

# Spring Newsletter of the PostDoc Network

**dkfz.**

## Editorial

Dear PostDocs,

The PostDoc Network (PDN) was established to represent the DKFZ PostDocs towards the management board and to help PostDocs expand their career goals and scientific interactions. This Newsletter features an overview of the PDN activities and detailed descriptions of various groups within PDN (see spread on pages 2 and 3). We at the PDN committee are convinced that the network is very useful in bringing PostDocs together (e.g. at the annual retreat) and in spreading information about our institute, living in Germany, careers in science and alternative career paths. The latest Career Seminar was focussed on the career paths in Project Management and again gathered a large audience, which included many PostDocs from DKFZ and outside (see article on page 4).

We also try to keep up with the changing PostDoc profiles by running an annual survey (see below). The survey helps us define the topics, which are relevant to current PostDocs. If we can identify your needs, we can make the seminar and retreat programmes more attractive. A full report on 2012 Survey will be published in the next PDN Newsletter.

As you all know, the PostDoc turnover is very high, and many active PDN members have left DKFZ recently. The PDN committee is always happy to welcome new members. Join us and see your ideas put into life!

Olga Ucar  
Editor of the PDN Newsletter

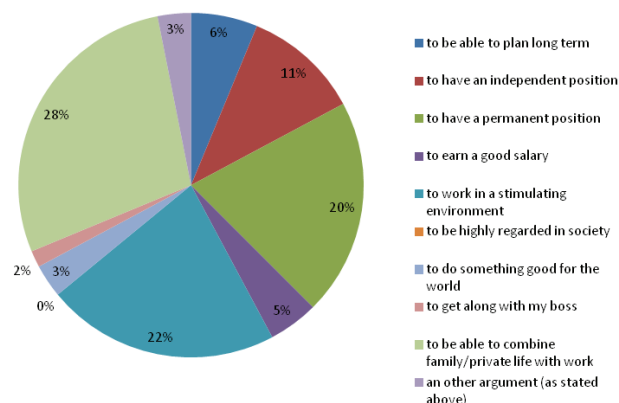


## Survey 2012

The survey 2012 is closed now. A special thank you goes to the 65 PostDocs that took the time to answer our survey. We are still evaluating the results, but so far we found that the PostDocs that responded this year were more experienced PostDocs; most of them obtained their PhD degree more than 2 years ago (83%). More than half of the PostDocs aim for a career in academia (53%), whereas 22% have not decided on a career path yet. The most important factor for career decisions is work-life balance followed by a stimulating environment. A more detailed report on the survey results will follow in the next PDN Newsletter.

Sarah Mang  
Coordinator of the Survey Group

Most important reason for career decisions



The PDN focuses on expanding PostDocs' possibilities for a successful career inside and outside academia. We thereby increase the visibility of PostDocs in DKFZ.

### Speaker of the PDN



**Sarah Mang**  
**s.mang@dkfz.de**

The speaker of the PDN is the official representative of the PDN Committee. Sarah is in charge of the communication with the PDN. This means incoming and outgoing requests, questions, and proposals are channeled here. In addition she organizes the meetings of the PDN Committee and supports other PDN Committee members in putting their ideas into action. As head of the PDN Committee, she also has to keep an eye on the general direction of the PDN.

### Career Seminar



**Inés Fernández Ulibarri**  
**i.ulibarri@dkfz.de**

Our Career Seminar Series provides insights into alternative career path options outside academia. The PDN invites talented speakers especially from non-academic working environments: R&D, marketing and sales, science management, publishing, consulting and patenting. At the Career Seminars you will hear about their personal career paths as well as get first-hand information about the requirements for the different job options. This is a great opportunity to expand your professional network!

### Marketing and Design



**Timo Kehl**  
**t.kehl@dkfz.de**

The PDN "Marketing and Design" Group provides support to put ideas into action. We take care of the design of printed and digital media for advertisement purpose. We are therefore connected to all other PDN groups, and ensure that their information for PostDocs is properly communicated, so that YOU can enjoy and profit from the PDN events.

### Academic Career



**Maiwen Caudron-Herger**  
**m.caudron@dkfz.de**

We want to provide support for young PostDocs who aim for an academic career. We are gathering first-hand advice and information from successful DKFZ group leaders and division heads about how to manage critical career steps. To join the pdn-academics mailing list, please contact us at [pdn@dkfz.de](mailto:pdn@dkfz.de).

### PDN Newsletter

The PDN Newsletter is prepared once every 3 months and is intended to update PostDocs and others on the PDN activities. We want you to know what we are doing! If you have something you'd like to be published, send it to us!

**Olga Ucar**  
**o.ucar@dkfz.de**

All Postdocs working actively in the PDN profit from their networking experiences. In addition they enjoy and profit from their increased visibility inside and outside of the DKFZ.

### PDN Retreat



**Rosario Piro**  
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A regular retreat for DKFZ PostDocs from all research areas is an excellent opportunity for networking and scientific exchange. We are really happy that so many members from various departments joined our previous retreats! We plan to organize further PostDoc retreats and are looking forward to your participation!

### PDN on the net



**Sarah Mang**  
s.mang@dkfz.de

You can find information on PDN activities on our official website:

<http://www.dkfz.de/postdoc-network>,

on our mailing list: [all-postdocs@dkfz.de](mailto:all-postdocs@dkfz.de),

and on our facebook site, [PDN@DKFZ](https://www.facebook.com/PDN@DKFZ).

As editors, we decide which platform is best suitable and how to present information. We collect all relevant data from other groups for publication in our online channels, so you are always up to date on our activities. We also handle your memberships on the PDN SharePoint and the mailing list. So contact us, if you want to join or if you want to contribute, for example by writing small articles for the homepage or facebook. Join us and be part of the PDN social network.

### Welcome Group

Are you a new PostDoc at the DKFZ and have questions regarding working and living in and around Heidelberg? Are you looking for someone who can provide helpful and valuable information to facilitate a good start at the DKFZ? Then this group is for you! The 'Welcome Group' offers help to new PostDoctoral colleagues for their start at the DKFZ, provide information on social life, finding an apartment, official contacts for new international PostDocs and many more. And in case we don't know the answers to your questions, we'll do our best to bring you in contact with people who do!

### Survey Group

The survey group prepares the annual PDN survey to find out who the PostDocs in the DKFZ are and what their wants and needs are. The PostDoc population is characterized by a strong fluctuation and we need to update our results each year to be aware of changes. We prepare questions for the survey in collaboration with the DKFZ Career Service and evaluate the results. The results are reported to the Committee to decide if our activities meet the PostDocs needs, or if they need to be adapted.

### Treasurer



The treasurer of the PDN keeps an eye on the money we spend. He or she collects and stores all bills that are paid by the PDN. He or she is also reporting on our spending to the Committee and on request to other people from the DKFZ.

### Get-Together

The organizers of the get-together set the dates for the get-together (currently the 1st Tuesday of the month). They decide on a location and time (Bellini, 18h) and invite the PostDocs to attend this event.



## Project Management Career Day

Project management (PM) is a versatile field. One can work as administrative manager, (scientific) project manager, project officer, managing director, product manager, development leader and many others. But what do all these professionals do? In the DKFZ Project Management Career Day on 1st March organized in a joint collaboration between the Postdoc Network (PDN) and the DKFZ Career Service, PostDocs had the opportunity to meet successful project managers from academia and industry. All our speakers obtained a PhD and the majority has worked as PostDocs as well. However, at some point in their career they decided to switch to the "project management" world. During the talks and personal interviews with the speakers we learnt that there are good perspectives for PostDocs in the field of PM.



Are you aware of what skills are useful for getting and doing the job? If you like writing, you have excellent communication and organization skills, you have abilities to keep a broad view of many aspects of a project and furthermore you have strong empathy with people and enjoy changing things, then project management might be an attractive option for you.

Since PostDocs are trained to do research but not to be managers, how should one prepare for a project management position while being a PostDoc? Researchers are managing projects more than you think, for instance: supervision of staff like technicians and students, writing papers and grant applications and control of the budget of projects. If you want to gain more knowledge and experience in such tasks, communicate to your group leader and offer to carry out these tasks. Additionally, you could organize events, attend PM courses or even be an active member of some associations. Most of these tasks you can do at our institute in parallel with your research responsibilities. Do not miss these opportunities to further develop your skills!

PostDocs, if you want to apply for a manager position, just do it! There are very good chances to switch at any time during your academic career. It seems that it is easier to get a position directly after your PhD or a short PostDoc, but it is also possible after being a PostDoc for a longer period. Which are the entry level positions? Project coordinator, project manager, personal assistant, EU specialist, technical specialist are some examples. However, to increase your possibilities to get the job, contact project managers and professionals working in the field. During the career day you have extended your professional network, using it will increase your chances to achieve your objectives.

The PM Career Day was definitively a success. Many thanks to the speakers, who made this event possible: Susanne Weg-Remers, Tanja Ninkovic, Ulrike Hardeland, May-Britt Becker (see foto together with the organizers), Claudia Durand, Erik Dölsner and Julia Hoffmann. We had a record of participation in the history of PDN career seminars. Many participants came from other institutes in Heidelberg and other cities in Germany. We had an extremely positive feedback and therefore we will continue working to guide you in finding your career options. Do you want to become a project manager? Joining the PDN will definitely improve your communication and organization skills and networking abilities. In case you still need to identify your next career step, joining the PDN is a great option to explore other alternatives by organizing seminars yourself and establishing direct contact with the speakers. Your experience in the PDN will inspire your success in the future!

Inés Fernández Ulibarri  
Coordinator of the Career Seminar Team

**Next Career Seminar: Communications Career Day, 5<sup>th</sup> of July  
(organized together with DKFZ Career Service)**

## Expanding network connections between PostDocs from Heidelberg's research institutes

PDN is planning to bring together the PostDoc community from all research institutes located in Heidelberg: EMBL, Max-Planck Institute, University, DKFZ, etc. We can get to know each other better, share relevant information easily and participate in PostDocs-oriented events at the individual institutes. Now we want to take the first steps to turn this plan into reality by creating a mailing list for all PostDocs in Heidelberg.

To join, please send an email to  
[postdocs-heidelberg-join@dkfz-heidelberg.de](mailto:postdocs-heidelberg-join@dkfz-heidelberg.de).

In this line, we have invited the colleagues from the PostDoc association committee of EMBL to join our PDN meeting on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April. It will be an informal meeting and a great opportunity to get to know each other, exchange ideas about how to promote PostDocs and identify potential projects for collaborations. By increasing the network between PostDocs we will promote scientific collaborations between our institutions, exchange of ideas about job perspectives and advances trainings, and much more.

The PDN Committee

**Mark the date:**  
**The PDN PostDoc Retreat 2013**  
**will take place on Nov 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> at**  
**Castle Diez.**  
**Watch out for more information!**



### Upcoming events:

**PDN committee meeting: BioQuant (Room 655), 16<sup>th</sup> of April, 17:00**  
**Get-Together: Bellini's Bistro, 18:00, 11<sup>th</sup> of April and 7<sup>th</sup> of May**

**Also meet us at the DKFZ booth at BioContact:**  
**Communication Center, 23<sup>rd</sup> of April, 10:00 - 17:30**