

The **University of Toronto Postdoctoral Association** is a professional organization recently formed by postdoctoral fellows at the University of Toronto and all affiliated research institutes in 2007.

The aim of the UTPDA is to help postdoctoral fellows with all aspects of **career development, mentorship, and training opportunities.**

We hope to improve the postdoctoral experience at U of T through **targeted advocacy** on issues of importance to postdoctoral fellows, in conjunction with the creation of **support networks and social events** to bring postdocs together to discuss common concerns, and also to help incoming and established postdoctoral fellows meet and share their experiences, suggestions, and questions.

The next U of Toronto Postdoctoral Association **Town Hall Meeting** will take place on **Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009** starting at **3pm**. It will be held in the **Earth Sciences Centre, Room 1050**.

During this Town Hall Meeting, we will be holding **elections for next year's officers and council representatives**. If you wish to take part in next year's council, or if you wish to nominate another postdoc for a council role or officer position, please indicate so by sending an e-mail to [torontopdaelection@gmail.com](mailto:torontopdaelection@gmail.com) on or before **March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2009**. More information on the roles and responsibilities can be found in the UTPDA constitution, available on <http://torontopostdoc.googlepages.com/>

We hope to also have a guest speaker to present on career development for postdoctoral fellows at this meeting. Refreshments (coffee and timbits) will also be available. We hope to see you there!

If you have general questions about the postdoctoral association, or if you have specific suggestions for how the PDA can better serve the needs of the general postdoctoral population, please let us know through our website or via [torontopda@gmail.com](mailto:torontopda@gmail.com)

Together, we can help to improve the postdoctoral experience at U of T.

Are you a postdoc?

Are you interested in meeting other postdocs outside of your lab / department?

Would you like to take an active role in your professional skills development?

If so, consider joining the University of Toronto Postdoctoral Association

**UTPDA**

<http://torontopostdoc.googlepages.com>

The University of Toronto Postdoctoral Association Council is set up to function as a representative organization, with representation roughly proportional to the population of postdocs across the various departments and research institutions on- and off-campus. We are composed of a number of subcommittees that function as working groups to research and develop particular issues of importance to postdocs. Our subcommittees currently cover the following areas:

Health / Benefits, PDA Constitution, Postdoctoral Career Development / Career Fair, Social / Networking, and Taxation.

As we are a volunteer organization, the number of issues and the progress we can make is directly proportional to the number of active members working in a particular area. Volunteering for the Postdoctoral Association allows you to develop your professional skills and the crucial “soft skills” you will need in the future, whether that future involves running a laboratory as a PI, or working in the industrial, government, or non-profit sector. We strongly encourage you to get involved, and volunteer your time – any form or level of involvement will be appreciated, and will go towards improving the postdoctoral experience for all current and future postdoctoral fellows at the University.

Some key events of importance to postdoctoral fellows in 2008-09, both led by our association and independent of it:

- The UTPDA conducted the first comprehensive survey of the postdoctoral population since 2000, to get a sense of postdoctoral concerns and help guide us in our advocacy efforts. Results will be presented at the February Town Hall.
- The Department of Immunology, and the Ontario Cancer Institute began postdoctoral seminar series.
- The establishment of health benefits package, and a postdoctoral training program for all on-campus postdoctoral fellows at the University (led by the School of Graduate Studies, see <http://tinyurl.com/c2f4vs> for more information).
  - o The UTPDA is working to provide input and suggest revisions to these programs as we learn more about them.
- The UTPDA Taxation committee provided a petition in lieu of T2202 form on our website for those postdocs wishing to argue their case to the Canadian Revenue Agency.
- In addition, the UTPDA lobbied the University administration to change their policies and implement the provision of T2202 forms to postdoctoral fellows.
  - o While this has not been successful to date, due to uncertainty regarding the Revenue Agency, the UTPDA has worked with the Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars ( <http://tinyurl.com/canadapostdoc/> ) to send a letter to the Canadian Revenue Agency and Ministry of Finance outlining the role of a postdoctoral fellow, the reasons why this tax exemption should apply to postdocs, and the importance of postdocs to research.
- The Career Development committee initiated plans for a postdoctoral career fair, and will continue with planning efforts through 2009.
- A number of Social Events and Town Hall Meetings have occurred since our inception, and we plan to continue these.