

REinforcing Women In REsearch, REWIRE

10.06.2024



REWIRE: REinforcing Women In REsearch

HORIZON2020-MSCA-COFUND-2018

- 5-year programme (01.06.2020 – 31.05.2025)
- Topic: supporting women researchers and addressing the gender gap in advanced academic careers
- Supports 16 female Postdoctoral Researchers (PDRs) for 36* months each
- Individual research budget
- Bespoke trainings, Annual retreats,
- 6-monthly Career Development Plan (CDP) meetings; Exit survey and interview



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 847693

Purpose of REWIRE

To help address the **gender gap** in advanced academic careers AND to serve as a **potential model** for future PDR training programmes

- **Specific goal:**

to offer a targeted PDR training programme dedicated to providing women PDRs with programme infrastructure that enables them to advance – and be more competitive – in their subsequent careers

- **Additional goals:**

to promote a new way for how PDRs are recruited at the University of Vienna: open, transparent and sustainable;

to provide additional trainings and the possibility for PDRs to have research funds for their own project



An international programme

EU/AC (UK)	TC
AT x2	USA x2
CZ	RUS
SK	KAZ
EE	ZA
IT x2	
ES	
PL	
SI	
UK	



Management, administration & support

- Programme Management Team (PMT):

Programme Lead: Stefania Benetton; Programme Manager: Thea Vidnes; Programme Assistant: Lisa Grabner;

Deputy Lead: Helmut Schaschl

- Support offered:

Regular contacts with fellows (6-monthly CDP meetings)

Dedicated online cloud- and u:wiki-based resources: info pack; other relevant documents, forms & information; digital newsletters

Additional support as required (e.g. individual meetings, travel accounting & university admin troubleshooting)

REWIRE Fellows' progress so far...

4 have taken up **permanent/tenure track** positions

4 have secured **prestigious third-party funded** grants - two held at University of Vienna

=> 50% success rate so far

Challenges along the way

- *Force majeure*: covid pandemic; war in Ukraine; inflation
- Funder rules re: PDR working 100% on their project
- Administrative structure of programme
- Internal changes (PMT)

Lessons learned (I)

Three guiding principles for any future, similar PDR programme:

1. MANAGEMENT OF EXPECTATIONS
2. GOOD COMMUNICATION
3. AGILITY & CAPACITY TO BE RESPONSIVE

1. Management of expectations

Each stakeholder within a PDR programme comes with expectations.

It is vital that the organizing unit, from application stage onwards, considers these and remains aware of them throughout the programme.

Regular checking in with stakeholders

2. Good communication

Essential to PDR programme success. Make good communication a priority.

Devise robust measures and methods to enable as optimal-as-possible communication between stakeholders.

Also keep in mind differing interpretations of terms or terminology, e.g. ‘mentor’ and ‘supervisor’.

3. Agility & capacity to be responsive

Unexpected events are inevitable.

Aim for an agile programme structure, flexible enough to adapt to changing circumstances/requirements.

Lessons learned (II)

Running a successful PDR programme involves:

- Finding the **balance** between what PDRs can **expect** from a career development position and programme, and what they **want**
- If possible, providing **individual research budget** for each PDR: enables networking & dissemination (conference attendance, workshop organization etc.); gives freedom; fosters responsibility, independence & initiative
- From the very start, being clear to all stakeholders that **PDR is a career stage/step, NOT a career...** and identifying **respective responsibilities**:
 - of the PDR
 - of a PDR programme



THANK YOU

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(Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays)