

NIST RMO Engagement Opportunity – Guest Researcher Projects (2023 – 2024)

The International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO) supports engagement between NIST and the Regional Metrology Organizations (RMOs) [SIM](#), [APMP](#), and [AFRIMETS](#). This program provides stipends to defray living expenses for Guest Researchers from National Metrology Institutes (NMIs) and Designated Institutes (DIs) who are Members of SIM, APMP or AFRIMETS. The program is designed to foster new collaborations across all measurement areas, and the collaborative research projects are expected to yield mutually beneficial outcomes for NIST and the partnering NMI.



SIM

[Sistema Interamericano de Metrologia](#)



AFRIMETS

[Intra-Africa Metrology System](#)



APMP

[Asia Pacific Metrology Programme](#)

Foreign Guest Researchers hosted by NIST must be proficient in English. In most cases, a Guest Researcher coming to NIST possess some graduate level academic experience and a minimum of 3 – 5 years of professional experience in metrology.

Visiting researchers must be employees of an NMI or DI that is a member of either SIM (Sistema Interamericano de Metrologia), APMP (Asia Pacific Metrology Programme), or AFRIMETS (Intra-Africa Metrology System).

Applications must receive concurrence from a hosting NIST laboratory to be accepted and considered for funding. Metrologists from eligible NMIs and DIs are encouraged to visit the NIST website (www.nist.gov) and contact potential research partners working in areas of mutual interest at NIST about possible collaborations. IAAO is unable to place researchers in hosting NIST groups.

Application process and deadline:

- Complete applications must be received by IAAO no later than Tuesday, 31 October 2023.
- An application review process will occur over 4 – 6 weeks following the application deadline.
- Applications must be submitted by email to andrew.conn@nist.gov; please include the phrase “RMO Engagement Opportunity” in the subject line.

NIST RMO Engagement Opportunity (SIM, APMP, AFRIMETS)

Applicants are required to submit a CV with their completed application.

Please submit your completed application to Andrew Conn (andrew.conn@nist.gov)

Name of NIST host (include DIV/Group info)

Name of Guest Researcher

Metrology area

Guest Researcher's NMI/DI

Affiliated RMO

Project title or research topic area (one to two sentences)

Project Dates (anticipated start and end date; no more than 12 months)

IAAO will set the amount of funds to be provided based on the guest researcher's length of stay (i.e. monthly stipend). IAAO does not provide financial support to cover expenses associated with travel.

Project Description (describe the project and the measurement topic to be examined)

Project goals/objectives (what will the project aim to accomplish; please elaborate on specific standards to be used or developed)

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If approved, is this project likely to continue beyond the period supported by this program? If yes, please elaborate on how the project/collaboration might continue into the future.

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Signatures and Approvals (all applications must bear the signature of the NIST group leader or division chief and management from the sponsoring NMI/DI)

Guest Researcher*	
NIST Host	
NIST Group Leader or Division Chief	
NMI/DI Director or Head of Metrology	

*It is expected that the visiting Guest Researcher will maintain their employment status with their sponsoring NMI/DI for the duration of their stay at NIST. Should the Guest Researcher's relationship with their home organization end during the project, NIST reserves the right to terminate the Guest Researcher's associate agreement and retain funds committed to the activity.

Frequently Asked Questions

- 1. I'm not sure if my English is sufficient to participate in the program. How might I determine if I can participate in the program?**
 - a. Researchers are always encouraged to meet virtually with their potential NIST host before submitting a project application. This meeting can serve multiple purposes, including an assessment of the Guest Researchers English. If there are concerns that the Guest Researcher's English may not be sufficient, language tests, such as IELTS and TOEFL, should be used to assess the applicant's language proficiency. IELTS score must be 5.5 or higher; TOEFL computer-based score of 183 or higher.
- 2. I am new to my NMI/DI and need training in a specific measurement method – may I use this program to access training at NIST?**
 - a. No, the RMO Engagement Opportunity is not a training-based program. Ideally, candidates will have existing experience in the metrology area they wish to collaborate on with NIST staff. The International and Academic Affairs Office (IAAO), in cooperation with NIST laboratory staff, organize subject specific trainings throughout the year that focus on training. IAAO makes separate announcements through the Regional Metrology Organizations like SIM, APMP, and AFRIMETS when such training opportunities are available.
- 3. I would like to participate in the program but do not know where to start – how should I go about developing a project plan?**
 - a. Before applicants begin working to develop an application, they should visit the NIST website (www.nist.gov) to determine if their research interests align with NIST's current measurement research programs. If you locate groups working in areas you would like to pursue, you are encouraged to contact them directly by email and ask if they might be interested in working with you to develop a proposal.
- 4. How will living arrangements be managed? Will NIST assist with housing, transportation, and other accommodations?**
 - a. Guest Researchers will be responsible for managing living arrangements during their stay at NIST. Incoming Guest Researchers may wish to connect with other NIST Guest Researchers through the NIST Guest Researcher Association (GRA) for advice and suggestions on finding housing, transportation options to NIST facilities, and other considerations.
 - b. *Please note that the NIST Guest Researcher Association is not an official NIST organization.*
- 5. How will monthly stipends be managed? How much will I receive each month?**
 - a. Guest Researcher supported through this program will receive a monthly stipend to defray living expenses associated with their stay in the United States. The amount to be provided will be specified in your acceptance letter. Payments will be made electronically to a bank account you will be asked to establish here in the United States.
- 6. What type of visa will I need? How will travel be managed?**
 - a. All Guest Researcher supported through this program must acquire and enter the United States on a J1 exchange visitor visa. Paperwork will be collected and approved by NIST before a package is sent containing your DS2019 form, which is required to apply for your J1 visa.
 - b. Guest researchers, or their sponsoring NMI/DI, are responsible for covering travel to and from the United States.
- 7. If accepted, I plan to bring my family with me to the United States – is this allowed?**
 - a. Yes, Guest Researchers wishing to bring their family members to the United States will include additional information in the paperwork provided by NIST to acquire J2 visas for their spouse/dependents.
- 8. How many applications does IAAO receive annually? What is the likelihood my application will be accepted?**
 - a. IAAO expects to receive 40 – 50 applications. IAAO endeavors to equitably assign funding across NIST groups and support a diversity of NMI/DI partners.

**NIST RMO Engagement Opportunity (SIM, APMP, AFRIMETS)
Final Report (2023-2024)**

Please complete this report one-week before the Guest Researchers date of departure; please email final report to Andrew Conn (andrew.conn@nist.gov)

Name of NIST Host & Group

Name of Guest Researcher

Guest Researcher's NMI/DI

Metrology Area or Project Title

Project Dates (start and end dates)

Did the project develop as planned? How did it change or differ from the original plan?

What were the primary accomplishments or project milestones achieved during the collaboration?

How will the project's accomplishments feed into services, standards, or other work being done at NIST and the partnering NMI/DI?

NIST Host signature

Guest Researcher signature

*We encourage researchers and their hosts to share photos and supporting documentation that showcase the project's achievements and important milestones.