

Autumn Newsletter of the PostDoc Network

Editorial

Dear PostDocs,

The summer is over, and everyone returns to the labs refreshed and motivated (or so we hope).

We are happy to announce that some changes have been made in the structure of the PDN committee (see below). In addition to the PDN speaker, whose main task is to represent the PDN to the DKFZ management board, we now also have a deputy-speaker. The various focus groups remain active, and we continue to put the emphasis on career opportunities and networking.

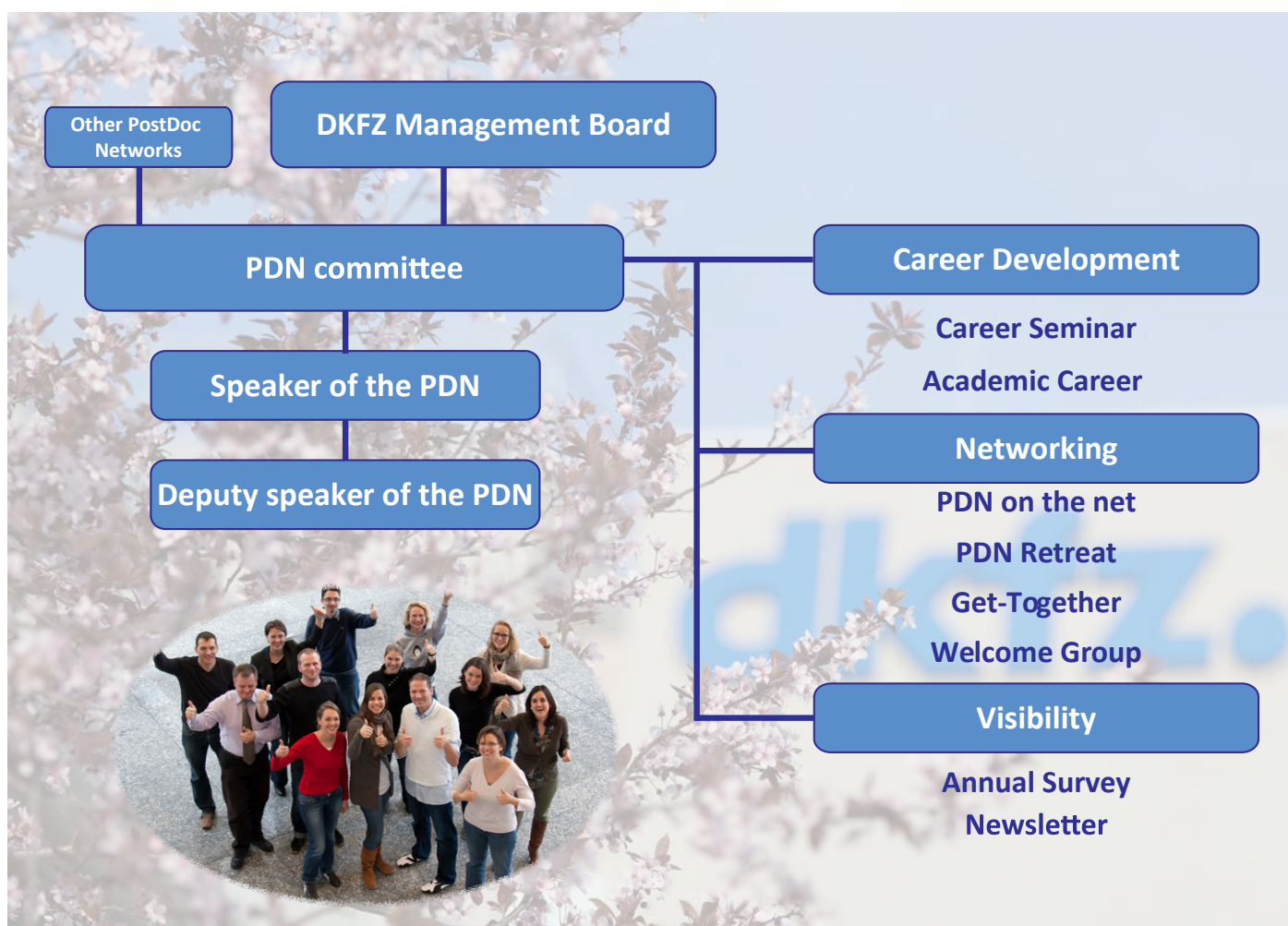
In this issue of the newsletter you will find an update on the Career Seminar series. At the 7th Career Seminar in June we touched the career perspectives for physicists and mathematicians. The next Career Seminar will give you the opportunity to evaluate your chances in publishing. Please see the article on page 3 for details.

The end of the year is approaching, and again everyone has a chance to get feedback on his career perspectives. From October until January employees including PostDocs and their supervisors are encouraged to lead a so-called Mitarbeiterjahresgespräch or appraisal interview. They are formally invited through the HCM-Portal to fix a date. We prepared a short description of the aims and benefits of these interviews, which you can find on page 4.

More on the topic of PostDoc perspectives and networking: the second annual PostDoc Retreat will take place in the end of October. Do not forget to register with a poster or oral presentation. Last year's retreat has been a great success, and we are looking forward to repeating this great experience with you.

Olga Ucar

Editor of the PDN Newsletter



Progress of the PDN and new structure



Maiwen Caudron-Herger
Former Speaker of the PDN

Since its launch, one of the principal activities of the PDN was the career seminar that is mainly hosting former PostDocs of the DKFZ, who now have a position in industry. Within the last months, the structure and the organization of the PDN evolved to better answer the needs of the current DKFZ PostDocs.

As depicted on the diagram, the PDN is currently organized in 3 main areas: Career Development, Networking and Visibility. The PDN has now two representatives, the Speaker of the PDN (and official contact person of the PDN) and a Deputy speaker. This dual system was chosen to ensure more stability in the PDN. Indeed, the main speaker is elected for a period of 18 months. At the same time a deputy speaker is elected, who is prepared to be the successor of the main speaker. This will facilitate future transitions and changes in the management of the PDN. The same principle is applied within each PDN group.

Our former speaker **Maiwen Caudron-Herger** stepped down to put more focus on the next steps in her academic career. She has successfully represented the PDN towards the management board and other groups within DKFZ as well as established contacts for PostDocs outside DKFZ especially on the campus in Heidelberg. Her work and support of other members of the PDN made the 1st PostDoc retreat last year possible. Maiwen also helped in further establishing the career seminar series as a successful event at the DKFZ. We are very grateful for her ongoing support and want to thank her for being our representative in the past. She will continue to play an important role

in the PDN by leading the academic career group, which will focus on gathering information on academic career advancement.

The PDN has elected two new representatives: **Sarah Mang** (main speaker) and **Inés Fernández Ulibarri** (deputy speaker). Sarah is a computer scientist and works in the group of Dr. Floca, Software development for Integrated Diagnostic and Therapy (E071) as a PostDoc since October 2009. Inés is a biologist and works in the group of Dr. Nettelbeck, Junior Research Group Oncolytic Adenovirus (F110) as a PostDoc since March 2009.

The PDN will continue to further improve the career seminar, the PostDoc retreat, and the annual PostDoc survey. Sarah and Inés want to additionally increase the efforts to recruit new members for the PDN and new PostDocs for the DKFZ and make the PDN more visible. To answer the demand from last year's survey we will also gather more information on academic career prospects for PostDocs to balance the more established career seminar series, which focuses on non-academic career paths.

The established working groups of the PDN will continue their work to improve the situation of PostDocs at DKFZ by providing information on career possibilities, answering specific questions regarding any aspect of PostDoc life, and providing space for scientific and non-scientific exchange between PostDocs. If you are interested in learning more about the PDN or would like to see your ideas come to life contact us (pdn@dkfz.de) or join our next meeting.



Sarah Mang
Speaker of the PDN

Sarah Mang and Maiwen Caudron-Herger

The PDN team needs you!

Working in the PDN you can meet other PostDocs, work in an interdisciplinary team, acquire and practice organizational skills, and have fun! We shape the life of the PostDoc community at DKFZ. Join the PDN to see your vision come true.

Currently we are in need of:

- **A treasurer:** You like to work with budget and bills? – We are looking for you!
- **Members of the survey group:** You like asking questions to get the right information and you like to generate convincing statistics from the answers? – We need you!
- **Members of the get-together group:** You like organizing meetings and have fun talking to other people? – Join us!

In July 2011 I met Maiwen Caudron-Herger (former speaker of the PDN) and she asked me if I would like to join the PDN committee. When I attended the regular PDN committee meeting for the first time, I received a very warm welcome and immediately became a part of the team. In my time as a member of the PDN committee I supported the career seminar group as well as the PDN retreat organization team. Additionally, as the treasurer I had to keep an eye on the finances of the PDN. I improved my social and project management skills, I met a lot of interesting Postdocs at the PDN with whom I discussed scientific as well as career development topics. Now it is time for me to leave the DKFZ and to join a project management department of an international pharmaceutical company. However, networking is a very important part of the career development and from my point of view the PDN is a great opportunity to get connected.



Julia Starmann

Mitarbeiterjahresgespräch/Appraisal Interviews – What's it all about?

The DKFZ Management Board acknowledges appraisal interviews as an important leadership tool. Therefore, an operating agreement (Dienstvereinbarung zu Mitarbeitergesprächen) was drafted and signed in 2010 (you can find the full text [in the intranet](#)).

What are the topics to be discussed?

Throughout the year, PostDocs and their supervisors discuss work-related issues on a regular basis. Beyond these routine meetings, the appraisal interview offers an excellent opportunity to intensively discuss short- and long-term professional goals as well as prerequisites needed in order to reach these goals. In addition, it is an occasion to contemplate how communication and performance might be improved and to obtain feedback with respect to overall performance and career development opportunities. Last but not least, PostDocs may also offer to give feedback to their supervisors.

How is an appraisal interview organized?

Duration of appraisal interview is approximately 1 to 1.5 hours. PostDoc and supervisor fix a date at least two weeks in advance, since both sides need to be well prepared. PostDocs who are not employed with a contract from the DKFZ will not be invited through the HCM-Portal to lead an appraisal interview with their supervisor. Nevertheless, every PostDoc may ask his supervisor for an appraisal interview.

You and your mentor are encouraged to keep record of the most important points discussed during the interview and use them as a basis for the following year's interview. Additionally, your supervisor will fill the online form at the HCM portal, and this will be accessible only to the Personal department.

What are your benefits?


Appraisal interviews help you define your situation and set professional goals for the future. Your mentor can advise you on the career path you want to follow and the measures you should take to be successful. It is also a great opportunity to discuss your short-term goals, e.g. special training courses and scientific meetings you would like to attend the following year. Many PostDocs think that it is essential to lead an appraisal interview once per year and to use the protocol from the previous year to have a realistic view of your achievements.



Upcoming events:

Get-together: Bellini's Bistro, 18:30,
11th of September & 9th of October

PDN committee meeting:
25th of September in BioQuant
(room 655), 17:00
8th of October in D0.01.021, 12:00



**Join the PostDoc Retreat
October 25-26, 2012 at Castle Diez
Registration will open soon**