National Clandestine Service (NCS) field-based career opportunities:

Make a world of difference.

The CIA’s National Clandestine Service is the cutting-edge of American intelligence. It is an elite corps, providing vital information needed by U.S. policymakers, the military and law enforcement services to protect the national security interests of the American people. For the extraordinary person who wants more than just a job, the Clandestine Service offers a unique career - a way of life that challenges the deepest resources of an individual’s intelligence, self reliance and responsibility.

Clandestine Service Trainee Program (CST) - Core Collector Positions

Core Collectors, following successful completion of the 18-month Clandestine Service Trainee (CST) Program, serve on the front lines of human intelligence collection overseas for the National Clandestine Service (NCS). The CST program trains and certifies individuals to perform the full range of steps leading to the clandestine recruitment and handling of sources with access to vital foreign intelligence. Within the Core Collector profession, there are two career tracks—Operations Officer and Collection Management Officer—described below. All Core Collectors, whether designated as OO or CMO, are expected to engage in the full cycle of clandestine operations while serving in overseas assignments. Therefore, all applicants seeking entry into the Core Collector ranks of the NCS must demonstrate the skills, abilities and personality traits necessary for the safe, secure, and effective conduct of clandestine intelligence collection operations overseas.

Core Collector - Operations Officer: Operations Officers (OO’s) are focused full time on clandestinely spotting, assessing, developing, recruiting, and handling individuals with access to vital foreign intelligence on the full range of national security issues. This human intelligence plays a critical role in developing and implementing US foreign and national security policy and in protecting US interests. OO’s use sound judgment, high integrity, strong interpersonal skills, and ability to assess the character and motivations of others to establish strong human relationships and trust that provides the foundation needed to acquire high-value intelligence from foreign sources. OO’s deal with fast-moving, ambiguous, and unstructured situations by combining their “people and street smarts” with subject matter expertise and a knowledge of foreign languages, areas, and cultures. An OO’s career can include assignments in the NCS’s three key areas of activity—human intelligence collection, counterintelligence, and covert action—on issues of highest interest to US national security, such as international terrorism, weapons proliferation, international crime and narcotics trafficking, and capabilities and intentions of rogue nations. Operations Officers serve the bulk of their time in overseas assignments that range typically from 2-3 years.

Core Collector - Collection Management Officer: Core Collector-certified Collection Management Officers (CMO’s) oversee and facilitate the collection, evaluation, classification, and dissemination of foreign intelligence developed from clandestine sources. CMO’s play a critical role in ensuring that foreign intelligence collected by clandestine sources is relevant, timely, and addresses the highest foreign policy and national security needs of the nation. They
are substantive experts in their area of specialty, have a comprehensive knowledge of how National Clandestine Service operations are conducted, and an in depth understanding of overseas operating environments as well as current and looming international issues.

During overseas assignments, CMO’s work closely with the OO’s to ensure that collection operations are designed to meet intelligence priorities fully and accurately; that recruitment of and interaction with clandestine sources is as effective as possible; and that resulting intelligence reports convey relevant information clearly and accurately—while at the same time protecting collection operations as well as individual sources. In addition and as required, CMO’s--like OO’s—are engaged in the full cycle of collection operations (spotting, assessing, developing, recruiting and handling sources).

During Headquarters assignments, CMO’s interact directly with the full range of intelligence consumers—from the most senior policymakers to analysts throughout the intelligence, defense, and law enforcement communities—to identify and prioritize intelligence collection needs and to ensure they are communicated accurately to Operations Officers in the field. Typically, Core Collector/CMO’s spend approximately 50-70 percent of their career overseas.

**Requirements:** Minimum requirements for Core Collector positions include a bachelor's or master's degree and a strong academic record, with a strong interest in international affairs. Degrees of interest include, but are not limited to, international business, finance, international relations, economics, and physical science. Candidates must possess solid interpersonal and communications skills, including the ability to write clearly and accurately. Foreign travel and area knowledge, prior residency abroad, cross-cultural sensitivity, and foreign language proficiency (particularly in the critical languages of Arabic, Chinese, Dari, Indonesian, Korean, Pashto/Pashtu, Persian, Russian, Turkish and Urdu) are highly desirable.

**All applicants** must successfully complete two personal interviews, a thorough medical and psychological examination, a polygraph interview, and an extensive background investigation. US citizenship is required. To be considered suitable for Agency employment, applicants must generally not have used illegal drugs within the last twelve months. The issue of illegal drug use prior to twelve months ago is carefully evaluated during the medical and security processing.

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