

## **LIGO Laboratory Staffing Guideline for Post-doctoral Scholars, Term Staff and Contactors**

### **Introduction:**

This document sets forth guidelines for LIGO Laboratory related to hiring, reappointment and staff planning for the positions of post-doctoral scholar, term staff and for contract employees. Definitions of the postdoctoral scholar and term staff positions can be found in (references here).

### **General guidelines**

These guidelines do not replace applicable policies at Caltech or MIT.

Staffing plans for LIGO Laboratory should avoid excess numbers of permanent staff so that the flexibility inherent in the term staff position can be maintained to allow the Laboratory to respond to changing conditions and opportunities.

### **Guidelines related to post-doctoral scholars**

Post-doctoral scholars are primarily educational positions and so should be limited in duration to no more than 6 years including previous post-doctoral positions occupied before joining LIGO Laboratory.

For Caltech appointment:

1. Appointment as a post-doctoral scholar is for 1 year renewable up to 3 years.
2. A succeeding appointment can be made to the position of Senior Post-Doctoral Scholar for a period of up to an additional 3 years, following review by the LIGO Laboratory staff committee and upon approval by the LIGO Laboratory Executive Director.
3. Initial appointment to the position of Senior Post-doctoral scholar can be made if the candidate has had a previous postdoctoral appointment at another institution.
4. Appointment to postdoctoral positions with LIGO Laboratory should normally be limited to a total of 6 years including previous time in a post-doctoral position at another institution. Exceptions require the approval of the LIGO Executive Director.

For MIT appointments:

1. Appointment as a post-doctoral scholar is for one year, renewable up to 3 years, or in exceptional cases, for 4 years
2. Appointments of longer duration must be as a Research Scientist. Formally, Research Scientist appointments are for an indefinite period, but by custom and with agreement of the employee initial such appointments are always for 3-years and in effect serve as a 'senior postdoctoral position'.
3. Initial appointment to the position of Research Scientist position can be made if the candidate has had a previous postdoctoral appointment at another institution.

## **Guidelines related to term staff positions**

Term employees give the Laboratory flexibility in responding to changing conditions. Term staff may be extended for multiple terms if there is a clear and significant benefit to the Laboratory. Extension of term employees for indefinite periods should not substitute for good staffing planning.

1. Term staff appointments can be made for up to 3 years. Such appointments may be renewed following review by the LIGO Laboratory staff committee and upon approval by the LIGO Laboratory Executive Director. Extensions beyond the first appointment do not imply any commitment or intention on the part of LIGO laboratory to eventually reclassify the employee to a permanent position. Refer also to paragraph #4.
2. Reclassification from a term staff position to a permanent staff position should not be the expectation for term staff employees. Reclassification from term staff to permanent staff is possible in cases where the capabilities of the employee and the needs of LIGO Laboratory indicate that such a reclassification is in the best interests of LIGO Laboratory. Reclassification requires review by the LIGO Laboratory staff committee and approval by the LIGO Laboratory Executive Director.
3. All term staff appointments are contingent on available funding and continued need for the position. Should funding for LIGO Laboratory not be sufficient to provide support for the position, or if priorities in the lab shift, term staff can be terminated with a notice period that is governed by relevant Caltech or MIT policy.
4. If it is in the best interests of LIGO laboratory to employ someone in a term staff position for an extended period, the employee should be given explicit information about its potential impact on his/her career and the possibility (likelihood) of being terminated at the conclusion of an upcoming term appointment. The employee should be made to understand that being in a term position for an extended period does not imply any expectation that a permanent position will be made available in the future.

## **Guidelines related to contract workers**

The purpose of contract workers is to augment the LIGO Laboratory staff with the labor required to either:

- Perform limited duration projects or efforts (even multi-year projects such as Advanced LIGO R&D and construction);
- Provide expertise or skills which, though valuable, are not considered core or central to the LIGO mission such as administrative support functions; or
- Allow LIGO Laboratory access to key expertise or knowledge when unavailable through other arrangements, in rare instances, and only with the approval of the LIGO Laboratory Executive Director.

Contract workers provide the LIGO Laboratory with the flexibility to adapt to unforeseen changes in labor needs and to access the marketplace for skills needed for the Laboratory

to fulfill its mission and obligations. Laboratory personnel will always provide oversight to the work of contractors.

1. A contract worker is always considered an "at will" arrangement, though a good faith, non-binding estimate of the term is to be provided to the contractor and their employer. The contractual term (also non-binding) is not to exceed 1 year at a time, but is renewable for a period determined by the needs of LIGO Laboratory following a review of the appropriate Laboratory needs by the LIGO Laboratory staff committee and with the approval of the LIGO Laboratory Executive Director. Extensions, regardless of the integrated duration, do not imply any commitment or intention on the part of the LIGO Laboratory of permanent employment. Such implications should never be made by any employee of LIGO Laboratory.
2. When possible, contracting arrangements are to be concluded through a contract employment agency/company, not directly with an individual, or sole proprietorship. This contract employment agency/company should have clients other than LIGO and should provide a benefits package to their employees.
3. When seeking a contract worker, a job description, approved by the LIGO Laboratory staffing committee, should be provided to all qualified companies that have existing contractual arrangements with LIGO. Additional companies can be solicited for candidates as well if there is a compelling reason and with the approval of the LIGO Laboratory Executive Director.
4. Candidate interviewing and selection is to be performed by the responsible LIGO Laboratory manager/supervisor and any Laboratory employees that the manager deems advisable.