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Young European Biotech Network

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Editor in chief

Denis Bilotta

Editors

Annika Hohendahl, Marie Müller

Staff writers - editorial board

Alba Olivares, Annika Hohendahl, Christine Weckenmann, Denis Bilotta, Debora Keller, Irina Epstein, Jakub Radzikowski, Marie Müller, Natalia Borkowska, Roi Villar-Vázquez, Tommaso Scarpa

Special contributors for this issue

Massimiliano Borgogna, Hans-Anton Keserue

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Project focus: iPhD project

Kicked off at the YEBN "Youth Conference on Careers in Life Sciences in Europe" in February 2009, the iPhD project tackles one of the major obstacles in career paths of young scientists in life sciences, which is the reinforcement of the link between academia, government and industry. It is our belief that in addition to preparing young scientists for an academic career, it is equally important for life scientists to acquire skills needed to succeed in a competitive, private and profit-oriented job market. The term iPhD programmes pools initiatives and programmes connecting academia and industry. Initially iPhD-like programmes all over Europe were benchmarked, first-hand experiences were collected, and the identified needs, benefits and obstacles of iPhD programmes were summarized in the iPhD report. The iPhD project group identified two important topics where the work of the stakeholders could provide an essential ground for discussion: the introduction of a European scheme for an industrial PhD programme ("iPhD") and the better integration of complementary skills education into formal curricula. During the satellite event to the ECB14 in September 2009

Dear all,
last September the new Executive Board has been elected during the YEBN Annual Meeting held in Barcelona.

Many initiatives and plans are now taking shape, and this brand new newsletter is one of them. In this bi-monthly communication we will explore what is going on inside and around the YEBN. We hope you will find the content useful, motivating and inspiring. You will find this newsletter in a completely new format and design. The iPhD project is presented on page 1 of this issue, on page 2 the new YEBN Executive Board presents himself and recent activities. Several career

and event related articles can be found on page 3. Finally you'll find an interview with one of our new Institutional Members and an article about the YEBN section in the journal New Biotechnology on page 4.

We will be happy to hear from you any feedback, criticism and proposals for the next issues, and invite you to check the newsletter section on the YEBN website.

YEBN newsletter editors

Denis Bilotta, Annika Hohendahl
Marie Müller

in Barcelona, representatives of iPhD-programmes all over Europe were invited to discuss these matters, resulting in strong support for our approach and valuable inputs for shaping the future iPhD project. In collaboration with existing programmes, our goal is to promote the idea of iPhD education across Europe in order to enhance the educational possibilities and to improve the integration of complementary skills education into the curriculum. Events, such as the recent CIFRE Event in Paris, an event of the French iPhD-programme, provide platforms to spread the iPhD idea among the responsible national authorities. In addition an iPhD section was installed at the newly released YEBN website, which will provide students, faculty members as well as iPhD coordinators with insights into currently existing iPhD education schemes and best practice examples of how to successfully link industrial and academic research. If you want to get active, want to spread this project to your national association or have ideas, want to give us feedback, know about other iPhD-like programmes or have further ideas you are more than welcome to contact the iPhD-team via iphd@yebn.org

Marie Müller



Find your dream science project!

SiROP

Student Research Opportunities Program (SiROP): The database with academic internships, Bachelor, Master, PhD and postdoc positions from some of Europe's top universities. Help spreading the non-profit project platform from students for students at your university: info@siropglobal.org
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advertisement



The new YEBN Executive Board

During the last annual meeting (Barcelona, 14th-15th September 2009) the new Executive Board was elected. Let's have a glimpse of what they have in mind and what they have worked on since they are in charge.



(left to right) Denis Bilotta, Peter Kaiser, Hans-Anton Keserue, Sebastian Olényi, Jakub Radzikowski.

Tony - Vice Chairman

Professionalisation of the network and the promotion of career related events in all IMs for enhanced visibility and members benefit.

Jakub - Secretary

Take care of the internal and external services, above all web-based ones, provide good means for communication and support the YEBN to further establish its role as a stakeholder.

Denis - Communication Officer

Improve the efficiency of external and internal communication of the organization.

Peter - Treasurer

Make sure that YEBN complies with regulatory and financial rules, which will give the EB a sound basis to make financial decisions during the next year.

Sebastian - Chairman

Enable the board to work together as good as possible, make sure YEBN is sustainably growing in Institutional and Individual Members, ensure funding and in its role make YEBN more known among the young biotechnologists and as stakeholder in Europe.

our goals

Sept 09 - Feb 10: a short report from the new Executive Board

As those of you who work in an international team can witness, the very beginning of such experience is definitively thrilling. Even though sharing an education in life sciences, each one of us has a different personal background, comes from a different culture and in some cases there is a tiny "generational"-gap. Backed-up during the early weeks by the former EB, the new team quickly warmed-up to set the agenda. Top priorities in YEBN actions did not change: sustainability of the network and careers. Here we present

an overview of the most relevant activities we worked on in the past months:

The new task group "Education and Professional Qualification" (EPQ) was created. It will work together with the equivalent task group within the European Federation of Biotechnology (EFB) and set the ground for new European actions in these areas. A first meeting of the EPQ task group with other European stakeholders is scheduled in Vienna, and is organized together with Club Biotech (the Institutional Member of YEBN in Austria).

Again on career, we promoted as partners the Zurich Life Science Day organized by the Young Scientist Network. Thanks to the collaboration

with a major international publishing group we are organizing a YEBN stream within an important career event this autumn. More info will come.

In December 2009 we organized the communication task group meeting and the ANBI-ASBTEC-FEBIOTEC meeting, where careers issues in Europe were addressed. During the former, the communication plan for 2010 was defined in details and several communication initiatives were kicked-off. Printed material, newsletter, new website started to take shape, put together by an international team of 11 members, the communication task group. A funding application to EU has been submitted to cover some 2010 activities, and new sponsoring initiatives are being set up. To keep track of up-to-date news, check www.yebn.org and our twitter www.twitter.com/yebn.

Acknowledgement

We want to take the chance of this first issue of 2010 newsletter to open acknowledge the immense contribution that the former Executive Board gave to the YEBN: Francesco Lescai, Marta Fuster, Leonardo Lauciello, Debora Keller, Emilia Danilowicz, Peter Kaiser. Your past work on finance, team practices, initiatives and give us a much efficient network than ever before. This allow us to concentrate our efforts in further improve the YEBN actions, face less critical areas, and to make concrete new initiatives the forthcoming times.

Zurich Life Science Day

On February 16th the Zurich branch of the Young Scientist Network (former YEBN-Switzerland) successfully organized the 1st Zurich Life Science Day at the Irchel Campus of the University of Zurich. The conference included two parallel sessions: one on Careers in Life Sciences (CiLS) and a second one on Entrepreneurship and Venture Ideas (Videos). Furthermore a trade show with different companies and the possibility to have your CV checked by the Career Service of the University and Kelly Scientific were part of the conference. The CiLS session featured talks about diverse themes like the following: Successfully Applying (Dr. Clausen & Netzwerkpartner), Academic Careers (Prof. Hengartner, Dean Faculty of Science UZH), Big Pharma Careers (Roche), Start-Up Careers (Molecular Partners), Strategy Consulting Careers (McKinsey & Co) and Personal Branding (Stamford Consultants). The highlight of the session was an on-stage case study interview with the Boston Consulting Group giving to

Upcoming Events in Life Sciences



International Talent Programme for Life Sciences & Health

From 17 to 21 May the International Talent Programme for Life Sciences & Health (ITP) will be held in the Netherlands. ITP invites international top talent to explore their career possibilities in the growing Dutch Life Sciences sector and to find their next job here. Up to 50 high potentials will be selected for a 4-day VIP programme that will allow them to get in contact with many renowned Dutch research institutes and companies. The participants will receive a travel bursary and a free stay (hotel + meals) during the programme. More information can be found on www.bcfjobs.nl/itp. Registration closes March 10th.

Transnational Youth initiatives

(4-9 May 2010, Portugal)
SALTO Resource Centres Training course for Project managers, Young people, Youth leaders, Youth workers.
More information at www.salto-youth.net/find-a-training/1681.html

the audience a unique insight on the procedure.

The Videos session included talks about Business Plans and Models (Eva-Basel), IP Management (ETH transfer & Unitetra), Startup Financing (Redalpine), two success stories (Preclin Biosystems and GlycArt) and a panel discussion. The highlight of this session was the presentation of the three winning business ideas including feedback from entrepreneurs, venture-experts and venture capitalists. Around 300 participants (mainly Master, Ph.D. students and Post Docs) attended the conference and many used the evening's aperitif to continue the networking. The feedback shows once again the difficulty to fit the talks to everybody's interests, but happily all the participants were satisfied.

Hans-Anton Keserue

Career tips for young scientists

We did three short interviews during the Zurich Life Science Day:

"A look on career in Academia"
by Michael O. Hengartner (Dean of the Faculty of Science, Univ. of Zurich)

"Insights into personal branding"
by Zaki Selam (Regional Head Pharma at Stamford Consultants)

"Innovative tips for job applications"
by Monica Clausen (Monica Clausen and Netzwerkpartner)

You can find the videos on our website.

www.yebn.org

YEBN scientist

Massimiliano Borgogna

Massimiliano, what is the focus of your research?

The research group where I work is involved in research projects on drug delivery systems based on biopolymers. In particular, we are developing carriers for drug delivery and drug targeting based on polysaccharides, by using nanotechnology.

How do you do that?

Polysaccharidic nanocarriers and nanoparticles merge the possibility to protect drug molecules and to ensure a controlled release and a tissue/cellular targeting. Polysaccharides are biocompatible and can be modified by means of biopolymer engineering. This confers new final properties to the materials. Polysaccharides can also be combined, in order to obtain systems characterized by new "tailored" properties.

What does especially fascinate you about your research?

I am fascinated by the possibility to "play" with materials, combine properties and features to "create" new entities, new systems (in this case drug delivery systems, but it is a general principle) with performance

not obtained before.

That sounds like a lot of new developments from scratch...

Yes, you need ideas, and derive them from practical needs: in my case pharmaceutical needs (drug protection, smart targeting). Of course your research is based on different materials: the old as well as the new ones. I mean classic materials, with polysaccharides

being a very good example; but also engineered, functional materials or more recently also nanostructures. The research includes, beyond the creation of the systems, their characterizations (physico-chemical, mechanical,

biological) and of course a variety of tests concerning the drug loading, release, biological activity etc.

So how would you say will your research change the world?

The diverse applications of this kind of academic applied research opens up great possibilities. Carried out in cooperation with other institutions and companies it combines the possibility to explore material properties and behaviours to find solutions to practical problems. The delivery and targeting of current drugs or the protection of particularly biotech drugs are only some of the applications.

interview by Marie Müller



Massimiliano has a Degree in Medical Biotechnology and a PhD in Nanotechnology. He currently works as a Post Doc researcher at the Department of Life Sciences, University of Trieste in the Laboratory of Physical and Macromolecular Chemistry.

Institutional Member Focus: Nouvelle Génération des Biotechnologistes

When did you join the YEBN?

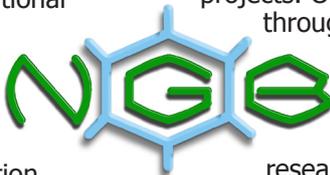
We are one of the youngest Institutional Members of the YEBN. We joined the network in 2008 as a country board, and then start at building our organisation.

Your organisation is thus quite young - how and why did you found it?

We were inspired by the YEBN and its Institutional Members and are certain that every country should have an organisation to represent the voice of young life scientists - a voice to represent them in and outside of their country. We want to become "the" student's biotech organisation in France. Our organisation aims to build up projects to better connect the French biotech schools and their students, amongst each other.

What are your intentions with respect to France and the YEBN?

We want to connect the YEBN to France and vice versa to the best interest of everyone involved. To present the French biotech and education concepts to the YEBN and transfer inspiration from the European partners back to France.



Who are your members?

We started as a student organisation at our university in Strasbourg. Currently we are intensely working to enlarge our network and include all young French biotechnologists from bachelor to PhD students.

Which activities characterise your network?

Our first project is the establishment of our website by adding videos, audio files and articles of interviews with young biotechnologists about their current research projects. Our interviews will present a cross section through the world of young biotechnologists, their interests and fields of work. Students in their early years and other young biotechnologists can get ideas about places, topics and kinds of projects for their own future internships and research projects.

What about your next big projects?

Next to our work on the interviews we will have two big projects ahead. On the one hand the organisation of the General Assembly 2010 of the YEBN in Strasbourg and on the other hand the design of a connected conference on communication in life sciences - but for now we won't reveal more...have a look at www.biotechnologistes.fr

Marie Müller and Annika Hohendahl

YEBN@New Biotechnology: it's your chance!

"Prochain arrêt: EPFL" said a voice, which soon enough became familiar to me when travelling by metro in the suburb of Lausanne. We've arrived. At this time, a flurry of international passengers get off every morning at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale of Lausanne and start their daily research..."

This lively, easy to read, and - to be honest - quite normal sentence is taken out of an article to be published in the next issue of New Biotechnology, in the section "Life on Top" from YEBN.

This sentence also represents the spirit of the YEBN section: young, modern, flexible, "free"-style, and full of enthusiasm. This sentence represents you, a young life scientist, and this is why the YEBN section of New Biotechnology is also your chance to start writing your ideas, your impressions, your thoughts! Now, what is New Biotechnology (also known as NBT) and what has YEBN to do with it?

Well, NBT is the young journal of the European Federation of Biotechnology (EFB) that was born 1st June 2008. NBT aims at publishing original and cutting-edge research papers in all areas of biotechnology, but also to vehicle the EFB's opinion and views in these same areas, without turning the controversial points under the

carpet. Recognizing the importance of the future generation in shaping biotechnology, NBT also wanted to give us, young biotechnologists, a place to represent our views and aspirations. That's why the YEBN was involved from the very beginning of the journal, and that's why NBT has a dedicated YEBN section.

What kind of articles is there in the YEBN section of New Biotechnology? There are 5 topics that are represented in the YEBN section, and in each of them you can bring your contribution: Life on top, Career advice, Young entrepreneur/young professor, Funding opportunities, YEBN Institutional Members (IMs) or Projects.

So, would you like to tell us how great your institute is? Or would you like to get advice on a specific career question, or find a project that fits your interests?

Then the YEBN section of New Biotechnology offers you the opportunity not only to learn something, but also to make your first steps in writing, in interviewing, in publishing in a very flexible, easy-going manner!

Take the chance, and get your first published article in New Biotechnology!

Debora Keller, Editor of YEBN section in NBT

For any question or comment, don't hesitate to contact Debora Keller, [Debora\[keller\]@yebn.org](mailto:Debora[keller]@yebn.org)

NBTopics

Life on top

Writes from a young life scientist writes about "his/her" research institute/company/organisation, what he likes about it, what makes it special, be it the infrastructure or the social life...All in all, here you have the opportunity to present a place you think is great to work at!

A very informal advice from people working in recruitment agencies or in companies, on how to prepare best for your career, how to shape your application so that it sticks out of the crowd, what to consider when you are applying for a job!

Career advice

Young entrepreneur/professor

In this section young people share their path and their struggles on their way to get their own lab or create their own company. Maybe it will give you some entrepreneurial ideas?

A useful insight into the other side of the research: an overview of the funding opportunities for young scientists, and what to consider when applying.

Funding opportunities

YEBN IMs/Projects

An introduction to each Institutional Members (IMs) of YEBN, where they come from, what they are doing, as well as the ongoing projects of the YEBN. There you can learn what is happening in your country, and why not, get involved!