

Featured Participants

Case Western Reserve University
case.edu

CERN
cern.ch

Harvard School of Engineering and Applied Science
seas.harvard.edu

Hebrew University of Jerusalem
huji.ac.il/huji/eng

Oberlin College
oberlin.edu

University of New Brunswick
unb.ca

University of North Carolina
unc.edu

University of South Florida
usf.edu

University of Sydney
sydney.edu.au

University of Wisconsin-Madison
wisc.edu

Additional Resources

Australian-American Health Policy Fellowship- www.commonwealthfund.org/Fellowships/Australian-American-Health-Policy-Fellowships.aspx

Fulbright Program
www.cies.org/Fulbright

Guggenheim Foundation
www.gf.org

Marie Curie Actions
ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/index_en.htm

National Institutes of Health
grants.nih.gov

National Science Foundation
www.nsf.gov

Nels Highberg sabbatical blog
chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/author/nhighberg

Sabbatical Homes
sabbaticalhomes.com

Can't Do It? Let Them Come To You

If you simply can't get away, consider hosting a sabbatical professor. Manish Patankar, Whelan's host at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, didn't take a sabbatical when he earned tenure a few years ago, but says his research program benefited when a sabbatical came to him in the form of Whelan's visit. "She brought in skills and techniques we didn't have in the lab," he says. Whelan's analytical chemistry background unexpectedly came in handy when she performed gas chromatography analysis on anticancer compounds the Patankar lab is exploring. Says Patankar, "You never know where things will go."

The positive effects of a visiting scientist can ripple beyond your research group. **Lyndal Trevena**, an associate professor at the Sydney school of public health, University of Sydney, hosted Pignone on his sabbatical leave from UNC, and says his work had national impact. Pignone and his Sydney colleagues did a cost-effectiveness study on colorectal cancer screening in Australia. Trevena says that being on sabbatical, without teaching and administrative duties, meant Pignone could focus intensely on the project, including traveling to the capital of Canberra to talk to people in the government. Being an outside expert also gave extra weight to his perspective. All this raised the profile of their work, says Trevena. "The study has really been influential for advancing a program for colorectal cancer screening in Australia," she says.

One of the study coauthors was Professor **Kirsten Howard**. Before Pignone arrived in her department, she knew of his work, but had never met him. Howard and Pignone quickly discovered common interests in shared decision-making—studying how patients and physicians can cooperatively make informed health care decisions. They now make up a forceful collaborative team, with Pignone contributing clinical expertise and Howard developing the health economics methods for two projects funded by grants they applied for while Pignone was in Australia. Howard's department supported her own sabbatical the next year to UNC. To encourage the type of informal interactions that can develop into new scientific partnerships, Howard suggests integrating visiting scientists as much as possible into the department. She says, "Attending seminars, research presentations, and student talks creates chance encounters and conversations that can lead to spin-off collaborations and new research directions."

Trevena recommends hosting a sabbatical professor whose work fits well with your research program. Then, make the most of every minute. The visit goes by quickly, she says, so squeeze as much time as possible with your visitor into your already busy schedule. She says, "You'll see that you can really do some meaty, productive work in that time and cement a collaboration."

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of your collaborator's research and mentoring achievements, so Feldman says, "work with someone who is well respected in the field."

Expect the Unexpected

From the other side of their sabbatical, professors say that although some people accomplish everything they propose—developing methods, publishing manuscripts, and writing books—many find that their plan simply isn't feasible. Be flexible and be ready to change the project if necessary, or even better, if something more interesting comes along. University of New Brunswick's Robert Austin says, "It's exceeding unlikely that your sabbatical project will proceed exactly as planned, but be open-minded and you'll see opportunities for collaborations and other sources of value that you didn't see going into your sabbatical."

Even Whelan, whose project went as planned, had unexpected scientific benefits from working at a new institution. After a colleague mentioned the university's high throughput sequencing equipment, she used the facilities to enhance her research by characterizing the most successful DNA molecules from her screen. Some professors advise building flexibility into a research plan from the start. Propose a practical project that you know you can accomplish, to ensure that you get something done, but also work on something risky—that's the point of a sabbatical.

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—Kirsten Howard