

CGS Workshop on Postdocs

Washington, DC ♦ December 7, 2016

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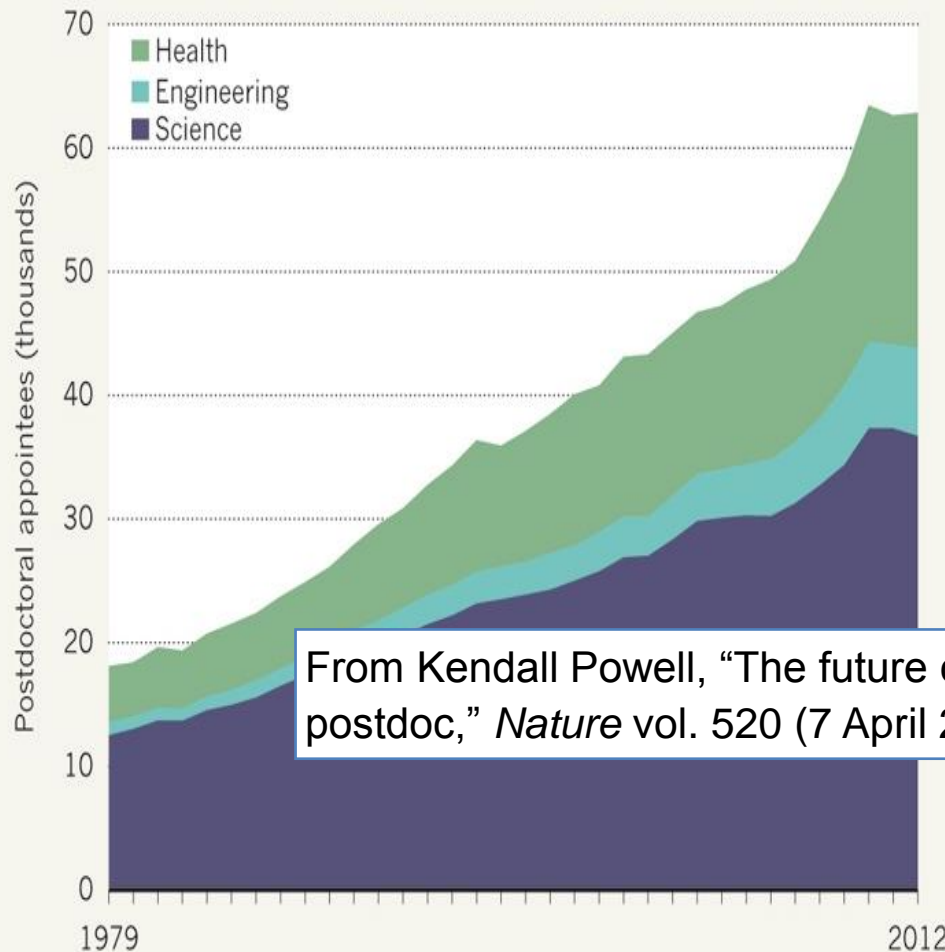
Agenda for today's workshop

- 9:00 – 9:30 Introductions and objectives
- 9:30 – 10:00 Contending with employment issues
- 10:00 – 10:30 Providing support and services
- a) Establishing a postdoc office
 - b) Working with other campus units
- 10:30 – 11:00 Building community and increasing visibility
- a) Planning activities for
 National Postdoc Appreciation Week
 - b) Hosting a Postdoc Slam
- 11:00 – 11:30 Collecting data and tracking outcomes

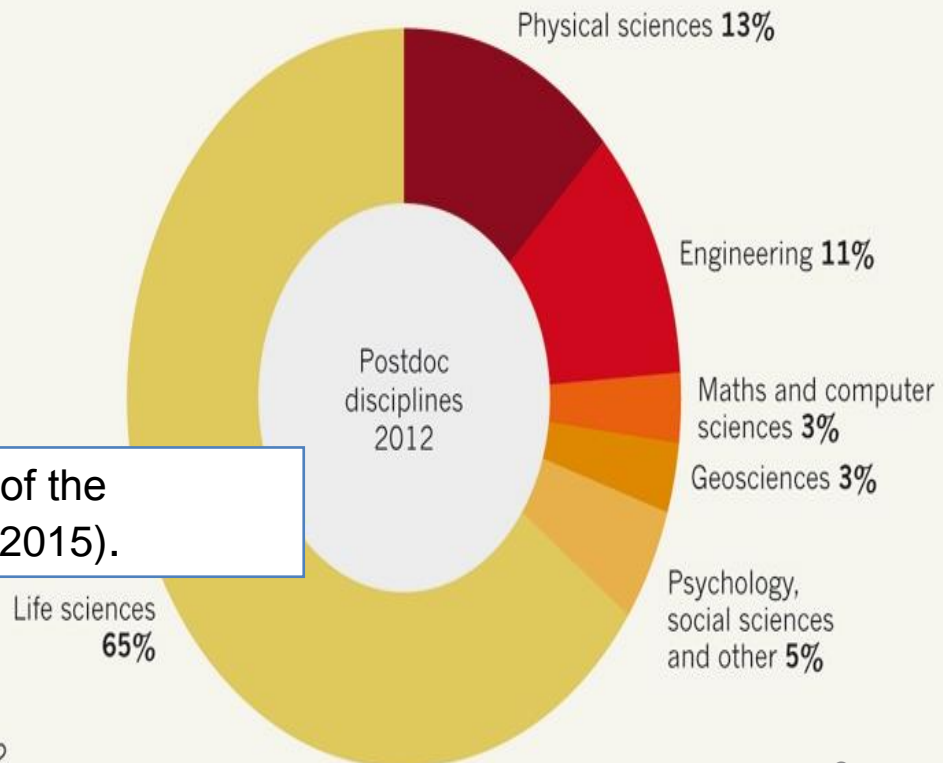
Number and type of postdocs in the US

THE POSTDOC PILE-UP

The number of researchers in US postdoctoral positions has more than tripled since 1979. The vast majority of postdocs are in the life sciences. Across fields, median salaries for postdocs are outstripped by those for non-postdoc positions, when measured up to 5 years after receiving a PhD.

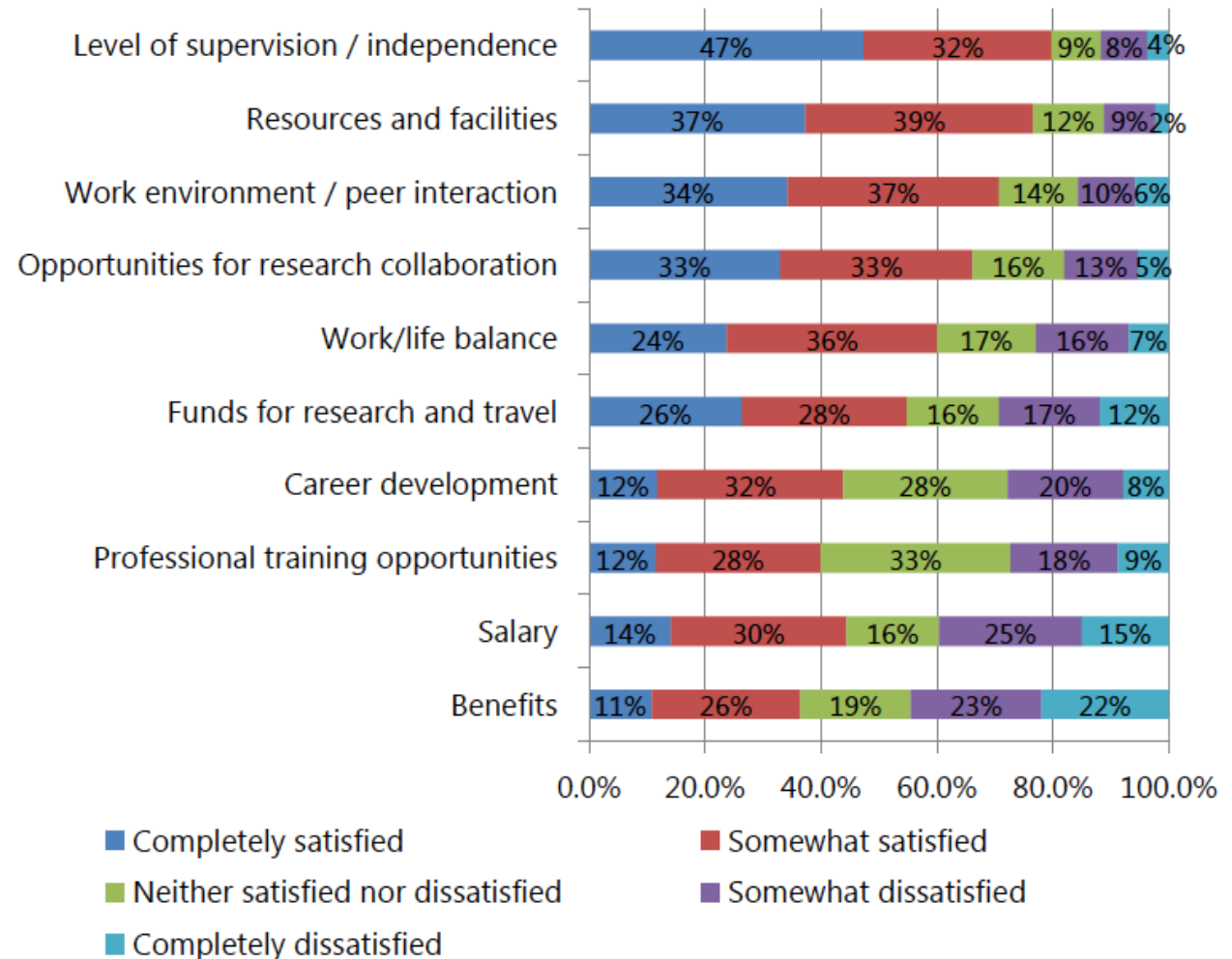


From Kendall Powell, "The future of the postdoc," *Nature* vol. 520 (7 April 2015).



Source: National Academies

Satisfaction with elements of postdoctoral experience: The 2016 Canadian Postdoc Survey



The Postdoc Condition

- Postdocs pose an ontological problem for administrators.
- Postdocs pose an existential problem for themselves.

1) Contending with employment issues

Goal: Understand and advocate for appropriate terms of postdoctoral appointments.

1. What types and terms of appointments are available to postdocs: PI funds, training grants, departmental funds, individual external awards, others?
2. Salaries and appointments: affected by collective agreements, university, grant, and other policies?
3. Benefits: Health insurance, retirement, leave policies (parental, family medical, medical, bereavement), child care, vacation days and sick days
4. International postdocs: visa and other concerns
5. Additional duties: e.g., teaching
6. Additional opportunities: e.g., professional development

2) Providing support and services

Goals: Identify what services should postdocs have, how they should be provided, and by whom. Develop potential strategies for creating a postdoc office and/or for optimizing such an office. Develop strategies for collaborations across campus.

1. What services ought to be made available for postdocs?
2. Which should a designated Postdoc Office provide and which should other campus units provide?
3. Can some services be provided from faculty-oriented units or student-oriented units?
4. What kinds of collaboration might be possible between units offering services?

2a) How to start a postdoc office

1. Hire good staff

- a. Research and craft job description
- b. Lines of authority and responsibility (to research office? graduate studies?)

2. Collect data

- a. How many postdocs on campus? Where? Working with whom?
- b. Local best practices: Consult with supervisors & administrators
- c. External best practices: NPA (National Postdoctoral Association) and CAPA (Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Administrators)
- d. What are the pressure points for postdocs, supervisors and administrators at your institution?

3. Communicate

- a. Communicate new services to researchers, administrators & central service providers.
 - i. How will the new office support and connect with other research service providers on campus and serve as community liaison?
 - ii. Where will authority lie for decision-making, signatures, etc.?
- b. Website design for central information hub
- c. Promote postdoc success stories at university and externally

2b) Partnering with other campus units

1. Collaborate with other service providers to integrate postdocs
 - a. **IT
 - b. Libraries
 - c. International office (e.g., visas, immigration questions)
 - d. Payroll and HR
 - e. Pensions and benefits office
 - f. Faculty/union relations office
 - g. Research centers and institutes
 - h. Research office (e.g., internal funding possibilities, conference travel funds, etc.)
 - i. Professional Development
 - e.g. York's Graduate & Postdoc Professional Skills program - GPPS
 - Teaching Commons
 - j. Food services
 - k. Parking and transportation
 - l. Physical education facilities and wellness resources
 - m. Accommodations for persons with disabilities

2b) Partnering with other campus units

2. Connections are facilitated through formal registration systems.
 - a. Employee number, equivalent of student number, etc.
 - b. **IT
3. Educate relevant offices on importance of postdocs research for the research culture at institution
 - Importance of postdoc profile
 - E.g., York considering renaming from “Faculty of Graduate Studies” to “Faculty of Graduate & Postdoctoral Studies”
4. Continuing postdoc development
 - a. Identify external funding opportunities
 - b. Review and feedback on postdoc applications
 - c. Connections to national networks, listservs and professional groups

2c) Policy

Three types of infrastructure needed for postdocs:

1. Policy (university or unit-level)
2. Physical (specific to research)
3. Financial (payroll, research accounting, etc.)

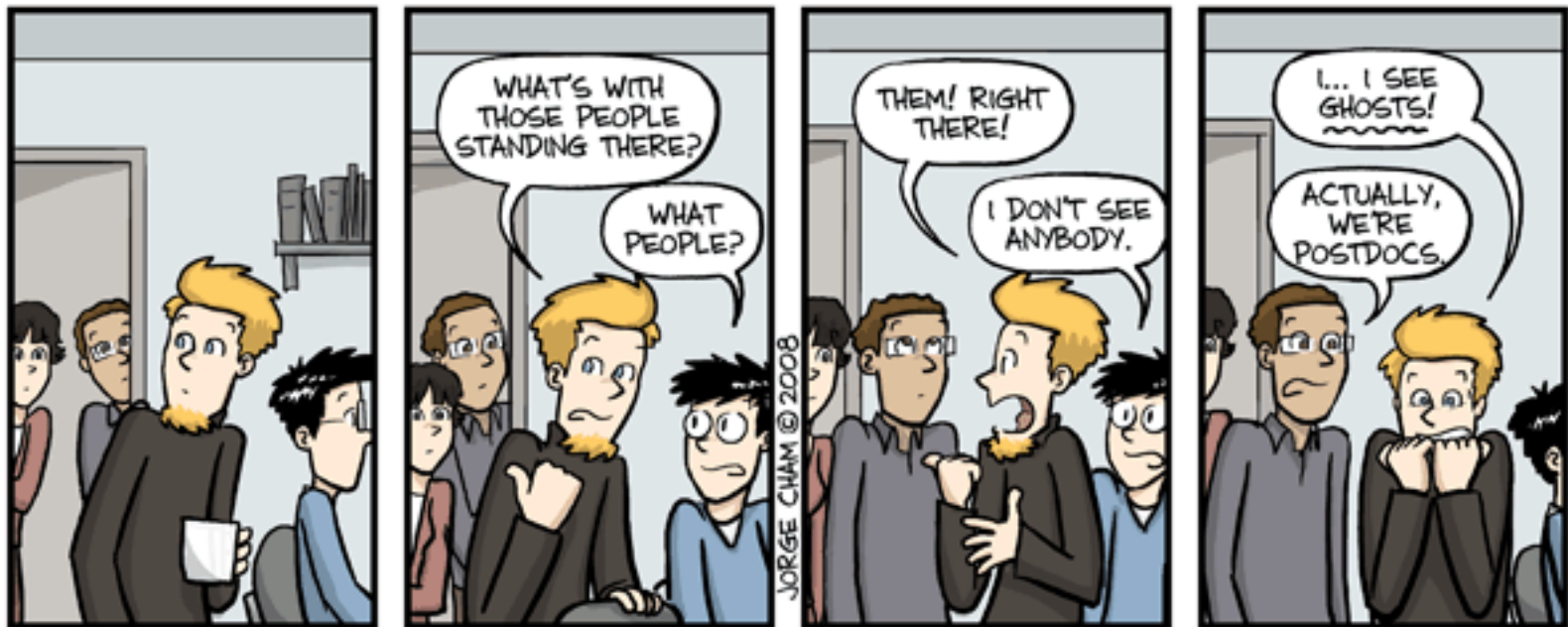
Policy

- In Canada most universities have postdoc policy
 - Ensure postdocs are meaningful research and training opportunities
 - 13/31 at Senate level
- Most policies include
 - Definitions
 - Supervisor roles
 - Intellectual property
 - Recruitment
 - Conflict resolution
 - Termination

3) Building community and increasing visibility

- The #1 problem reported by postdocs is loneliness and disconnectedness from the rest of the campus.

Goals: Improve morale, foster social relations, and garner attention for postdocs' contributions and to generate further support.



WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM

3a) National Postdoc Appreciation Week

- Social Media Campaign: #UCSFPostdocsRock and #NPAW2016.
- Free access to fitness centers
- Ice cream socials
- Morning coffee and bagels for on-campus housing residents
- Afternoon cake and coffee at satellite sites
- Workshop on “Developing Your Elevator Pitch” with career center staff
- “Play date” for postdoc parents and their kids
- Faculty- and lab-sponsored events (taking postdocs to lunch, bringing in pizza, etc.)
- Postdoc Slam!

Grad Slam

the closest thing UCSF
has to a football game!



*PhD students have only three minutes
to talk their way into winning a \$3,000 top prize.
It's fun. It's educational. It's "TED" on steroids.*

March 10 | 4 p.m.

Genentech Hall, Byers Auditorium

free admission | reception | trivia contest | come early!

Poster promoting live
Grad Slam event in 2016

UCSF Office for
Postdoctoral Scholars

Postdoc Slam Live!



Poster promoting live
Postdoc Slam event
in 2016

postdocs present their research in
< 3 minutes to win a \$3K top prize

Sept 22 • 4 p.m.

Byers Auditorium – Mission Bay

free admission | reception | trivia contest



University of California
San Francisco

*You've heard
of Grad Slam...*

**Now there's
Postdoc
Slam!**



Mission Bay

May 9

12 - 1 p.m.

Byers Auditorium

Parnassus

May 10

12 - 1 p.m.

HSW 301

Attend an info session.

Come to a town hall-style Q&A session hosted by Vice Chancellor of Student Academic Affairs Elizabeth Watkins, with representatives from Campus Housing and Student Financial Aid.

Light lunch provided while supplies last.
Bring your own beverage.

Information about the Supplement also available at finaid.ucsf.edu/cols. Deadline to apply: July 1

Flyer promoting
Postdoc Slam info
sessions and deadline to
declare intent to enter
2016 contest

3b) Hosting a Postdoc Slam

Considerations:

- How are finalists selected (preliminary round via video uploads)?
- Who should serve as judges (for prelims and finals)?
- What are the criteria for judging?
- What are the prizes (and how many will there be)?
- How about a “people’s choice award”?
- Will you offer coaching sessions to finalists?
- How will the live final event be publicized?
- What is your budget?

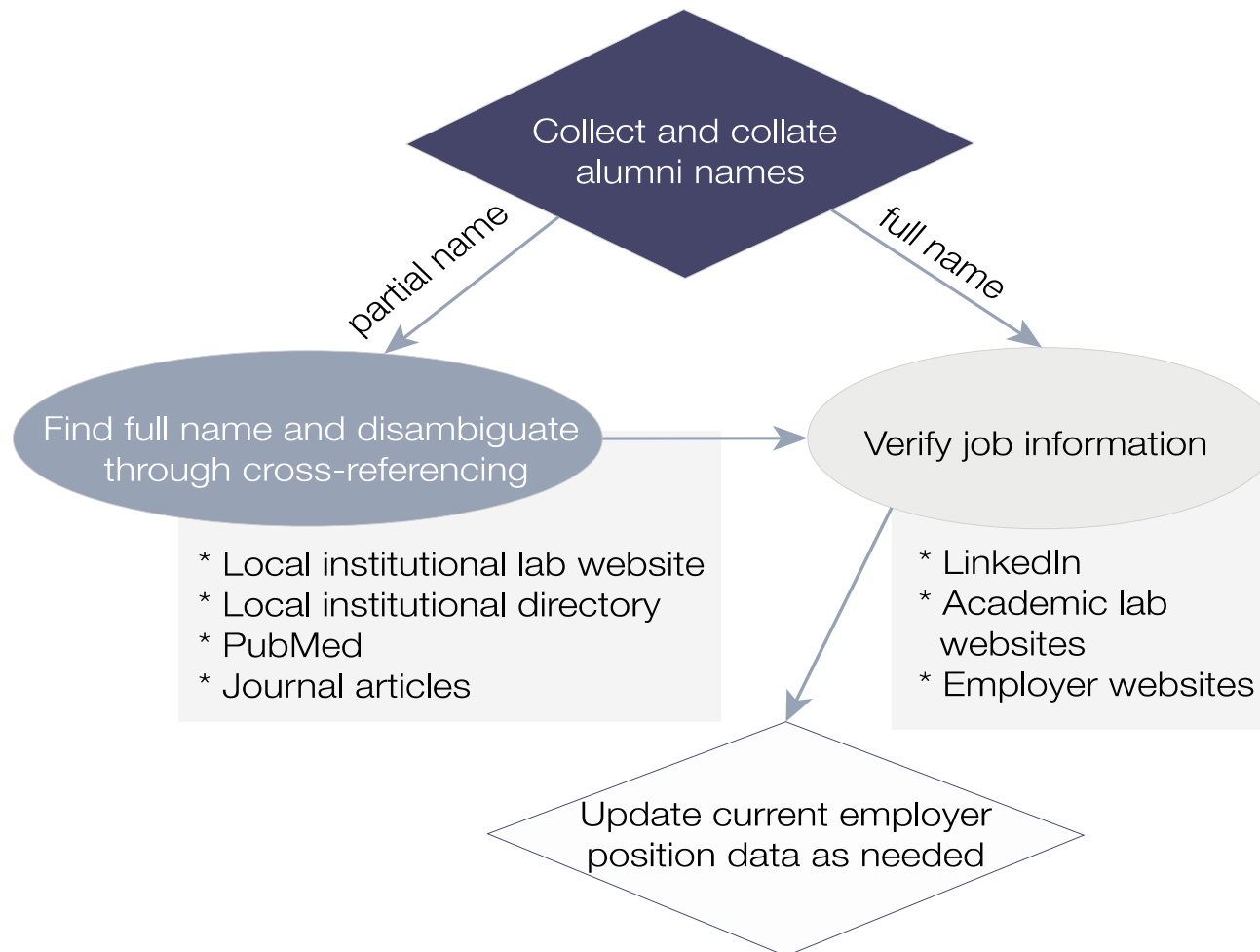
4) Collecting data and tracking outcomes

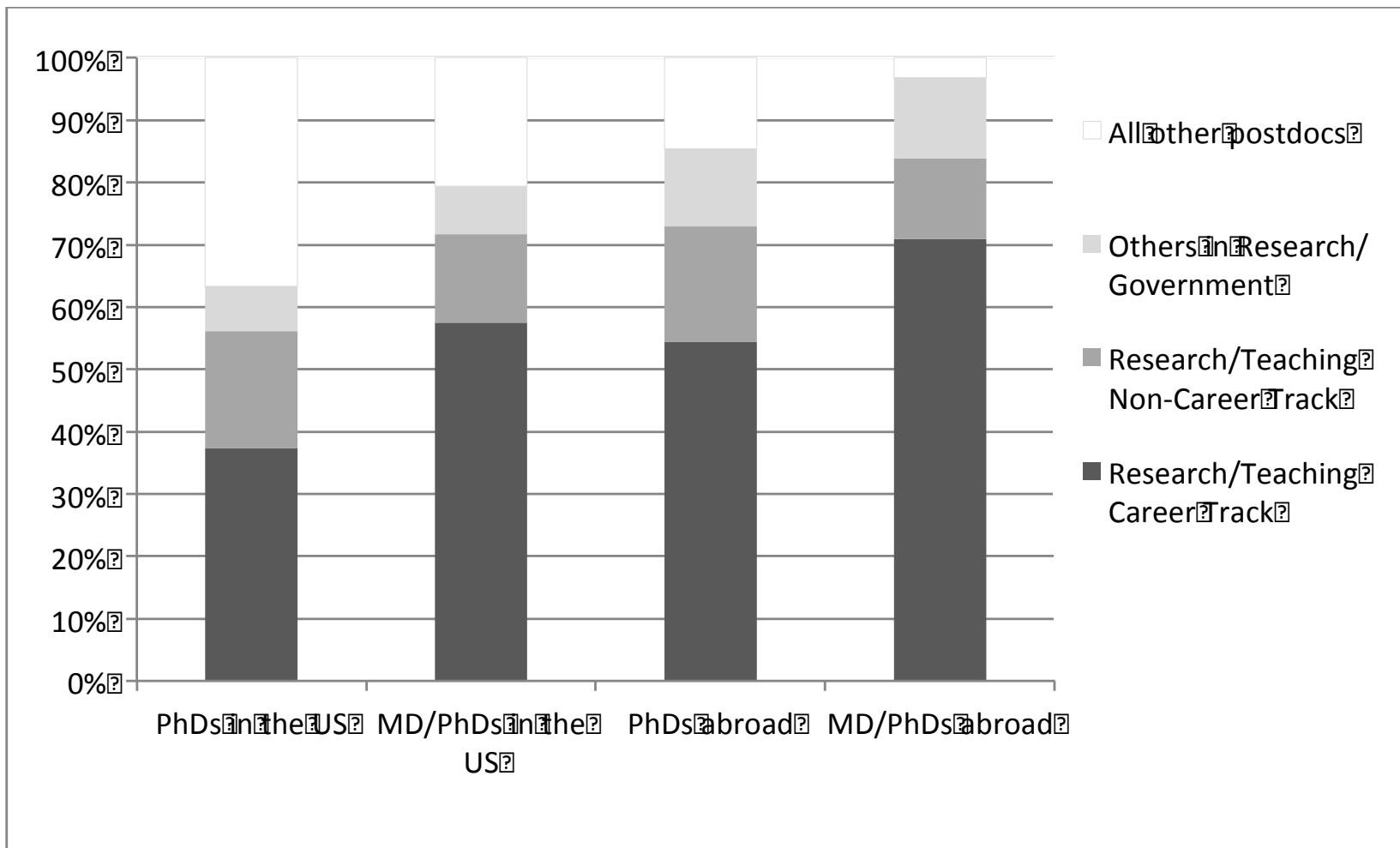
Goal: Design components of retrospective and prospective postdoc career outcomes studies that can be initiated at your institution

Considerations:

1. Defining your objectives: who is the audience for this study?
2. Identifying postdocs to include in the study
3. Choosing a method: respondent survey or independent ascertainment
4. Choosing a data management system
5. Developing categories of employment (sector, job description)
6. Collaborating with campus partners (departments, PIs, alumni relations, career services)
7. Distributing the workload
8. Disseminating the results

Workflow for finding and verifying employment status for postdoc alumni





Silva EA, Des Jarlais C, Lindstaedt B, Rotman E, Watkins ES (2016) Tracking Career Outcomes for Postdoctoral Scholars: A Call to Action. *PLoS Biol* 14(5): e1002458. doi:10.1371/journal.pbio.1002458
<http://journals.plos.org/plosbiology/article?id=info:doi/10.1371/journal.pbio.1002458>