



WASP LAB EXCHANGE PROGRAM

Are you a researcher working on paper wasps such as *Polistes*, yellowjackets, or related insects (Vespidae)? Are you thinking about working on paper wasps in the future? Would you like to learn new techniques to elevate your future research in this area? Come join the Wasp Squad!

With support from the US National Science Foundation EDGE (Enabling Discovery through GENomic Tools) Program, the research groups of Amy Toth (Iowa State University) and Michael Sheehan (Cornell University) are organizing a new program that offers funding for lab exchanges. Funding will be given to researchers for exchanges to visit other laboratories to learn techniques related to functional genetics, lab rearing, measurements of behavior, and physiology of paper wasps. The purpose of these lab exchanges is to foster growth, collaboration, and communication within the paper wasp research community, advancing the development of this taxon as a model organism in integrative organismal biology. Up to \$3500 is available per awardee (must be US-based due to funding regulations).

Possible topics for exchanges include, but are not limited to the following:

- Lab rearing methods
- Field collection and rearing methods
- Methods for behavioral observation
- Methods for microdissection
- In situ hybridization
- Neuroanatomy
- RNA-interference
- CRISPR/Cas9
- RNA-sequencing
- Population and functional genomic sequencing (DNA, RNA, ATACseq, ChIPseq, etc.)

Interested parties may apply to work in any lab performing these techniques, not strictly those of the supporting labs. The host lab does not have to work on wasps, but at least one partner (visitor or visit host) should be currently involved in wasp research.

Interested parties should provide 1) a cover page with full contact information of the applicant and host lab and the proposed institution at which the exchange will occur, 2) a two page (single spaced, 12 font) project description including proposed activities, justification for length of time/location of the proposed visit, what is to be gained from the experience, and a dissemination plan (how results will be publicized and made available to the research community), 3) a budget with justification of costs to be incurred (may include travel, lodging, lab or field supplies, sequencing or service facility costs), 4) a letter of support from the principal investigator of the proposed lab to be visited. We encourage applicants to consider practicality (travel costs and living expenses, etc.) in considering which lab to visit. Because these are US federal funds, these exchanges can only be provided to researchers based at US labs or institutions (international travel to *visit* institutions outside of the US is allowed).

Interested parties at any career stage (student, postdoc, faculty, or staff) will be considered, with priority given to early career scientists. We will endeavor to provide funds to as many interested parties as possible; please note that if not funded, a second year of exchanges will be offered in 2021 and interested parties may reapply.

Questions about the process, or help finding a matching lab for your interests can be sent to amytoth@iastate.edu. Please submit applications Amy Toth by email with subject "Wasp Lab Exchange Program" by March 20, 2020 at amytoth@iastate.edu. Applications will be reviewed and decisions made by late March, with funding for exchanges be awarded as early as May 2020.