

ResearchGate

SUCCESS STORY

# Specialized postdoc hiring at Johns Hopkins University

Overcoming the challenge of  
recruiting for two highly specific yet  
differing roles with ResearchGate



## Hiring specialized roles for a cutting-edge project

Johns Hopkins University is a world leader in research and education in medicine, public health, the arts, sciences, and engineering, based in Baltimore, Maryland.

Dr. Gene Fridman, Assistant Professor in the Department of Otolaryngology and in the Department of Biological Engineering, needed to hire two postdoctoral researchers to work with him on a project.

The project was to develop a new type of neurostimulator to create communication between hardware and the human body's nervous system. The primary application would be to help those with balance disorders, such as those who suffer from bilateral vestibular dysfunction.



One position required a neurophysiology specialist to conduct experiments to quantify the effectiveness and longevity of the device; the other required an engineer to develop the device itself.

Both positions required a variety of advanced skills: “I was looking for an electrophysiologist with experience in neuroscience, able to record from neurons and do histology, with some experience in the neurostimulation field,” said Dr. Fridman. “For the engineering position, I was looking for someone with experience in microfluidics who was able to pattern silicone rubber and do some chemistry, who also had an understanding of biocompatibility issues.”

## Key stats

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34

Applications

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7500

Combined views

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2

Candidates hired

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Dr. Fridman was responsible for hiring for both of these positions himself. Because the roles were so specialized, he had found it hard to find applicants.

“I tried contacting my colleagues at other universities, calling the departments of neuroscience and biomedical engineering at a dozen major universities asking them to put up flyers advertising my job, and sending them out to graduate students. They did that, but it was not successful,” said Dr. Fridman. “I’ve also been to three major conferences where I advertised, and again I didn’t receive any significant response.”

With these options exhausted, Fridman was looking for new avenues to explore, and decided to try ResearchGate.

## Attracting candidates with dynamic job descriptions

He posted both positions on the platform, and provided thorough job descriptions and qualification requirements for each. “I found ResearchGate easy to use. I went back a few times to edit the job descriptions to make sure I was attracting the right applicants,” said Dr. Fridman.

ResearchGate’s targeting team advertised the jobs to relevant potential candidates among ResearchGate’s membership of scientists and researchers. Relevant members received email digests advertising the postdoc positions, and it was also advertised to pertinent members on the platform itself.

## Recruiting successfully across disciplines

The job pages had a combined 7500 views, and attracted 34 applicants: 14 for the neurophysiology position and 20 for the engineering position.

Dr. Fridman is in the process of filling both postdoc positions with candidates he found through ResearchGate. “An applicant for the neurophysiology position has accepted an offer and will be coming out next month. I've made an offer to a candidate for the engineering role, and I also have a back-up candidate for this role.”

Due to the difficulty Dr. Fridman had with hiring for postdoc roles and the success he found with ResearchGate, he would recommend the platform to others looking to hire for scientific roles.

“I haven't had any other reasonable applications from anywhere outside ResearchGate. I had difficulty finding good applicants, and I have high expectations of those I've hired — I would absolutely recommend ResearchGate.”



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**Dr. Gene Fridman**  
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