



NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY

Responsible University Official: Vice President for Research
Responsible Office: Office for Research
Origination Date: December 6, 2016

RESEARCH VISITORS

Policy Statement

To facilitate research activity at Northwestern University, the Office for Research provides visiting appointments, of defined duration, to enable individuals to learn research techniques and processes, use specialized facilities and/or collaborate with faculty or other principal investigators.

Reason for Policy/Purpose

This policy outlines the types of Research Visitor appointments made by the Office for Research and the requirements for establishing such appointments.

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Who Approved This Policy

Vice President for Research

Who Needs to Know This Policy

All members of Northwestern University's research community.

Website Address for this Policy

https://research.northwestern.edu/sites/research/files/policies/researchvisitorspolicy.pdf

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## Contacts

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If you have any questions on the Research Visitors Policy, you may:

Call the Office for Research at 847 -491 - 2101

Send an e-mail to [researchvisitors@northwestern.edu](mailto:researchvisitors@northwestern.edu)

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## Definitions

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Affiliated Institution:	An institution with which the University has a formal affiliation, such as Northwestern Memorial HealthCare, Ann and Robert H. Lurie Children’s Hospital of Chicago, and the Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago (excluding Argonne National Laboratory).
Foreign National:	An individual who is not a United States citizen, permanent resident alien of the United States ( <i>i.e.</i> , “green card holder”), lawfully-admitted temporary resident alien or refugee, or other protected individual as defined by 8 U.S.C. 1324b(a)(3).
Living Allowance:	Funds provided to a Research Visitor to assist in covering the cost of living while resident at Northwestern University during the Research Visitor appointment. A Living Allowance is never tied to services rendered to Northwestern and is usually paid from non-restricted funds. A Living Allowance may be paid from restricted funding only when explicitly allowed by the sponsor or donor.
Research Affiliate:	Research professionals employed by Affiliated Institutions. Research Affiliates are not paid by or employed by Northwestern, although they may be involved in collaborative research with Northwestern investigators in Northwestern facilities. They typically hold the PhD, MD, or equivalent terminal degree in their discipline or have received equivalent professional recognition. Research Affiliates may be appointed for a term of up to three years; such positions are always dependent upon their continued employment at the Affiliated Institution.
Restricted Party Lists:	A series of lists published by the U.S. government, which identify the names of companies and individuals to whom there are federally imposed restrictions upon access to certain items and information and/or eligibility for federal funding.

Visiting Pre-doctoral Fellow: An individual who is a current doctoral degree-seeking graduate student from another institution who is studying at Northwestern for a short period, working with faculty to learn research techniques or to use specialized facilities. Visiting Pre-doctoral Fellows are not employed or paid a salary by Northwestern, nor do they have Northwestern student status. In some cases, a Living Allowance may be provided.

Visiting Research Collaborator: An individual who may periodically visit Northwestern in order to learn research techniques, use specialized facilities and/or collaborate with Northwestern faculty. A Visiting Research Collaborator must have current, paid employment at the start-up company of an existing Northwestern faculty member. A Visiting Research Collaborator cannot simultaneously have Northwestern faculty, staff or student status. Visiting Research Collaborators are appointed for only one year at a time and must show documentation of paid employment at the time of initial appointment. These appointments are renewable; the Visiting Research Collaborator must provide updated documentation of paid employment at the Northwestern faculty start-up company prior to each reappointment.

Visiting Scholar: An individual sponsored or employed elsewhere, usually by another university, industry or government agency. Visiting Scholars are at Northwestern for one year or less; this appointment may be renewed. Visiting Scholars are not paid a salary or employed by Northwestern. Visiting Scholars are usually paid by their sponsoring organization. In some cases, a Living Allowance may be provided.

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## **Policy/Procedures**

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### **I. General Information**

The Office for Research (OR) is responsible for approving the following categories of appointments<sup>1</sup> as Research Visitors to Northwestern University:

1. Research Affiliates;
2. Visiting Pre-doctoral Fellows;
3. Visiting Research Collaborators; and
4. Visiting Scholars.

Individuals granted these appointments are invited to Northwestern University for a defined period of time to study with Northwestern faculty, learn research techniques, use specialized facilities, and/or collaborate with faculty or other principal investigators.

Research Visitors are neither employees nor students of Northwestern University; Research Visitors can never hold any other concurrent position at Northwestern. Research Visitor appointments requiring co-terminus employment by, or sponsorship of, an external entity must be terminated as soon as such employment or sponsorship ends. There may be additional restrictions on appointments for individuals who are Foreign Nationals, depending upon the individual's visa status.

Under certain circumstances, Visiting Scholars and Visiting Pre-doctoral Fellows may be provided with a Living Allowance. Such funding may never be tied to services rendered to Northwestern. Research Affiliates and Visiting Research Collaborators may not receive a Living Allowance.

Although not Northwestern employees, Visiting Pre-doctoral Fellows may be supported by sponsored program funds provided by Northwestern to their home institution through a subcontract. See "[Visiting Pre-doctoral Students from Other U.S. Institutions of Higher Education and Northwestern Sponsored Programs](#)" for additional information.

## **II. Appointment Requirements**

### **A. Appointment Start Date**

Research Visitors cannot start at Northwestern until the OR has finalized the appointment and an official start date has been determined. The official start date must always be later than the approval date of the appointment. Provision of a Northwestern NetID, email, Wildcard, parking and/or other privileges may not be granted before formal approval of the appointment.

### **B. Foreign Nationals**

If the appointee is a Foreign National, the individual must have an appropriate visa as required by the United States Department of State. This visa must be active for the entire time the visitor will hold a Northwestern appointment. The [International Office](#) provides assistance in obtaining the necessary visa to extend an offer for a Foreign National to be appointed as a Research

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<sup>1</sup> This policy does not address appointments through the Northwestern University Argonne National Laboratory Institute of Science and Engineering (NAISE); for NAISE appointments please see: [www.naise.northwestern.edu](http://www.naise.northwestern.edu).

Visitor. As obtaining a visa is a lengthy process, the International Office should be contacted as early in the appointment process as possible.

### C. Background Checks and Restricted Party Screening

Conducting individual background checks helps to ensure the protection of the University community, and property and information of the University. Research Visitors are subject to background checks, including:

- Federal, state, and local criminal checks
- Sex offender registry check
- Education check
- Restricted party screening

Northwestern reserves the right to limit or refuse access to Research Visitors based on the results of background checks.

As specified in the Implementing Procedure for this policy, Northwestern conducts restricted party screenings to ensure compliance with various federal regulations. Certain individuals as well as entities may be screened against various Restricted Party Lists to ensure that extending an invitation to visit is appropriate and within the law. No person or entity who is identified as a match against these lists should be invited to Northwestern until the [Office for Export Controls Compliance](#) (OECC) is informed and, in consultation with other offices as appropriate, has approved of the visit. Once OECC is informed, the appropriate steps will be undertaken to ensure that Northwestern will remain in compliance with the regulations, which may involve not moving forward on the visiting appointment or proceeding with an understanding that the responsible Principal Investigator, with oversight from the relevant department and/or school, exercise due diligence in ensuring that the appointment is managed in compliance with the regulations. Additionally, there are restrictions upon activities involving certain countries subject to embargoes enforced by the U.S. Department of the Treasury. OECC should always be consulted to determine whether the citizenship or other ties of a Research Visitor to an embargoed country or a restricted entity implicate such restrictions.

### D. Medical Insurance

As specified in the Implementing Procedure for this policy, all Research Visitors at Northwestern must have valid medical insurance throughout the term of their appointment. It is the responsibility of the unit requesting the Research Visitor's appointment to make certain that the Research Visitor and any accompanying family member(s) have adequate medical insurance coverage during the full period of the appointment. International Research Visitors subject to the Department of State's Exchange Visitor Program may obtain medical coverage through the

Office of Risk Management's Visiting Scholar Plan. Domestic Research Visitors are not eligible for the Visiting Scholar Plan and must obtain appropriate coverage through their home institution, employer or other avenues (marketplace exchanges, Medicare, etc.) Research Visitors wishing to utilize their own medical insurance must submit a waiver request form to the Office of Risk Management for review and approval.

#### E. Benefits Eligibility

Research Visitors are not eligible for University employee benefits, including but not limited to paid holidays, paid vacation, paid sick leave, long- or short-term disability, life insurance, educational assistance and tuition plans, and/or retirement plans. Additionally Research Visitors are not entitled to benefits as defined in the Illinois Workers' Compensation Act.

Research Visitors are eligible for a Northwestern NetID, email, Wildcard, library privileges, reduced ticket prices for various athletic and cultural events, access to University recreational facilities and use of the campus shuttle service. Research Visitors are eligible to obtain a parking pass for access to University facilities pursuant to payment of University parking fees.

#### F. Research and Laboratory Safety

Northwestern is committed to providing a safe environment for all members of the community engaged in research. All Research Visitors, regardless of academic discipline, are required to complete the Research and Laboratory Safety Form prior to their start date. The Office for Research Safety (ORS) will review all forms. If it is determined that the Research Visitor will be engaging in research requiring training in safe laboratory practices, ORS will require the Research Visitor to participate in the appropriate training before being allowed to enter a lab or perform any research. Research Visitors engaging in research within laboratories may also be required to sign a liability waiver/release.

#### G. Human and Animal Research

As specified in the Implementing Procedure for this policy, additional policies and training are applicable to Research Visitors engaged in research utilizing human participants or animals in research. Visit the [Institutional Review Board Office](#) and [Institutional Committee on Animal Use and Care Office](#) for additional information.

#### H. Compliance with Northwestern Policies

Research Visitors are required to comply with, and should familiarize themselves with, all Northwestern University policies. These are available here: <http://policies.northwestern.edu/>. Two important compliance elements require the following:

- Research Visitors, regardless of citizenship or place of residence, must complete the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Mandatory Reporting form. This form acknowledges the individual's status as a mandated reporter, indicating that he or

she understands the requirement to make a report to the Illinois DCFS Hotline whenever there is reasonable cause to believe that a child known to the individual in his or her professional or official capacity, may be abused or neglected.

- To help keep the Northwestern community safe from sexual violence and sex discrimination, Research Visitors are required to complete the University’s “Preventing

Sexual Misconduct & Sex Discrimination” online course:

<http://www.northwestern.edu/sexual-misconduct/prevention/online-educational-course.html>

Failure to comply with these policies may result in sanctions, including termination of the appointment. While at Northwestern, Research Visitors are also required to abide by all applicable policies of their sponsoring entity.

#### I. Appointment Termination

The Vice President for Research has the authority to terminate the appointment of any Research Visitor at any time for any reason. In situations where a Research Visitor is charged with violation of Northwestern policy, the Vice President for Research, in consultation with others as appropriate, may decide to terminate the appointment immediately. The decision of the Vice President for Research is final.

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## Forms

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Recommendation for Research Visitor Appointment

Visiting Scholar Insurance Plan – only International Visitors are eligible

DCFS Mandatory Reporting Form

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## Processes

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Implementing Procedure for Research Visitors Policy

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## Appendices

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## Related Information

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## **History/Revision Dates**

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**Origination Date:** December 6, 2016

**Last Amended Date:** August 1, 2017

**Next Review Date:** August 1, 2020