

Hiring a Research Assistant

Please follow the instructions below to hire a casual, hourly research assistant. This would include, for example, a student working full-time in the summer and part-time during the academic year. If you intend to hire a research assistant to work consistently more than 24 hours per week for an extended period of time, please contact your grants administrator or the NBER Human Resources Office, hr@nber.org, to discuss the hiring process.

It is **ESSENTIAL** that the completed packet be returned to the NBER **BEFORE** the Research Assistant begins work.

Please make sure the student is eligible to work in the U.S.. By law, an I-9 form must be completed within 3 days of an individual's employment date. As the student's supervisor, you must complete and sign section 2 of the [I-9 form](#).

If you do not know your NBER account number (grant number), please contact your grant or program administrator.

Hiring Foreign Students

In general, the NBER is able to hire foreign students on F-1 or J-1 visas as hourly research assistants. The first step to hiring a foreign student should be a discussion between the student and his/her home institution's International Students Office. Each visa has its own set of regulations we must follow, but as the visa sponsor the home institution may impose their own more strict interpretation of the rules. The NBER can advise you on the different categories of employment (OPT, off-campus employment, etc.) but it is the student's responsibility to maintain his/her status and communication with the ISO is critical.

Additional information will be required to complete the I-9 form for students on F-1 or J-1 visas. Please contact [Mui Cheung](#) before completing the form.

Most students on F-1 or J-1 visas are considered "non-resident aliens" by the Internal Revenue Service. [Instructions on how non-resident aliens need to complete a W-4](#) are included in the new hire packet. If the student wants more information, please direct him/her to IRS publication 519, "U.S. Tax Guide for Aliens," on the [IRS web site](#). You may also download a PDF version of that publication here: [Download IRS Publication](#)

[Download the entire New Hire Packet here.](#)

Completing the New Hire Packet

Required Forms

1. [Personnel Action Form](#) – Please have the new employee fill out this form completely, including the signature section. As the supervisor, please complete the "Employment Information" and "Grant Allocation" sections including, but not limited to, the date of hire, rate of pay, and NBER Project Number. The Project Director must sign the Authorization Section on the backside of the form.
2. [Employment Eligibility \(I-9\) Form](#) – Research Assistants must complete and sign the top portion of the form and produce appropriate and valid pieces of identification. **Please photocopy these ID's and send copies to our office with the I-9 form.** The project investigator should inspect the original ID's and complete and sign Sec. 2 of the form.
3. [W-4 Form](#) – Please have the employee fill the form out completely. The total number of allowances should be written in line #5.

4. [State Income Tax Form](#) – Please download the appropriate form below and have the employee fill the form out completely. Please note there is no state income tax in Alaska, Florida, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Texas, Tennessee, Washington, or Wyoming. There are no withholding forms for Pennsylvania, they withhold at a flat rate.

[Alabama](#)

[Arizona](#)

[Arkansas](#)

[California](#)

[Colorado*](#)

[Connecticut](#)

[Delaware](#)

[District of Columbia](#)

[Georgia](#)

[Hawaii*](#)

[Idaho*](#)

[Illinois](#)

[Indiana](#)

[Iowa](#)

[Kansas](#)

[Kentucky](#)

[Louisiana](#)

[Maine](#)

[Maryland](#)

[Massachusetts](#)

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[Mississippi*](#)

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[Nebraska*](#)

[New Jersey](#)

[New Mexico*](#)

[New York](#)

[North Carolina](#)

[North Dakota*](#)

[Ohio](#)

[Oklahoma](#)

[Oregon*](#)

[Rhode Island*](#)

[South Carolina*](#)

[Utah*](#)

[Vermont*](#)

[Virginia](#)

[West Virginia](#)

[Wisconsin](#)

Please note that Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah, and Vermont utilize the W-4 form for state income tax purposes. Please complete a second W-4 form and mark it “For State Purposes” at the top.

5. [Direct Deposit Form](#) – Please complete the form for the appropriate type of bank account.

6. [Consent to Receive Electronic Communications](#) – Please review the statement describing the NBER Electronic Delivery of Health, Pension, and Welfare Plan Information and indicate your preference on the Personnel Action Form.

7. [Certification Form or Work Authorization Letter](#) – The Certification Form must be filled out for non-US Citizens who are in the country on an F-1 visa. J-1 Visitors must provide a letter from their responsible officer that authorizes them to work as a Research Assistant. **Please make a photocopy of the student’s I-94 and I-20 form (for F-1 Students) or I-94 and IAP-66 (for J-1 Visitors) and send the copies to our office with either the certification form or the letter. All J-1 and F-1 visa holders also need to send a photocopy of the visa in their passport.**

8. [NSF Mandatory Training in the Responsible Conduct of Research \(RCR\)](#) – Students and postdoctoral researchers supported on NSF awards must complete the training as part of their new hire paperwork. **They will not be paid until they complete the training.** Please indicate the date the student completed the training course on the Personnel Action Form. While this training is mandatory only for those supported by NSF awards, we encourage you to implement this training broadly to cover all students and post-docs.

9. [Time Report Form and Instructions](#) – The employee should write his/her name and project allocation number on the form and make copies for future payrolls. Each time the report must be complete and signed by both the employee and the supervisor in order for the employee to be paid. Please write in each day worked and include

starting and ending times as well as the total number of hours worked. Please read the attached instructions related to time sheet completion and limitations to hours worked. A schedule of payroll dates is below. Time sheets can be mailed to the payroll office or faxed to (617) 349-3955.

Optional

10. [Tax-Deferred Annuity Plan \(403\(b\) Plan\)](#) – Hourly employees are eligible to participate in the NBER’s 403(b) Plan. Please complete the attached salary reduction form. Additional information about the Plan is included [here](#).

Additional Information

[Current Year Pay Schedule](#)

[NBER Drug Free Workplace Policy](#)

[Health Insurance Marketplace Exchanges](#) – The federal health insurance reform law (Affordable Health Care Act or ACA) created new options for individuals and families to purchase health insurance from a federal or state-run insurance exchange, also known as the Health Insurance Marketplace. The law requires that we provide the attached notice which explains the Marketplace in more detail. Additional information about the Health Insurance Marketplace, which becomes available on October 1, 2013, can be found at HealthCare.gov.