Field Application Scientist

PhD Career Insights

Field Application Scientists are the interface between sophisticated scientific tools and bench scientists. They travel the world, demonstrating new technology for labs, providing customer support and troubleshooting equipment problems. This job combines working on scientific problems with teaching and customer service. Many PhDs use this career as a stepping stone to product management, sales, and marketing careers in science.

Interested in the work but not in the constant travel? Look for “Application Scientist” jobs, which have more focus on customer service and less focus on demonstrations. Application scientists can also work in the lab adapting products to customer needs.

What would I do?

- Demonstrate scientific software and equipment
- Travel to labs around the world
- Understand the client’s needs and assess whether your product will help
- Answer client questions
- Troubleshoot equipment and software issues
- Break down technical information into step-by-step instructions
- Stay current on new innovations in software and equipment
- Train internal sales staff
- Edit training manuals
- Provide support to the regional Sales Manager
- Collaborate with R&D and provide recommendations on how products can be improved
- Inform product management of new technologies that could complement the existing product portfolio based on customer needs

Where could I work?

- Biotech firms

Example Job Titles

- Application Scientist
- Technical Support Scientist
- Field Support Scientist
- Field Application Scientist

Johns Hopkins Medical Institute Professional Development and Career Office
http://pdco.med.jhmi.edu/
Make an appointment to develop a career strategy and optimize your job search tools
What skills should I have?

- Excellent communication
- Troubleshooting
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills
- Ability to sell an idea
- Customer service experience
- Sensitivity to different cultures
- Comfort with extensive travel
- Ability to quickly learn about science outside your area of expertise
- Thorough knowledge of the technology you are selling
- Ability to handle criticism politely

What is the salary range?

~60-80K – Field Application Scientist
70-110K – Senior Field Application Scientist

Where can I find out more about Field Application Scientist careers?

- The Applications Scientist Career Track – Science Careers
- Application Scientist – A Science PhD’s Alternate Career Option – LinkedIn
- What to do with your PhD : Application Scientist
- In the Spotlight: Jessica Parra, PhD – Stanford
- NIH Alumni – Where are they now? Field Application Scientist

How can I gain skills and experience for a career as a Field Application Scientist?

- Train undergraduates in your lab on specific products and techniques
- Gain teaching experience
- Become an expert in a technology, equipment, software or reagent and adapt the product to varied user needs. You should believe in the product.
- Publish techniques papers
- Talk to field application scientists when they visit your lab

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Make an appointment to develop a career strategy and optimize your job search tools
• Prepare an excellent resume and cover letter
• Consider gaining customer service experience through volunteer work
• Practice writing down basic, step-by-step instructions when you create a protocol
• Read the manuals of software and equipment in your lab, and write summaries of them for your lab members
• If you are interested in working with a specific type of equipment or software, incorporate it in your current experiments

**Professional Societies and LinkedIn Groups**

These tend to be divided by technical areas. For example:

- **International Clinical Cytometry Society**
- **High-Throughput Flow Cytometry**
- **Oligonucleotide Therapeutics Society**
- **Noncoding RNA Discussion Group**
- **Microscopy Society of America**
- **Microscopy**