Letter must be on faculty letterhead

DATE

EMAIL ADDRESS

Dear NAME,

I am delighted to offer you a full-time appointment as a Postdoctoral Fellow in the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences from DATE through DATE with the possibility of renewal depending on continued funding and satisfactory performance. As a Postdoctoral Fellow, you will be under my direct supervision and will be expected to adhere to all Harvard University rules and requirements. This appointment is conditional on funding and institutional review.

I look forward to working with you on [TOPIC(S) OF RESEARCH. ADDITIONAL DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES.] *Consider including some or all of the following and adapt to your group’s use:* In addition to your research, we expect you to participate in international conferences and publish conference and journal papers, to propose new directions and projects and assist in preparing research proposals, and to supervise and interact with graduate and undergraduate students. You may also have opportunities to assist with courses and to prep grant proposals.

Ahead of your one-year renewal date, I look forward to discussing your achievements and progress during the first year and to setting objectives for the following year. If it is determined that your performance is not satisfactory, the appointment may be terminated or not renewed before the appointment end date.

[ADDITIONAL RELEVANT INFORMATION FOR THE POSITION, SUCH AS OFFICE/DESK SPACE, RESEARCH ALLOWANCE, TRAVEL ALLOWANCE, INSTITUTE OR CENTER AFFILIATIONS AND RESOURCES, ETC.]

Your [SPECIFY ONE: full-time/part-time] position will be funded from your fellowship from [FUNDER NAME]. You will receive an annual stipend of $[AMOUNT] paid through [Harvard University/FUNDER NAME]. You will be eligible for Harvard University’s subsidized comprehensive medical, dental, vision, and other benefits. Most of the benefit plans require a contribution from participants for coverage. More information on benefits and benefits costs is available on the FAS Office of Postdoctoral Affairs website: <https://postdoc.fas.harvard.edu/harvard-benefits-eligible-postdocs?admin_panel=1>.

Postdocs who are paid with a stipend should be aware of potential tax implications and requirements associated with receipt of the stipend.  Generally, taxes are not withheld from stipend payments for postdocs. In addition, University contributions to a postdoc’s benefits may be considered taxable income for the postdoc (i.e., imputed income), and such postdocs must generally report these contributions as earnings when filing taxes. Because taxes are not withheld, postdocs may wish to reserve a portion of their stipend for the purpose of paying taxes on their income.

For further information please review the [Fellowship Payment FAQs](https://nratax.oc.finance.harvard.edu/files/nra/files/fellowship_handout.pdf) and the University’s [Policy on Fellowship Payments and Reimbursements for Students and Non-employee Postdocs/Fellows](https://policies.fad.harvard.edu/fellowships-vs-reimbursements). Additional information regarding tax reporting of fellowship income for non-employee research fellows can be found on this [Fellowship Reporting Handout](https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/faculty-affairs/wp-content/uploads/sites/40/2012/11/Fellowship-Reporting-Handout.pdf) and on the University’s [Nonresident Alien Tax Compliance](https://nratax.oc.finance.harvard.edu/) web page. Please note that Harvard is not providing you with any tax guidance or advice, and this information should not be considered tax, financial, or legal advice. Tax considerations are often unique to each individual, and you are encouraged to consult with your own tax professional to determine how to report and treat your stipend payment.

Full-time Postdoctoral Fellows are generally entitled to 20 days of vacation per year. This time may not roll over from year to year, and there can be no payout of unused vacation time when an appointment ends. Please discuss your vacation and holiday plans with me in advance.

If you received or will receive your doctoral degree within one year of your appointment start date, please note that the FAS Office for Faculty Affairs must receive official confirmation that you have completed all requirements for your doctoral degree prior to your appointment start date.

INTERNATIONAL: All appointments are contingent upon approval of an appropriate visa as required by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS).  The Harvard International Office (HIO) helps individuals secure visas and other appropriate documentation allowing them to enter the United States and pursue their activities at Harvard.  If you need such assistance, and as federal regulations permit, HIO will assist you in the process of obtaining temporary visa status. The United States government, however, remains the final arbiter of all immigration-related cases. Furthermore, we note that as a result of the COVID-19 virus pandemic, the United States Department of State visa services at all United States embassies and consulates may be delayed or otherwise impacted. It is ultimately the responsibility of the individual appointee to ensure they obtain an appropriate entry visa and any other required authorization prior to arrival at Harvard for their appointed term.  In the event that you are unable to obtain a visa and any other required authorization within that time for any reason, Harvard shall have no obligation to pay the stipend specified for the appointment.

The health of our workforce is a priority for Harvard University. With that in mind, we strongly encourage all employees to be up-to-date on CDC-recommended vaccines.

Prior to the start date of your appointment, you will also need to sign an electronic version of the [Harvard University Participation Agreement](https://seas.harvard.edu/office-faculty-affairs/research-appointments/forms-appointees) which is designed to help carry out the Harvard University Intellectual Property Policy and other research policies. Please review and electronically sign the Participation Agreement upon your arrival to campus.

For information on other FAS and University policies pertaining to your appointment, please see the [FAS Appointment and Promotion Handbook](http://academic-appointments.fas.harvard.edu/).

The Office for Postdoctoral Affairs website is an excellent source of information for incoming Postdoctoral Fellows: <https://postdoc.fas.harvard.edu/>.

Information about Harvard’s many cultural and intellectual resources can be found at <http://news.harvard.edu/gazette/harvard-events>.

I am enthusiastic about having you join my group. If you have any questions about your appointment, please contact Gina Scribner (scribner@seas.harvard.edu) OR Nora McDonald (nora@seas.harvard.edu) OR Karen Galvez (karengalvez@seas.harvard.edu) in the Harvard SEAS Office for Faculty Affairs.

Sincerely yours,

signature

Faculty Member

Title

cc: Academic Appointments Manager