



Empowering
Researcher
Careers in Austria

PAW Postdoc Appreciation Week Austria

September 21–25,
2026

Programme 2026

Monday, September 21, 2026

4th Postdoc Networking Day (PoND): “New Beginnings”

Vienna BioCenter

09:00-17:00 (onsite)

[Registration](#)

Within Vienna’s life science community, we want to share our research, foster scientific connections, and get to know each other! We will have short talks from former postdocs about their new beginnings, a poster session, ample opportunities for networking, and a final social event in the late afternoon with food and drinks. Coffee breaks and lunch are also included!

**The Good, the Bad, and the Inbetween:
Perception and Preservation of Scientific Quality in the Era of
Predatory Publishing**

MedUni Wien

10:00-11:00 (online)

[Registration](#)

The event focuses on change in scientific communication and its impact on good scientific practice, publication practices, and quality assurance in this context. “Predatory publishing” is a phenomenon that has existed for some time; later, major open-access publishers such as MDPI and Frontiers raised the controversial question of quality in scientific communication. With the now widespread use of AI, this question has taken on a new dimension that has also implications for good scientific practice.

Expert Talk:

PostDoc Careers: Orientation, Planning & Possible Futures

LBG Career Center

10:00-11:30 (online)

[Registration](#)

Research careers rarely follow one straight path. This online event offers space for a reflective and practical conversation on career orientation and career planning for postdocs and researchers navigating transitions, uncertainty, and new possibilities within and beyond academia.



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The session will begin with a short input on career orientation, possible futures, and approaches to making conscious career decisions. Following the introduction, a panel of postdocs will share personal insights into their individual career journeys, including challenges, turning points, decisions, and transitions across different career paths.

Is This Really What You Signed Up For?

How to Do Meaningful Research AND Thrive in Academia

University of Graz

10:30-11:30 (online)

[Registration](#)

What motivated you to start a PhD or pursue an academic career? Curiosity? The desire to understand the world? The hope of contributing something meaningful?

Many researchers begin their academic path with these motivations. Yet somewhere along the way, the pressure to publish, fierce competition, and career insecurity can shift the focus from pursuing meaningful questions to simply surviving within the system. In this talk, Gayannée Kedia addresses what often feels like the elephant in the room: the question of meaning in academic life. She approaches this question as a researcher who has spent many years within academia and who works closely with scientists at different stages of their careers. Through her own experience, as well as her background in psychology and neuroscience and work supporting researchers in their scientific writing and thinking, she repeatedly encountered this tension between the ideals that bring people into academia and the realities of the system they encounter. Rather than offering definitive answers, the aim of this talk is to open a conversation: to reflect together on how we experience meaning in academic life and whether we might begin to reclaim it.

Postdoc Coffee Hour

Med Uni Innsbruck

12:00-13:00 (on-site)

No registration needed

Drop-in to our traditional postdoc-only forum designed to help postdocs connect across institutes and disciplines. Have a coffee, get to know new people, build your network, ask questions, and find support, whether you're navigating daily challenges, career decisions, or simply looking to exchange experiences with peers.



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Celebrating failures and successes in your research career

13:00-14:00 (online)

To foster central tenets of good research like risk taking, courage, a spirit of innovation, and learning from mistakes, it pays off to make research culture more failure-friendly. It is a community effort to productively handle career setbacks, you don't have to do it alone. This interactive webinar explores the "why" and the "how" of celebrating failures and successes in the everyday life of a researcher. Through short lectures and group work, Johanna Stadlbauer and the participants will work out what goes right and what goes wrong when you are in this profession, what celebrating failure can look like and what benefits it might have, what resources each of us has to handle our next „career fiasco“ with care, and how to mark small everyday achievements and big milestones alike.

University of Graz

[Registration](#)

Expand your network and opportunities

13:00-14:00 (online)

In this session, we will explore opportunities that can help you expand your professional network as a postdoctoral researcher. Discover new opportunities for your research as well as for your career development, which are offered by COST, the European Research Infrastructures, the paneuropean initiative EURAXESS as well as activities provided by researcher-led networks and associations such as the Marie Curie Alumni Association and the Association of ERC Grantees.

Euraxess Austria

[Registration](#)

Inequality by Default: Care Work and Academia

14:00-15:30 (hybrid)

The event explores how women are disadvantaged by gender bias in academia and discusses with the audience ways to address inequality in academic institutions. Speakers include Fabienne Décieux (LFU) and Nikola Komlenac (MUI). Nikola Komlenac will address gendered roles and expectations in academia, while Fabienne Décieux will focus on carelessness in academia.

IBK Med Uni Innsbruck

[Registration](#)



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Data Visualization Crash Course

14:00-16:30 (on-site)

This Crash Course on Data Visualization offers Postdocs the opportunity to learn about communication and visualization strategies for data-driven scientific findings, and to get creative and explore different ways of visualizing data. Examples of data visualizations from CSH can be viewed here: <https://csh.ac.at/visuals/>. This course is led by data visualization expert Liuhuaying Yang, recipient of the World Data Viz Prize and the Information Is Beautiful Award.

Complexity Science Hub

[Registration](#)



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Tuesday, September 22, 2026

Scientific Writing Made Easy

10.00-11.00 (online)

Doing science means exploring and shaping the world—but scientific writing often becomes a challenge. This short presentation will introduce specific methods for writing scientific articles and grant proposals more quickly and efficiently. At the end, an "online course" will be presented, followed by a brief "demo".

Universität Klagenfurt

[Registration](#)

Lateral Leadership for Postdocs

10:00-12:00 (online)

This workshop introduces postdocs to essential principles of lateral leadership in academia. Participants will explore key leadership theories and models and learn practical techniques for guiding (doctoral) students, fostering collaboration, and navigating challenging situations – strengthening their leadership skills in environments without formal authority.

Med Uni Innsbruck

[Registration](#)

Aktive Pause

11:30-12:00 (online)

Loosen up, stretch, and strengthen your body right at your desk. This short session helps prevent back pain, improves mobility, and reduces stress so you feel refreshed and focused.

Med Uni Innsbruck

[Registration](#)

Postdoc Get-together

14:00-15:00 (on-site)

Informal get-together for exchange and networking on-site at the mdw cafeteria.

mdw

[No registration needed](#)



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How to start your own research group – Day 1

09:00-17:00 (on-site; ISTA postdocs only)

ISTA

closed on-site event

We want to equip you with the tools you need to start your own academic research group. Dr. Philipp Gramlich and Prof. Max von Delius will guide you through this two-day workshop, combining the skills and experiences they have gathered in both academic and industrial settings. The workshop is highly interactive, featuring discussions and practical exercises, and is structured around three main pillars: funding, science, and people. You will explore how to choose the right type of funding for your plans and how to write effective applications and proposals. The trainers will also help you design the structure of your own group and position it within your institute and beyond. Finally, you will focus on leadership - both self-leadership and team leadership. This includes deep dives into staff selection, conflict management, and negotiation techniques.



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Wednesday, September 23, 2026

Expert Talk: Research Management

10:00-11:30 (online)

LBG Career Center

[Registration](#)

While research management positions are incredibly important to keep research running successfully, they are often undervalued and underrecognized. In Austria, a dedicated group of research management professionals are contributing to EU-aligned initiatives to professionalize and formally recognize the field of research management. During the expert talk, we will gain an overview of these initiatives and why they are both useful and necessary for current and future research managers. Furthermore, we will explore what a successful career transition from postdoc to research manager could look like, which skills are transferable from academia, and which competencies may be important to develop. Participants will also gain insights into the everyday work and responsibilities of a research manager. There will be plenty of opportunities for questions, discussions, and lively exchange.

Beyond Publications and Patents: Impact first!

11:00-12:00 (online)

TU Graz

[Registration](#)

In this online session, we will explore strategies and discuss pathways towards societal impact for your research. Learn what kind of support can help along your personal impact journey, exchange good practices, and gain insights from fellow PostDocs and their experiences.

Panel: AI in Funding

12:00-13:30 (online)

University of Vienna

[Registration](#)

Join us for a focused panel discussion on the evolving role of Artificial Intelligence in the review and evaluation of research funding applications. Bringing together perspectives from funding bodies, universities, and the AI ecosystem, the panel will explore how AI is being integrated into assessment processes, from supporting peer review and expert selection to enhancing efficiency, consistency, and transparency in funding decisions. Participants will discuss opportunities, limitations, and governance considerations, as well as the implications of AI-assisted evaluation for applicants, reviewers, and research institutions.



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Webinar: Giving and Receiving Peer Feedback with Clarity and Confidence

13:00-14:30 (online)

mdw

Registration

Peer review and feedback shape every stage of academic life, but most scholars are never really taught how to handle them well. In this 90-minute workshop held by coach Melanie Sindelar, we look at several aspects of the review process: how to receive criticism without being completely derailed by it, how to respond to peer reviews strategically, and how to give feedback that is specific, useful, and constructive. Participants will explore different perspectives on the purpose of peer review, learn strategies for “unhooking” from criticism, and work with a practical template for turning reviewer comments into a clear revision plan. We will also discuss how to offer productive feedback to peers and colleagues, and how to set boundaries when feedback becomes vague, overly harsh, or difficult to navigate, also in the context of departmental politics. Participants leave with a clearer process, reusable templates, and more confidence in approaching academic critique as a normal part of scholarly life rather than a personal verdict.

How I became a PI

14:00-15.30 (online)

St. Anna CCRI

Registration

This online session features 2 PIs sharing their individual paths toward becoming independent group leaders. Speakers will outline key steps, decisions, and experiences that supported their transition, as well as factors that proved less helpful.

Austrian Researcher Careers Wine & Cheese: The Grant Mixer Edition

16:30-18:30 (on-site)

University of Vienna

Registration

A strong professional network is one of the most valuable foundations for a successful career. This networking event at the Botanical Garden in Vienna offers a dynamic space to connect with peers across disciplines, exchange ideas, and spark conversations that may open unexpected intellectual and professional pathways. By bringing together researchers from diverse fields, the event is designed to foster meaningful new connections and encourage interdisciplinary dialogue that often leads to innovative



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collaborations. Who knows, your next inspiring partnership or groundbreaking project may begin with a single conversation here.

How to start your own research group – Day 2

ISTA

09:00-17:00 (on-site; ISTA postdocs only)

closed on-site event

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Thursday, September 24, 2026

The Next Step: Building a Research Career After the Postdoc

09.30–13.00 (on-site)

TU Wien

[Registration](#)

What comes after the postdoc? This session brings together researchers and funding organisations to offer an honest picture of academic career pathways, grant opportunities, and how to navigate them strategically. The funding choices you make now can shape your scientific trajectory for years to come. A panel discussion and open Q&A give participants direct access to first-hand experience from both funders and researchers. The session closes with a networking lunch to continue conversations in a more informal setting.

Expert Talk: Career Paths

10:00-11:30 (online)

Universität Klagenfurt

[Registration](#)

- ◆ Career opportunities for scientists
- ◆ Professional and private goals
- ◆ Relevant job portals
- ◆ Discussion and questions

Brainfood breaks

12:00-14:00 (on-site)

ISTA

[Registration](#)

Rapid-fire lunchtime talks bringing together researchers from three institutions (ISTA – CSH – AITHYRA), showcasing their backgrounds, current research, and future goals. The talks will be followed by informal discussions and a buffet lunch, offering a chance to connect with peers, exchange ideas, and build community across disciplines and institutions. It's the perfect opportunity to sharpen your presentation skills and challenge yourself in front of a new audience. And who knows—these new connections might prove valuable as you take your next career steps!

The event is open to everyone, but slots are limited. Please register via the following link starting in August: [ISTA Postdoc Office](#). For non-ISTA postdocs, a Campus tour will be available from 14:00 to 15:00.



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Research That Moves the World: Where Science Meets Entrepreneurship TU Wien

14.00–17.30 (on-site)

[Registration](#)

You've spent years mastering rigorous thinking, managing uncertainty, and solving problems nobody has solved before. Those are exactly the skills that founders, innovators, and industry leaders are looking for both inside and outside academia. This event puts your career interests at the center, explores how entrepreneurial thinking applies across all paths, and brings in voices with diverse, authentic experiences. Whether you choose to found, to enable, or to understand the landscape, these competencies will make you a stronger scientist, a more versatile collaborator, and a more confident decision-maker at every stage of your career.

Postdoc Get-together

16:00–18:00 (on-site)

Academy of Fine Arts Vienna

[Registration](#)

Join fellow postdocs for a get-together focused on informal exchange and networking. This event offers space to meet peers from different disciplines and institutions, exchange experiences, and discuss shared challenges and ideas.

Networking event

16:00–18:00 (on-site)

JKU Linz

[Registration](#)

Get-together to discuss topics such as career development for postdocs or challenges in research and teaching.

Postdoc Alpine Retreat

Thursday-Friday (on-site; Med Uni Innsbruck Postdocs only)

Med Uni Innsbruck

[closed on-site event](#)

The retreat aims to strengthen interdisciplinary exchange, peer learning, and community building among postdoctoral researchers in an informal off-campus setting. The program will include postdoc lightning talks, peer-led skill-sharing sessions, and structured networking. By combining scientific exchange with community-driven activities, the retreat offers a unique opportunity for postdocs across departments to connect, share experiences, and build sustainable professional networks.



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Friday, September 25, 2026

Career Energizer

09.00-10.00 (online)

TU Wien

Registration

In this session, you explore what introversion and extroversion really mean, beyond common stereotypes and in the context of your daily work. Through short experiential exercises, you will identify your own energy patterns and how they shape teamwork, focus, and early leadership experiences. You will leave with a clearer understanding of how you work best — and practical ways to align your environment and interactions accordingly.

PAW Closure Networking Event

Postdoc Job Search Networking Blitz

15:00-18:00 (on-site)

ISTA

Registration

Join a lively peer to peer event designed for postdocs navigating the job search. Share practical tips, vent common frustrations, celebrate successes, and exchange honest advice — all in a relaxed speed networking format that reminds you: you're not alone in this process! Food, fun, facilitation, and meaningful connections included. The Maria Gugging hills are waiting for you! The networking event is open to everyone, but slots are limited. Please register via the following link starting in August: [ISTA Postdoc Office](#).



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