

Quarterly  
Newsletter  
Issue 2  
2022



euraxess  
RESEARCHERS IN MOTION

This newsletter is for you! Via [china@euraxess.net](mailto:china@euraxess.net), you can send us any **comments**, **contributions** or **suggestions**.

To become a **member** of EURAXESS, you can **sign up** [here](#). You can also follow us on LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Weibo and WeChat.



## EURAXESS China

Dear colleagues,

This quarter has not been particularly easy one for the mobility of researchers in China. Strong pandemic response in Shanghai and all over China has lead to a period of few months where many of us weren't able to leave our houses and all planned activities had to be postponed.

To understand the impact of the situation we want to ask for the help of the European members of the network and conduct a survey this summer on the topic of the mobility of European researchers in China. This will be coming out soon and we will let you know when it is open. Any help on this topic is greatly appreciated, the better understanding we have of the state of mobility the better we can service the community and raise awareness of the situation amongst relevant stakeholders.

Although we in the EURAXESS China team had to postpone some physical events in the quarter, we were able to have online networking events for European researchers, conclude our big [science communication training series](#) and hold a big training event for prospective applicants of [Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship](#). The fellowship is the focus of this newsletter; we [interviewed two successful applicants](#) and we even spoke to a fellow that is going to the UK about the situation with [UK hosted fellowships](#).

Carrying on from our open science feature in the last Quarterly newsletter, this time we also explore the importance of '[FAIR principles](#)', as the bedrock of solid research and replicable data, through the work of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) and GO-FAIR Organisation. Like normally we also include an article focusing on a particular EURAXESS member country, this time we look at the main research opportunity available in [Belgium](#).

This and a lot more in this quarters' unusually thick newsletter! Too much for you to handle? No worries, you can see us in our next live videocast where EURAXESS China Country Representatives Anna and Halldor will go over the newsletter in a casual and fun manner. Since last month the live stream is [now also visible](#) to our members based in Mainland China.

See you there!

EURAXESS China Team



## POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

### MARIE SKODOVSKA CURIE ACTIONS

## Open to post-docs of all nationalities and all fields

Chinese Postdoctoral researchers (up to 8 years of experience after PhD graduation) are welcome to apply with a European Host Institution for the Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowship.

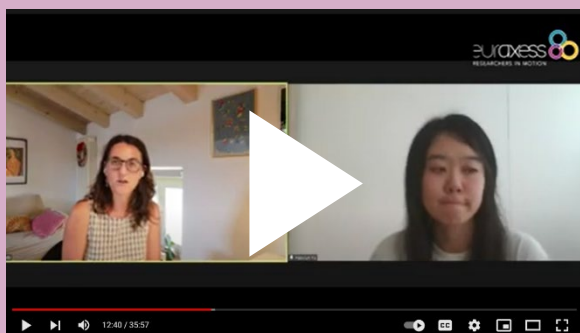
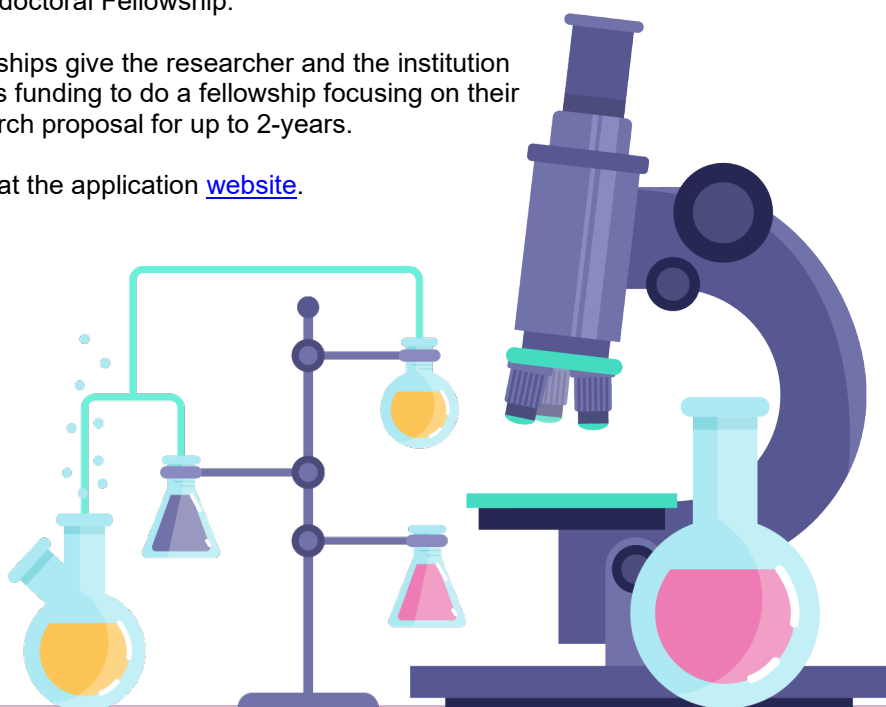
The fellowships give the researcher and the institution a generous funding to do a fellowship focusing on their own research proposal for up to 2-years.

See more at the application [website](#).

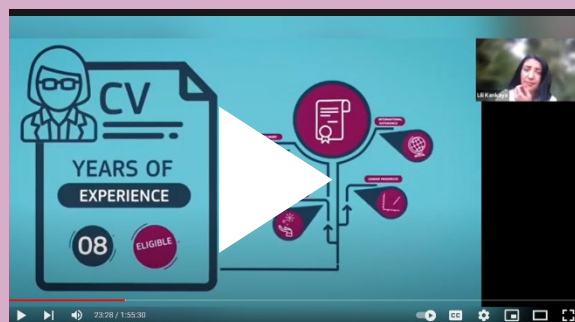
2022 DEADLINE

14

SEPTEMBER



Video interview with Postdoctoral Fellow Haocun Yu



EURAXESS China MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship Online Training



# POSTDOCTORAL FELLOWSHIPS

## INTERVIEWS

### Interview with two successful MSCA Postdoctoral Fellows: From China to Europe

*We interviewed two Chinese researchers who attended our webinars in the past and have started or will soon start their Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) postdoctoral Fellowships (PF) in Europe; Dr Lingju Meng (LM) a postdoctoral fellow at Aalto University in Finland and Dr Andong Wang (AW) postdoctoral fellow at Oxford in the UK. Read their personal experiences and tips to prepare a successful application!*

#### The application process

**Have you applied many times before being selected for MSCA PF? If so, what were the problematic parts in your previous proposals? What kind of guidance and support have you received? Do you have suggestions for other prospective candidates?**

**LM:** The 2021 MSCA PF call for proposals, when I was selected, was the second time I applied. So, I'm not a rookie :-)

I submitted my first application to the then-called MSCA Individual Fellowships in 2020 under the Horizon 2020 framework. I was close to the control threshold in this first attempt. According to the comments received, I believe the problems in my proposal were mostly in the third section, the one about implementation. I think I didn't provide enough details on the collaboration work and the key performance indicators, so I lost some points in this section.

#### Lingju MENG

Aalto University, Finland

Dr. Lingju Meng was born and raised in Hebei, China. He is currently a Marie Skłodowska-Curie European Fellow at Aalto University, Finland. Under this framework, he will develop nanoelectromechanical devices (NEMS) for superfluid helium.

Lingju acquired his B.Sc. degree in applied physics from the University of Science and Technology of China, in a southern China city, Hefei, China. After that, he moved to Edmonton, a prairie city close to the Rockies in Canada, for further education and research. In 2020, he obtained his Ph.D. degree in solid state electronics at the Department of Electrical and Computer Engineering, University of Alberta.

In 2021, he joined Aalto University, Finland as a postdoctoral researcher at the Microfabrication Group for a new adventure, and he was awarded the MSCA-PF under the Horizon Europe frame in 2022. Lingju's research interest covers a large area in nano/micro sensing devices, especially MEMS, NEMS, and quantum dot devices.

During the preparation of both applications, I joined multiple webinars by EURAXESS China, EURAXESS North America, and also by my host institution. Here, I need to thank EURAXESS China once again for providing high-quality webinars: the one organised in collaboration with National Contact Points from France was the best MSCA-related webinar I have attended so far. Some ideas I gained from this webinar have even formed the basis of my current grant writing methodology. Besides all these webinars, of course, I also got guidance and support from the grant office at my host institution, my colleagues and my supervisors.

My suggestions to prospective applicants are: 1. Set yourself goals with proper motivation. 2. Start as early as possible. 3. Pay attention to the details. 4. Do not be afraid of asking questions.



*Dr Lingju Meng in Finland*

## **Andong WANG**

*Oxford, UK*

Dr. Andong Wang passed the evaluation of MSCA Postdoc Fellowship in 2022 with a score of 98.

His main host for this fellowship is from Oxford University, and his secondment host is from CNRS, France.

His research interest mainly concentrates on laser matter interactions.

**AW:** I applied twice and succeeded the second time. The ‘deadliest’ weakness of my previous proposal was mainly in the impact sections (graded 4.0), pointing to the lack of a detailed commercialisation plan and broader impact to potential policymakers and professional organisations. Reflecting on the comments I received, I realised that I over-emphasised the scientific parts, but paid less attention to other parts. This failed to meet the high-standard requirements of MSCA. In my second attempt, I paid more attention to those sections, and developed careful plans with my supervisors. Finally, I obtained a 5.0 in this section.

Reflecting again on these experiences, my most important suggestion is to understand fully what is required by MSCA and address each of the potential requirements. The programme guide gives a very detailed explanation and

examples of the requirements, so a careful read is helpful even though it is a bit long.

Another small piece of advice I want to share is regarding how to find people to check your proposal. Previous MSCA awardees or your supervisors will surely offer invaluable advice, yet they might be difficult to find or too busy to read your proposal many times. Therefore, I applied another approach, which is to find other applicants who are also applying during the year to do a cross-check: they will devote more time to check your proposal, and they know much more about the rules. A joint journey is not only helpful during the writing process, but also beneficial for relieving the stress in the long application process!



*Dr Andong Wang*

## Host institution

**Which institution will host you? How did you get in contact with it originally? Did they provide any kind of support to you during the application process? How should an applicant identify the right host institution for his/her MSCA PF?**

**LM:** Aalto University in Finland is my host institution. At first, I accepted a postdoctoral researcher job offer from them. Indeed, during that interview, I already discussed the possibility of applying for MSCA PF in 2021, and my future supervisor was up for it. I arrived in Helsinki in April 2021. After the call was open, I started reaching out for collaboration and also designing the structure of the proposal.

The topic of my proposal is in nanotechnology. Aalto University is home to the OtaNano infrastructure, which is one of the most cutting-edge facilities of this kind in the world. This is actually a point I could play with in my proposal. Aalto University has a large grant supporting team. I must say they provided a lot of support to me. The grant writing team helped me edit the proposal at least three times, and the post-award team literally took care of every administrative thing

after the awarding. They are super professional: definitely a dream team! For prospective applicants, if there is any similar service in your host institution, do not be afraid to ask for help.

Regarding identifying a suitable host, what I can suggest is from the academic side. One should always think from two different perspectives: the hardware and the software. If you are an experimentalist like me, you definitely need to check out the scientific infrastructure of the host institution, because that will be your playground for at least two years. You should also pay attention to the scientists in the institute to see if they are people you would like to work with. Even though you will mostly work independently in your postdoc career, it is still great to have someone to exchange ideas with and that could help you grow. Anyway, if you have other variables over the academic ones, just set them as your priority. One rule above all: follow your heart!

**AW:** I had a clear research plan in my mind, so I knew which research group to contact to fit my plan. I contacted my current host, from Oxford University, with an email which briefly explained my research ideas and my interest in applying for MSCA PF. My projects raised interest, so we decided to give it a try and apply. During the writing process, I was the main driver to prepare the draft and submit the proposal, yet my hosts offered precious experience and did some important revisions to my proposal. The host institution also offered general guidance and documents to help me.

Regarding how to find the right host institution, I believe MSCA is mutually beneficial for both candidates and hosts. Therefore, if you have any good research ideas, don't hesitate to reach out to the institution you would like to be your host.

## Secondment and intersectoral mobility

**Are you going to do any secondment? Which benefits do you expect from it?**

**LM:** Yes, I have two secondments and they are both academic institutes in the UK. They are actually key collaborators for me, because they have the necessary scientific equipment and skills for my project. They will help make the project run smoothly and I can also learn new things from them.

**AW:** My host is in the UK, and I included a secondment in France. This allows me to benefit from a wider network and stronger support from more research groups. The secondment group will also bring complementary knowledge from another discipline which fits well with the aims of MSCA.

# What if I apply with an UK Institution?

*Many applicants for MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship in China apply with a host institution in the UK. It has been clear through the application process that those applications are conditional to the successful conclusion of the negotiations between European Union and the United Kingdom. Since we wrote the article above it has become clear that the negotiations will probably not be concluded in time for the fellowships starting this year.*

The impact of that should be lessened for the applicants with a UK host institution as on 15 March the UK government [announced](#) an extension to the guarantee to provide a financial safety net for successful UK applicants to Horizon Europe

See here how to [apply](#) for the guarantee funding for MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships. Please note that this is only for successful MSCA applicants that applied last fall (2021) but is indicative of the process offered by the UK government.

To give us a better feeling for the situation we also interviewed another successful MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowship applicant heading to Sheffield University in the UK, **Dr Zhenming Li**. We asked him about his experience with applying for the MSCA grant, but also the process of moving from MSCA to an UKRI grant.



**Zhenming Li**

Sheffield University, UK

Zhenming Li graduated from Delft University of Technology in 2021. He majored in construction materials, such as cement, concrete and new types of binders. He also studies recycling of solid wastes into the use of raw materials of concrete. He has published dozens of journal papers in his field and he is an active member in technical committees of RILEM (the International Union of Laboratories and Experts in Construction Materials, Systems and Structures).

## The application process

**Did you apply many times? If yes, which were the problematic parts in the previous proposals? Which kind of guidance and support you received? Do you have suggestions to perspective applicants?**

No, I just applied for one time. Well, not all universities have service to review the proposals. I did receive some guidance on the template and some general questions from the contact points of MSCA. The main support I received during the writing of proposal was from the hosts and some kind colleagues who have experiences on this. I have mainly two suggestions to future applicants. The first one is we should strictly follow the template and make sure all the questions and issues are addressed clearly.

There is a limit of the number of words, so you should use concise language when writing. Compared to adding extra information that you may think helpful, addressing the questions asked is more essential. The second suggestion is to ask colleagues to review it before submission. They can be those who successfully got this grant, or those who have other experiences. In fact, the key aspects of proposals for many grants from Horizon Europe are similar. Comments from experts and professors are helpful.

## Transition

**Have you started the work yet? What are your expectations for these first weeks of research activities? How do you expect this experience to impact your research career and life?**

Not yet. I will start after I finish my current project. I think I need to settle down at the beginning of the project and do planning and arrangement first. I will of course say hello to my new colleagues, get involved in the new group, and check the availability of the facilities that I need.

My impression is always that this grant is reputational and I believe this experience is a vital step towards a tenure track position in academic community. The impact on my life is also significant since my families and me are going to live in a new country with a different culture. Getting to know something new is always interesting and I am grateful that this project gives me this chance.

## Being hosted in the UK

**Your host institution is in the UK - due to technical reasons the UK is not able to host Marie Curie fellows this year. Can you tell us how this was dealt with? What process can applicants going to the UK expect if this situation remains? How will it impact your research?**

Yes. To be honest, this is an issue that many colleagues including me have been concerned. UK has many good universities, so a big number of scholars choose UK as their destination. But till now, we have been informed that EU will not actually pay the grant, but UKRI (UK Research and Innovation) instead. UKRI guarantees that the amount of money remains the same, but the title of Marie-Curie Fellowship may not be applicable to us anymore.

This is a pity I have to say, because many people know this grant as named by Marie Curie and now the name of our project will be something else. I didn't see official announcement yet whether this situation will remain this year, but I guess so (if not worse) since the negotiation between EU and UK can take time. While, for my research, I don't think this can have a big impact as long as I get granted. The research will go as planned I think.



# All's FAIR in love and ... science

Carrying on from our open science feature in the [last Quarterly newsletter](#), this time we explore the importance of 'FAIR principles', as the bedrock of solid research and replicable data, through the work of the European Open Science Cloud (EOSC) and GO-FAIR Organisation.

Even at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, anti-vaccination propaganda proliferated across the internet. It was a wake-up call for the scientific community that its methods and motivations can never be taken for granted.

Throughout the ages, scientific advances have relied on a solid foundation of evidence underpinned by reliable data. The more unconventional the innovation or development, the higher the standard of proof needed to overcome natural conservatism. Early reticence about the novel RNA-based Covid vaccines is a case in point.

To counter such resistance, scientists' measurements and observations typically focus on building and strengthening a body of evidence fed by carefully scrutinised datasets to "anticipate, identify and minimise (or even eliminate) sources of error", according to the New South Wales government's guidance on evaluating scientific data. The Australian State adds:

*"Every aspect of a scientific investigation must be scrutinised for errors, as they may affect the investigator's conclusions. When experiments are repeated, the errors of measurement may compound. Therefore, scientists use several criteria to decide if an experiment, and the conclusions derived from it, are acceptable."*

The internet, digital technologies and powerful tools to sort, search and understand research results, including machine-learning, are fuelling a data-led scientific revolution. But with these developments comes added responsibility and new challenges warranting the creation of new disciplines and even operating system to foster coherent solutions for what is being called a global 'Internet of FAIR Data and Services (IFDS).

Early developments have centred on the work of the European Open Science Cloud ([EOSC](#)) and the [GO-FAIR](#) initiative to catapult this nascent domain worldwide.

## So, what does FAIR stand for?

First communicated in a 2016 article, 'FAIR Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship' ([Nature – Scientific Data](#)), the concept of making digital assets **F**indable, **A**ccessible, **I**nteroperable, and **R**eusable was introduced. The principles emphasise "machine-actionability", or how easily computers can interact with increasingly complex and large datasets.

Efforts to build the IFDS are well underway across Europe and in other regions, including Australia, Africa, and the US. The work focuses on establishing what GO-FAIR describes as a "federated environment" for scientific data-sharing and re-use based on existing and emerging elements in EU Member States and "lightweight" international guidance and governance.



Emphasis is on avoiding top-down decrees and allowing a “large degree of freedom regarding practical implementation” in much the same way as the internet currently functions with “no single centralised governance”.

Here, GO-FAIR stresses that the “dominance of a very limited number of private or public parties should be avoided by copying the internet’s [“hourglass model”](#) of minimal yet rigorous standards and protocols.

This, the organisation adds, allows open and common implementation through different stakeholders: “All kinds of providers, both public and private, can start implementing prototype applications for the Internet of FAIR Data and Services on the day minimal standards and minimal rules of engagement are released.”

### **FAIR practices**

Guidelines have been published on how FAIR works in practice and summarised on GO-FAIR’s website ([‘Three-point FAIRification Framework’](#)). The principles apply to three main types of entities: data (or any digital object), metadata (information about that digital object), and infrastructure.

For the [EURAXESS Worldwide](#)’s busy community, we provide a quick overview of the main points.



#### ***Findable***

Good metadata (machine-readable descriptions) is key to making your data ‘findable’. The FAIR data framework assigns (meta)data a unique globally recognised identifier, which should be clearly and explicitly included in the rich data descriptions and registered or indexed in a searchable repository/resource.



#### ***Accessible***

Once users find the data, they need access and possibly permission to do so (authentication/authorisation). For this, (meta)data must be retrievable using the identifier and standard communications protocols, which should be open, free and universally implemented. Metadata should remain accessible even when the data are no longer available.



#### ***Interoperable***

Data should be well integrated with other datasets, applications and workflows for optimal analysis, storage, and processing. This means using accessible and broadly applicable language (lexicon) that follows FAIR principles and includes qualified references to other (meta)data.



#### ***Reusable***

Replicability is vital to good science and underpins FAIR principles. (Meta)data should thus be well-formulated for ease of use and re-use in different settings. That means it should be “richly described” with accurate and relevant attributes, released with clear and accessible data-usage licensing and provenance information, and should meet domain-relevant community standards.

#### **More info**

To keep abreast of GO-FAIR’s developments, EWW community can sign up to its newsletter ([see the March-April edition here](#)) edition and participate in relevant [events and webinars](#).

# EURAXESS members in focus: Belgium

*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 41 countries. Here we focus on Belgium.*

## Some facts about Belgium

Capital: Brussels

Government: Federal State, made up of:

- 3 Communities with different languages: the Flemish Community, the French-speaking Community and the German-speaking Community
- and 3 Regions: the Flemish Region, the Brussels Capital Region and the Walloon Region.

Belgium is also a constitutional monarchy.

Population: 11.6 million

Surface area: 30,528 km<sup>2</sup>

Neighbouring countries: France, Germany, The Netherlands, Luxembourg.



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Belgium was created as an independent kingdom in 1830 but its history is much longer and has always been deeply involved in international relationships within and outside Europe. Located at the crossroads between the Latin and Germanic worlds, in the heart of Western Europe – its capital, Brussels, hosts the official seats of the European Institutions and is the home to many international businesses and organizations –, this multilingual and cosmopolitan country is well-known for its beers (around 1500 Belgian beer brands), its comics and its surrealist taste (the land of Magritte, Delvaux or Folon), but also for its first-class universities and its long-standing tradition of promoting scientific and technical research. Many Belgian scientists are involved in a wide range of international scientific programmes – for example in the fields of nuclear research at the European Organisation for Nuclear Research (CERN), research into space exploration, and environmental research at its Princess Elisabeth Station in Antarctica, but also in nanotechnology, biotechnology or vaccination research –, and are received into prestigious universities abroad, while Belgium welcomes various foreign students and researchers attracted by the high scientific level of its universities together with the quality of life in the country.

Several Belgian universities appear in the top 200 of international rankings. Recently, the Reuters ranking of Europe's most innovative universities included 7 Belgian universities, and most of all it is topped by a Belgian university.



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Ten Federal Scientific Institutions (Museums and Research Institutes) fall under BELSPO:

- [Institute for Cultural Heritage](#)
- [Institute of Natural Sciences](#)
- [Institute for Space Aeronomy](#)
- [Meteorological Institute](#)
- [Museums for Art and History](#)
- [Museum for Central Africa](#)
- [Museums of Fine Arts](#)
- [Observatory and Planetarium](#)
- [Royal Library](#)
- [State Archives](#) (of which [SOMA-CEGES](#) is now a DG)

## Research and Innovation landscape in Belgium

In Belgium, approximately 148,000 persons are employed in R&D, with nearly 92,000 of these working as researchers (2019 figures). More than half of the R&D personnel and of the researchers is to be found in the business sector (respectively 58% and 53%). Since 2019, the Belgian intramuros R&D Expenditure (known as the *R&D intensity*) has reached the Lisbon target, with 3.17% of GDP, placing the country among the most active EU Member States with respect to innovation and R&D.

For up-to-date information and indicators on research and innovation in Belgium, as well as for a full overview of the Belgian research landscape, please refer to the website of the [Monitoring and Evaluation of Research and Innovation](#) (MERI). By publishing the most recent data and indicators, this department of BELSPO shows the complexity, but also the richness of the National R&I landscape.

In Belgium, universities and other higher education institutions are managed by the language communities:

- The Dutch-speaking universities and colleges, in Flanders and Brussels, are managed by the Flemish community.
- French-speaking universities and other higher education institutions, in Wallonia and Brussels, are managed by the French-Speaking Community (Wallonia Brussels Federation).

The only exception is the Royal Military Academy, located in Brussels, which is still a federal institution.

## The Federal authority

With its 2,800 employees, and through its major [research programmes](#), the Federal Science Policy department offers the government reliable, validated data, allowing it to take decisions with full knowledge of the facts in areas such as sustainable development, the fight against climate change, biodiversity, energy, health, mobility and the information society. BELSPO also manages the Belgian contribution to the [European Space Agency](#). Since Belgium is the fifth net contributor to the ESA, this participation is strategic for our country and crucial for our companies. At the same time, BELSPO offers R&D aid to companies with the desire to participate in various AIRBUS programmes.

BELSPO supervises [10 federal scientific Institutes](#) these offer scientists an exceptional framework and research materials. They also house artistic and historical collections, which are visited by more than 1.2 million people every year.

There are four other Federal Scientific Institutes that fall under other administrations:

- [National Institute for Criminalistics and Criminology](#) (in French or Dutch),
- Penitentiary Center for Research and Clinical Observation,
- [Sciensano](#) (merger of the Scientific Institute of Public Health & the

Veterinary and Agrochemical Research Centre),

- [Royal Museum of the Armed Forces and Military History](#).

**Useful links:**

[Information on Studying, working, housing, schools, ... in Flanders](#)

[Research at Flanders' University Colleges](#)

[Research at Flanders' Universities](#)

[TTO](#) - Tech Transfer Offices Flanders

[VLIR](#) - Flemish Interuniversity Council

[ECOOM](#) - Centre for Research & Development Monitoring is an interuniversity consortium with participation of all Flemish universities

BELSPO co-ordinates the research effort lead by all the country's authorities. As such, it co-ordinates R&D and innovation surveys. It also serves as the secretariat of concertation bodies involving all Belgian authorities. BELSPO monitors the R&D fiscal incentives, amounting to 1.5 billion per year. It ensures that Belgium takes part into great European and international infrastructures and network.

The Federal Science Policy is also connected to a wide range of [prestigious institutions](#) such as the Academia Belgica in Rome, the Biermans-Lapôte Foundation in Paris, the Junfrauoch in the Alps, the Académie Royale des Sciences d'Outre-Mer, the Royal Belgian Film Archive, the Euro Space Center, the Princess Elisabeth Antarctica Research Station, the Research Vessel Belgica and the Institut Von Karman. Through these infrastructures, the Federal Science Policy offers our researchers an international reputation.

At the Federal level, there is one university: the [Royal Military Academy](#). This military institution provides education at university level that is responsible for the basic academic, military and physical training of future officers, and for the continuing advanced training of officers during their active career in the Defence department. Furthermore, though located in Flanders, the [Belgian Nuclear Research Center](#) (SCK-CEN) is a federal organization. Through its activities it remains a global leader in the field of nuclear research, services and education.

## Flanders

The backbone of the Flanders' knowledge sector is shaped by five university associations ([UHasselt](#), [KU Leuven](#), [UAntwerpen](#), [VUB](#), [UGent](#)), four strategic research centres, and a number of other knowledge institutes in specific domains such as marine sciences, tropical health, agricultural research, and various collective research institutes active in specific fields. Several of these seats of knowledge in Flanders are recognized as centres of excellence in their field of activity and conduct research integrated in renowned international networks and with partners throughout the world. Some of these, such as KU Leuven, UGent, IMEC or VITO, have established subsidiary activities abroad (USA, Asia), often involving local counterparts or partners.

The main contributors in the research and innovation landscape are businesses and industries. Companies in Flanders (and Belgium) are among the most innovative in the EU: With a score of 70% (versus 68% for Belgium) Flanders ranked second during the period 2016-2018 in the list of the highest proportion of enterprises with innovation activity (product innovations, business process innovations and/or ongoing or abandoned innovation activities), behind Estonia (73%) and ahead of Cyprus, Germany and Norway (all 68%). Of all people employed in Flanders, 8,8% are active in a high-tech sector. Flanders is specialised in labour intensive (plastics, diamonds) and capital intensive (vehicles) goods. The main high-tech

export product is pharmaceuticals, that represented almost 60% of all high-tech exports in 2020.

If you are you looking for research topics, research teams or researchers, you'll find them on the e [Flanders Research Information Space](#).

In addition, the publication "[STI in Flanders](#)" will give you in depth information about Science, Technology and Innovation policy in Flanders, important figures or indicators, the broad context and the performance of the research and innovation landscape, and an overview of the main actors and the public entities engaged in the field of R&D and innovation.

## The French-speaking Community (Wallonia-Brussels Federation)

In the French-speaking Community, six universities play a key role as research performers: the Catholic University of Louvain ([UCLouvain](#)), the Free University of Brussels ([ULB](#)), the University of Liège ([ULiège](#)), the University of Mons ([UMons](#)), the University of Namur ([UNamur](#)) and Saint-Louis University, Brussels ([USL-B](#)), who participate in international university networks, whether institutional or disciplinary, and maintain numerous student exchange partnerships with universities all over the world. These university institutions, with their laboratories and research centres, enjoy access to cutting edge scientific support and top-quality infrastructure.

More than 12,000 researchers are working in the French-speaking Community. Alongside the six universities, there are 223 spin-off universities, 300 public and private units specialised in research and development, and six competitiveness clusters bringing together businesses and researchers in priority sectors for the economic and industrial development of French-speaking Belgium.

These "**competitiveness hubs**" are key elements of the economic development and innovation policy of Wallonia-Brussels, aiming to strengthen the ties between the various public and private research bodies. They group together higher education institutions, businesses, research units and other stakeholders involved in common innovative projects, over a limited territory. In this "triangle of innovation" or "triangle of knowledge", higher education institutions play an important part. On the one hand, they provide high quality teaching with a focus on research, and on the other, they produce research and innovation. To make the most of the results obtained, each university has established a knowledge transfer office (KTO). Each of these is represented in the [LiEU Network](#) (the Businesses and University Link) network, which facilitates the pooling of resources.

## Innovation

Innovation support is governed by the regions through dedicated agencies and subsidy programmes. In Flanders, Flanders Innovation and Entrepreneurship ([VLAIO](#)) acts as a one-stop-shop for all guidance and support for businesses, including innovation support, while [Innoviris](#) and the [SOWALFIN group](#) take up

### Useful links:

Study in Belgium: [Information on studying, working, housing, schools, ... in French-Speaking Belgium](#)

[CRef \(Rectors' Council\)](#)

[ARES](#) (Academy of Research and Higher Education).

[Official Portal of Scientific Research in Wallonia-Brussels Federation](#)

[WBI](#) (the agency responsible for international relationships in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation)

[LiEU Network](#) (the Businesses and University Link)

[SynHERA](#) (the office which represents applied research within French-speaking Universities of Applied Sciences (UAS) and associated Research Centres)

These are the six competitiveness hubs in the WBF:

- [Skywin](#) Wallonia – Aeronautics and space sector
- [Logistics in Wallonia](#) – Transport and logistics sector
- [GreenWin](#) – Green chemistry, sustainable construction and environmental technologies sector
- [BioWin](#) – Nutrition and health sector
- [WagrALIM](#) – Agricultural-industry sector
- [MecaTech](#) – Transversal technologies sector

this role in the Brussels Capital Region and the Walloon Region, respectively.

Besides financing, the regions offer hands-on support. While the established policy is implemented by the agencies, **preparation, monitoring and evaluation of policy** happens within the administration of the respective governments, in particular the Department of Economy, Science and Innovation ([EWI](#)) and the Ministry of Education and Training ([O&V](#)) in Flanders, and the directorates ([SPW Economie, Emploi, Recherche](#)) and [DGESVR](#) of the public services of the Walloon Region and the French-speaking Community, respectively.

## Funding tools/opportunities

Belgium offers various recruitment opportunities for international candidates. All university research positions that are open to international researchers are listed on the job portal [www.euraxess.eu](http://www.euraxess.eu)

Basic research funding is largely administered by the [FWO](#) (Flemish community) and [F.R.S.-FNRS](#) (French-speaking community) agencies.

Other information on support for research projects in French-Speaking community: <https://www.objectif-recherche.be/en/funding-options>

Other information on support for research projects in Flanders: <https://www.vlaanderen.be/en/support-for-research-projects>

At the European level, Belgium is very successful in securing research funding both from the [Marie Skłodowska Marie Funding program](#) and [ERC funding](#). The 5 National Contact Points ([NCPs](#)) present in Belgium provide candidates with information and help about the latest developments in Horizon Europe, to help them find suitable project partners or join a consortium, to support them in preparing a project proposal and to provide feedback on their project proposals.

## Important information for incoming researchers

Belgium belongs to the EURAXESS initiative that provides support to researchers and their families when coming to Belgium (in key areas such as visas, housing, schooling, etc.). Additional information can be found at <https://www.euraxess.be/>

About the immigration procedures system, see also the following pages:

- [Work permits for foreign workers](#) | Flanders.be (vlaanderen.be)
- [Work permit to hire foreign workers from outside the European Union](#) | Wallonie.be
- [Work Permits](#) | Brussels Regional Public Service
- [Working in Belgium](#) | International.socialsecurity.be



## Survey for European Researchers in China 2022

*EURAXESS China is interested in keeping a good overview of the real state of European Researchers' Mobility in China and as part of that we are planning to conduct a survey on the topic in the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of 2022.*

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We are interested to learn the impact of the strict COVID measures in 2022 on Europe-China science relations, and in particular how the work and mobility of European researchers based in China has been affected. If you had to leave China since COVID started, we would also be interested in hearing your side of the story, including where you went and if you are still working with China.

The survey will be opening around mid-Summer, so if you are interested in participating, please stay tuned and wait for our announcement of starting the survey. The link to the survey can be accessed through the button below:

### See the results of our 2019 survey

The result of our 2019 survey on the mobility of European Researchers in China was published on our website and can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

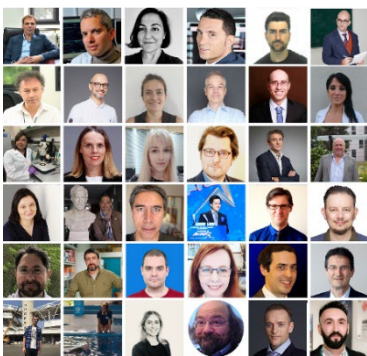
[SURVEY FOR EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS IN CHINA 2022](#)





## 2nd Newsletter of the Network of European Researchers in Biology and Medicine in China

*EURAXESS China is pleased to share the 2nd edition of the newsletter published by the Network of European Researchers in Biology and Medicine in China. NERBIMEC was established in June 2021 and is now formed by more than 60 members. If you want to know more about it, would like to propose collaborations and activities, or want to become part of it, visit the [website](https://nerbimec.eu) and get in touch!*



It is our great pleasure to share this second NERBIMEC newsletter for the summer 2022 period. Despite the pandemic, most of the network was able to resume research and make new wonderful discoveries. The network was even able to organize their annual meeting (although only held in online), where we introduced ourselves, shared our research interests, our work and approaches. We hope these discussions will promote collaborations between the members of the NERBIMEC network!

The conclusion that was drawn at the end of this meeting was more divided than last year: while some of the network was able to advance their science, for others the pandemic has been a huge burden for their research and career in China. The reasons seem to be a weakened effort in conducting international research, at various levels. Let's hope these difficulties are only temporary, and that we will all be able to work normally very soon.

<https://nerbimec.eu>

Moreover, EURAXESS China share with the network organizers the hope that we will all be able to meet in real life very soon!

GET IN TOUCH

See the PDF version

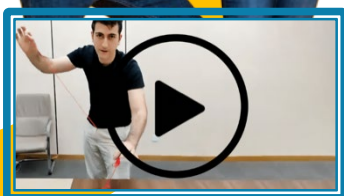
# In case you missed it...

## Science Communication Training



In case you missed in our last newsletter we welcome you to take a look at our 2022 Science Communication Training, which was our biggest online event spanning the first and second quarter of the year.

Take a look below at our recordings from the various different training sessions we did this year; everything from how to prepare for a job interview to how to straddle industry and academia.



### [Training n. 1: Basics of Science Communication](#)

We started from the Basics of Science Communication with **Dr Alvaro Castells**, the winner of Science Slam China in 2021, who shared tips on how to communicate your science in a fun and entertaining way. We also provided an overview of the main takeaways of last year's edition of the Training.



### [Training n. 2: How to Prepare a Job Interview](#)

With career coach and trainer **Dean Hogan**, we went through the different formats of interview and provided tips for each of them. We talked the types of questions you can expect, what to do on the day and during your interview, touching also on non-verbal communication & cues.



### [Training n. 3: How to Publish in Academic Journals](#)

With the collaboration of **Taylor & Francis** and their **Hennie Thomson**, we provided a basic overview of the current state of academic publishing to enable a better understanding of the process, as well as offer guidance to help researchers succeed.



### [Training n. 4: Communicate your Core Idea](#)

Joining this session were **Bill Xu**, SAP BusinessObjects, **Corinna Luther**, Falling Walls Lab Foundation, and the Science Communicator **Emmie Chiyindiko**, who shared strategies and tips to make your pitch stand out and catch the audience attention quickly.



### [Training n. 5: Business of Science](#)

The session focused on the transferable skills that can help academic scientists in the business world, and how businessmen engage with entrepreneurs and innovative academics with **Dr Ulf Richter** and **Christian Jensen** from Audi China.



## About us

EURAXESS China is a networking tool for European researchers active in China and for Chinese and international researchers wishing to collaborate and/or pursue a career in Europe. EURAXESS China provides information about research in Europe, European research policy, opportunities for research funding, for EU-China and international collaboration and for trans-national mobility. **Membership is free.**

Visit us at [china.euraxess.org](http://china.euraxess.org) and [join](#) the EURAXESS China community.

EURAXESS Worldwide has dedicated teams in the following countries and regions ready to assist you: ASEAN (focus on Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam), Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC, focus on Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico, and Colombia), China, India, Japan, North America (USA and Canada), South Korea, Australia and New Zealand.