

# Marie Curie Fellows Association



## Letter to Members

January-February 2008

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Dear MCFA Members,

We wish you a happy and successful new year!

Please find enclosed some news about our Association.

*The MCFA board*

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## Life of the Association

### Short news from the board

- Several *board meetings* have been held using VoIP (Skype): on January 10 and February 7 (special meeting on sponsorships and the Associations “business plan”) and 12. This is a welcome addition to the Board discussions by e-mail and on the discussion forum, for a better run of the Associa-

tion.

- The “Administrative Board” section of the website has been updated, with a *presentation of the new administrative board members*: (<http://mcf.eu/> – About us – Administrative Board). Please see the calls below if you wish to be part of the Advisory Board or participate actively in the life of the Association!

## Revision of the Statutes

As mentioned in the last Letter, in the process of revising the Statutes of MCFA the month of January has been devoted to checking their English translation, as the official version is French and the discussion is more likely to be held in English. No major problems have been found yet by the administrative and advisory board members. You can still help check the current version using the table provided at: <http://eric.buchlin.org/private/mcfastatree4vuir/>.

It has been planned to devote the month of February to the proposal of several options for changing the Statutes. You are welcome to participate to the discussion: please send you ideas and comments to [board@mariecurie.org](mailto:board@mariecurie.org).

As written in the last Letter, here are some ideas for changes:

- Meeting the current quorum at an ordinary Annual General Meeting (AGM) has become “mission impossible”, making people’s travel to the AGM from all over Europe almost pointless. We need to address this issue by releasing partly the quorum constraints (which can be dangerous), and/or allowing the EGM to be held at the same place and day as the AGM, or any ideas you might have.
- There is a lack of continuity in the board: each year, people with valuable experience and contacts leave, for various reasons, and the new board needs to learn everything from scratch; a term of one year is too short and there is no mechanism for transferring experience and contacts. One solution would be to have a board renewed each year by half or third.
- Marie Curie fellowships are evolving, with new schemes which are only co-funded by the EC: these new fellows are excluded from the Association by the present Statutes. The existing structure of affiliates / associate / full members may be too complicated anyway. [affiliates don’t exist in the Statutes! and their legality (making anyone to be a member of an Association without explicit consent) is questionable

anyway, as said by Mike Rogers at the AGM in London]

- On the other hand it may be useful to have institutional members in addition to ordinary members.

*Éric Buchlin*

## Please participate!

Dear Members of the MCFA, and everybody else reading our small publication,

At the Annual General Assembly last year in London, I was encouraged by other members of the Board to run for Chair. I was of course happy to be called for, but also anxious, since to be honest with you, I had only been actively involved in the MCFA for about a year. How could I contribute given my experience?

It was clear that no people with more experience were available. People involved with the MCFA for longer time tend to lead very hectic lives, involved in their own companies, heavy bureaucracy or large research projects. This will happen to YOU too! I therefore accepted that it was now my turn to offer what I could for the MCFA, which I find is a unique and uniquely important organization.

*Now I ask YOU, the Member reading this Letter, to also join up and help!* Between us, the Board members can only keep the MCFA alive, we cannot make the big difference we think the MCFA is capable of. That requires extra hands, and that means YOU!

Please consider taking a couple of hours out each week, to join up in one of the activities which makes the MCFA. Many National Groups need new active leaders. We would like more people to participate in developing policy, and writing policy papers. We need people to help contacting potential new members, and we need people to help us take care of the little things that are necessary to keep the MCFA running.

We think the MCFA is the only organization which speaks up for all mobile researchers in Europe, this is your chance to participate!

*Guggi Kofod - Chair*

## Membership renewal

We would like to thank all of you who already renewed their membership for 2008 and also the new Fellows who have recently joined the Association.

*We warmly invite Fellows who still did not pay to do it before March, the 1st.* After this date the status of those who did not renew their membership status will automatically be set to "MCFA affiliate". You will be able to upgrade to regular membership by paying your membership fee at any moment of the coming year, should you change your mind later on.

Full membership benefits include access to the database of current and former Marie Curie Fellows (including contact details, professional profile, and contract data), access to MCFA discussion forum, access to internal documents (including administrative and financial reports, meeting minutes, collaboration documents). Furthermore, MCFA membership entitles you to vote at the Annual General Assembly and to otherwise actively participate in decision making, policy formulation, and contribute to MCFA publications. Full membership is also required in order to candidate for a position in the Administrative or Advisory Board.

Membership fee is payable either by credit card or via international bank transfer. You will find more information on the main page of our website. In this occasion, please update also your records in the database. Keeping the record updated help us to provide you with information which may be of your interest.

If you are an affiliate, we invite you to upgrade your status to full member. To do so, you have only to pay the fee for the current year. Full members have access to a number of membership benefits and are favoured by allocation of funds available to MCFA.

Please note that current fellows can ask their host institution to pay the membership fee for them, as they have been declared "eligible research costs of a Marie Curie Fellowship contract" by the European Commission. Details concerning this arrangement can be found on the "fees information page" as well.

If you know somebody who is a Marie Curie Fellow in your institution, please invite him to join the MCFA!

*The Administrative Board*

## Call for the MCFA Advisory Board

The main role of the Advisory Board is to give advice to the Administrative Board as well as to deal with specific tasks. Its action is of great value for the Association as the Administrative Board could not undertake such a broaden range of tasks alone.

Last year the Administrative Board could rely on strong support by an Advisory Board of ten people, with varied backgrounds, ages and careers. They constantly helped us to reach concrete goals with their expertise or giving us advice or encouragement. We are grateful to them. You can find their names and profiles on our website: <http://mcfa.eu> > About us > Advisory board.

Fortunately for MCFA, the majority of these people will continue to be part of the Advisory Board. Nevertheless, the Association needs more people working on some specific topics. That's why we publish a call for the following positions:

1. PR Associate: visibility of the MCFA needs to be increased. The PR Associate/s will assist the Administrative Board in the Public Relations of the MCFA. Among others, his/her tasks will include: liaise with partners organisations and the media, write articles to promote the MCFA, make new contacts.  
Profile: proactive, motivated and enthusiastic, communication skills are a must. Consistent, reliable.
2. Fund Raising Advisor/Campaigner: we are looking for an extremely motivated individual who will orient the board in fund raising campaigns for the MCFA. It is important to notice that this person will not necessarily carry on fund raising campaigns requiring external input, although a certain degree of self-confidence is required.  
Profile: Motivated, experience in fund raising would be a plus but it is not necessary. Reliable, business-driven, like challenges, able to meet targets.
3. Science Policy Advisors: This call is targeting people with knowledge of European Institutions to assist the board in publishing statements and to follow the developments of Science Policy in Europe. We also

welcome people interested in Science Policy but who are not interested in becoming members of the Advisory Board, to join the "Science Policy Panel".

Profile: Experience in European policy is a plus. Consistent, reliable. Good team player.

4. Editorial Team: People involved in this task will supervise the Newsletter (that is launched 4 times per year). They will work in close contact with Eric Buchlin. They will bring up new ideas for each issue and will follow the preparation of these publications.

Profile: motivated, reliable, consistent. Can meet tight deadlines.

The life of the Association depends on the involvement of its members. *We warmly invite you to apply to the Advisory Board call.* Do not underestimate how important it is that we get YOUR support.

If you are interested in being member of the Advisory Board, even if you are not sure in which area you could work, send us your application (CV + short motivation e-mail) to [board@mariecurie.org](mailto:board@mariecurie.org). Deadline for applications is the 10th of March 2008.

We are looking forward to working with you!

*Maria Antonietta Buccheri*

## From our members, and other announcements

### Workshop on FP7 in biotechnology

Frank Heemskerk is participating to the organization of an International Coaching Workshop "Creating R&D value - Roads to Capital" at the Fondation Sophia Antipolis on 21 and 22 February 2008. This workshop is free of charge and will provide extensive information on the 7th EU-framework programme opportunities, calls and project proposal; Intellectual Property, partnerships, adding value to technology; incubation and business planning; alternative funding opportunities (venture capital, etc.). Online registration is open at <http://www.match2biosme.com/content.asp?id=61>.

### Research project on international mobility: please help

The Institute for Social Studies of University of Warsaw is carrying out a research project on international mobility of academics and their participation in European research cooperation. Their main aim is to research the motivation for going abroad and the potential benefits and costs of international mobility and international academic cooperation of Marie Curie Fellowship recipients. The research will be anonymous. Your

answers will remain confidential and will be used solely for academic purposes, processed only in order to create statistical data. If you are interested in helping them, please contact Dominika Walczak [dominika.walczak@uw.edu.pl](mailto:dominika.walczak@uw.edu.pl), who is conducting this research as part of her PhD project.

### "International Talent meets Dutch Life Sciences"

Up to 50 persons will be selected for a travel bursary and a free stay during 19 to 22 May 2008 in Amsterdam, the Netherlands to attend a special programme that will allow them to meet Dutch companies, universities and research institutes in life sciences.

The aim is to introduce the career opportunities in the Dutch Life Sciences sector to talented researchers from outside the Netherlands. The ultimate goal is to recruit new employees for Dutch Life Sciences companies and institutes.

More information on the programme, the participating organisations, the costs covered and on the application procedure can be found at <http://www.biocareerevent.nl/page/123/68>

## News in Brief

### From Science Careers

Please read these articles and others at <http://sciencecareers.sciencemag.org/> or click on the titles below (if you are reading the electronic version of this Letter to Members):

#### Maximizing Productivity and Recognition, Part 2: Collaboration and Networking

The article focus on collaboration and networking, “including getting the most out of scientific meetings and improving your chances that others will know you and your research well enough to write strong letters for promotion”.

#### Learning to Manage

A workshop series aims to teach project-management skills to young scientists before they need them.

#### Mind Matters: Leaving a Lab Gracefully

When it’s time to leave the lab, the key is to make sure the end isn’t bitter.

#### Research Integrity: Making the Right Choices

Early-career scientists need to learn to hold themselves to high ethical standards.

### Finding the Way Back to a First (Career) Love

It’s not unusual for scientists to find themselves well along a scientific career path before recognizing that their interests are waning or aren’t quite strong enough to carry them through a Ph.D., a postdoc, and tenure. One approach is to reconsider an old hobby or passion that you discarded or never considered as a career.

#### Mastering Your Ph.D.: Dealing With Difficult Colleagues

In an ideal world, your lab would contain only bright, capable people working harmoniously together in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. If this describes your lab, count yourself lucky, because most scientists work in close quarters with at least one person who tries your patience or is difficult to get along with.

#### Faculty Positions: Seeking the Skills for a Successful Career in Academia

The article deal with skills needed to succeed in the academic career. People who have achieved high levels of success in academia have been interviewed to provide specific, practical advice to others who would follow in their path. “The key, it seems, is making a conscientious effort to develop the necessary skills early on.”

## Upcoming Events

### EPWS Annual Conference, Vilnius, June 2008

The European Platform of Women Scientists EPWS cordially invites you to the First EPWS Annual Conference 2008 “Women Shaping Science”, organised in collaboration with BASNET, the Baltic States Network: Women in Sciences and High Technology, in Vilnius, Lithuania, on 5-7 June 2008.

Contributions: Please send your abstract (around 250 words) using the respective applica-

tion forms in attachment to [conference2008@epws.org](mailto:conference2008@epws.org) by 8 March 2008.

The full announcement can be found at <http://www.epws.org/>.

### IEEE Networking meeting in Dresden

A Marie Curie Networking event is planned as a part of the IEEE conference in October in Dresden.

## Past Meetings with MCFA Participation

### Regional conference on Equal Opportunities in Bari

The regional conference on Equal Opportunities and the European Chart was held in Bari, Italy, on 11 February 2008. Its aim was to promote the European Chart for the Equality and Rights of Women and Men in the Local life – a chart that invites the local territorial bodies to use their power and their partnerships to implement a better equality of women and men. This chart was set up and promoted by the CCRE (Consiglio dei Comuni delle Regioni di Europa) and by its partners.

We have been invited to this conference by one of the speakers, Prof. Ennio Triggiani, currently head of Dept. of Law at Bari University, who gave in his presentation an excursus from the universal declaration of Human Rights to the Positive Actions of Maastricht, and the new programme PROGRESS (2007-2013) which groups all the direct actions to favour the equality between women and men.

The interesting concept already implemented in the Apulia Region is the Gender Budgeting, which integrates a gender policy into the financial processes and a planning of expenses, in order to promote the equality between women and men. This will have a direct impact in the quality of women life.

The European Chart for the Equality between women and men in the local life is directed to those local bodies and regions of Europe that have been invited to sign it, to take a public position on the principle of equality between women and men and to implement, in their territory, the tasks defined in the Chart.

To assure the implementations of the tasks, each signed body has to write an Action Plan for the Equality to set the priorities, actions, and resources needed to its implementation.

Further, each signed body is bounded to collaborate with all the Institutions and Organisations of the territory to actually promoter the set up of a true equality.

The Chart has been written in the context of the project (2005-2006) developed by the CCRE in collaboration with several partners and supported by the European Commission in the framework of the 5th Programme of Action at community level for the equality between women and men.

Gianna Avellis attended to the conference. It was very interesting to participate and to find contact people both at local Region of Apulia and the University of Bari, Comitato Pari Opportunità, for future collaboration with our working group m-WiSET (mobile Women in Science Engineering and Technology).

To this end, *we open a Call for Interest of the MCFA women researchers of the several National Groups, to participate in monitoring the current situation of women in MCFA, to compile “best practices” to increase the proportion of women in decision-making processes and positions, and to raise awareness on the conditions that facilitate women’s representation in decision-making processes.* The aim is provide the Commission with policy recommendations to advance women’s participation in this area and apply for a suitable Call in Science&Society of the 7th FP.

*Gianna Avellis*

### Erasmus Mundus meeting

The MCFA has been invited to the expert meeting on the Erasmus Mundus Joint Doctorate programme organized in Brussels on 19 February by the EC Directorate General for Education and Culture. The Association has been represented by our Secretary General Yegor Domanov.

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

*The MCFA Board*

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