

# Proposed Emory University Postdoctoral Association Bylaws | Updated May 2022

## Mission

The Emory University Postdoctoral Association (EU-PDA) aims to:

- Provide a sense of community and identity for postdoctoral scholars, fellows, and researchers;
- Advocate for individual and collective needs and interests of postdoctoral scholars, fellows, and researchers;
- Facilitate communication and scientific interactions;
- Provide relevant resources for career development;
- Function as a central hub for and to disseminate information from our subcommittees.

## Governance

General membership to the EU-PDA is open to all postdoctoral scholars at the university, regardless of department or college affiliation. A postdoctoral scholar ("postdoc") is an individual holding a doctoral degree who is engaged in a temporary period of mentored research and/or scholarly training for the purpose of acquiring the professional skills need to pursue a career path of his/her/their choosing (National Postdoctoral Association). At Emory University, everyone with a 9903 or 9905 HR code who has a doctorate degree is automatically considered a member of EU-PDA. For individuals who hold a doctorate degree, are considered a postdoc in their department, but *do not* have a 9903 or 9905 HR code, these individuals can apply for membership by providing a copy of their offer letter and/or a letter from their Department Chair that states they are considered a postdoctoral scholar or that their duties are aligned with the definition of the postdoctoral scholar. All EU-PDA members can serve as Executive Board members, members of subcommittees, and representatives on the University Senate. All postdoctoral fellows can run for Executive Board and Subcommittee leadership positions.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Executive Board

1. The **Chair**
  - a. Organizes and sets the agenda for general and Executive Board meetings;
  - b. Leads general and Executive Board meetings;
  - c. Communicates with members of the Executive Board;
  - d. Communicates with the leaders of the Subcommittees;
  - e. Communicates with the Office of Postdoctoral Education (OPE);
  - f. Oversees elections, and
  - g. Serves as an ex-officio member of the Emory University Senate.
2. The **Vice Chair**
  - a. Aids in responsibilities as delegated by the Chair;
3. The **Communications Chair**
  - a. Conducts semesterly surveys to assess the needs of the group;
  - b. Crafts emails for upcoming events;
  - c. Works with the Office of Postdoctoral Education (OPE) to communicate pertinent information; and
  - d. Manages the group's social media accounts.
4. The **Treasurer**
  - a. Prepares the annual budget;
  - b. Manages funds of the group;
  - c. Submits requests for funds and honoraria in a timely fashion;

- d. Acts as a liaison between the Office of Postdoctoral Education (OPE) and Emory PDA to communicate the size, cost, and resources needed for events;
5. The **Webmaster**
  - a. Controls access and remains up-to-date on training with the Cascade system,
  - b. Maintains the website and Microsoft Teams space,
  - c. Advertises announcements for upcoming events on the website, and
  - d. Works with the Communications Chair to manage the group's social media accounts.
6. The **Emory University Senate Representative**
  - a. Is an active member of the Advocacy Subcommittee
  - b. Attends and represents Emory University Postdoctoral Community at Emory University Senate Meetings;
  - c. Advocates for the needs of the Emory Postdoctoral scholars to the Emory University Senate;
  - d. Summarizes Emory University Senate meetings to the EU-PDA Executive Board, and to the greater Emory University Postdoctoral community via updates to the EU-PDA website(s) or via email, and
  - e. Advises the EU-PDA Board and Advocacy Subcommittee about Emory University Senate Concerns.
7. The Chair (and Vice Chairs) of the following **Subcommittees** will automatically hold Executive Board positions:
  - a. Science Writers
  - b. Postdoctoral Council for Diversity
  - c. International Postdocs
  - d. Programming Advisory
  - e. Mentorship and Outreach
  - f. Advocacy
8. All members of the Executive Board except the Chair, who leads meetings, will rotate who takes meeting minutes.

## Election Procedures

Each year on a 6-month rotation, calls for Executive Board and Subcommittee leader nominations will be sent to all Emory postdoctoral scholars, fellows, and researchers; nominations and elections may take place virtually and asynchronously. Nominations must be confirmed by the nominee or can be a result of a self-nomination. Individuals can be nominated for multiple positions, but must submit a separate application for each position and may only accept one position, which will be determined by majority rule. A 2-week period shall be enacted for nominations, where nominees will be asked to provide:

1. How many years they have been at Emory,
2. Their department, and
3. A small paragraph (<6 sentences) detailing why they want to run for the position.

After the nomination period, a 2-week voting period will be enacted where all Emory postdoctoral scholars, fellows, and researchers can vote for the incoming Executive Board and Subcommittee leaders. The voting period will close. If only one individual is nominated, they are automatically elected by default and no voting will take place. Otherwise, winners will be determined by majority rule. A 1-month interim period will take place to provide a smooth transfer of responsibilities between the current and incoming Executive Board and Subcommittee leaders. The incoming Executive Board and Subcommittee leaders will begin their 6-month terms 1 month after their election or at the discretion of the needs of the Executive Board.

## Resignation or Removal of an Officer from the Executive Board.

A member of the Executive Board who wishes to resign must submit a written statement of resignation to the Executive Board; an email stating the intent to resign and their last day of service will suffice. An officer can also be removed due to dereliction of their duties. Dereliction of duty must be determined by the Executive Board and must be unanimously approved.

In both instances, if the vacated position is not a Subcommittee Chair (Chair, Vice Chair, Communications Chair, Treasurer, Webmaster, or Emory University Senate Representative) an ad-hoc nomination and election will take place for that position only. Like the general election process, the ad-hoc election may take place virtually. Individuals who are elected will serve until the next official nomination and election period.

## Descriptions and structure of subcommittees

Subcommittees will elect or appoint, per each subcommittees' rules and procedures, a **Chair**, and optionally, a **Vice Chair** to serve on the Emory PDA Executive Board. Within subcommittees, additional positions can be created but will be governed by subcommittee itself. If a Subcommittee Chair is unable to serve on the EU-PDA Executive Board or a Subcommittee Chair is derelict in their responsibilities to the EU-PDA Executive Board, the EU-PDA Executive Board will first request that the subcommittee elects or appoints a different member of the subcommittee to serve as the EU-PDA Executive Board Representative. If the subcommittee is unable to elect or appoint an EU-PDA Executive Board Representative, the EU-PDA Executive Board will do so. The mission for active subcommittees are included below:

a. **Science Writers**

Science Writers is composed of a group of postdocs with a knack for writing. This subcommittee provides opportunities for members to develop their writing skills via the peer-review process of writing and editing articles. By creating an open and nourishing platform of sharing thoughts and ideas, Science Writers fosters strong communal bonds through writing. Members of Science Writers contribute to publishing the bi-annual Postdoc Science Writers Magazine. Each edition features a unique theme of contemporary interest. Members also post blogs covering a variety of topics of interest to the postdoc community. In addition, Science Writers is actively engaged in facilitating related events hosted by the Office of Postdoc Education (OPE).

b. **Postdoctoral Council for Diversity**

The mission of the Postdoctoral Council for Diversity is to uphold diversity and inclusion as core institutional values. People of diverse race, gender, socioeconomic status, first-generation college students, and sexual orientation, among others, are key to the advancement of the sciences. Therefore, we seek to increase the participation and retention of underrepresented groups in scientific fields and address systemic racism within the academic environment in order to cultivate a network of diverse scientists. We are committed to providing a safe space and fostering a community among diverse groups of scientists, where individual differences are celebrated, supported, and nurtured.

c. **International Postdocs**

The International Postdocs subcommittee supports foreign national postdocs in personal and career development. The subcommittee, 1) facilitates quick exchange of information and useful resources regarding visas, immigration, fellowship and grant opportunities that are open to international scholars; 2) provides a network of moral support for international postdocs facing similar struggles; 3) participates in advocacy actions for internationals (e.g., petitions).

d. **Programming Advisory**

The Programming Advisory subcommittee works with the Office of Postdoctoral Education (OPE) to ensure that the events and workshops throughout the year are meeting the needs of all postdoctoral fellows at Emory. By integrating with OPE, the Programming Advisory subcommittee fosters the maximal growth of all postdoctoral fellows by ensuring appropriate professional development workshops and events to help postdoctoral fellows succeed in their careers. We aim to organize programs that facilitate the professional development of postdoctoral fellows at Emory in addition to events and workshops that focus not only on the academic job search but also on careers outside of academia.

e. **Mentorship and Outreach**

The Mentorship and Outreach subcommittee aims to: 1) Build a bridge and mentorship relations between pre-doctoral students and postdocs; 2) Facilitate scientific interactions in the postdoc community; 3) Organize social events and provide support for postdocs in need (logistically, mentally, etc.).

f. **Advocacy**

This subcommittee advocates for the interests of postdocs, by supporting on a case-to-case basis individual postdocs in conflict with forces within the institution, and by organizing postdocs in support of shared economic interests and collectively bargaining to improve postdoc benefits, compensation, and/or working conditions.

EU-PDA members are encouraged to be involved in these subcommittees as they see fit.

## General Rules

**Non-Discrimination Clause:** The EU-PDA, including Executive Board officers and members, shall not discriminate against any individual, group, or organization on the basis of race, color, age, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, socioeconomic status, religion, political orientation, veteran's status, national origin, or disability.

**Meeting Structure:**

1. Executive Board meetings should be held when necessary. The meeting agenda should be prepared by the Chair and Vice Chair with input from all officers. A quorum shall be the presence of two-thirds of the Executive Board officers. Decisions made at Executive Board meetings must be approved by a majority vote. Officers will rotate who takes meeting minutes, and the minutes must be made available to all officers promptly.
2. General meetings will be held monthly, and the schedule will be determined at the beginning of the semester. All officers should be present if possible, and all members are invited to attend. Votes will be decided by a majority vote of present EU-PDA members. Officers will rotate who takes meeting minutes, and the minutes must be made available to all officers promptly.
3. An annual meeting will be held with all members and Executive Board officers in August. Each Executive Board officer will give a brief report to discuss accomplishments from the previous year and goals for the upcoming year. The new Executive Board will be introduced. Any member may then present relevant issues for discussion.
4. Social events, professional events, and workshops will be held periodically and are open to all EU-PDA members.

## Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any meeting where the entire Executive Board is present. The Amendment must be proposed in writing and submitted to the Executive Board two weeks ahead of the meeting. The proposed Amendment must receive a majority vote at the meeting to be approved. If it is determined that not all Executive Board members will be present at the meeting, then participation in an asynchronous online poll to vote on amendment ratification can be held instead.