

# Letters to members

The Association in April 2006

Dear colleagues and friends,

April was a very busy month, especially in terms of meetings and conferences. This issue reports on the very successful Marie Curie Conference in Manchester (MC2), co-organised by the MCFA. The Association was also invited to take part in science policy workshops and conferences. Furthermore, this issue informs you about other important developments in the Association, including the prepared changes of the statutes, coming and past events, initiatives regarding science policy, and novel IT services. We continue with the presentation of MCFA National Group coordinators, started in the last issue.

## - MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

### **STATUTES OF THE ASSOCIATION**

The board is preparing a proposal for some important changes to the MCFA Statutes. The proposal will include among others:

- institutional membership, allowing organisations (e.g. universities, associations, networks) to join the MCFA;
- changes in eligibility rules for membership in the Association, adapting to the new concept of the Marie Curie Actions proposed for the FP7;
- simplification in some administrative rules.

A dossier with a detailed description of these changes is being prepared and will be available soon. Before the next Annual General Assembly a survey will be held to collect your opinions and comments.

### **CHANGE OF THE NAME**

Another change which does not require any modification of the Statutes

regards the English name of the Association. As we already informed in an earlier issue, the board has decided to use "Marie Curie Fellows Association" (i.e. change the previous "Fellowship" to "Fellows"). The decision has been taken according to the recommendation made during the last EGM in Pisa (October 1st, 2005). We are continuously changing all web pages to reflect this change.

See also:

Current version of the MCFA Statutes  
<http://www.mariecurie.org/index.php?frame2=/src/assoc/statutes.htm>

### **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL**

The MCFA membership renewal is now in full swing. Membership fees were due on 28 February 2006; if you have not renewed your membership yet, please do so as soon as possible (see under logging in [www.mariecurie.org/mem\\_fees](http://www.mariecurie.org/mem_fees)). If you experience any problems when logging in, please contact our office ([office@mariecurie.org](mailto:office@mariecurie.org)).

## **- MARIE CURIE CONFERENCE, MANCHESTER APRIL 10-12 2005**

This year conference on Marie Curie Actions was a very interesting event in several aspects. First, the organisers (University of Manchester, the EC and MCFA) have attracted a number of excellent speakers including **Tim Hunt** - Nobel Prize winner in Physiology or Medicine in 2001, **Curtis Dobson** from Ai2 Ltd – an innovative company working in the field of HIV therapy, **Chris Smith** from the Naked Scientists Radio Show Podcast to name but a few. Many MCFA members and affiliates participated as invited speakers (Gadi Rothenberg), panel members (Louise Ackers, Dagmar Meyer, Marco Stoffella), workshop chairs (Natalia Balcázar Aigars Ekers, Silvia Giordani, Tamara Grava and panel speakers of the MCFA session, see below), facilitators (Begona Arano) and rapporteurs (Vanessa Diaz).

Secondly, the MCFA organised a plenary session attended by several (past and current) board members (Dagmar Meyer, Antonella di Trapani, Ana M. Cerdeño-Tárraga, Maziar Nekovee and Jaroslav Mysiak) as panel speakers. Besides, Piotr Swiatek from COST (European Cooperation in the field of Scientific and Technical Research) presented a new funding scheme dedicated to young researcher – the Young Investigators Network (YIN), supported by the board. The MCFA was present also with a stand. Leaflets and posters developed for the conference are accessible at [www.mariecurie.org/publicrel](http://www.mariecurie.org/publicrel); please contact your national coordinator for copies of the leaflets and personalised pens.

Finally, during the conference a meeting of the National Contact Points from all over the EU took place. This gave the participants (and us) an opportunity to establish new contacts.

Links:

COST: <http://www.cost.esf.org/index.php>

The Naked Scientists:

<http://www.thenakedscientists.com/>

NCP Mobility:

## **- JOINED UK AND IE MCFA NATIONAL MEETING**

Attached to the MC2 conference, a joint UK and IE meeting took place on Sunday, April 9<sup>th</sup>. The meeting was organised by the respective MCFA national coordinators, Silvia Giordani and Vanessa Diaz (both introduced in the last issue) and was attended by 12 Fellows, including some MCFA coordinators from other countries. The photos from the meetings can be found at <http://www.arcetri.astro.it/~eric/mcfa06/pictures>  
See also:

UK blog (in test mode):

[http://www.mariecurie.org/mcfa\\_template/](http://www.mariecurie.org/mcfa_template/)

## **- SCIENCE POLICY**

An article with experiences by Marie Curie fellows in France has just appeared on Science careers. "Experiencing France" is based on contributions by Christos Christoglou, Andreas Förster, and Marcin Szwed. The articles can be accessed at [http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career\\_development/previous\\_issues/articles/2006\\_04\\_28/experiencing\\_france](http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/career_development/previous_issues/articles/2006_04_28/experiencing_france)

## **- MORE-AID PROJECT**

The EC subvention to MCFA, included in the Marie Curie Work Programme, is taking shape in the MORE-AID project (a draft is available from the member area). Recently, we have had a chance to discuss

the draft with Mr. Bingen and Mr. Liberali. The governing committee of the project encompasses Antonella Di Trapani, Vanessa Diaz Zuccarini, Ursa Opara Krasovec, Christos Christoglou, and Martin Hajduch.

## - **THE ANNALS OF THE MARIE CURIE FELLOWSHIP**

The 4th edition of the Annals is available on our web page. The edition encompasses 21 scientific articles from physics, chemistry, economics, life sciences, mathematics social sciences, and engineering. All the articles are based on results accomplished during or following a Marie Curie contract. Similar to the previous volume, the fourth edition was edited by Nora Brambilla and Aldo Deandrea.

Link:

<http://www.mariecurie.org/annals/volume4/volume4.html>

## - **NEW IT SERVICES**

The MCFA has acquired two new **domains with the extension .eu**: [www.mcfa.eu](http://www.mcfa.eu); and [www.mariecurie-association.eu](http://www.mariecurie-association.eu). Both domain redirect the visitors to the current [www.mariecurie.org](http://www.mariecurie.org) domain, so especially the first one, since very short, can be used to access our Internet infrastructure.

Another news is related to the **MCFA mailing lists**. You may have noticed that some messages posted in the mailing lists are distributed with substantial delays (up to some days). This was caused by the software used for the management of the lists by our server provider (Mailman). We are currently testing another software, DaDaMail, which though introduces some changes in posting the messages and accessing the archives. We have put lot of

time in making the transition as smooth as possible. The mcfa-ro is currently working under the new software, after a short testing period by a normal use of the list will proceed with transition of the other lists.

A new blog dedicated to **science policy has been established**. The blog uses the same infrastructure as the national groups blogs (currently used by UK group, see). It is accessible at [www.mariecurie.org/science\\_policy](http://www.mariecurie.org/science_policy).

We look for editors interested in posting and editing the new messages in the blog. If you want to join the science policy working panel at MCFA, please contact us at [office@mariecurie.org](mailto:office@mariecurie.org).

## - **LOCAL FELLOWS' NETWORK**

One of the proposed activities in the MORE-AID project is the establishment of a MCFA Local Fellows' Network. We are looking for people who have enthusiasm and willingness to help other MC Fellows to settle down in the new Institution or City, help with local problems, make them welcome in the new countries, organize social gatherings, network with new fellows or just make new friends.

The MCFA Local Fellows' Network will be an interface between the MCFA and the Institution or the local European Research Office. The network members will distribute information about events, leaflets and announcements to the Fellows, inform and help the institution with administrative and contractual problems. They will work in close collaboration with the National Groups Coordinator of their country to organize national meetings and local/regional meetings.

If you want to join the MCFA Local Fellows Network, please contact us at [office@mariecurie.org](mailto:office@mariecurie.org)

## **- MEETINGS AND CONFERENCES WITH MCFA REPRESENTATION**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

#### **PHD CAREER EVENT, AMSTERDAM MAY 11**

Intermediar in collaboration with YER Campus Recruitment and PNN (PhD/Postdoc Network Netherlands) is organising the PhD Career Event. During this event, approx. 1,000 PhD students will have the opportunity to talk to future employers and career offices. The MCFA will be represented at a stand, shared with the Netherlands's ERA-MORE Mobility Centre. Rosalie Luiten (who already represented the MCFA at various important meetings related to science policy) will attend the stand. You are welcome to participate at the meeting (entrance is free) and visit the MCFA stand.

#### **E-MRS SPRING MEETING, NICE, 29 MAY-2 JUNE**

The European Materials Research Society (E-MRS) aims to promote and enhance the efficiency of research in European countries in the field of Advanced Materials.

The MCFA was offered one free registration fee for the conference. This offer is open to any of the members. The only commitment is that part of the time should be dedicated to management of the MCFA stand. If you are interested in attending it, please contact us at [office@mariecurie.org](mailto:office@mariecurie.org).

Link: <http://www.emrs-strasbourg.com/>

#### **AUSTRIAN PRESIDENCY CONFERENCE "A RESEARCHERS' LABOUR MARKET: EUROPE A POLE OF ATTRACTION?", VIENNA 1/2 JUNE**

The conference is one of the events in the Programme of the Austrian Presidency of the European Union. It will focus on the question, under which conditions the European researchers'labour market can be a pole of attraction for well trained and highly motivated researchers at all levels from all over the world. Furthermore it will explore to which extent the Charter and the Code are a driving force for enhancing career prospects. The MCFA will be represented by Jaroslav Mysiak.

See:

<http://www.eracareersaustria.at/conference/>

#### **MCFA LOCAL/REGIONAL MEETING IN LONDON, JUNE**

The MCFA UK group is organizing a Local/Regional Meeting in London. Exact date, venue and agenda will be published soon in the MCFA blog area ([www.mariecurie.org/mcfa\\_template](http://www.mariecurie.org/mcfa_template)). The meeting is targeted mainly to fellows based in London and in the cities around London (Oxford, Cambridge, Reading and the rest of the South of England), but if you are in London on that day, you are welcome to participate.

The meeting is jointly organized by the MCFA UK and UKRO (UK Research Office). Estelle Kane from the UK National Contact Point will be present at the meeting to talk about the new FP7 and future career prospects for MC Fellows.

Please get in touch with Vanessa Diaz ([vanessa.diaz@mariecurie.org](mailto:vanessa.diaz@mariecurie.org)) or Antonella Di Trapani ([antonella.di.trapani@mariecurie.org](mailto:antonella.di.trapani@mariecurie.org)) if you would like to take part. Light refreshments will be provided.

#### **NATIONAL GROUP COORDINATORS WORKSHOP, MUNICH JULY**

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](mailto:office@mariecurie.org).

#### **ITALIAN CONFERENCE OF RECTORS (CRUI), 23RD OF JUNE, IN BOLOGNA**

CRUI is organising an event on the European Research Council 23rd of June, in Bologna, inside a wider programme of debates on the incoming 7th Framework Programme for research.

See: <http://www.crui.it/link/?ID=2025>

### **EVENTS IN APRIL**

#### **STAKEHOLDERS MEETING, »EXPLORING FURTHER THE EUROPEAN INSTITUTE FOR TECHNOLOGY (EIT) CONCEPT: FEEDBACK AND CONTRIBUTION FROM EUROPEAN STAKEHOLDERS«, APRIL 25, BRUSSELS**

The meeting, chaired by Ms Odile Quintin (Director General of the Directorate "Education and Culture") and Mr José Manuel Silva Rodríguez (Director General of the Directorate "Research") aimed at clarifying some important points regarding the EIT, including its structure and governance rules. The MCFA was represented at the meeting by Ursa Opara Krasovec, the MCFA National Group coordinator in Slovenia.

#### **OECD/MEC JOINT WORKSHOP ON "RESEARCHER CAREERS FOR THE 21 CENTURY", MADRID 26-27 APRIL 2006**

The workshop organised by Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Spanish Ministry of Education and Science addressed issues such as models for researcher careers, the role of market forces, government regulations, and mobility in researcher career paths. The participation at the workshop was possible only by invitation. The MCFA was represented by the MCFA Spanish National Group Coordinator - Margarida Taborda Duarte.

Link:

[http://www.oecd.org/document/31/0,2340,en\\_2649\\_34269\\_36286687\\_1\\_1\\_1\\_1,00.html](http://www.oecd.org/document/31/0,2340,en_2649_34269_36286687_1_1_1_1,00.html)

#### **EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION (EUA) FOLLOW-UP OF DOCTORATE PROGRAMMES PROJECT, BRUSSELS, 23-24 MARCH**

The workshop to be held in Brussels from 23-24 March 2006 will focus on two aspects of doctoral programmes: the supervision, monitoring and assessment of doctoral programmes; and generic (transferable) skills training and its relation to learning outcomes and employability. The MCFA was represented by Adriana Jalba.

Second workshop with similar scope will take place in Brussels, from 12-13 October 2006, and will focus on: the organisation of graduate/doctoral/research schools and their place in the global competition; the link between the Master and the doctoral level; the European dimension and mobility.

LINK:

[HTTP://WWW.EUA.BE:8080/EUA/JSP/EN/CLIENT/ITEM\\_VIEW.JSP](http://www.eua.be:8080/EUA/JSP/EN/CLIENT/ITEM_VIEW.JSP)

**INFORMATION DAY "RESEARCH IN EUROPE: NATIONAL AND EUROPEAN RESEARCH FUNDING", UNIVERSITY OF DRESDEN (GERMANY), APRIL 26, 2006.**

The meeting was organised in co-operation between the Saxon State Ministry of Science and Arts, the Saxon universities and universities of applied science and KoWi. The event dedicated to doctoral and post-doctoral researchers has introduced programmes of national and European Research and Funding Institutions including the German Research Foundation (DFG), the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), the Alexander von Humboldt-Foundation (AvH), the German-Israeli-Foundation, the Volkswagen Stiftung, the Max-Planck-Society, the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft, the Leibniz-Association, the Helmholtz-Association, the Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt as well as by representatives of the Stifterverband für die Deutsche Wissenschaft and more.

The MCFA was represented by Bernhard Baumgartner, former MCFA National Group (NG) coordinator in the Netherlands. The next event of the same art will take place in Hamburg, June 29 and will be attended by Natalia Balcazar, the current MCFA NG coordinator in Germany.

**- VACANCIES IN THE MCFA OFFICE**

We are looking for Marie Curie Fellows willing to participate as working group in the following MCFA Units:

- Industry
- Sponsorship and Fundraising
- Science Policy
- Women in Science
- Membership Drive
- Careers

- Publications
- Legal issues

The selected MC Fellows will gain invaluable experience in working in an international organisation and in European research and science policy. The candidate will interact and collaborate with other Marie Curie Fellows, policy-makers, European associations and institutions.

Good organizational and communication skills are required, but essentials are enthusiasm, time and willingness to achieve the results and to carry on the tasks. No previous experience is necessary.

Please contact us for more information about the units and MCFA activities. The positions are on a voluntary basis. The activities will be overseen by the Board and by the Advisory Board. Please contact us at [office@mariecurie.org](mailto:office@mariecurie.org) for more information.

**- 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.

Many thanks for your constant interest in the Association,

Jaroslav Mysiak

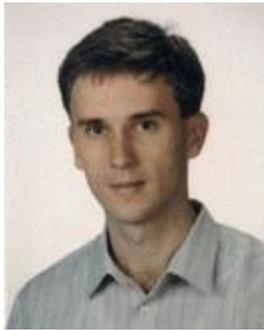
## A short presentation of some national coordinators, part II (see also the Letter to Members, March 2006)

### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP CZECH REPUBLIC

**Stefan Ratschan** obtained a Ph.D. in Computer Science at the Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria, in 1998. After a year of humanitarian work in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Hercegovina, he was awarded a Marie-Curie Fellowship that he spent at the University of Girona, Spain. From 2003 on he worked as a researcher at the Max-Planck Institute for Computer Science in Saarbrücken, Germany. Since July 2006 he is a researcher at the Institute of Computer Science of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague, Czech Republic. His research is centred on verification algorithms, especially algorithms that can automatically proof the correctness of computing devices that are embedded into technical systems such as cars, trains, etc.



### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP HUNGARY



**Péter Sántha** works at the Department of Physiology, University of Szeged, Szeged, Hungary. In 1995 he graduated in Human Medicine and then started a post graduate training program on neuroscience at the Physiology Department of my home university. In 2000 he received Ph.D. degree. He is a member of the Functional Neuromorphology Research Group of the department, currently holding an assistant lecturer position. His research interest is the neurobiology of pain detecting (nociceptive) primary sensory neurons. He also participates in the education of undergraduate medical students on medical physiology. After having several short time visits to the Max Planck Institute of Physiological Research in Bad Nauheim, Germany, in 2003 he has received a two years long individual Marie Curie Intra European Fellowship to the Department of Surgery Anesthetics and Intensive Care Medicine of Imperial College London.

### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP NETHERLANDS

**Andrea Romano** was born on August 26th 1970 in Vittorio Veneto (TV), Italy. In 1996 he completed his study in biology at the University of Bologna. After graduation and military obligations, he worked for 6 months at the Bibra International, Carshalton (Surrey, UK) sponsored by "Leonardo da Vinci" scholarship. From 1998 to 2002 he received a Marie Curie Fellowship that, in combination with an IAC grant, allowed him to work in a 4-years project aimed at developing methods for the production of biodegradable polyester in transgenic potato. In October 2002, he obtained the Ph.D. degree at the Wageningen University and Research Centre (the Netherlands). From November 2002, he is working as a PostDoc at the department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Maastricht University Hospital, studying the regulation steroid-hormone nuclear receptor.

### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP SPAIN



Liz Karen Herrera is currently pursuing her PhD in the Spanish Council of Scientific Research (CSIC), in the Institute of Materials (Seville). Her work concerns the conservation of paintings pigments, supports and binders in Andalusia cultural heritage (Southern Spain). Before she has come to Spain she has made an MSc in materials engineering, in the University of Antioquia (Medellin, Colombia). After her MSc she was the Colombian delegate in the Biodeterioration Network (RTXV-E) of CYTED cooperation program. Her experience as a researcher has resulted in the production of 20 scientific communications to international conferences on corrosion, biodeterioration and materials science. She was also invited (three times) to do plenary lectures in international conferences. At international journals she has published 15 papers and 2 chapters in books.

#### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP GERMANY

Lyudmila Zinchenko graduated in Electrical Engineering from Taganrog State University of Radio Engineering (Russia). She obtained PhD in Electrical Engineering from the Southern Russian Technical University in 1993 and Dr. degree from Russian Ministry of Education in 2000. She obtained As. Prof. title from Russian Ministry of Education in 1997 and Prof. title from Russian Ministry of Education in 2002. She is currently a Marie Curie Fellow at the Fraunhofer – Institute for Autonomous Intelligent Systems, where she is carrying out research on evolutionary circuit design.



#### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP ITALY



**Maria Antonietta Buccheri** is currently a PhD Student in molecular genetics at the University of Catania (Italy). She graduated in Biology at the University of Catania in 2001 with a thesis in molecular genetics. After graduation, she moved to France and worked at Institut Cochin in Paris. She then moved back to Italy and started a PhD in November 2003. In 2004 she was awarded a Marie Curie Fellowship (FP6-EST) which she spent at CNRS in Villejuif (Paris-France). Her current research is focused on RNAi (RNA interference).

#### MCFA NATIONAL GROUP PORTUGAL

John Griffith Jones was born in Wales and graduated from the University of Stirling in 1985. He then obtained a Ph.D. in Applied Chemistry at the University of Texas at Arlington in 1991. From 1991-1995 he was a Postdoctoral Fellow at University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas and was a UTSW Radiology Faculty member from 1995-2000. With a Marie Curie B-40 Experienced Researcher Fellowship in 2000-2001 he moved to Coimbra, Portugal where he is now a Senior Research Investigator at the Center for Neurosciences and Cell Biology at the University of Coimbra. His research interests are focused on applying stable isotope tracers to study glucose and fat metabolism in humans.