large U.S. cohort and provide their medical, genomic, and other health-related data, with appropriate protections, for broad research use. A research entity could be a health care system, research network, cohort study or consortium, or other entity such as a longitudinal study using digital-based research platforms.

Ideally, participants from a research entity should be able to provide comprehensive clinical information via electronic health data that can be harmonized with data from multiple other systems or networks. Participants may come from ongoing studies with several previously measured phenotypes, stored biological specimens, and proven high quality DNA. Participants may also be recruited de novo. Participants may have been ascertained at random or by disease status. Biological samples and associated data should be available and transferrable. Participants should be accessible for consent or re-consent for data sharing, whole genome sequencing and other biologic measures, multi-use (ability to perform analysis of multiple traits and measures, not just one single disease), and call-back for consent for further in-depth study.

The NIH seeks comments on any or all of, but not limited to, the following topics:

A. General topics on the development and implementation of this large U.S. cohort.

1) The optimal study design and sample size for a large U.S. precision medicine cohort.

2) Data to be collected at baseline and follow-up, including mode of collection and frequency and length of follow-up.

3) Potential research questions that could be uniquely or more efficiently and effectively pursued in a large U.S. precision medicine cohort.

4) Any other suggestions for NIH to consider in the development and implementation of such a research cohort.
B. Suggestions for existing or potentially new research entities (a health care system, research network, cohort study or consortium, or other entities such as longitudinal studies using digital-based platforms) that might be combined into a large U.S. cohort. Providing the following information would be useful when suggesting research entities.

1) The capability of the existing or potentially new research entity to efficiently identify and follow 10,000 or more participants who are likely to consent to providing their medical and other health-related data, biospecimens, and genomic data for broad research use, including in sub-group analysis that could help assess various treatment effects and outcomes. It would also be useful to provide the rationale that potential participants are likely to consent, as well as experience with and ability to participate in central IRB and a master contract agreement to streamline enrollment of the precision medicine cohort.

2) The capability for the research entity to provide individual-level participant data, particularly those from electronic health data (including both electronic health record and payer data), that can be integrated into a standard format to create a combined large longitudinal precision medicine cohort.

3) The capability for the research entity to track and retain the participants for several years of follow up. The race/ethnic composition, sex, and age distribution of participants from the research entity likely to consent, by standard U.S. Census categories, would also be helpful. The NIH especially seeks information about studies of populations underrepresented in research and those with phenotypes or disorders of high public health and human impact. Additional information that would be of use includes: for health care systems, the current patient turnover rate and efforts that can be made to capture longitudinal data from clinical visits outside of the system and to continue follow participants who leave the system entirely; and for ongoing cohort studies, the retention rate to date.

Responses

All responses must be submitted online via the following website: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/rfi/rfi.cfm?ID=43 by May 7, 2015. Response to this RFI is voluntary. Responders are free to address any or all of the categories listed above; respondents should not feel compelled to address all listed issues. Please note that the text box for each topic has a maximum limit of approximately 250 words.

This RFI is for planning purposes only and should not be construed as a solicitation for applications or as an obligation on the part of the Government to provide support for any ideas identified in response to it. Please note that the United States Government will not pay for the preparation of any information submitted or for its use of that information.

Responses will be compiled and may be shared publically. We look forward to your input and hope that you will share this RFI document with your colleagues. Updates to this document, if any, will be noted. Please check before submission.
Inquiries

Please direct all inquiries to:

Email: PMI_Cohort_RFI@sp10mail.nih.gov


(3) NIH: Training Program in the Neurosciences (T32)


The Jointly Sponsored NIH Predoctoral Training Program in the Neurosciences (JSPTPN) supports broad and fundamental research training in the neurosciences via institutional NRSA research training grants (T32) at domestic institutions of higher education. Trainees appointed to this training grant are financially supported for either one or two years, during the first 2 years of their graduate research training. The primary objective is to prepare individuals for careers in neuroscience that have a significant impact on the health-related research needs of the Nation. - See more at: http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PAR-15-178.html#sthash.ctr7X4SV.dpuf

Letter of Intent Due Date(s): 30 days prior to the application due date

Application Due Date(s): June 10, 2015;
(1) World Statistics Day to be highlighted in *Significance* magazine

To mark World Statistics Day (October 20, 2015), *Significance* will devote its October issue to articles that highlight the important contributions statistics is making in different parts of the world. We are looking to publish one article from each of the main geographic regions: North America, South America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and Asia. We are particularly keen that articles published about the developing world do not fall into the 'bad news' trap – that is, focusing only on stories of war, death, disease, poverty and natural disasters. We would like to surprise readers with tales of interesting work and novel applications of statistics from parts of the planet that are too often overlooked by the media.

Please send any article ideas, or recommendations for potential contributors, to Significance editor Brian Tarran at b.tarran@rss.org.uk. Thank you.

(2) JSM Docents

JSM is HUGE! And it seems to be getting bigger every year. For first-time attendees the experience can be overwhelming. The ASA has created a Docent program to help first-timers have a positive experience at JSM and we're looking for volunteers. Section members tend to be more involved in ASA and could be ideal Docents.

We're looking for persons who have attended three or more JSMs. Persons willing to volunteer as Docents will attend an orientation session the Sunday of JSM. There, they will receive Docent ribbons they attach to their name badge. First-time attendees will be instructed to look for someone with this ribbon if they have any questions. There will be a thank you reception for all Docents the Wednesday afternoon of JSM.

There is a short (1 minute) video narrated by ASA Board of Director member Mary Kwasny about the Docent program on the ASA home page. Here is the direct link to the video:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_1lcGzIQ-s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A_1lcGzIQ-s)

Anyone interested in volunteering as a Docent should send their contact information to JSMDocent@amstat.org.
(3) SAMSI: Forensics - Opening Workshop

August 31-September 4, 2015

Deadline for applications is July 10, 2015. To apply, go to http://www.samsi.info/forensics-ow

This workshop will be held at the North Carolina Biotechnology Center's Hamner Conference Center, 15 T.W. Alexander Dr., Research Triangle Park, NC.

Workshop Organizers:

- Eugene Fiorini
- Anil Jain
- Karen Kafadar
- Dennis Lin
- Cedric Neumann
- Clifford Spiegelman
- Sandy Zabell

Visit the SAMSI website for more information about the 2015-16 Forensics Program http://www.samsi.info/Forensics

For additional information about the workshop, send e-mail to forensics@samsi.info

(4) Student travel awards to ICHPS

Student Travel Awards are available to students enrolled in a graduate program to attend the 11th International Conference on Health Policy Statistics (ICHPS), sponsored by the American Statistical Association. The ICHPS 2015 will be held October 7-9 in Providence, Rhode Island, USA.

Students currently pursuing a master's or doctoral degree are eligible. Each applicant must meet all of the following criteria:

1. Must be presenting an invited paper, topic-contributed paper, contributed paper, or poster
2. Must be a current registered graduate student working toward either a master's or doctoral degree at the time of the conference
3. Must be a member of the American Statistical Association

The application deadline for the student travel award is May 15, 2015.
If interested, please send the following information to Naomi Friedman at naomi@amstat.org and copy ICHPS2015@gmail.com by the above deadline:

- Name (last/surname, middle initial, first)
- Email address
- Phone number, including country and area codes
- Degree program (e.g., MA, MS, PhD, ScD, DPH, MD, DO, PharmD, DDS, DMS)
- Years in current graduate study (# of years since MM-DD-YEAR)
- Expected graduation date (MM-DD-YEAR)
- Institution affiliation
- Department
- U.S. state of the institution (if outside U.S., enter Non-U.S.)
- Country of the institution if outside U.S. (if within U.S., enter N/A)
- Thesis adviser and/or program director (please provide and copy the adviser in the email)
- Submitted ICHPS 2015 abstract ID
- Title of the presentation
- Presentation format (invited paper, topic-contributed paper, contributed paper, or poster)
- Brief justification up to 1,200 characters (excluding spaces) with a statement of need for travel assistance and how ICHPS 2015 may affect and benefit your study or research

In conjunction with our policy of not charging students any fee to attend the Wednesday workshops, we hope to present these awards to as many qualified applicants as possible. However, due to limited funding, we cannot guarantee every applicant will receive an award.

Sincerely yours,

Recai M. Yucel and Kelly H. Zou, PStat®
Co-Chairs, ICHPS 2015
ICHPS2015@gmail.com
(5) Advice on doing peer review

We thought many of your faculty might find this article valuable:

Reviewing Academic Papers ([https://github.com/jtleek/reviews](https://github.com/jtleek/reviews))

(6) “The Role of Big Data in Pharma” – NJ Chapter Spring Symposium

Everyone, not just chapter members, is invited to the NJ Chapter of ASA 36th Spring Symposium, "The Role of Big Data in Pharma". It will be held on May 29th at Rutgers RWJ Medical School, Piscataway. Meeting agenda and details follow below.

To register, visit [http://BigDataNJ2015.eventbrite.com](http://BigDataNJ2015.eventbrite.com). The registration deadline is May 24th. Registration after May 24th is subject to seat availability.

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<td>Zhaoling Meng, President, ASA-NJ Chapter</td>
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<td>Reflections on the Opportunities and Challenges of Big Data,</td>
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<td>9:55 - 10:45</td>
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<td>Peng-Liang Zhao, Vice-President, ASA-NJ Chapter</td>
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