



PROGRAMME BOOKLET

ONLINE WEBINAR

Attractive Careers in Research: the expectations & roles of different stakeholder groups

When

Day 4 Nov 2024
4 Nov 14:00 – 17:30

Where

Online via Zoom

Register

Registration for the event:
<https://eu01web.zoom.us/j/81457137840?pwd=ZGp1aUJhZGp1XHh3GMfMTw>

About Science Europe

Science Europe is the association representing major national research funding and performing organisations across Europe. It brings together the expertise of some of the largest and most respected European research organisations to jointly push the frontiers of policies and practices that underlie how research is programmed, conceived, conducted, and communicated.

About the Webinar

The webinar aims to explore the common and different expectations for careers in research by different stakeholder groups, and the opportunities for positive action that exist based on these expectations. Existing good practice examples from within and outside of academia will be presented and used as inspiration.

The webinar will focus on opportunities for positive action to improve conditions for talented individuals within the research sector in Europe, thereby contributing to the quality of research and the evolution of research cultures. To do so, we must recognise the myriad challenges and difficulties faced in our current systems. These have been discussed and written about at length over the past decades and are summarised in the workshop challenge statement on pages 3 and 4 of this booklet.

On the basis of this webinar, Science Europe Member Organisations will discuss their specific roles and responsibilities towards careers in research. Ultimately, we aim to contribute to improving careers in research through careful and considered policy and practice changes, and the outcomes of this workshop will form the basis for recommendations for action to be taken forward by Science Europe.



Programme

Monday, 4 November 2024

14:00 – 14:05	<p>Welcome Address Lidia Borrell-Damián (Secretary General, Science Europe)</p>
14:05 – 14:15	<p>Introduction to the Workshop Concept James Morris (Senior Policy Officer, Science Europe)</p>
14:15–15:15	<p>Expectations for careers in research from the research community Anneke Kastelein (PhD Candidate, Leiden University Medical Centre) Liz Simmonds (Head of Research Culture, University of Cambridge) Dipti Pandya (Chair, European Association for Research Managers & Administrators) Q&A + discussion (facilitated by Mentimeter) – (30 mins) Moderated by Jolanta Šinkūnienė (Research Council of Lithuania)</p>
15:15–15:30	<p>Break</p>
15:30–16:30	<p>Expectations for careers in research from within and beyond academia TBC (tbc) Verity Elston (Co-Director, Graduate Campus, University of Lausanne) Adelheid Wessler (Head of the “Societal Transformations”, Volkswagen Foundation) Q&A + discussion (facilitated by Mentimeter) – (30 mins) Moderated by Anjana Buckow (German Research Foundation)</p>
16:30–17:30	<p>Expectations on careers in research from policy makers and international voices Manuel Aleixo (Head of Unit, DG RTD, European Commission) Claudia Sarrico (OECD Research & Innovation Careers Observatory, Project Lead) Stephane Berghmans (Director of R&I, European University Association) Q&A + discussion (facilitated by Mentimeter) – (30 mins) Moderated by Sean Sapcariu (Luxembourg National Research Fund)</p>
17:30	<p>Concluding Remarks James Morris (Senior Policy Officer, Science Europe)</p>

Tuesday, 5 November 2024

09:30–12:30	<p>Closed moderated discussion session for Science Europe Members Moderated by Goda Naujokaityte (EU Funding Editor, Science Business)</p>
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Challenge Statement

Science Europe's Careers in Research workshop aims to focus on opportunities for positive action to improve conditions for talented individuals within the research sector in Europe, thereby contributing to the quality of research and the evolution of research cultures.

To do so, we must recognise the myriad challenges and difficulties faced in our current systems. These have been discussed and written about at length over the past decades, and this statement aims to summarise the key issues, acting as a common reference upon which discussions on differential expectations can take place, working towards defining positive actions. A selection of key studies, reports, and policy papers is also provided that discuss and contextualise the challenges described below.

The key challenges facing careers in research

- The **precarity** of research positions, particularly at early career stages, leads to reductions in the attractiveness of academic career pathways and a **loss of talent** to other sectors. Precarity is the result of a **lack of available public funding for research**, the short-term '**projectification**' of research, and a lack of research positions that, combined, lead to an **overly competitive environment**. Competition is a necessary and important element in promoting quality and excellence, yet over-competition acts against promoting high-quality research by increasing talent loss and **reducing diversity** (both in terms of people and ideas). It is vital that actions to improve the conditions for careers in research act on precarity and over-competition without compromising on quality and excellence.
- Broad-scale, international reform of research assessment is underway, yet many of the traditional and **perverse incentives** that have shaped the way that research is conceived, conducted, and communicated remain influential in the careers of research professionals. '**Publish or perish**' remains a well-used idiom, and the focus on **individualistic** and easily quantifiable outputs in research predominate.
- All types of **mobility** within the research system should be recognised as valuable contributions, these include: geographical, virtual, intersectoral, inter-disciplinary, inter-role, and intellectual mobility. Yet, it is also important to recognize that not all roles or positions within the research profession benefit from mobility. Promotion of mobility must focus on and reward the skills and competencies gained, the research results obtained, the outcomes achieved, and coherence with the research strategy, rather than mobility for its own sake. Mobility should not be a requirement for career advancement, where it may introduce or **reinforce unwanted bias** and lead to reductions in equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- As a component of mobility, the international movement of research professionals offers specific benefits and challenges. The **brain drain** of talented individuals from certain regions of the world (or within the European Research Area) seeking more attractive conditions poses significant challenges and will require international collaboration and whole-systems thinking to overcome.



The same is true for inter-sectoral mobility, which is heavily skewed towards industry from academia currently – promoted both by more attractive conditions in the private sector and a **lack of recognition of non-academic skills** and achievements as part of standard research assessment processes.

- Career progression remains **narrowly focused** upon advancement as a function of increasing **leadership**, as is highlighted by the R1-R4 classifications (i.e. Doctoral candidate (R1), junior academic (R2), research fellow (R3), research professor (R4)). Yet, many important specialised roles in research (lab technicians, science communicators, data scientists, research managers, as examples) would be served better through recognition of increasing skill, experience, and/or competency over increasing leadership.

These are some key examples of the many challenges facing careers in research, upon which there are opportunities for positive action by research funding and performing organisations: the subject of this Science Europe workshop.

Looking forward

With the above (and more) challenges facing the sector, how can we develop positive actions as research funding and performing organizations to make careers in research more attractive and sustainable? – Our workshop will learn from existing good practices and focus on the expectations of different stakeholder groups towards careers in research. Understanding the different career expectations that exist within the research sector will help in developing actions that work towards more attractive and sustainable working environments for everyone in the research sector, contributing to positive research cultures that foster high quality research for the benefit of all. There is no perfect system, but by focussing on good practices and expectations, we can work together to improve the conditions for research in Europe and globally.

Science Europe aims to contribute to improving careers in research through careful and considered policy and practice changes, and the outcomes of this workshop will form the basis for recommendations for action to be taken forward by Science Europe Member Organisations.



A selection of key studies, reports, and policy papers.

- DORA (2012). The San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment. <https://sfdora.org/read/>.
- Science Europe (2016). Postdoctoral Funding Schemes in Europe. DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.5059938](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5059938)
- Wellcome (2020). What researchers think about the culture they work in. <https://wellcome.org/sites/default/files/what-researchers-think-about-the-culture-they-work-in.pdf>.
- Aubert Bonn & Pinxten (2021). Advancing science or advancing careers? Researchers' opinions on success indicators. PLOS One 16(2): e0243664. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0243664>.
- De Herde, Björnmalm, & Susi (2021). Game over: Empower early career researchers to improve research quality. Insights: the UKSG Journal 34, 1-6. <https://hdl.handle.net/2268/308575>.
- EUA, DORA, Sparc Europe (2021). Reimagining Academic Career Assessment: Stories of innovation and change. <https://www.eua.eu/publications/reports/reimagining-academic-career-assessment-stories-of-innovation-and-change.html>
- OECD (2021). Reducing the precarity of academic research careers", OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers. <https://doi.org/10.1787/0f8bd468-en>.
- Science Europe (2021). Statement on Research Culture – Empowering Researchers with a Thriving Research System. DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.5726893](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5726893)
- CoARA (2022). The Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment. <https://coara.eu/agreement/the-agreement-full-text/>
- LERU (2022). A Pathway towards Multidimensional Academic Careers - A LERU Framework for the Assessment of Researchers. https://www.leru.org/files/Publications/LERU_PositionPaper_Framework-for-the-Assessment-of-Researchers.pdf
- YERUN (2022). Rethinking academic careers: cultural change as key bottleneck to be addressed. <https://yerun.eu/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/YERUN-RethinkingAcademicVFinalSpreads.pdf>.
- CESAER (2023). Position 'Supporting modern and stable research careers in Europe'. <https://zenodo.org/records/8096603>
- OECD (2023). Promoting diverse career pathways for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers. OECD Science, Technology and Industry Policy Papers. <https://doi.org/10.1787/dc21227a-en>.
- European Commission (2023). Proposal for a Council recommendation on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=COM:2023:0436:FIN>.
- EUA (2024). EUA Research & Innovation Agenda 2027: Seizing the moment, driving the change. <https://www.eua.eu/publications/positions/eua-research-innovation-agenda-2027.html>
- EUA (2024). Trends 2024: European higher education institutions in times of transition. <https://www.eua.eu/publications/reports/trends-2024.html>



Speakers & Contributors



Lidia Borrell-Damián

SECRETARY GENERAL OF SCIENCE EUROPE

Lidia Borrell-Damián is Secretary General of Science Europe, the association representing national public organisations based in countries in the Council of Europe that fund and perform research. She holds overall responsibility for the organisation's strategic development and implementation.

Her areas of experience cover a wide range of Research and Innovation (R&I) policy priorities, namely EU Framework Programme; European Research Area; International Cooperation; research infrastructures; research ethics and integrity; research assessment processes; university-business co-operation; regional innovation; gender and diversity; Open Science; doctoral education; energy science policy. Concerning international research co-operation, she is engaged in diverse policy fora including: the Global Research Council (GRC), supra-national bodies (UN; OECD-GSF; CoARA; DORA), and well-established international conferences (STS; FAPM; World Science Forum).

She holds a Doctorate in Chemistry (Chemical Engineering: specialty Solar Energy) from the University of Barcelona (1995). She worked at the European University Association (EUA) during 2006–2019, serving the last five years as the Director for R&I. She was Director of Research at Universitat Pompeu Fabra, (Barcelona, Spain, 2003–2005). Formerly, she was a Visiting Scholar at the University of Western Ontario (London, Canada, 1999–2001) and at North Carolina State University (Raleigh, USA, 1997–1998). She was an Assistant Professor at the University of Barcelona from 1990–1998.





James Morris

SENIOR POLICY OFFICER

James Morris is a Senior Policy Officer at Science Europe working broadly on the topics of Research Culture, Research Assessment, and Research Infrastructures. He joined Science Europe in 2019, and has a background in marine and molecular biology and a strong interest in science communication. Before joining Science Europe he was a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions post-doctoral fellow at the Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences.



Anneke Kastelein

PHD CANDIDATE, LEIDEN UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTRE

Anneke Kastelein is a PhD candidate at Leiden University Medical Center. Her research focuses on the mechanisms underlying cancer-related fatigue, integrating chronobiology and oncology to improve cancer patients' quality of life. Beyond research, Anneke has a special interest in bridging the gap between science and policy. She is currently an advisory board member of the PhD representative Network of the Netherlands (PNN).



Liz Simmonds

HEAD OF RESEARCH CULTURE, UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Liz is the Head of Research Culture at the University of Cambridge, responsible for driving the research culture agenda across the institution. She co-chairs the Research Culture Steering Committee, setting the strategy and priorities for research culture. She also works with universities, funders and other stakeholders nationally and internationally to help build a collaborative approach to tackling research culture across the HE sector.

Liz has worked at the University of Cambridge for more than 15 years, primarily in roles supporting early career researchers. She has a degree in Natural Sciences from the University of Cambridge.





Dipti Pandya

CHAIR, EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR RESEARCH MANAGERS & ADMINISTRATORS

Dipti Pandya is the Chair of the European Association for Research Managers and Administrators, EARMA. Dipti has been an active EARMA member since 2016 and was previously the Chair of the EARMA Policy and Representation Committee and elected Board member since 2022. Dipti is the EARMA member of ERA Action 17: *Empowering the Research Management Profession*. Dipti is committed to ensuring recognition of the Research Management profession, as a career of choice, in Europe by engaging in initiatives that advance the profession. Dipti is passionate about fostering collaboration across national and international stakeholders, advocating for the profession at the highest levels, succession planning and driving innovations that strengthen our community's impact on the research landscape.

Dipti is the Head of Pre-Award Research Funding at University College Dublin, Ireland leads the pre-award and contract teams. Dipti has been involved in all aspects of the research funding lifecycle as an Erasmus alumni, EC stagiaire, funded researcher, expert evaluator, National Delegate for SSH, EU Research Infrastructures Advisory Group member, Senior Research Manager and funder as Director of the Irish Research Council. Dipti is the Co-Chair of the UCD EDI Anti-Racism and Cultural Awareness sub-group, and Board member of Léargas.



Verity Elston

CO-DIRECTOR, GRADUATE CAMPUS, UNIVERSITY OF LAUSANNE

Verity Elston is co-director of the Graduate Campus at the University of Lausanne, where she leads support for the career and professional development for early career researchers across seven faculties. She has been working for over 15 years in the field, first at the EPFL Doctoral School in Lausanne, and then for the Conference of Western Swiss Universities, before joining the University of Lausanne with the creation of the Graduate Campus in 2017. Her background informs the work she does: after several years working in the public and private sectors in several countries, she returned to university in Ireland to complete her Bachelors degree, and followed with a PhD in Anthropology at the University of Chicago. Throughout, her core question has been how to best provide supportive frameworks for the professional development of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, and for the people who manage them.





Adelheid Wessler

HEAD OF THE "SOCIETAL TRANSFORMATIONS", VOLKSWAGEN FOUNDATION

Dr. Adelheid Wessler is Head of the "Societal Transformations" team at Volkswagen Foundation with more than fifteen years of experience in research funding. She started by supervising various collection-based research projects in museums, collaborative projects between artists and scientists as well as cooperations between African and German scholars and scientist. 2018 she took over the lead of the "Team International" at the Volkswagen Foundation with a focus on supporting research in and with researchers from Middle Asia and Caucasus as well as Sub-Saharan Africa.

Now she focusses on various societal transformation processes, e.g. circular economy, democracy, wealth research and demographic challenges. By developing funding opportunities in these fields she wants to support the expansion and critical reflection on the body of knowledge on transformation processes and at the same time encourage researchers to involve actors outside academia in order to develop options for societal action. She holds a doctoral degree in social anthropology with a dissertation on museum representations in ethnographic exhibitions. She had longer research stays abroad, e.g. in Bolivia and Namibia and participated in various (international) exhibition projects.



Manuel Aleixo

HEAD OF UNIT, DG RTD, EUROPEAN COMMISSION

Manuel Aleixo, currently Head of Unit A2 – ERA, Spreading Excellence and Research Careers, in DG Research and Innovation, European Commission; previously assistant to the Director-General of DG R&I, and before that member of cabinet of the Commissioner responsible for Research, Science and Innovation, Carlos Moedas.





Claudia Sarrico

OECD Research & Innovation Careers Observatory, Project Lead

Cláudia S. Sarrico is a policy analyst at the OECD Science, Technology, and Innovation Directorate. She is the project manager of the Research and Innovation Careers Observatory project. Previously she was the project manager of the OECD Global Science Forum projects on Reducing the Precarity of Academic Research Careers and Promoting Diverse Career Pathways of Doctoral and Postdoctoral Researchers.

Before joining the OECD, she was a Professor at the School of Economics and Management of the University of Minho, and a senior researcher at the Centre for Research on Higher Education Policies, Portugal. She holds a PhD in Industrial and Business Studies from Warwick Business School.



Stephane Berghmans

DIRECTOR OF R&I, EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION

Stephane Berghmans is the EUA Director of Research and Innovation. He is a Doctor in Veterinary Medicine who obtained his PhD in genetics and molecular biology at the University of Liege (Belgium). Stephane was a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard Medical School, worked in the biotech sector in Cambridge (UK) and served as Director of Biology at Znomics in Portland, Oregon (USA). Stephane also worked for the European Science Foundation as Head of the Biomedical Sciences Unit and for Elsevier as Vice President of Academic Relations in Brussels.



Goda Naujokaitytė

EU FUNDING EDITOR, SCIENCE|BUSINESS

Goda joined Science|Business in April 2020. Previously, she interned at the Council of the European Union and the Guardian News Media, among other organisations in the UK and Lithuania. Goda holds a bachelor's degree in communication from the University of Nottingham and a master's degree in data journalism from Cardiff University.

