Selected Responses from Postdoc Survey

Note: Some responses are omitted or aggregated to avoid reporting of small bins.

Demographics of respondents

Fig A1: How many years of total postdoc experience do you have?

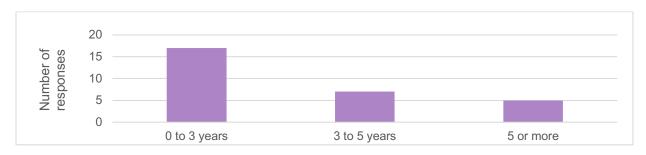
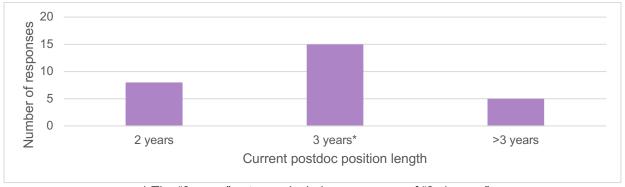
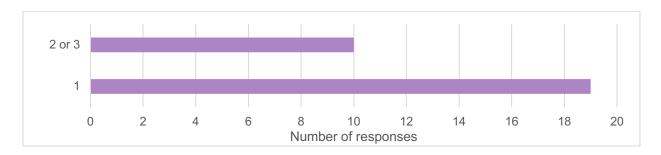


Fig A2: How many years is your current postdoc position?



^{*} The "3 years" category includes responses of "2+1 years"

Fig A3: Including your current postdoc, how many postdoc positions have you held?



Postdoc compensation and benefits

Fig A4: What is your annual salary as a postdoc (based on a full-time appointment)? Note: Some responses not included due to small number of responses within that cell

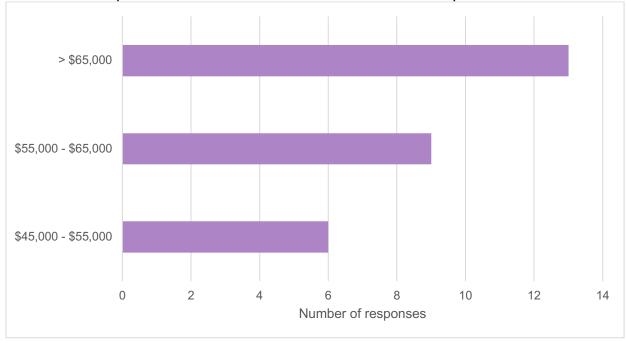
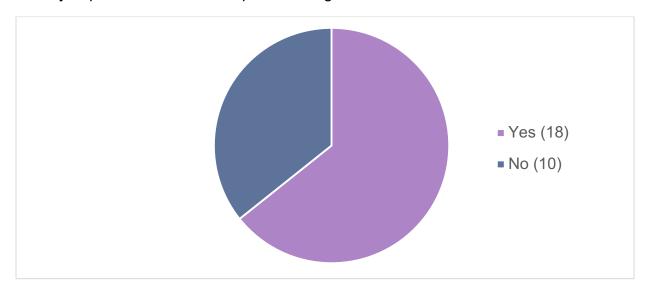


Fig A5: For the respondents who moved geographical location for their postdoc: Were you provided with an adequate moving allowance?



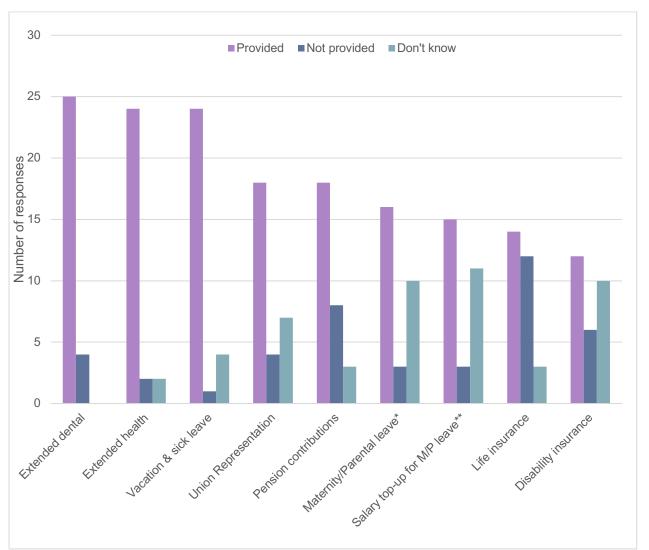


Fig A6: Which benefits are you entitled to in your postdoc?

Notes

^{*} Maternity and parental leave without pay

^{**} Any amount of salary top-up for maternity/parental leave for any number of weeks

Postdoc work responsibilities and resources

Fig A7: Do you do any of the following non-research tasks as part of your postdoc?

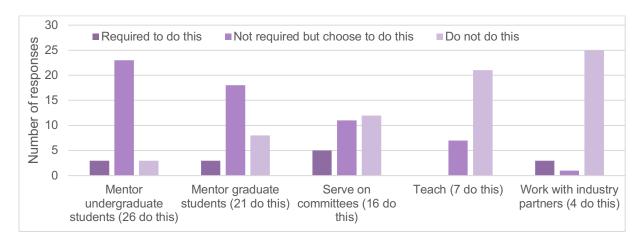


Fig A8: How often do you work more than your institution's full-time equivalent hours (typically 35-40 hours per week)?

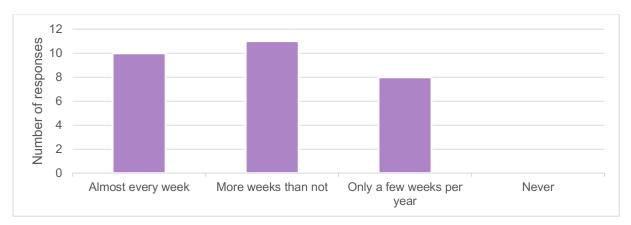
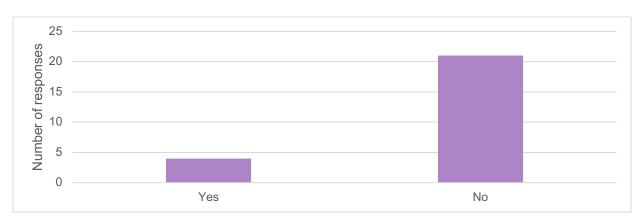


Fig A9: Have you ever been required to pay work/conference travel costs yourself as part of your postdoc?



Postdoc international and family status

Fig A10: Do you have any children or underage dependents for which you are a primary caregiver?

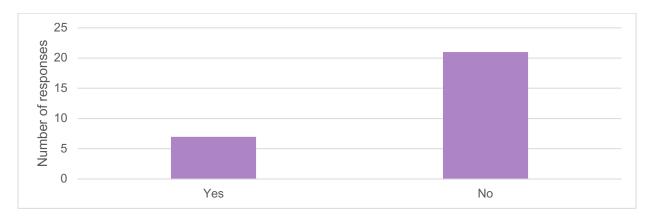
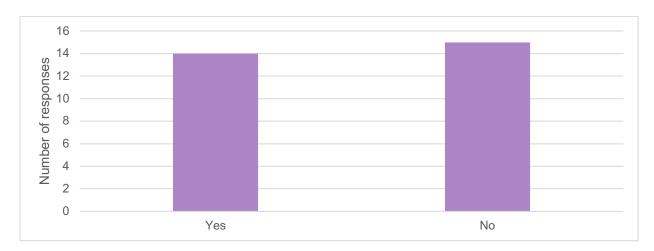


Fig A11: Are you in Canada under a work visa and/or work permit?



Postdoc Outcomes

Fig A12: Upon the end of your postdoc, what type of employment do you hope for? (choose all that apply)

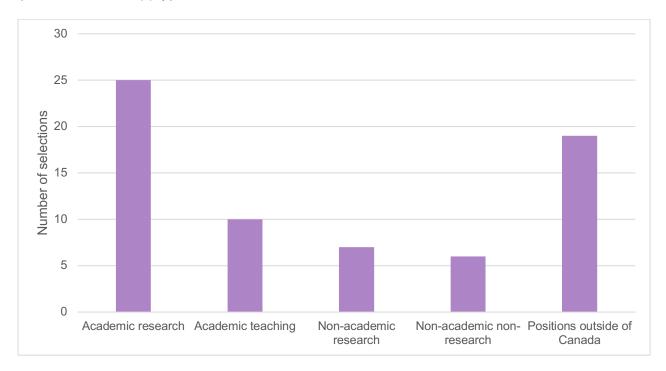
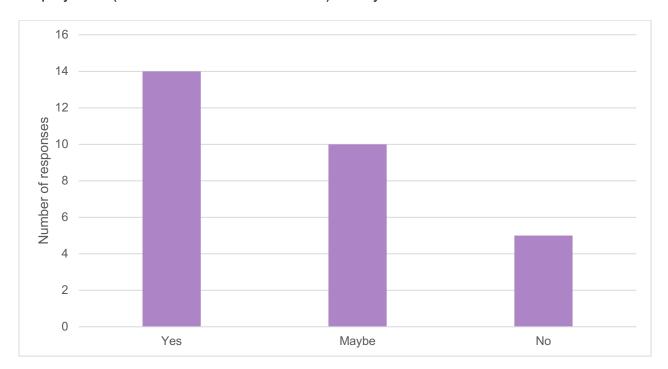


Fig A13: Do you believe that you are provided with enough resources to help you gain employment (either academic or otherwise) after your contract ends?



Open-ended questions

Here, we present summaries of responses to three open-ended questions.

What resources would help you better prepare for employment upon the end of your post?

Training-related (4 responses):

- Broader training of skills such as teaching, project management, data science
- Discussions of how postdocs develop and apply professional skills
- Workshops on marketing postdoc skills to industry

Careers-related (4 responses):

- Better connections between current and future employers, e.g. Universities taking a role in promoting their PDFs to local employers, job fairs, etc.
- Networking events with non-academic employers
- Discussions/workshops on transition from academia to industry

Mentorship-related (2 responses):

- Formal mentoring with both faculty members and non-academic mentor, especially those who were recently successful in the job market

Teaching experience opportunities Longer postdocs and more funding for postdocs

What are the important issues to highlight during this LRP process?

Note: This question had three checkboxes: "More jobs", "More funding" and "Professional Development", with space to write in comments. Here is a summary of the responses.

"More jobs": Marked by 18/27 respondents. In the open answer part, respondents emphasized the need for more stability (longer postdocs lengths) and more permanent positions instead of more term positions.

"More funding": Marked by 17/27 respondents.

"Professional Development": Marked by 15/27 respondents.

Stories, comments and anecdotes submitted by respondents

Note: Some comments abridged or edited for brevity and anonymity.

Comment #1: I went on to a second postdoc [outside of Canada], and am now about to start a faculty position [outside of Canada]. My first postdoc in Canada was key to me feeling welcomed and part of the world astronomy community—and it was great fun.

Comment #2: Canadian astronomers nearly always have to leave the country to find postdoc or permanent positions. It is generally hard to move so far, so often. It is harder

when you have a spouse and/or dependents. Losing your support network when you have children is very challenging. In addition, some countries make it very difficult for a spouse to obtain a work permit, and a single postdoc salary is not usually enough to support a family (especially if you still carry student loan debt). I ended up in debt after my first postdoc in the US.

Comment #3: Towards the end of my current contract, I began to apply for postdoc positions within Canada, as well as other countries. [...] I never heard a single thing back - not even a rejection email. The only reason I found out that I had not been considered was through the Astro Rumour Mill, which is simply unacceptable.

Whilst I understand that large fellowships like these [...] attract a huge number (100s) of applicants, it is incredibly demoralizing to not even receive a response back after all the effort put into an application. All it takes is a 1-2 line email saying "Dear X, we have reviewed your application for Y and unfortunately, at this time, we will not be able to offer you a position this year." This would take a day of somebody's time at the very most. There are very limited postdoctoral positions in Canada and people put an awful lot of time and effort into their applications in order to stand the best chance of getting a job. To not hear a response back, nothing, not even a 1 line rejection email, makes you think that people at these institutes haven't even read your application. Please share this story, because people, especially the hiring committees at larger institutes need to hear this, and they need to know how it feels to be completely ignored. The postdoc job hunt is cutthroat and brutal enough without institutes being too lazy to send out formal rejection letters.

Comment #4: I'd like to see Canadian conferences and organizations become even more understanding towards the fact that many of postdocs here are speaking English as a second language. This can improve outcomes. What are some of the ways that we as a community can become more understanding and accommodating? Science is international.

Comment #5: I actually recently finished my postdoc and successfully got a faculty position outside of Canada, but filled out the form since I thought the data would be useful to you. Even though I had a fairly prestigious postdoc, my sense is the pay in Canada is awful; at \$55k I made less than my previous postdoc in the US. While I was treated fine, postdoc seemed like an afterthought at my institution. There weren't very many of us, and as a 2yr (with potential for a 3rd from other funding) contract, there was very little sense of community for those at this career stage. It felt isolating.