

## Searching for academic jobs in math: a brief overview of the process

In the U.S., most applications (but not all) for academic jobs in mathematics go through the AMS-sponsored site (<https://www.mathjobs.org/jobs>). Job ads for the next cycle usually start to appear in July or August, but some will not appear until later. Application deadlines in the U.S. are typically in the range of October through December. Some departments will invite candidates for interviews soon after the application deadline (e.g. interviews during the fall semester); some departments will invite candidates to interview in January (that is usually the case at Duke, for example) or later. Many departments (especially at smaller schools) will hold interviews at the Joint Mathematics Meetings each January, because this allows them to interview many candidates relatively inexpensively. In any case, try to keep your fall/winter schedule open and flexible – you may get a call, asking you to visit and interview as soon as possible. There are always exceptions to these trends. In particular, some jobs may be posted in the spring for various reasons. So, it is good to check the postings regularly so that you do not miss a late-appearing opportunity that would interest you. The typical timeline may vary if you are looking for jobs closely-related to another field, such as computer science or statistics. The timeline may also differ for positions outside the U.S. In all cases, early application is advised. The search committee may be reading and sorting applications as they come in so that they can come to consensus quickly after the deadline.

### **Application materials**

It is likely that you will need to submit the following documents with each application. The expectations for each these will vary, depending on the position and the institution.

- CV.
- Research statement. The length will vary, depending on the type of position and the institution. 5-6 pages (plus references) is typical for tenure track applications. The quality and clarity of the exposition is more important than the length.
- Teaching statement. Approximately 1-2 pages, depending on the type of position and institution.
- Teaching data, list of courses taught, comments and scores gathered from TCEs, etc.
- Electronic copies of your published papers or preprints.
- Cover letter. Very brief, one page. Many of these may be generic, but consider writing a tailored cover letter for the places you are most interested in – this is an place to explain why you are particularly interested in that opportunity.
- AMS cover sheet. This is a standard form, but not always required.
- Letters of recommendation. You will need 3 or more. The letter-writers submit them independently (e.g. through mathjobs), but you need to ask the letter-writers well in advance.

- Other statements? Some applications may require some other special statements or materials, so check the requirements carefully.

## Suggested timeline of things to do

This timeline is based on the typical academic job cycle in the U.S. market. For jobs outside the U.S. the timing may be different. In any case, the key point is to start working on your applications early.

### Summer

- Talk with your mentor/advisor about your intentions and goals, about what type of job you want to apply for. Your mentor will have advice about how you should go about looking for jobs and might know of upcoming opportunities that would be especially good for you. Also, your mentor can help you identify potential letter-writers.
- Prepare your documents. **Start early** so that you have enough time to get feedback and revise them before you submit.
- Ask for reference letters. The timing of this may vary, depending on your relationship with the person you ask. The person you ask may want you to make a presentation of your research, or may ask to observe your classroom teaching. When asking for letters, it is helpful to provide some of your application materials (e.g. CV, research/teaching statements) – another reason to start early on these documents. It is wise to discuss with your mentor whom you should ask, before you do the asking.

### August/September

- Get feedback about your application materials, especially the research statement, teaching statement and CV. Ask your postdoc mentor, your graduate advisor, other colleagues or friends to read them and give you feedback.
- If you haven't done so already, ask for reference letters. Give the letter-writers plenty of time before the deadline,  $\geq 4$  weeks.
- Create an account at [mathjobs.org](http://mathjobs.org) and other job sites.
- Monitor the adds that have been posted. Keep a list of deadlines for jobs you want to apply for. Set up an organization system (e.g. spreadsheet) to keep track of the process.
- Work on cover letters.
- Post any preprints to arxiv, refer to them with links in your documents. Preprints on arxiv will seem more official and complete than documents posted only your personal website.
- Gather teaching data/evaluations which might go into your teaching statement/portfolio.

- Job talk: it is not too early to start working on a “job talk” which you may be asked to give on an interview trip. Start preparing and practicing this well in advance.

### September/October

- Upload your files to mathjobs
- Submit your application on time – submitting early (e.g. 2 weeks before deadline) is better!
- If you have a personal website, make sure that it is up-to-date and looks professional (i.e. pictures of your cat and a list of your favorite local beers may not communicate the message you want potential employers to perceive).
- Consider participating in the AMS joint meetings, where many schools will conduct interviews: <https://www.ams.org/meetings/national/national-index>

### Other resources

Google can help you find lots of other resources and advice online. In particular, you should explore the AMS resources:

<https://www.ams.org/profession/career-info/career-index>

Also, here are some sites which have jobs posted:

Mathjobs <https://www.mathjobs.org/jobs>

Academic Jobs Online <https://academicjobsonline.org>

Chronicle of Higher Education <https://chroniclevitae.com>

SIAM jobs board <https://siam.org/Careers/Job-Board>