

Title: Research Specialist or Senior Research Specialist (Stream focus)

Description: Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute is seeking to hire a motivated full-time Research Specialist or Senior Research Specialist working on The Jefferson Project at Chautauqua Lake. The Jefferson Project is a multi-disciplinary collaboration between RPI, IBM, the Lake George Association, and the Chautauqua Institution that brings a sophisticated technological approach to studying freshwater and lakes in particular. A central goal of the Project is to understand the impact of human activity on freshwater and how to mitigate those effects. This position will be based out of Fredonia, New York, supervised by Dr. Allison Hrycik, with field work on Chautauqua Lake and its surrounding tributaries and in collaboration with colleagues at Rensselaer, SUNY Fredonia, and elsewhere. An initial main focus of research will be nutrient loading via streams. Occasional trips to the Darrin Freshwater Institute in Bolton Landing, New York and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute in Troy, New York will be expected. In addition, new hires will be expected to travel to The Darrin Freshwater Institute for up to a month of training at the start of the position. This position will provide multi-disciplinary support to multiple aspects of the project, including conducting sampling surveys, maintaining a network of sensors on and around Chautauqua Lake, assisting with research activities and laboratory work, and potentially traveling to other lakes and field sites in the region.

Duties:

- Conduct field surveys using standard limnological and hydrological field equipment, primarily on tributaries to Chautauqua Lake
- Assist with laboratory analyses of water samples, including water quality samples
- Calibrate, deploy, and maintain environmental sensors
- Maintain accurate records and conform to data management standards
- Contribute to data quality assurance and checking as part of overall data management and publication efforts
- Assist with research activities such as data analysis and manuscript preparation

Education: Bachelor's degree in ecology, biology, environmental science, natural resources, or a related discipline is required. A Master's degree is preferred.

Experience/skills desired:

- Experience conducting field work in streams
- Basic laboratory experience is required; familiarity with water chemistry and/or stream gauging is preferred
- Experience deploying, using, and calibrating environmental sensors (e.g., water quality sondes, weather stations, auto samplers, etc.)
- Well-organized and detail-oriented
- Knowledge of boat safety as well as some operating/trailing experience is a plus
- Experience with data analysis, visualization, and common statistical approaches
- Programming experience preferred, but not required
- A willingness to troubleshoot and own complex problems in the field and in the lab
- Ability to work outdoors in challenging conditions
- Occasional travel to other lakes as well as meetings and conferences

- Some experience with small electronics/basic wiring and knowledge of basic electrical engineering principles
- Must be able to lift 40 lbs

To Apply: Apply at <https://careers.rpi.edu/en-us/job/494464/energy-environment-and-smart-systems-researchers-202425>. Please indicate in your cover letter if you are interested in the stream focus or lake focus position. Review of applications will begin on 15 February 2025 and will continue until the position is filled.

Questions: Please email Jordanne Schwitzgebel at feldmj3@rpi.edu with questions. Please see <https://dfwi.rpi.edu/> for more information on the Darrin Freshwater Institute.

Anticipated salary: Applicants to this position may be considered for either a Research Specialist title or Senior Research Specialist title depending on skills, qualifications, and education. The salary range for a Research Specialist is \$37,500 to \$55,000 and the salary range for a Senior Research Specialist is \$60,500 to \$65,000. Rensselaer also offers a generous benefits package with excellent healthcare, retirement, paid time off, and other benefits.