



Letters to members

The Association in March 2006

Dear colleagues and friends,

Welcome to another issue of the "Letters to Members" which summarises the recent developments in the Marie Curie Fellows Association. This issue features new membership benefits, recent initiatives regarding science policy, novel IT services, reports from recent meetings, and more. The letter includes also a short presentation of the coordinators of selected MCFA national groups.

- **MEMBERSHIP ISSUES**

New membership benefits

The board is constantly seeking to introduce new membership benefits. The most recent one is the subscription to New Scientist, a magazine dedicated to science and technology (<http://www.newscientist.com>), offered to MCFA members with a 40% price reduction. To take advantage of this special price you need to quote a special promotional code which can be obtained by emailing our office (office@mariecurie.org). Contact the New Scientist Customer Service with the code to place your order.

We are negotiating other benefits such as courses in project administration and management, short introduction in the Marie Curie Action programme under the Seventh Framework Programme, a short guide to European science policy and more.

The board is also discussing the rules and criteria for selection of experts and evaluators to be proposed to the Commission for the Seventh RTD Framework Programme. The call has not yet been published, but you can find more information about the selection procedure for FP6 under http://www.cordis.lu/experts/fp6_candidature.htm. The selection process will be open only to genuine members (who paid the fee for 2006).

Missed opportunity

The Association is regularly invited to take part in working groups, scientific committees, and steering boards for diverse national and European projects, initiatives and programmes. Recently we have received an invitation to take part in the working groups preparing the Austrian Presidency Conference "A researchers' labour market: Europe-a

pole of attraction?" which will take place in Vienna, 1st–2nd June 2006. Unfortunately, we failed to find an expert on social security and working conditions among the MCFA members, prepared to take part in this initiative on behalf of the Association.

In order not to miss similar opportunities in the future, we plan to enhance the description of members' field of expertise and experiences, recorded in the online database.

Update of membership status

The member benefits are available to genuine members, i.e. those who renewed their membership for 2006. The status of those who did not do so was set to "MCFA affiliate". You may upgrade your status by paying your membership fee at any moment of the year.

There are some payments which could not be assigned properly because they did not include the member name or number. If you have paid and your database record does not reflect this, please let us know.

- SCIENCE POLICY

The Scientific Council of the European Research Council proposed a funding stream for the establishment and support of early stage independent investigators (ESII). The funding stream will be given priority in the start up phase of the ERC, with a call launched early in 2007. A second funding stream should be devoted to broader support for

excellent and innovative frontier research projects of individual teams, led by investigators at all subsequent career stages. [see also http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/future/basic_research/erc_sci_council_en.htm]

EUROPEAN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY (EIT)

One of the proposals put forward by the Commission last year to re-launch the Lisbon strategy is the establishment of the European Institute of Technology (EIT). The Institute will most likely be formed as a network of the outstanding departments of various EU Universities, complemented by an headquarter coordinating its activities. The proposal raised a dispute. Mostly contested are the relation between European Research Council (ERC) and EIT, and the structure of the Institute. [see also <http://europa.eu.int/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=IP/06/201&format=HTML&aged=0&language=EN&guiLanguage=en>]

Recently, Euroscience initiated a survey among the members about the perceived usefulness of the Institute. The replies have to be sent by 15th of April to EITdebate@euroscience.org.

- NEW IT SERVICES

We are planning to turn "The Annals of the Marie Curie Fellows" into an online journal, featuring original scientific papers, papers on science policy issues and the ERA, and papers aimed at communicating scientific knowledge to general public. For this purpose, an online journal

management system is being created. The system will support the management of submissions, review and online publication of submitted articles. All the previous issues will be transferred into the online system within a few weeks. The same system is also used by the Integrated Assessment Journal, available at http://journals.sfu.ca/int_assess/index.php/iaj.

Blog tested for UK national group pages

Another new Internet facility has been established to facilitate the activities of MCFA national groups. The system, based on web blog, is being tested by the UK national group. Blogs are web sites focusing on a particular topic in which items are posted and displayed with the newest at the top. The facility is accessible under http://www.mariecurie.org/mcfa_uk.

Feedback form

Collecting feedback on various issues related to the Association or science policy will be facilitated by a feedback form, accessible under <http://www.mariecurie.org/index.php?frame2=/src/members/only/feedbackform.php>. The messages posted here are stored in an online database which makes it easier to analyse the collected opinions.

Blackboard

To exchange local information, offers and other useful information, an online blackboard is being installed. The blackboard will be accessible from the member area and will allow a

search according to geographic and thematic criteria. The current version is a working prototype. We will improve the service according to your comments and suggestions.

- MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES WITH MCFA REPRESENTATION

UPCOMING EVENTS

Marie Curie Conference, Manchester 10-12 April 2006, and UK national group meeting

The MC2 conference, about which we informed you already in the last issue, will be held next week in Manchester. You may find more detailed information including the conference programme under <http://www.jb.man.ac.uk/mc2/>. A **plenary session** on Tuesday 11th (11:00 - 12:30) will be dedicated to the presentation of the MCFA.

At the same venue, the **National Meeting of the Marie Curie Fellows in the UK and Ireland** will be held on Sunday 9 April 2006. Find more information under <http://www.arcetri.astro.it/%7Eeric/mcfa06>. All Marie Curie fellows are warmly welcome to participate at the meeting. There is no participation fee for the meeting.

PhD career event and Intermediar Orientation Guide PhD Edition 2006

Intermediar (publisher of a number of career-related magazines) will

organise the PhD Career Event. During this event, approx. 1,000 PhD students will have the opportunity to talk to future employers, career offices etc. The event is organised by Intermediar in cooperation with YER Campus Recruitment and PNN (PhD/Postdoc Network Netherlands). At the same time, Intermediar will publish the PhD Guide, a guide with information about future employers, career offices etc.

You are welcome to request a free copy of the Guide [<http://www.intermediar.nl/phd>].

National Group Coordinators Workshop

The board is preparing a workshop of the coordinators of the MCFA national groups. The meeting will be most probably attached to the EuroScience Open Forum 2006, held in Munich from July 15th to 19th, 2006. The national coordinators met last time in July 2000.

For some countries, the position of the national coordinators is still not filled. If you would like to get involved in the national group activities, please contact us at office@mariecurie.org.

EVENTS IN MARCH

European Platform of Women Scientist (EPWS) launch event

The launch event of the European Platform of Women Scientist (EPWS) was held on the 28th March in Brussels. The MCFA was represented at the meeting by Antonella Di Trapani (treasurer and coordinator of the

national group committee). The EPWS seeks to empower women scientists to participate in the research policy debate and to enhance their professional and career development.

Speakers included Dr. Adelheid Ehmke, President of the EPWS, Johannes Klumpers, Head of Unit Women and Science DG Research, Dr. Brigitte Muhlenbruch, Former Director Centre of Excellence Women and Science (CEWS), Erna Hennicot-Schoepges MEP, Former Minister for Culture, Higher Education and Research Luxembourg, and Dr. Maren Jochimsen, Secretary General European Platform of Women Scientists.

4th Workshop of ERA-MORE Germany

The meeting took place at the Humboldt Foundation in Bonn; from March 30th to 31st. Natalia Balcazar and Dagmar Meyer took part at the meeting.

Quality Assessment in Institutions of Higher Education in Europe: problems, practises and solutions

The conference was organised by Academiae Europea (AE). It took place in Pavia, from March 23rd to 25th, 2006. AE awarded several MCFA members (Maria Dan Bostenaru, Manuella Giovanetti, Dagmar M. Meyer, Jaroslav Mysiak) with a travel grant to enable their participation at the event.

3rd Annual General Meeting of the MCFA Greek National Group - Hellas

The meeting of the Greek national group took place at the National Hellenic Research Foundation, March 19th.

Regional meeting of the MC Fellows in Sheffield

The event, organised by Vanessa Diaz (the UK national coordinator) and 6th Framework Office of the University of Sheffield, took place at the New Spring House, Sheffield on March 15th. The presentations are available at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/framework/mariecurie>

Eurodoc annual conference

The Eurodoc annual conference took place in Bologna, from March 9th to 12th. A session dedicated to scientific mobility was chaired by Magda Lola, the former coordinator of the MCFA science policy working panel. The presentations are available at <http://www.eurodoc.net/articles.php?lng=en&pg=5>
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- OTHER SHORT NOTICES

A **leaflet**, a **poster** and a **presentation** of the Association have been prepared for the special session

dedicated to the MCFA during the Marie Curie Conference in Manchester. The documents will be accessible from the member area to every member to support their MCFA activities, presentations and national meetings.

The board and members of selected working panels have prepared the **outline of a collaboration project** with the ERA-MORE network. The draft proposal is available from member area (internal documents).

The MCFA participated at the **evaluation of the applications for travel grants** to participate at the ESOF 2006. Altogether 178 applications have been submitted. There are about 20 grants available at the moment, but other bursaries may become available depending on further funding

Many thanks for your constant interest in the Association,
Jaroslav Mysiak

A short presentation of some national coordinators (in alphabetical order of the countries)

MCFA NATIONAL GROUP FRANCE

Aldo De Andrea graduated in Physics from the University of Pavia (Italy). He obtained PhD in Theoretical Physics from the University of Geneva (Switzerland) in 1995. He was awarded with a Marie Curie individual fellowship at the Centre de Physique Theorique de Marseille (France). After completing the fellowship he joined the University of Heidelberg (Germany), and later the CERN Particle Theory group in Switzerland. Since 2000 he is a professor of Theoretical Physics at the University of Lyon 1 (France). Since 2004 Head of the Theoretical Physics group at the Institut de Physique Nucleaire de Lyon.



MCFA NATIONAL GROUP GERMANY (ad interim)

Natalia Balcázar the director of ENVIROpro – European Environmental Project management in Duisburg, Germany. She studied Geological Sciences at the Complutense University in Madrid and completed her doctoral thesis on “Environmental Management of Siderurgical By-products” at the Alcalá University in Madrid, Spain. She was awarded with a post-doc DAAD fellowship and later with a Marie Curie individual fellowship to join Forschungsgemeinschaft Eisenhüttenschlacken e.V. She worked afterwards at the Ruhr-University Bochum and at a private environmental consulting in Duisburg. In the last years, she worked on project management in several environmental areas (such as water management, production integrated environmental protection) with main interest also on the Gender Mainstreaming aspects associated to the projects.



MCFA NATIONAL GROUP COORDINATORS IRELAND



Silvia Giordani is a researcher at Trinity College Dublin. She graduated in Chemistry and Pharmaceutical Technology from the University of Milan (Italy) in 1999. She then moved to the Center for Supramolecular Science at the University of Miami (USA) where she obtained a MS and PhD in Chemistry. She moved back to Europe, appointed as a young researcher in context of the Marie Curie Research Training Network on “Template Grown Molecular Nanomaterials”. Her current research interests revolve around the design, synthesis and analysis of novel nanomaterials.

Liam Gallagher graduated from the Department of Biochemistry, UCD in Molecular Genetics and Biochemistry. Following this, he obtained a PhD in Molecular and Cellular Biology from the Cancer Research UK Beatson Laboratories in Glasgow. In 1997, he moved to Paris to undertake a Marie Curie Individual Fellowship at AVENTIS Pharma. Afterwards, he returned to Ireland upon receipt of an Enterprise Ireland Post-Doctoral Fellowship (1999-2000) and, subsequently, a Marie Curie Return Fellowship (2000–2001). Since 2001, he has been employed in a permanent capacity as College Lecturer at UCD. In January 2005, he was appointed Senior Lecturer and is now based in the UCD School of Biomolecular and Biomedical Science. In addition, he is a Principal Investigator at the Conway Institute and currently Deputy Co-Ordinator of the Cancer



Group there. He currently leads a research group of 5 post-doctoral fellows, 13 PhD students and 2 MD students. He has served as National Co-Ordinator of the Marie Curie Fellowship Association (MCFA) in Ireland since 1999. In this context, he organised the meeting on "Impact of Genetics on Science and Society", July 2001.

MCFA NATIONAL GROUP LATVIA



Ihor Sydoryk graduated at the Physical Department of the L'viv State University in 1996. From 1996 till 2000 he worked in the Institute of Physical Optics as an engineer in the laboratory of the parametrical crystallo-optics. After 2000 he went to the Warsaw Institute of Physics of Polish Academy of Sciences (Poland), where he finished his PhD thesis in a field of laser spectroscopy, instrumental optics, atomic physics. Recently, he was awarded with a 2-years MC fellowship at the Molecular Beam Laboratory of the Institute of Atomic Physics and Spectroscopy, in the newly established Laser Centre.

Aigars Ekers graduated from the University of Latvia and obtained PhD degree in physics in 1999. He was awarded with a DAAD scholarship (1997-1998) to visit the University of Kaiserslautern, Germany. Later he obtained a 6 months fellowship at the Institute of Physics of the Polish Academy of Sciences after which he returned to Kaiserslautern in 1999, where he completed his individual Marie Curie Fellowship (2000-2001, FP5). He stayed in Kaiserslautern as a research associate till 2005. Presently he is the head of the Molecular Beam Laboratory of the Institute of Atomic Physics and Spectroscopy of the University of Latvia, and lecturer at the Department of Physics. He also coordinates a MC Transfer of Knowledge project (2005-2009) in FP6, and has currently 3 active MC fellows in his laboratory.



MCFA NATIONAL GROUP ROMANIA



Simona Vonica graduated in pedagogy and sociology. In 2001 she joined the Quality of Life Research Institute, Romanian Academy of Sciences. Later, she started a PhD in Sociology at the Bucharest University. She studies the Romanian national social policy in light of the EU enlargement. She joined the MCFA in 2004 after completing a Marie Curie fellowship in Aalborg, Denmark and she has been National Coordinator since then.

MCFA NATIONAL GROUP SLOVAKIA

Jana Kadukova is assistant professor in the Department of Non-Ferrous Metals and Waste Treatment at the Faculty of Metallurgy, Technical University of Košice, Slovakia. She obtained her PhD from the same University. In 2003 she joined the Laboratory of Biochemical Engineering and Environmental Biotechnology at the Technical University of Crete. Her research interests includes the application of biological processes on soil, groundwater and wastewater treatment; biosorption and bioaccumulation and their application to the bioremediation; application of phytoremediation methods for treatment of contaminated soil and water; and effect of metals on biochemical and physiological characteristics of algae and plants



MCFA NATIONAL GROUP SLOVENIA



Urša Opara Krašovec is a chemist working on the field of material science – developing different kinds of materials/layers/components for devices that are connected to Solar Energy (solar cells, smart windows, solar collectors). She got her PhD in Chemistry from the University of Ljubljana (Faculty of Chemistry) in 1999. Presently (from 01/07/2003), she is a researcher at the University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Electrical engineering in the Laboratory of semiconductor devices. Urša has worked in the past at the National Institute of Chemistry in Ljubljana (Slovenia, 1994 – 2003) and as a postdoctoral Marie Curie Fellow (2001 – 2002) at the Fraunhofer Institute for Solar Energy Systems, Freiburg, Germany. She has spent some shorter periods at the University of Jerusalem and at the Institut de Chimie Moleculaire d'Orsay, Universite' Paris-Sud. The detailed information about her bibliography can be found at http://paris.fe.uni-lj.si/ursa/URSA_OPARA_KRASOVEC.htm. She has been the national coordinator of MCFA Slovenia since 2003.

Jernej Iskra obtained PhD degree in Chemistry from the University of Ljubljana. He then joined the 'Jožef Stefan' Institute where he studied environmental benign processes and the use of haloperoxidases for halogenation reactions. He was awarded with Marie Curie Fellowship at the University Paris XI, 2000-2002. After completing the fellowship, he returned to Slovenia to 'Jožef Stefan' Institute where he currently works in the Laboratory of Organic and Bioorganic Chemistry. His main field of research involves halogenation and oxidation reactions of organic molecules with "greener" oxidants and sources of halogen atoms as well as solvents (water, fluorous phase) that would reduce the use of volatile organic and chlorinated compounds



MCFA NATIONAL GROUP SPAIN

Margarida Tobar Duarte graduated in mining engineering from the Technical University of Lisbon. She moved to Northern Sweden where she stayed for almost 4 years. During this period absolved an industrial training period within the R&D department of LKAB and the Swedish Licenciante degree in Mining Engineering. Since May 2006 she is engaged in the MC Cultural Heritage Research program. Presently, she is a PhD candidate at the National Museum of Natural Sciences (CSIC, Madrid) Spain. She studies the conservation of hypogean monuments with paintings or/ and engravings."

Erik-jan Malta graduated in biology from the Leiden University. In 2000 he obtained his PhD in marine ecology at the Netherlands Institute for Ecology (NIOO-CEMO) in Yerseke and the Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands. After two years working for two environmental NGOs in The Netherlands, he moved to the University of Cádiz, Spain where he started his Marie Curie fellowship. Currently, he is a post-doc fellow at the Centre of Marine Sciences of the Algarve in Faro, Portugal. He is specialised in nutrient ecology and ecophysiology of seaweeds and seagrasses and their role in the carbon and nitrogen cycling of coastal marine ecosystems



MCFA NATIONAL GROUP UNITED KINGDOM



Vanessa Diaz-Zuccarini graduated in Mechanical Engineering from Simon Bolivar University and then she went on to study for a PhD. in Automatic Control and Industrial Informatics (*First Class Honors*) at the Ecole Centrale de Lille. She is currently a Marie Curie Fellow in the Department of Medical Physics at the University of Sheffield, where she is carrying out research on 'coupling 3D models with lumped parameter models for cardiovascular applications'