

Newsletter of the PostDoc Network (PDN)

In July 2009, the Interactive Network of Senior Scientists (INESS) organised a meeting for the DKFZ PostDocs. The conclusion of this meeting was that PostDocs should improve their connectivity and set up some kind of representation towards the DKFZ administration. The organizing group worked one year to establish a structure for a Network. Recently Amel Tounsi, Torsten Hechler and Alexandra Kienast presented the concept of the PDN to Prof. Wiestler, who strongly endorses the initiative. The PDN aims to support PostDocs at different stages of their career at the DKFZ and to communicate their needs to the administration, e.g. welcoming, networking, training, grant application and career development. We would like to thank all PostDocs who registered and participated in the PDN meetings. The PDN as it stands would not have been possible without your support and active contributions.

Achievements of the PDN so far

1. Mailing list and electronic platform

At present we have a mailing list of approximately 130 PostDocs. To improve communication and information exchange we also established an own PostDoc SharePoint platform (<http://intracoop/sites/pdn>). This platform still needs to be improved; help from PostDocs interested in this aspect of PDN communication would be much appreciated. For the moment the PDN decided that scientists with a PhD degree, working under a termed (non permanent) contract and not supervising other PostDocs may register to the PostDoc SharePoint and be part of the PDN. The idea is that this platform should provide a confidential space of expression and exchange for junior PostDocs (senior PostDocs are invited to join INESS - just send an e-mail to iness@dkfz.de). In order to access the PDN- SharePoint, you will have to register by sending an e-mail to postdoc-node@dkfz.de. An e-mail with a code of conduct will be sent together with the confirmation of your registration. The SharePoint platform will enable us to:

- Improve communication and spread information between PostDocs.
- Share and discuss career related issues.
- Welcome the newcomers by providing them with relevant information concerning their life in Heidelberg and their work at the DKFZ.
- Provide and share information concerning grant applications and funding opportunities.

2. Communication with distinguished lecturers:

We achieved that two PostDocs may join the lunch session with distinguished lecturers at the DKFZ (as you may know, previously only PhD students were able to do so).

3. PDN/INESS cooperation:

We are working closely together with INESS members to take advantage of their experience and network. Several PostDocs have already participated in the INESS Scientific Retreat which took place on May 10th and 11th in 2010. On this occasion they presented their scientific work. Ample opportunity was offered to learn more about the Helmholtz Association and the DKFZ as well as exchange on career related issues. PostDocs have also already participated in the Dialogue of the senior scientists with the management board on the 15th of July 2010. Career development of advanced PostDocs was a central topic at this exchange.

4. Workshops for PostDocs:

As you may have noticed, the recent vocational training program (Weiterbildung) already includes several courses dedicated to and reserved for PostDocs. This improvement is a direct result of the first PostDoc-questionnaire you answered last year. To move along this way, a more refined questionnaire will be sent soon. Moreover, all of you who would like to gain additional social, management or working technique competences should check out the new seminar program (half English, half German) in the intranet.

[Personalabteilung/Weiterbildungsprogramm.pdf](#)

5. Helping new PostDocs:

We have collected some useful information for PostDocs who are new in Heidelberg or even new in Germany. You can download the files from the PDN SharePoint (<http://intracoop/sites/pdn/welcomegroup/>). We are also planning to deposit copies at the DKFZ human resources desk to be given out to new scientists when signing the working contracts.

Important Upcoming Events

Career Seminars:

We are planning a Career Seminar Series specifically for PostDocs. At these seminars one guest (a former PostDoc) who is now successfully pursuing a career outside of “classical” academic research will give a presentation. Afterwards there will be time to meet the speaker personally and discuss details with respect to career choices and success factors. We also plan to invite people from Human Resources Departments of international companies, to talk about their expectations towards new employees coming from institutes like the DKFZ. We are very excited about this plan and hope that you are, too.

The PDN Kick-Off meeting/party:

In order to present this newly established PDN to the DKFZ PostDocs and all other colleagues from the DKFZ, a kick-off meeting is planned for the end of this year. You will receive an invitation in timely manner. The PDN is looking forward to meeting all PostDocs at this big event!

Your help is needed in the following topics:

- PostDoc SharePoint platform,
- career seminars
- organisation of the kick-off party.

If you want to see your ideas put into action: join us!

Write to PostDoc-Network@dkfz.de

Please, forward this newsletter to other PostDocs.

The PDN Organizers



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