Dear MCFA Member,

Here we are again getting in touch with you by this bimonthly letter. We thank you for giving of your time reading the following pages through which we are keen to keep you posted about the association activities, upcoming events and careers, funding, and networking opportunities.

The MCFA board

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Life of the Association

MCFA Lifetime Membership

Dear Members,

In our effort to increase the facilities to present and past Marie Curie Fellows, we have drawn the conclusion that our members should have a simple and straightforward way to be attached to the MCFA for much longer. We would like to build a kind of "Alumni" service into the MCFA, so members can benefit from the MCFA also after their Marie Curie Fellowship ends. As part of this, we would like to offer all members an opportunity to obtain life-time membership of the MCFA, complementing our annual membership. The annual membership is set at 40 euros for 2010 and the lifetime membership will be offered at 200 euros. A discount of 20 euros per year of membership previously paid will be applied to current members. Both memberships may be paid out of your Marie Curie Fellowship if your project is still active.

We hope lifetime membership will be a simpler and straightforward way to keep members active in our association for a longer time and allow the MCFA to reach wider and more diverse body of researchers that can increase the scope and cooperation between present and past fellows.

The option to pay for a lifetime membership will be made available on our website shortly or you can request it now by contacting MCFA's Treasurers at treasurer@mariecurie.org.

With best regards,

MCFA Board

Eligibility to join the MCFA

In the previous Letter to Members, the eligibility criteria were not clearly explained, here is the complete list:
MCFA membership is open to researchers who have benefited from mobility research training grants by the European Commission:

- individual Marie Curie fellows (EIF, IIF, OIF, COFUND) from the 6th and 7th Framework Programmes (FP6 and FP7);
- Marie Curie Host fellows (EST, RTN, ITN, TOK, EXT and IAPP) from FP6 and FP7;
- recipients of Marie Curie reintegration grants (IRG and ERG);
- Marie Curie fellows from FP 5 (Improving Human Potential - IHP) and FP 4 (Training and Mobility of Researchers - TMR);
- individual fellows from the Human Capital and Mobility programme of FP3;
- individual fellows within one of the programmes for Research, Training and Mobility of FP 2 or FP 1;
- fellows within a Research Training Network from one of the framework programmes up to and including FP 5 whose fellowship had a duration of at least one year;
- Considering the statutes of the MCFA "Any person not completing a Marie Curie fellowship or having held a Marie Curie fellowship for less than one year can become a full member at the discretion of the board". Therefore fellows with fellowships like IRSES are also welcome to join the association; they just have to make a request to the MCFA Board.

Thank you for your support!

MCFA Board
Evolution of MCFA’s web infrastructure

The http://mcfa.eu/ website is currently migrated from one server to another, and the responsibility is transferred from one webmaster to another (who is then going to develop a new version, as voted at the 2009 General Assembly). This transfer is not without any risks and difficulties, so please be patient if you encounter problems with the website.

There are already a few known issues with the current web site at http://mcfa.eu/:
- our domain name records are not yet updated correctly, so don't be surprised if you are redirected to the IP address 67.20.105.217 (this is normal, for the moment)
- in some cases, after you have logged in on http://mcfa.eu/, you may be required to log in again on http://67.20.105.217/mcfa_web/. In order to avoid this problem, you can log in directly to the latter address.
- the credit card payment form doesn't work anymore. If you still have to pay your membership fees for 2010, please do so by bank transfer, or use the Word or PDF forms (bank account details and forms for credit card payment are available at http://67.20.105.217/mcfa_web/site/memberArea/fees.php after login)

We are sorry for the inconvenience this may cause. In any case, it should remain possible to contact us at office@mariecurie.org. 

MCFA Office

Careers, funding, and networking opportunities

Call for Marie Curie Fellowships (IEF/IOF/IIF)

The 2010 Marie Curie Individual Fellowship call is now open:
- Intra-European Fellowships (IEF)
- International Incoming Fellowships (IIF)
- International Outgoing Fellowships (IOF)

New in the Intra-European fellowships is the creation of a multidisciplinary career restart panel which aims at encouraging researchers to return to research after a career break.

Deadline: 17 August 2010.

EMBO long-term fellowship

The European Molecular Biology Organisation (EMBO) welcomes applications for Long-Term Fellowships. The fellowships are awarded for a period of up to two years and support post-doctoral research visits to laboratories throughout Europe and the world. Applications are only considered from candidates with a maximum of three years postdoctoral experience.


Masters, PhD and Post-doc opportunities in bioinorganic chemistry

The Bioinorganic Chemistry and Peptide Design laboratory at the Instituto de Tecnología Química e Biológica,
Dr. Olga Iranzo  
ITQB-UNL  
Av. da República, Estação Agronómica Nacional  
2780-157 Oeiras, Portugal  
phone: (+351) 21 446 97 36  
email: oiranzo@itqb.unl.pt  

XING Premium for MCFA Members  

We have negotiated with the professional social network XING, where MCFA has a Group (https://www.xing.com/net/mcfa/), that we can offer 24 months (in total) of XING Premium subscription for free to members of the group who request it. If you are interested, please become a member of the MCFA group (if you aren’t already), and ask us (by writing to the moderators of the group). We plan to offer 2 months per person in a first-come, first-served basis, with priority to MCFA members.

Christos Christoglou  

Balancing mobility and personal lives: a MCFA survey on “Dual Career”  

A key opportunity in whatever stage of a researcher’s career is experiencing some mobility. Mobility represents an invaluable way to acquire new knowledge, new know-how, to keep an open mind, to exchange views on scientific issues, to develop an useful job-related network, not to mention the value of a personal experience in a different culture.

A Green Paper was published last April by the EC, “Inventing our future together. The European Research Area: new perspectives” [COM (2007) 161 final].
This Paper identifies as a priority the need for “an adequate flow of competent researchers with high levels of mobility between institutions, disciplines, sectors and countries”.

Thus, mobility seems to be more and more a key feature in a researcher’s career. Nonetheless, researchers’ mobility can clash with their own personal lives as it can affect their relationships, their families and the previous social environment to be left behind. This becomes even harder if we consider that both members of a couple may be required to be mobile and would pursue their own careers. Even more problems arise in families with children.

The proportion of dual-career couples is increasing among scientists, thus it is worthwhile to explore this issue further. Moreover, according to some studies, the number of women scientists abroad decreases drastically in subsequent stages of their career. Thus, mobility is partly gender sensitive also if reasons have not yet been deeply investigated. This issue needs to be addressed in some way to ensure equal opportunities to male and female scientists for seizing opportunities and benefits offered by mobility programmes.

The MCFA started to focus on dual career last year, when a dedicated science policy group was set up. One of the goals of this group is to collect information directly from Fellows’ experience. The following step would be to imagine actions that could be taken to help researchers when dealing with dual career problems. And of course, we should struggle for the implementation of crucial measures.

If mobility brings many advantages, appropriate answers should be given to tackle possible disadvantages. Sustaining the development of researchers’ careers while promoting a better balancing of personal and working life is of key importance.

A first paper has been written about the experience of a few of us and it will be published soon. Our next step will be to take a snapshot of the situation. Being a MC Fellow, you experienced mobility in your life, maybe even more than once. Then probably you have had to face this issue! How was your experience? Could you reconcile your career’s goal with your partner’s ones? What about your family life? What kind of measures could have served you better?

That is what we would like to know through our new survey. Your participation could directly affect the future of others … and your own! A questionnaire will be sent through our mailing list. Answers will be kept anonymous. The results of this survey will be presented during the session “Dual Career: how many computations to transform it into an advantage?” which will be held in Torino during the ESOF 2010. Please, join our effort to improve scientists’ mobility!

These results of the survey will moreover merge into a document together with contributions coming from the aforementioned workshop. We wish to send it to the European Commission in order to highlight the importance of facing the “dual career” issue and to urge more actions to sustain researchers.

We invite all MC Fellows to take part to the survey. These kind of actions are a real and efficient tool we have in order to push things forward. So, please, invest a few minutes in this!

Maria Antonietta Buccheri
Marie Curie Actions Survey

As part of the EU-funded project “Trans-National co-operation among National Contact Points for Marie Curie Actions (People NCP’s)” we are carrying out a survey to assess various aspects of the Marie Curie Actions in the 7th Framework Programme. This survey is addressed to current or recent holders of a Marie Curie Fellowship or Reintegration Grant from FP7, where we also use the term “Marie Curie Fellowship” for secondment periods within Marie Curie host actions such as the Industry-Academia Partnerships and Pathways (IAPP) or the International Research Staff Exchange Scheme (IRSES).

The aim of this survey is to gather feedback regarding the correspondence between the different schemes and the needs of the researchers benefiting from them, and to find out about any specific issues that hinder a smooth implementation or prevent maximizing the positive impact of these actions. The questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete (depending on how many comments users want to make). Your contribution is highly appreciated and will help future generations of Marie Curie fellows to benefit from a similar or even better experience. This survey is anonymous. Responses will be used exclusively for this evaluation, and reported in aggregate form only. Contact details will not be passed to any third parties. The survey can be found at: http://peoplenet.it.fmi.uni-sofia.bg/survey.php?sid=30

Celia Gallagher

Request for case studies or personal experience of Researchers

The University of Cambridge (UK) and the University of Padua (Italy) are supporting a European Union Expert Group tasked with looking at possible changes to Social Security and supplementary Pension provisions in member countries designed to facilitate researcher mobility.

The expert group is focusing on:

• Identifying the most typical problems and challenges encountered by mobile researchers in the area of social security and supplementary pensions, taking into account typical mobility and career paths of researchers.

• Assessing the appropriateness of current social security co-ordination rules vis-à-vis most recurrent typologies of researchers' working status (employee, self-employed, stipendee, posted, etc.) and mobility paths and making concrete proposals on how to solve current problems, which may include recommending administrative changes, implementation guidelines or when appropriate legislative changes of current EU social security co-ordination rules.

• Analysing existing supplementary pension schemes for researchers and status and nature of bi- and/or multilateral agreements between supplementary pension providers making it possible for mobile researchers to cumulate pension rights, and proposing operational conclusions on possibilities of setting up and/or replicating supplementary pension schemes for researchers, and developing bi- and/or multilateral agreements on cumulation of supplementary pension rights.

The results of the work undertaken by this expert group are aimed to provide relevant input to the Joint Competitiveness/EPSCO Council meeting in early March 2010. They will
also provide valuable input to the work of the ERA Steering Group Human Resources and Mobility, as well as to possible new Commission initiatives on new patterns of mobility and related to the portability of supplementary pension rights that may be adopted in the future.

A key part of the work is to collect case examples – personal experiences of mobile researchers (either moving within the EU or coming to the EU from outside) relating to any social security/supplementary pensions issues impacted by their mobility. If you have such an example please could you email Catherine O’Brien at mco223@admin.cam.ac.uk. These examples will strongly assist in the work that is underway to evaluate the changes needed to encourage and facilitate mobility across countries and employment sectors.

Catherine O’Brien

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**Publications**

**Call for papers**

**Journal of Economics & Sociology**

Economics & Sociology ([www.csr.co.ua](http://www.csr.co.ua)) is a bi-annual international scholarly journal published by Centre of Sociological Research and Foundation of International Studies at the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences, Ukraine dedicated to advancing socio-economics analyses of societies and economy, institutions and organizations, groups, networks and interactions.

Topics of interest for the above area include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Interdisciplinary Approach to Economics and Sociology
- Recent Issues in Economic Development
- Recent Issues in Sociological Research

Extended papers (approx. 8-12 pages) should be sent by e-mail to yuriy_bilan@yahoo.co.uk by 20th January and by 20th May each year. Papers will be 8-12 pages (1,0-spaced) including abstract, keywords, JEL-classification, bibliographic references and tables.

Papers accepted all year round, waiting time: max. 6 months.

Charge included into the conference or seminar fee, organized by Centre of Sociological Research.

Finally, papers, as with all other aspects of the journal, can be sent to the Editor.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Jurij Bilan
Editor-in-Chief

Prof. Habil. Dr. Dainora Grundey
Deputy Editor-in-Chief
Specific concerns of SHS Fellow

The EU Commission is giving more importance to Social and Human Sciences in the 7th Framework Program. However, whether the specific needs of these disciplines, notably in terms of publication, are properly addressed remains questionable.

There seems to be some contradictions between the implicit norms of publication promoted by the Excellence Policy of the 7th FP and the everyday practice of locally inserted Social Scientists. Among the underlying trends pervading the Marie Curie rhetorics for Social Disciplines, some derive from a conception of Research that is heavily inspired by the practices of Natural Sciences.

To begin with, the 7th FP is underlying the importance of publication of articles in international peer-reviewed journals, whereas the career of the majority of Social Scientists is linked to the publication of books. This discrepancy might be experienced as a difference between European expectations and more local (including national) forms of recognition.

Furthermore, the 7th FP is promoting publication in international Journals, which is of course an excellent thing per se, but tends to impose English as an exclusive language. Now, if there is little doubt that English is the lingua franca for research communication concerning natural (and formal) sciences, most of the Social Sciences remain linked to a certain linguistic diversity (whose logic does not only correspond to that of national territories). Whether this is good or not is not for the EU Commission to decide: to internationalize research is one thing; to proceed with an English-only Policy is another one, which can all the more be questioned since the official European « Philosophy » concerning languages does foster cultural diversity on a large scale (not only within the administration). A more mature, explicit and official « more-than-English » orientation is indeed much needed, in order to bridge the gap between international expectations and local practices. Forcing (through soft « normative » power) Scientists, especially Social Scientists, to write only in English is tantamount to a not-so-fair Tax Policy over non native speakers.

Finally, and this remark also concerns « hard » sciences, there seem to be some an ambiguous relationship between the EU research policy and the Open Culture movement. Indeed, the 7th FP is promoting excellence publication in well-known journals, which happen to be of limited access (not « open access », especially for non digital journals) and « proprietary », in their vast majority, i.e. using a « hard » version of the copyright licences (« all rights reserved »). Now the EU has widely accepted the norms of the Berlin Declaration concerning Open Access to Knowledge [http://oa.mpg.de/openaccess-berlin/berlindeclaration.html]. What is more, a growing movement insists on the necessity to promote re-usable legal licences (of the Creative Commons type, i.e. “some rights reserved” [http://creativecommons.org/]), which are both protecting intellectual property and allowing the digital dissemination of remixable resources on a large scale. The ERA should therefore take a stand on an issue a clear statement showing its support to Open Access/Content ways of
producing and distributing Knowledge [It could for instance support the Public Domain Manifesto Initiative: http://publicdomainmanifesto.org/].

Philippe Lacour

We would like you to share with us your experience as a Fellow, good or bad: has your funding been taken away by someone else in the lab? Were the conditions of the contracts different than promised? Did you feel a lack of support from your lab or the EC management? Or on the contrary everything went fine and the MC fellowship helped you start a successful career. More generally, we also welcome articles about your views on European Science policy. Please send an email to office@mariecurie.org (Subject line: "Speaker's corner") to be published in this section in the next Letter to Members.

Upcoming events

**Green Week 2010**

The Green Week 2010 Conference will be held between 1-4 June in Brussels, Belgium. This year the largest annual conference on European environment policy turns the spotlight on biodiversity. The conference will address the state of biodiversity in Europe and the world, the benefits it brings, present-day pressures it is facing, and possible solutions to the current rates of loss.

**ESOF2010**

The Early-bird registration for the ESOF2010 (Torino, 2-7 July 2010) is open until May 31.

The latest news regarding the conference can be found in the last ESOF newsletter.

**Marie Curie Conference at ESOF**

Boost your career at the Marie Curie Conference (30 June-2 July)! The Marie Curie Conference lasting a day and a half prior to the main ESOF conference will offer fellows special opportunities to broaden their career perspectives and further exploit their potential as Marie Curie Fellows. The conference will include a training session on how to access EC funding and how to write successful grant proposals. There will also be a series of workshops on how creative academics can exploit their research potential in the private sector, how to exploit their fundamental research, and how to communicate to a non-specialised audience. Opportunities in alternative careers and skills needed by researchers will be discussed with specialists. Participants will also play an active role through poster sessions and will get coaching by experts on poster presentations. Fellows will have the opportunity to share their success stories of dissemination and explore how to reach out and create synergies with other scientific fields. More experienced fellows
will also give guidance on making a success of your career in Academia.

All participants in this satellite meeting will be automatically registered to the ESOF conference. The joint participation fee covering both the Marie Curie satellite and the main ESOF event can be charged to your Marie Curie contract.

**Research Career Fair**

APEC (French association for the employment of executives and managers) is pleased to announce the new session of: RESEARCH, the European Research Career Fair Paris, Centquatre, 19 November 2010.

For European companies and SMEs, research centers, cluster, universities, State-owned institutions… RESEARCH is an opportunity to:

- Diversify your competences and recruit new talents to build your future R&D teams.
- Increase your visibility and attractiveness in Europe, promote your action plans
- Find new contacts to develop strong European partnerships for your research projects

Researchers, PhD students attend RESEARCH and:

- Meet major European Research organisations which are recruiting
- Benefit from personalised professional advice for your career and European mobility
- Exchange ideas with other researchers and take contacts.

Well-known economic and institutional key players will testify about their career in research and discuss about researchers’ career challenges in Europe.

Registrations will be open mid-June.

**WATOC 2011 Satellite Conference**

Strongly correlated systems, cooperativity, and valence-bond theory

This is an early invitation for theoretical chemists, physicists, and mathematicians to take part of next year’s international workshop of the World Association of Theoretical and Computational Chemists (WATEC). The Satellite of 2011 World Congress of WATOC will be held 23-25 July, 2011 in Coruna, Spain. The maximum number of participants will be limited to approximately 100. The aim is to bring together researchers in a pleasant location to address difficult problems concerning electronic structure: molecules, nano-structures, and beyond.

**Award & Conference ITWIIN**

The second edition of the Award & Conference ITWIIN (24 June, Bari, Confindustria Congress Hall) is managed by DISTI (Distretto dell’Informazione Scientifica e Tecnologica per l’Innovazione). Other partners of the initiative are as follows: CNR, Regione Puglia, ARTI (Agenzia Regionale per la Tecnologia e l’Innovazione), Ufficio Consiglieria di Parità della Regione Puglia, Politecnico di Bari, Italgest, IAMB, ANFeA, BTI (BridgesToItaly), Telpress, De Simone&Partners, Studio Petruzzelli (Vicenza)
The competition awards 5000 euro and consultancy services for the Best Inventor and the Best Innovator.

The Conference will address the issue "Information: between Research and Enterprise", on the role that a right information can play between researchers and entrepreneurs for the knowledge and technology transfer. The conference and the award ceremony will take place the 24th of June in Bari, at the Congress Center of Confindustria. In the context of ITWIIN 2010 Competition, the Partners offer three Special Prizes:

- **THE PREMIO AWARD** - Honouring Italian Women Scientists in America, for the Italian women scientist most voted by the community of researchers and professionals of the social network of the Californian association Bridges To Italy.
- **The Recognition AIWEC (Award for an Innovative Professional Woman in the Euro-Mediterranean Cooperation in Agriculture)**, jointly assigned by the Istituto Agronomico Mediterraneo di Bari-Valenzano (IAMB) and ITWIIN, is for a women expert who, developed in the IAMB, started a working path for foster the dialogue and the cooperation and for maintaining collaborations between Europe and the Mediterranean in the agriculture field.
- The **Premio DISTI-TELPRESS**: DISTI (Distretto dell'Informazione Scientifica e Tecnologica per l'Innovazione) e TELPRESS Italia Spa awards with 500 euro the author of the project who have expressed major efficacy in the communication.

The information to participate to THE PREMIO AWARD are at [http://bridgestoitaly.ning.com/](http://bridgestoitaly.ning.com/). For information and participation to the other Special Prize write to itwiin.premio@gmail.com.

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**News in Brief**

**Commission to cut research funding red tape**

The European Commission has set out its plans to simplify the procedures for taking part in EU-funded research projects. The Commission hopes that cutting red tape in this way will entice the very best researchers to get involved in the framework programmes. The communication (Simplifying the Implementation of the Research Framework Programmes) is available in the documents area of the EC Research website.

**The 2009 Science, Economy and Society Highlights**

The 2009 Science, Economy and Society Highlights are now published. The publication brings in an attractive form an overview of the many activities carried out in 2009 by Directorate L - Science, Economy and Society of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Research. The Directorate has the responsibility of managing both the Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities (SSH) and the Science in Society (SIS) Programmes.
Research in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities - Towards a New Approach

The leaflet "Research in Socio-economic Sciences and Humanities - Towards a New Approach" is available in 24 languages on the European Commissions Research website. The European Commission, in consultation with various stakeholders, identified a number of important current Societal Challenges for the European Union. These will be addressed by the 2010-2013 Work Programmes and, as examples, include "Changing the role of the financial system to better serve economic, social and environmental objectives", "Creating and adapting jobs in Europe in the context of a sociocological transition" and "Europe facing a rising multi-polar world".

FP7 contribution to sustainable development

The European Commission's services have published a web-based tool which monitors the expected impacts of FP7 on the objectives of the EU renewed Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS). This tool is based on a cross-reading of the two framework documents, i.e. FP7 (especially the Cooperation Specific Programme) and the EU SDS (split into 78 operational objectives derived directly from the text). Registered users (registration is free of charge and open to everyone) can use this tool to produce charts and tables presenting the data according to the structure of FP7 as well as the structure of the EU SDS. Data is available on topic and on project (including budget) level.

You are strongly encouraged to explore www.FP7-4-SD.eu and make active use of this tool, in order to foster the debate about the alignment of EU-funded cooperative research to societal challenges.

Online survey on the European Research for Sustainable Development portal

The European Commission "Research for Sustainable Development" website (http://ec.europa.eu/research/sd) was launched in November 2007. This portal aims at presenting consolidated information about the multiple ways through which European research is mobilised for sustainable development. In addition to providing access to key documents and publications on sustainable development research, the portal also links to national and regional initiatives on sustainable development research and highlights relevant events and initiatives.

We are in the process of relaunching of the "Research for Sustainable Development" portal. In this perspective, we would really benefit from your feedback and suggestions for improvement on the portal content and features.

You are kindly invited to participate in this survey by visiting the website or by directly accessing the survey form.

Your opinion counts!

From Science Careers

Careers Beyond the Bench

After completing their graduate studies, many scientists have moved away from the bench and found rewarding careers in areas from grant administration to venture capital. While still making
use of the training and skills gained during graduate school, these "alternative" careers are a better match for many.

**Systems Biology and Bioinformatics: Something for Everyone**

Systems biology and bioinformatics want you. These highly collaborative fields are looking for biologists, engineers, chemists, mathematicians, and computer programmers.

**Lab Management: The Human Elements**

You've reached a career milestone: managing your own lab. This recognition of your achievements attests to your hard work, attention to detail, commitment to a goal—and outstanding science. But be prepared. You're about to face challenges you may not have considered.

**Conventions of Scientific Authorship**

The rules and conventions of authorship are ever-changing and rarely clear, but early-career scientists need to master them.

**Taken for Granted: Trying to Account for Tastes**

Research finds that scientists' career-related preferences are far wider than stereotypes suggest -- and that industry is likely to be an excellent choice for many.

**Mythbusting for Academics: Considering a Job in Biotech/Pharma**

Although academia and industry differ in many ways, the two environments are ultimately more similar than they are different.

Please feel free to forward this Letter to Members to your colleagues and friends, even if they are not Marie Curie Fellows!

We also remind you that you are encouraged to use the MCFA flyers, available from the Internal Documents: [http://mcfa.eu/site/memberArea/internalDocuments.php](http://mcfa.eu/site/memberArea/internalDocuments.php).

This Letter is edited by the Association des Boursiers Marie Curie a.i.s.b.l. (Marie Curie Fellows Association), [http://mcfa.eu/](http://mcfa.eu/). Editors: Anett Kiss ([anett.z.kiss@plantphys.umu.se](mailto:anett.z.kiss@plantphys.umu.se)) and Samer Zaky ([shz33@pitt.edu](mailto:shz33@pitt.edu)) Director of publication: G. Kofod. Please send requests about articles in this Letter and submissions for the next Letter to Members to [office@mariecurie.org](mailto:office@mariecurie.org).