

Quarterly  
Newsletter  
Issue 3  
2018

## EURAXESS NORTH AMERICA

Dear Friends and Colleagues!

Being the gateway to the European Research Area (ERA), EURAXESS takes pride in providing an array of information on Europe's vibrant and dynamic research landscape, from latest strides and achievements to funding and partnership opportunities through our new and improved portal and beyond!

This September issue, EURAXESS North America is very pleased to provide you with the latest news and developments from the ERA. As always, we strive to offer a section of articles to engage our growing community of scientists and science advocates in North America, include recent and very interesting R&D news from the European Research Area, Canada and the United States.

If you haven't already, please mark your calendars for our upcoming events! The theme for our flagship events this year is ERA's diverse and tangible contributions to society through science and innovation. Under the theme of "Science to Society" our [European Research Day 2018](#) will be held on the 5 November 2018 at the University of Ottawa, whereas our [4<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of European Scientific Diasporas in North America](#) on 7 December 2018 will be under the banner of "Innovation to Society". Please see below for more details.

Finally, we take this opportunity to remind you that we are here to facilitate and advance your research career development! With that, we invite you to let us know if there is a particular topic or area of ERA you're interested in learning about.

Enjoy reading the newsletter!

With Best Wishes,

Your EURAXESS North America Team

The information contained in this publication is intended for personal use only. It should not be taken in any way to reflect the views of the European Commission nor of the Delegation of the European Union to the USA or the Delegation of the European Union to Canada.

This newsletter is also intended as a communication tool with you all, so please do not hesitate to contact

us at [northamerica@euraxess.net](mailto:northamerica@euraxess.net) for comments, corrections or if you want to advertise for a particular funding scheme or event

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EURAXESS – Researchers in Motion is an initiative of the European Research Area (ERA) that addresses barriers to the mobility of researchers and seeks to enhance their career development. This pan-European effort is currently supported by 40 countries, of which we will profile one in each of our quarterly EURAXESS North America newsletters. This quarter we focus on Hungary.

# 1 EURAXESS Country in Focus: HUNGARY

## 1.1 Research & Innovation in Hungary

In the knowledge-based market economy, growth in prosperity, performance and employment is determined by the knowledge intensity and the dynamic development of high technology. Hungary considers R & D and innovation as a driving force and accelerating resource of its economy. The vision for the future in their strategy is as follows:

- the world class research institutes in emphasized disciplines
- R & D centres of global companies integrated into the national innovation system
- R & D intensive Hungarian medium-sized companies expanding on international markets
- RDI based small and medium-sized enterprises with fast growth potential
- innovative SME suppliers
- innovative start-ups
- international market integrated early-stage and venture capital investors
- public institutions performing R & D activities and utilising innovations

## 1.2 Hungarian Research & Innovation institutions

### National Research, Development and Innovation Office (NKFIH)

**NKFIH** is the major national strategic and funding agency for scientific research, development and innovation, the primary source of advice on RDI policy. It is in charge of managing the National Research, Development and Innovation Fund (major domestic public source for funding RDI). The program portfolio includes calls for national and bilateral basic research for academic and other research institutes and universities. Competitive research grants are provided for young researchers, postdocs and experienced researchers. It supports bilateral mobility and project based cooperation with partner countries, enhances Hungarian participation in the RDI framework program (Horizon 2020) of the European Union, gives financing for the Hungarian winners of joint programs of EU and member states, EUREKA and ERA-NETs. It supports the development of innovative and competitive products, technologies and services by enterprises or through the collaboration of enterprises, research institutes and universities. The Office takes part in the planning of calls and organises expert evaluation of project applications with RDI focus financed from The European Union Structural Funds under the Economic Development and Innovation Operation Programme (EDIOP) closely cooperating with the responsible Managing Authority, Ministry for National Economy. The calls focus on the improvement of corporate RDI

Hungary is an OECD high-income mixed economy with very high human development index and skilled labour force with the 16th lowest income inequality in the world, Budapest is the financial and business capital of Hungary. Hungary's achievements in science and technology have been significant, and research and development efforts form an integral part of the country's economy.



NEMZETI KUTATÁSI,  
FEJLESZTÉSI ÉS INNOVÁCIÓS HIVATAL



activities, co-operation between the academic and the business sector, as well as the improvement of RDI infrastructures.

See more at <http://nkfih.gov.hu/english>



The **MTA Wigner** Research Centre for Physics has been founded in 2012 by the merging of two former research institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences: the Research Institute for Particle and Nuclear Physics, and the Research Institute for Solid State Physics and Optics. The Research Centre has 40 research groups in 2 institutes (Institute for Particle and Nuclear Physics and Institute for Solid State Physics and Optics). Their research fields cover diverse topics ranging from particle physics to space physics, and from theoretical physics to applied research.

See more at <https://www.wigner.mta.hu> or <https://www.facebook.com/MTAWignerFK/>



**MTA SZTAKI** is the Hungarian acronym of "Institute for Computer Science and Control, Hungarian Academy of Sciences". The Institute was founded in 1964. The fundamental task of the Institute is to perform basic and application-oriented research in an interdisciplinary setting in the fields of computer science, engineering, information technology, intelligent systems, process control, wide-area networking and multimedia. Contract-based target research, development, training and expert support for domestic and foreign industrial, governmental and other partners are important activities at the institute. The mission of MTA SZTAKI includes the transfer of up-to-date research results and state-of-the-art technology to university students. The Institute is very active in graduate and postgraduate education, co-operating with most technical universities in.

See more at <https://www.sztaki.hu/en> .



**NAIK**, the National Agricultural Research and Innovation Centre was established to align research institutes responsible for providing the professional background of Hungarian agriculture. The research activities of NAIK cover all the important fields of agriculture including irrigation, crop breeding, animal breeding, food science, forestry and horticulture, dairy industry, seed breeding and fishery, viticulture and vine research. NAIK aims to enable its research institutes to work in cooperation as efficiently as possible.

NAIK places special emphasis on the arrival of new scientists in order to increase competitiveness. To this end, it operates a young researcher program. It also aims to keep talented young people at its institutes on the long term. NAIK's companies work to enable achieved results to appear faster and more competitively on the domestic and international market.

See more at <http://www.naik.hu/en>.



**BAY-BIO:** Bay Zoltán Non-profit Ltd. is Hungary's leading institution of applied research. Its Institute of Biotechnology (BAY-BIO) was established in 1993 as the first institute of the Ltd.'s legal predecessor.

The main objective of the Biotechnology Division is to fulfil its research and development tasks at the highest possible professional level. The institute aims to develop cutting-edge technological solutions which can contribute to the establishment and sustainment of a clean and liveable natural environment. In line with the key objectives of the Company, BAY-BIO's mission is to implement technology transfer, i.e. to realize the economic utilization of research-development achievements; to accomplish and publish adaptable research findings in the area of biotechnology. See more at <http://www.bayzoltan.hu/hu/rolunk/divizok-osztalyok/bay-bio-biotechnologiai-divizio/>



**Innostudio, Inc.** is one of the largest upstream technology networks in the CE region in Europe. The company is specialized in high risk – high potential technical innovation. Studios within the corporation are focused towards nanotechnology, bringing flow chemistry and other chemical technology to Space and supporting drug discovery through IT technology, among others. See more at <http://innostudio.org/>



**ThalesNano, Inc.** is the world leader in bench-top flow chemistry reactors. The company has the widest portfolio of bench-top continuous process instruments for the flavour and fragrance, pharmaceutical, biotech, fine chemical, petroleum/biofuel, and education markets. Its products are used in hundreds of laboratories globally.

See more at <http://www.thalesnano.com/>

### 1.3 Hungarian Investment Promotion Agency (HIPA)

HIPA is a national investment promotion organisation governed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. It provides management consulting services to interested companies free of charge in an end-to-end, one-stop-shop service model, supporting them in selecting a business location, providing tailor made incentive offers and information on state aid issues, identifying investment possibilities and dealing with public authorities. See more at <https://hipa.hu/main>



### 1.4 Educational relations

#### Tempus Public Foundation

Tempus Public Foundation (TPF) is a non-profit organization established in 1996 in Hungary, managing international cooperation programmes, special projects in the field of education, training and EU-related issues:

- supports initiatives on modernization and quality improvement of education, training and human resources development,





- encourages international cooperation and mobility,
- strengthens the European dimension in these fields,
- coordinates a number of short and long-term scholarships for students and researchers

#### [Hungarian State Scholarships for researchers](#)

#### **Hungarian Rectors' Conference (HRC)**

The Hungarian Rectors' Conference, as the unique representative body of the local universities, is proud to be one of the oldest and most prestigious organizations in Hungary responsible for the university sector, academic cooperation and internationalization of the higher education. Recently, a great emphasis has been put on fostering internationalization in Hungary, and the HRC is taking a major role in enhancing incoming and outgoing student mobility, promotion of Hungarian culture, innovations, academic life and research cooperation, and concluding various international projects and agreements.

Contact person: Ms. Júlia Morován, Secretary for International Affairs, E-mail: [mrk@mrk.hu](mailto:mrk@mrk.hu), See more at: <http://www.mrk.hu/en/current/>

#### **Information for incoming researchers – EURAXESS Hungary**

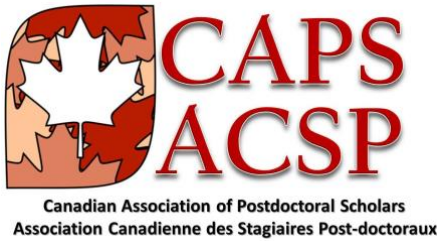
Bay Zoltán Nonprofit Ltd. was appointed to lead the EURAXESS project by the National Research, Development and Innovation Office of Hungary. As the Bridgehead Organization, the Hungarian coordinator of [EURAXESS in Hungary](#), Bay Zoltán Nonprofit Ltd. focuses on mobility services for outgoing and incoming researchers to Hungary.

Bay Zoltán Nonprofit Ltd. provides incoming researchers with up-to-date advice on daily life and formalities when living in Hungary including visa and entry conditions to the EU, accommodation, banking, family-related issues, Hungarian language courses for foreigners and health insurance. The EURAXESS network in Hungary has 13 members throughout the country: Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Tempus Public Foundation, Szent István University, Eötvös Loránd University, Corvinus University of Budapest, Semmelweis University, Óbuda University, College of Nyíregyháza, University of Debrecen, University of Miskolc, University of Szeged, University of Pécs, Széchenyi István University.



<https://www.euraxess.hu/>





## 2 Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars / l'Association Canadienne des Stagiaires Postdoctoraux (CAPS/ACSP)

The Canadian Association of Postdoctoral Scholars / l'Association Canadienne des Stagiaires Postdoctoraux (CAPS/ACSP) is a not-for-profit organization that represents the interests of postdoctoral scholars (i.e., postdocs) working in Canada (regardless of citizenship or nationality) as well as Canadian citizens and permanent residents working as postdocs abroad – a group comprised of approximately 10,000 individuals whom CAPS/ACSP defines as “Canadian postdocs”.

### MISSION

The mandate of CAPS/ACSP is to improve the lives, training, and work experience of all Canadian postdocs. This mandate is guided by a vision of a strong community in which all Canadian postdocs are provided fair and reasonable compensation, benefits, rights, privileges, and protections, as well as a supportive social network and effective support, training, and career development opportunities.

CAPS/ACSP works to achieve this vision by:

- a. Providing postdocs with information, resources, and support services to improve their wellbeing, training, labour conditions, and career development.
- b. Acting as a collective voice for postdocs on issues relevant to postdoctoral policy and labour relations in Canada.
- c. Collecting data from postdocs and external agencies for use in advocating for evidence-based reform in postdoctoral policy at the national, provincial, and institutional levels in Canada.
- d. Providing platforms, tools, and meeting opportunities to facilitate communication among postdocs and maintain a healthy, supportive Canadian postdoctoral community.

### MEMBERSHIP

CAPS/ACSP has a free and open membership policy whereby anyone is welcome to [register as a member](#) to gain access to mailing lists and/or voting rights (current “Canadian postdocs” only) in the association. However, registration is not required for any current/former postdoc to access the information, resources, and support offered on the CAPS/ACSP website ([www.caps-acsp.ca](http://www.caps-acsp.ca)), to respond to our national surveys (disseminated widely



through our extended network), or to contact the Executive Council with questions about their postdoctoral appointment or postdoc policy in Canada.

### ACTIVITIES

For the past decade, CAPS/ACSP has been the sole organization in Canada dedicated to improving policy and working conditions for postdocs through advocacy at the national level. With that goal in mind, the association conducts a Canadian National Postdoctoral Survey every 3-4 years, and produces reports that include evidence-based policy recommendations based on the collected data. To-date, CAPS/ACSP has produced three such surveys/reports, including one in 2009 ([Stanford et al., 2009](#)), 2013 ([Mitchell et al., 2013](#)), and 2016 ([Jadavji et al., 2016](#)), and collected data from over 5,000 current / former postdocs to help inform their advocacy efforts. Each of those reports has prompted increased recognition of the issues facing Canadian postdocs and new recommendations to improve the Canadian postdoctoral training system.

CAPS/ACSP 2017 Annual  
General Meeting, Ottawa, ON,  
Canada, 4 November 2017



The input from Canadian postdocs on those surveys serves to inform all of our advocacy efforts at the local, provincial, and national levels. For example, our survey results and other input from members guided the development of a number of recent government consultations, including the:

- 1 – [CAPS/ACSP 2019 Pre-Budget Brief: Investing in Canada's Postdoctoral Training System](#)
- 2 – [CAPS/ACSP 2018 CRCC Consultation: Reimagining Canada's Postdoctoral Training System](#)
- 3 – [CAPS/ACSP 2018 Canadian Postdoctoral Immigration Report](#)





The latter of which was a report submitted in response to a consultation request from Immigration, Refugees, and Citizenship Canada (IRCC), which is highly relevant to European postdocs working in, or considering positions in, Canada.

In addition to CAPS/ACSP's advocacy efforts on behalf of postdocs, we also offer a wide range of information and [resources](#) for postdocs and open access to all of our [reports and publications](#) about postdoctoral working conditions and policies in Canada on our website. And we have recently started offering [National Health/Dental Insurance Plans](#) to 'Contributing Members' (i.e., members who pay a small fee to support the association) and [holding webinars](#) on a variety of topics including career development for members .

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

The [CAPS/ACSP 2018 Annual General Meeting](#) will be held in Ottawa, Ontario starting with a networking event on the evening of Friday, November 9<sup>th</sup> followed by a meeting from 10 AM to 6 PM on Saturday, November 10<sup>th</sup>. We encourage all European postdocs working in Canada to attend this event!

**EURAXESS PARTNERSHIP**

The Executive views our partnership with EURAXESS as an essential part of our efforts to encourage engagement in CAPS/ACSP among European postdocs working in Canada. In addition, we rely on EURAXESS' network of European diasporas in North America to assist us in disseminating information of interest to European postdocs and scientists working in Canada. We look forward to expanding our partnership with EURAXESS in the future to increase the cross-sharing of information and resources and the cross-promotion of events.

Dr. Joseph Sparling, Chair of CAPS/ACSP presenting at the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of European Scientific Diasporas in North America, Washington, DC, 11 December 2017



For more information, please visit us online:





## 3 HOT TOPIC: “The unofficial guide to writing EU research grant proposals”

*Piece originally published by Sami Makelainen, an experienced FP7 and H2020 proposal evaluator, in his blog entry of the same title, accessible [here](#), and reproduced below as-is with his consent.*

For the past several years, I have been involved as an independent expert, commissioned by the European Commission, to evaluate FP7 research proposals (and more recently the Horizon 2020 program). Every time I do this, it entails reading hundreds or even thousands of pages of research proposals in a relatively short time period, so good, clear and concise proposal writing would be appreciated.

In order to help whoever is vying for funding via these channels, I offer the following advice. Please note that this is my individual view, not explicitly or implicitly condoned by the European Commission in any way, shape or form. Also note there are several experts independently reviewing every single proposal, so just writing it so that I like it will not get you any money. In other words, this advice comes with no warranty whatsoever, but here goes:

**Cut the complicated language.** One often wishes the writers would just get the basics of good writing right. Writing in a complicated way and using a wide range of meaningless buzzwords is not a sign that you know your domain, nor is it a sign of intelligence. At best it's a sign of laziness, at worst it's an attempt to cover up the lack of any real substance. Write simply. Do not try to complicate things unnecessarily; most of the time what you're doing is completely feasible to present in very simple terms – dump the buzzwords and the pretend-intellectualism. And, please, check that the sentences you write make sense. Because sometimes they make no sense whatsoever, or do not mean *anything*.

**Be realistic on impacts.** Too many times the applicants completely forget they are operating with finite time and resources. I know the EC asks for impact assessments, but this needs to be realistic. Any talk of “saving Europe” or similar grandiose statements through just this one research project is unrealistic and will be treated as such.

**Focus; don't try to achieve too much.** It may seem that the more goals you have in a project and that the wider they are, the better it must be. It's not. Have a clear focus, because that's the only way to achieve something. If you focus on everything, you're not focusing on anything and will accomplish exactly that. This is particularly important for Small or medium-scale focused research projects



### About the author, Sami Mäkeläinen

I am a technologist with more than 20 years of experience deep in and around the worlds of ICT, mobile and telecommunications, and the many exciting interfaces where they meet, and overlap.

Technically knowledgeable, analytical and pragmatic, I am also a humanist with a strong interest in the environments technology creates – the audio-visual, the social and business texture, and the emotion created by our interactions with technology and how that influences our behaviours, our perceptions and the places where we feel invited to engage in an increasingly digital world. For the past several years, I have been involved as an independent expert, commissioned by the European Commission, to evaluate FP7 research proposals (and more recently the Horizon 2020 program).



(STREP) proposals. You do NOT need to address every single element in the call.

**Don't do research for research's sake.** Anything that you attempt to do that goes beyond state-of-the-art must have an application or use somewhere. It's not good enough to say that after you research topic X for three years, you'll have good grounds to continue the research.

**Don't waste money – get onto the 'lean' boat.** Just having multi-year funding from the EC doesn't mean you can use outdated project methodologies. Two iterations over three years is not "agile". There is also no reason for you not to borrow a page or two from the Lean Startup. The EC – really the European taxpayers – don't like to see their money wasted any more than a VC would. Keep in mind that most of the time part of the funding comes out of *your* tax dollars – would you invest in your project?

**Don't waste money, part II.** 15% of project funding to management overhead is unacceptable. That is proposing to buy loads of gear or services at unreasonable prices.

**Learn to pitch.** Something you should learn from the startups; make sure you develop a compelling pitch – why should your project be funded? Don't bury the lead on page 78, by when the reviewers will have lost any faith in you coming up with something good. It's essential for the abstract to be compelling and engaging.

**Learn to write (English).** I bet you were taught to write essays in school, and scientific articles at the university. Try to remember those lessons: Use clear layout. Break into appropriate sentences and paragraphs. Reference concisely, i.e. in a way that doesn't interfere with reading (superscripted [21] is good, [Lastname 1, Lastname 2, publication XYZ, page B, 2010] is not.). Use graphics, but make them clear. Check the spelling. Check the grammar. Write clearly. Avoid sentences that are like 100 words long. Avoid paragraphs spanning half a page. Pay attention to layout and pagination. Check the spelling and grammar again. Make sure the sentences make sense.

Did I mention you need to check the spelling and grammar? Surprising as it may be, it turns out we can't read minds.

*If, btw, your writing or scientific writing courses did not teach you these things, take a better one that does.*

**Be specific.** Particularly when discussing what it is that you're going to be doing beyond state-of-the-art, it's essential that you say something more than "research" this and that. And don't forget to be realistic, too; don't say you're going to achieve something awesome which is clearly unrealistic. It is, however, fine to say you will *try* to do something.

**Don't forget business fundamentals.** You need to have a story on how your thing could be used in the "real" world; often this means involving one or more business entities that somehow need to make money. Having a pure research-platform is fine, too, if it's justified – but "*build it and they will come*" usually does not go down well as a strategy. Remember to engage the relevant industry in your project.



**Innovate, sometimes radically.** Don't be afraid to propose something completely different as opposed to just progressing some field in an expected, linear fashion. If you think the call has inappropriate elements – because sometimes they do – don't be afraid to criticize them and propose alternatives.

**Don't fall for neomania,** i.e. making something new just for the sake of it being new. Not everything new or even innovative is worth doing – show that your use cases are *actually* useful and have demand, not merely “novel”. Novelty in and of itself is valueless; don't fall for technological solutionism either.

**Test your assumptions.** Another concept from the Lean Startup; too many proposals list as some their core thesis assumptions that are entirely untested. At worst they are the result of groupthink of a very unrepresentative group of researchers along the lines of “*We'd love this so why wouldn't everyone?!*”. If you base your project on assumptions, you need to test and validate those assumptions early. Oh, and on a related note: Gartner or some other analyst company saying so doesn't make it so.

**Get the right team;** trying to make advances in areas where the members are amateurs in and not even engaging the parties with the actual state-of-the-art technology guarantees you will not get anywhere. These are not funds purely for your internal competence development.

**Don't get stuck on the Europe bit;** don't hesitate to bring in non-European partners if you can; not all service-oriented architecture (SOA) is of European origin and engaging organizations outside Europe can bring substantial benefits.

**Manage the management right.** Think about using more modern project management tools than email and Word documents.

**Keep the big picture in mind.** Having experts onboard is good. Having experts who can see beyond their little domain and into the macro-level developments *and* understand their significance is better; you need to have an understanding of the macro-environment and trends and how they might affect what you are going to do.

Finally, **don't submit a bad proposal.** It just isn't worth it. It will not get funded and you will have caused reputational damage to all participating organizations and the people identified by submitting stupid things.



## 4 In case you missed it....

**REPORT of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Meeting of European Scientific Diasporas in North America** held at the Embassy of France in Washington, DC on 11 December 2017 is NOW available on our [WEBSITE](#).

### 4.1 Event Outlook

Event	When	Where	Organized by	Link
11 <sup>th</sup> NIH International Opportunities EXPO and Career Fair	18 October 2018	NIH, Bethesda, MD, USA	Visiting Fellows Committee – National Institutes of Health	<a href="#">Link</a>
Nature Jobs Career EXPO Texas	27 October 2018	Houston, TX, USA	Nature Jobs	<a href="#">Link</a>
European Research Day 2018	5 November 2018	Ottawa, ON, CANADA	EURAXESS North America	<a href="#">Link</a>
10 <sup>th</sup> Canadian Science Policy Conference (CSPC 2018)	7-9 November 2018	Ottawa, ON, CANADA	CSPC	<a href="#">Link</a>
4 <sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of European Scientific Diasporas	7 December 2018	Washington, DC, USA	EURAXESS North America	<a href="#">Link</a>

### About EURAXESS North America

EURAXESS North America is a network of thousands of European and non-European researchers, scientists, and scholars throughout North America (USA and Canada). This multidisciplinary network includes members at all stages of their careers. It allows them to connect with each other and with Europe, ensuring that they are recognized as an important resource for European research, whether they remain in North America or return to Europe.

For further information about EURAXESS North America, please visit:

<http://northamerica.euraxess.org>.

To sign up for membership in our network, please go to our [website](#) and click on *Sign up and become a member for free* button.

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