



Science of Benefits

# UNDERSTANDING THE CALTECH RETIREMENT PLANS

## Caltech Base Retirement Plan

Employees Hired or Rehired on or after January 1, 2022				
Who is eligible?	When can I participate?	Institute contributions	Participant contributions	When am I vested?
All Benefit-Based Employees <sup>1</sup>	First of the month coincident with or next following date of hire or change to an eligible employment category	<p><b>Less Than 10 Completed Years of Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5% of eligible compensation<sup>2</sup> up to Social Security Wage Base (SSWB) (\$176,100 for 2025), then 10% of eligible compensation<sup>2</sup> over SSWB, not to exceed IRS compensation limit (\$350,000 for 2025)</li> </ul> <p><b>10 or More Completed Years of Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11% of eligible compensation<sup>2</sup> up to SSWB, then 16.5% of eligible compensation<sup>2</sup> over SSWB, not to exceed IRS compensation limit</li> </ul>	No Employee Mandatory contributions	<p><b>Completed Years of Vesting Service<sup>3</sup></b></p> <p>&lt;1 Year = 0%            1 Year = 33%            2 Years = 66%            3 Years = 100%</p>

Employees Hired or Rehired Prior to January 1, 2022			
Who is eligible?	Institute contributions	Participant contributions	When am I vested?
Faculty <sup>4</sup> Key Staff Employees <sup>5</sup>	<p><b>Under Age 55</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>8.3% of base salary up to SSWB, plus 14% of base salary over SSWB, not to exceed IRS compensation limit</li> </ul> <p><b>Age 55 and Above</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12.3% of base salary up to SSWB, plus 18% of base salary over SSWB, not to exceed IRS compensation limit</li> </ul>	Employee Mandatory Contribution is 5.7% of base pay over SSWB, not to exceed IRS compensation limit	Immediately at 100%
Staff Employees Postdoctoral Scholars	<p><b>Less Than 10 Completed Years of Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5% of gross pay<sup>6</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>10 or More Completed Years of Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Under Age 50: 8% of gross pay</li> <li>Age 50 and Above: 12% of gross pay</li> </ul>	No Employee Mandatory contributions	Immediately at 100%

<sup>1</sup> See the Summary Plan Description under section “Base Plan Eligibility” for the definition of a Benefit-Based Employee.

<sup>2</sup> Eligible compensation generally is the Employee’s taxable income including lump sum payments, but excludes certain forms of pay including bonuses, foreign allowances, relocation, taxable reimbursements, imputed income, and gross-ups.

<sup>3</sup> Vesting service is calculated using the Employee’s original Institute hire date. Regardless of vesting service, an Employee is automatically 100% vested at age 65 or if death occurs while actively employed.

<sup>4</sup> Faculty includes all tenured and tenure track faculty.

<sup>5</sup> All eligible faculty and staff whose annual base salary is above the Minimum Compensation Threshold (MCL). The MCL for 2025 is \$148,500 (for JPL the hourly rate is \$71.40).

<sup>6</sup> Fellowship stipends distributed by Caltech are not considered “salary” eligible for Institute contributions.

## Caltech Voluntary Retirement Plan

Who is eligible?	When can I participate?	Institute contributions	Participant contributions	Age Catch-up, how much can I contribute?	When am I vested?
All Employees with eligible pay <sup>7</sup>	You can enroll at any time based on the payroll calendar schedule.	No Institute contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$23,500 in 2025<sup>8</sup></li> <li>• Contributions can be made on a pre-tax or Roth after-tax basis, or a combination of both</li> </ul>	Starting January 1, 2025, the catch-up limit <sup>9</sup> will be based on your age in 2025: 50-59 \$7,500 60-63 \$11,250 64 or older \$7,500	Immediately at 100%

<sup>7</sup> Fellowship stipends distributed by Caltech are not considered “salary” eligible for pre-tax and/or Roth after-tax contributions.

<sup>8</sup> For the 2025 plan year, the IRS basic contribution limit is \$23,500. This limit may be reduced for some participants because it must also factor in contributions received under the Caltech Base Plan.

<sup>9</sup> The limit reflected in the TIAA salary deferral agreement system will automatically include the appropriate age catch up amount applicable to you for 2025.

## 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan

Who is eligible?	When can I participate?	Institute contributions	Participant contributions	When am I vested?
Annual base salary as of November 1 must be at or above the compensation threshold (\$303,480 for 2025).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First of the month following hire date, or</li> <li>• January 1 after meeting the compensation threshold</li> </ul>	No Institute contributions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• \$23,500 in 2025<sup>10</sup></li> <li>• Pre-tax contributions only</li> </ul>	Immediately at 100%

<sup>10</sup> The IRS age 50 and age 60-63 catch-up provisions do not apply

Additional information about the Caltech Retirement Plans is available at <https://hr.caltech.edu/departments/total-rewards/benefits/spd>.

For detailed information regarding Institute retirement plans, or to enroll and/or make changes to your contribution amounts and investment elections, visit [TIAA.org/Caltech](https://TIAA.org/Caltech).