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Career development: **networking**

MRG Seminar, 08/06/2023

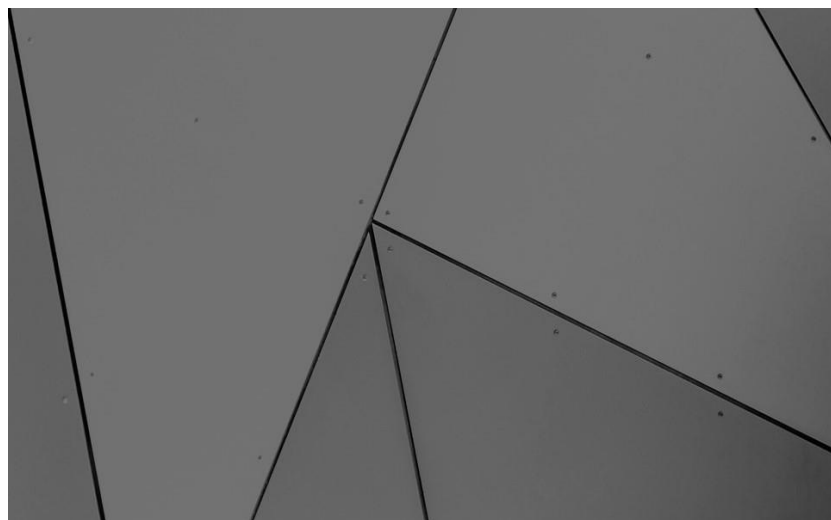


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- Why to network?
- What networking is not
- What networking is
- Where to network?
 - At your uni
 - Within your field
 - Stage-based
 - Free form
- How to network?



Quick agenda



Why to network?

Yeah, yeah, but really, I'm already busy enough...

What is networking good for?

- **Improving your scholarship**
 - It's impossible to read all the papers
 - Increasing interdisciplinarity makes it harder to connect the fields
 - Knowing the right people keeps you updated
- **Dissemination**
 - Poor levels of readership and citations of papers
 - Conferences are not enough (there are so many...)
 - Mouth to mouth "marketing" is a valuable method
- **Your mental well-being**
 - PhD can be lonely, postdocs too – reach out!
- **Collaboration**
 - Networking lets you build a body of contacts
 - Not only in academia, but also beyond:
 - Citizen science / Participatory research
 - Non-academic dissemination
 - Applicability of research, start-ups, incubators
 - Requirement for job/grant applications
 - Job opportunities
- **Again: job opportunities!**

What networking isn't

- Ability to “work a room”, i.e., you have to be a master of small talk
 - It can range from exhausting to a torture for (almost) all.
 - There are many ways to network. What works for you, is good for you.
- Something you do with strangers
 - Don't forget your colleagues at “home”!
- Yet another thing taking your time away from research
 - It is not additional to your work; it is your work
 - To do it well is not necessarily to *overperform* – no need to know everyone!
- A rat race for over-ambitious academics
 - It's not only vertical – it's also a horizontal support structure
- Something that stays at the conference
 - Good networks are not created over night. Take your time.

What networking is

- Developing authentic (not necessarily close) relationships
- Supporting yourself in achieving your professional and life (!) goals
- A long-term community-building strategy
- A way to figure out the culture of your workplace
- Getting the feedback you miss otherwise
- Giving and taking: give willingly but not carelessly
- A chance to strategically target support on your career path
 - Where do you stand right now in your career?
 - What do you want to achieve?
 - What support might you need in order to do so?
 - What do you have to offer in return?

Networking – where?



At your uni

your department and other faculties – be active!



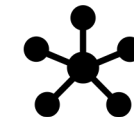
Within the field

Field-based societies, conferences, summer schools, etc.



Stage-based

Scholarships, fellowships, graduate schools, trainings, etc.



Free form!

Social media, workshops, science communication events, etc.



At your
university

Group

- Know what your colleagues are doing: topics, methods, populations
- Check which funding they are using
- Collaboration/competition group dynamics – find your way

Faculty

- Keep track of the faculty mailing lists, join events, meet people
- Follow the career paths of colleagues on your/more senior level to explore future options

Uni

- Look for similar topics at different faculties
- Follow interesting colleagues/groups on social media to know about their events



Within your field



Societies

Not any society!

- People working on similar topics to yours?
- Discounts for PhDs for membership and/or events?
- Training/development opportunities?
- Funding options?
- Publication support?
- Are ECRs valued? E.g., Young Board



Conferences

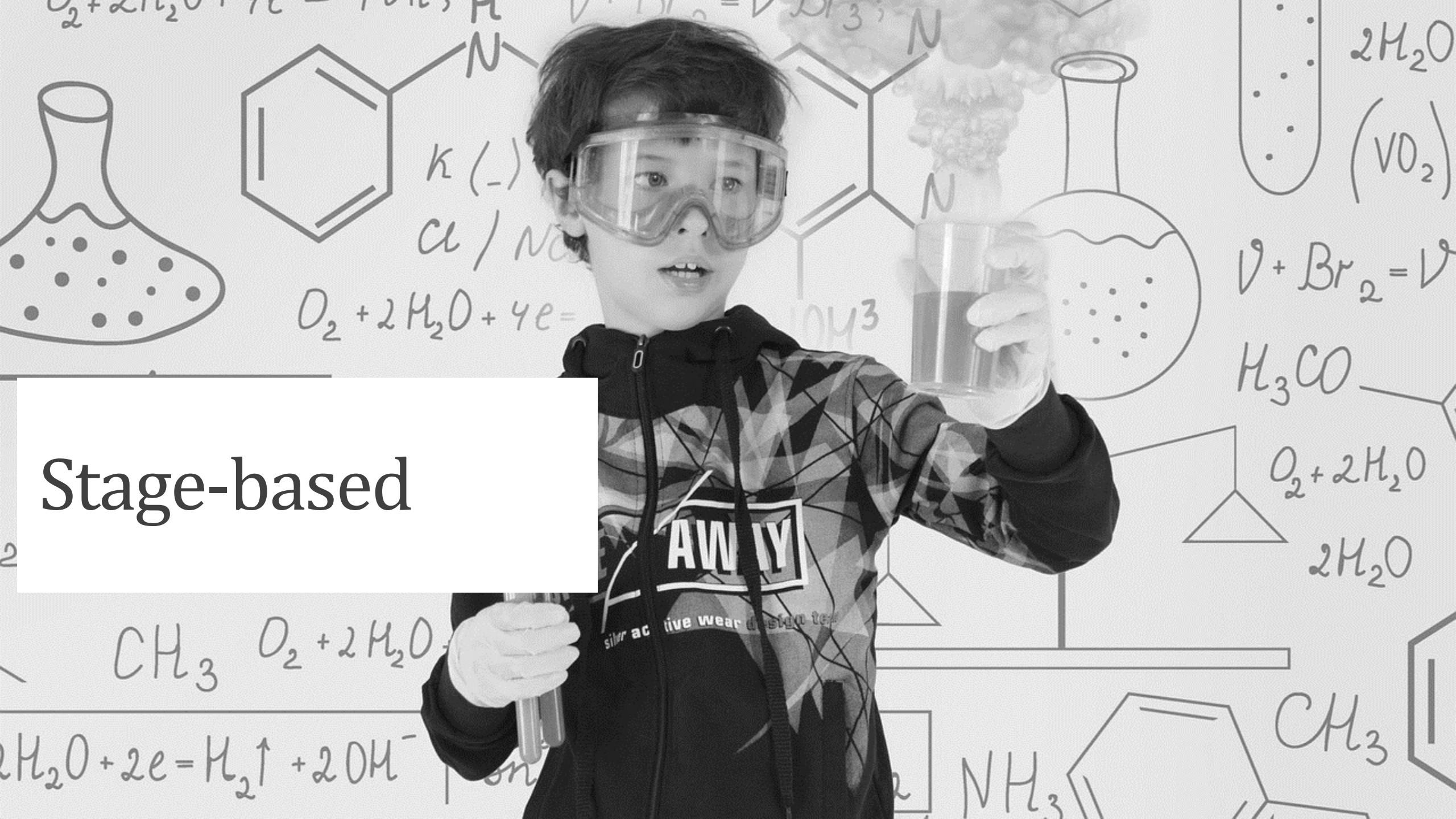
- Disseminate your research and learn about others (duh...)
- Join panels and discussions, ask questions, present yourself
- Introduce yourself to people you find important in your field (future contact, reviews, job opportunities)
- Coffee breaks and social events are great opportunities too!
- Follow up afterwards (email)



Summer Schools

- Longer and more relaxed than conferences
- More opportunities to chat with people in less structured atmosphere
- Often different formats: workshops, presentations, group discussions, etc. – try and enjoy!
- Don't forget about your social network next to the professional one!

Stage-based



Scholarships, fellowships, graduate schools, training programs...

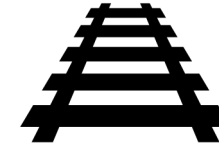


The social aspect

- PhD/science can be a lonely experience, being a part of a group helps
- Share similar experiences, support each other
- Take care of your social network!



Check UPF
Click for
trainings!



The trainings

- Find people who represent values and practices you care for (open science, mentoring, teaching, mental health, etc.)
- Look for trainings not only in your field
- A chance to find a mentor!
- Btw – a mentor does not have to be your boss 😊



The example

- You will often meet colleagues further ahead in their careers – learn from them
- Ask questions, people often like talking about themselves ;)
- Be critical: a successful path of another person may not be what success is for you





Free form

Networking has many faces

Social media

- Mainly: Twitter & LinkedIn
- Being active helps with dissemination and new contacts, but passively following others is a great idea too
- Yep, easier said than done...

Science communication

- Long Night of Science – communicating your research to the “outside”
- Popular science articles – a foot outside of academia
- Presentations/workshops /events for your target non-academic group: industry, clinicians, etc.

Other events

- Science Soapbox
- Pint of Science
- Festivals
- Writing groups
- Panels
- And more.



How to network?

Up to you! Here are some examples...

Conferences

- Go through the program and make a list of people you want to talk to
- If you can, invite them to your talk/poster
- Try to „catch” them at coffee breaks, lunches, social events, after their talks
- If it's someone of „mentoring potential”, just ask for a coffee and advice. It works!
- If you can't meet them at the conference, send an email afterwards!
- Keep in touch – send an „aftermaths” email a few days later, mention points you discussed...

Social media

- Keep your LinkedIn, Twitter, website, RG updated
- Follow people!
- Give when you can and ask for things when you need them: polls, methods questions, RT to disseminate/recruit, etc.

Mailing lists

- Sign up to mailing lists of societies, fellowships, organisations that are of interest for you – stay updated about funding options, events, practices

Outside of academia

- Keep a list of contacts + context! It's easy to forget things...
- Join networking events, gatherings, social events
- Check Barcelona Activa – there are many networking events/gatherings



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Thank you

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under the Marie Skłodowska-Curie grant agreement No 945380.

