



### **Career programme: Opportunities for young researchers.**

Through practical sessions, panel discussions, debates, presentations and networking events, this programme will publicise the opportunities open to young and mid-career researchers in Europe and around the world. Participating to the "Tapas with the Prof" networking event, young researchers will be able to benefit from the experience and inspiration of Europe's leading researchers in a casual atmosphere.

---

### **Session: Get Proactive! – an interactive session on taking the initiative in public communication**

**Organiser:** *Andrew Moore*, European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO), Germany

**Abstract:** Why wait till the journalist calls; why delay until public fear and media sensationalism dominate the issue or your funding is cut? Being a proactive scientist is about taking the initiative to talk to the public in person or via the popular media: from building relationships with non-scientists at public appearances to contacting newspaper editors directly. Some scientists might say: 'But I do really basic research; it's far from application and not finished yet'. A pragmatist would respond: 'If you don't tell anyone about your research, it may never be finished because of a lack of public funding'. It is unlikely that a professional science journalist will ever be uninterested in basic research: science journalists are generalists, and local media in particular appreciate being contacted with information that broadens their scientific knowledge. A large proportion of the public, including children, are interested in the life and work of scientists when engaged with the right language and enthusiasm. This requires practice/training, which is crucial when liaising with the media. This interactive session invites the audience to participate in some simple exercises, which will be reviewed alongside results from a recent EMBO survey demonstrating the benefits to scientists of proactivity.

---

### **Session: The journalists got my message wrong, again! How to minimise mistakes in media coverage**

**Organiser:** *Diane Scherzler*, Suedwestrundfunk (SWR), Germany

**Abstract:** You may fear this situation (or already know it): your preliminary results were reported in the news as a breakthrough, and the most important aspect of your research was misunderstood by the reporter. Mistakes in media coverage are detrimental to science, damage the researcher's reputation amongst peers, and can misdirect the public. Scientists often refuse to communicate with the media because of this possibility. Consequently, their expertise is unheard by the public, and whole fields of research could disappear from sight of the public. But there is a better way to handle the situation to avoid common mistakes. In this hands-on workshop, an editor and media trainer will demonstrate techniques which reduce the possibility of misleading information being reported in the media. After an introductory presentation, participants will engage in interactive exercises and role-playing that simulate interviews and interaction with different kinds of journalists. You can experience how mistakes and misunderstandings arise, and learn strategies to prevent them, including standard do's and don'ts when cooperating with journalists. Participants can join in and/or observe the exercises.

---

**Session: Rebeca's Thesis. The career of a young scientist**

**Organiser:** *López-Guerrero José Antonio*, Spanish Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (SEBBM), Spain

**Abstract:** Rebeca is a young student who has just carried out her doctoral thesis in the Center of Molecular Biology in the Autonomía University of Madrid. Her studies aimed to the elaboration of a transgenic mouse carrying the receptor to a human virus. The video proposed in this project shows the scientific, human and administrative dimensions involved in the development of a scientific career, from its first stages. After playing the video, all participants in this session are invited to hold a debate on the issue of both scientific and political features showed in the video. Genetic Modifications of animals or plants, as a scientific debate and the development of a professional scientific career in Spain are topic that will be tackled.

---

**Session: Young generations: energy to open new perspectives for science and reform universities**

**Organiser:** *Livio Riboli-Sasco*, European Association for a Greater Enthusiasm in Research (EAGER), France

**Abstract:** Lisbon agreements in 1997 stated the importance of renewing and uniting European universities to ensure a continuous progress for all European countries. All these processes are long. Those who will see this Europe united through a shared culture and a shared knowledge are those who are now young students. Students are the ones who have the energy to impulse changes, the freedom to travel and meet their peers in other European universities and exchange about the best educational practises. Our European societies face major challenges such as environmental change or globalization. We need talented youth to nurture innovation, to reinforce social cohesion and to take action. We also need to link European research to civil society demands. We believe that the next generation of scientists should be instrumental in reinforcing the link between science and society. Most students are concerned about the challenges. In association with civil society organizations, they will be able to raise major questions. They should try to solve them through highly innovative research and excellence in civil engagement. Indeed, we believe that promoting excellence in studies will also bring excellence in civil engagement.

---

**Session: Nature & Naturejobs guide to career alternatives**

**Organiser:** *Andrew Douglas*, Nature Publishing Group/The Macmillan, UK

**Abstract:** From our experience and interactions, it is unclear what opportunities are open to young scientists outside of a "normal" academic career. Editorial content published by Naturejobs provides an overview of the whole job market for scientists including career alternatives for scientists with certain skill sets as well as providing information on how people can develop their careers. Naturejobs offer a "career alternatives" session with a realtime version of the editorial content that we publish on a weekly basis. A panel of speakers will discuss career progression and experiences directly with young scientists.

---

**Session: Should I stay or should I go?**

**Organiser:** *Vanessa Diaz-Zuccarini*, Marie Curie Fellows Association (MCFA), UK

**Abstract:** Scientific careers are not limited to lab bench science in academia. Not every post-doc will become a lecturer, so where do young researchers (and researchers in general) go? Some go into industry, non-lab-based scientific careers, project management or consultancy, whereas others simply quit science. This session explores the options facing young researchers, including teaching, running sponsored programme departments, starting your own small business, lobbying, science policy, conference planning, regulatory affairs, clinical trial support, industry or management. These directions often require additional training/skills, not just scientific experience, but also soft skills such as presentation skills, empathy, teamwork, time management and budgeting. Academic science needs to support researchers and foster links with industry to open up career opportunities outside the academic environment. This could require a change of mentality away from regarding academia as separate from other scientific career options.

---

**Session: Working in science or politics - or both? Young scientists' success stories**

**Organiser:** *Dunja Potocnik*, European Council of doctoral candidates and young researchers (EURODOC), Croatia

**Abstract:** The European Commission has estimated that Europe needs between 500.000 and 700.000 new scientists in order to achieve the Lisbon goals. At the same time, more young scientists are leaving science for careers in policy/politics or decide to combine science and policy/politics. This session considers the value of this multidisciplinary approach, combining science and policy/politics, both from the point of view of individual researchers' career success, and as a societal goal of making Europe the most attractive and productive market in the world. Young scientists who combine science and policy/politics or have been changed science for policy/politics career discuss the factors which create attractive workplaces for young researchers. Questions to be discussed in this interactive session include: Do young scientists who engage in policy/politics betray principles of "pure science" and weaken the science? Do successful young scientists change science for policy/politics careers or do only unsuccessful young scientists do so? Do we need more persons in politics/policy who had been researchers themselves and better understand the needs of researchers? Could an increased engagement of researchers in policy foster knowledge transfer and help to shape more evidence based policies? Why many ex-scientists change their opinion or just abandon their ideals when it comes to be "real" politicians?

---

**Session: Concrete career perspectives in the EU for researchers**

**Organiser:** *Massimo Serpieri*, European Commission, Belgium

**Abstract:** What has been, and what could be done to improve working conditions for researchers, to recruit and retain researchers in science careers? The fragmentation at national, regional and local in the research labour markets and, consequently, of researchers' careers represents one of the main barriers to standardising the rights and obligations of research positions throughout Europe. Issues to be discussed include the need for open and transparent recruitment procedures, the inclusion of 'transferable skills' in researcher's curricula, the establishment of structured relationships between researchers and their supervisors, recognition of mobility, and how research organisations can balance the need to attract excellent human resources with institutional financial constraints.

---

**Session: European Research Area, our fifth freedom, latest developments and challenges**

**Organiser:** *José Manuel Silva Rodríguez/Montserrat Torné Escasany*, European Commission, DG Research/Ministry of Science and Education, EU/Spain

**Abstract:** to be defined

---