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SARELA GARCIA-SANTAMARINA

Auxiliary Researcher at ITQB NOVA
https://www.itqb.unl.pt/

In our group we study the interactions between the gut microbiota, xenobiotics and micronutrients. The training provided a great overview of coordinating a proposal for the Horizon Pilar II and III grants. I hope to use this information, and further support from EUTOPIA, to build a good proposal that can be at the level of funding for the EC during the next few months.

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FILIPA MARCELO

Assistant Researcher in Glycoscience and Group leader of the (Bio)molecular structure and interactions by NMR lab (BioNMR) at the Applied Molecular Biosciences Unit (UCIBIO) of NOVA School of Science and Technology
NOVA FCT: https://www.fct.unl.pt/

My research mission is to decode how glycome (sugar code) is created and how it is read and translated into biological signals in human health & disease, aiming to develop innovative glycanbased therapies.This training program was a unique opportunity to gain contact with an experienced pre-award team that is extremely motivated to assist NOVA Researchers in writing collaborative proposals for EU funding schemes.

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OANA MARIA BLAGA

I am an Assistant Professor and public health researcher at Babes-Bolyai University in Romania. My expertise in research design, data analysis, and behavioral health equips me to seamlessly integrate and test evidence-based interventions as part of my work.

I've been using my USA-based behavioral health training and my 12-year research expertise to design, implement, and evaluate interventions to promote positive health outcomes among mothers, infants, and children in Romania. My research involves running randomized controlled trials (RCTs) to test public health interventions with a focus on reducing maternal modifiable health risk behaviors. One of my most exciting projects is an AI-based mobile health app for smoking cessation during pregnancy. We are currently testing the effectiveness of this app against usual care in a hybrid effectiveness and implementation RCT.

Over the past six years, I have held local Principal Investigator roles on six National Institutes of Health-funded projects. In January 2022, I was competitively selected to become a member of the WHO Europe Technical Advisory Group on Behavioral and Cultural Insights.

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DANIEL CRUCERIU

Daniel Cruceriu is a member of the Department of Molecular Biology and Biotechnology at the Babes-Bolyai University, where he teaches a range of subjects including Oncobiology and Molecular Diagnosis in Oncology, Human Genetics, and Bioethics and Research Ethics. In addition to his academic role, he is also a Specialist Biologist in Genetics and Molecular Biology at the Oncological Institute “Prof. dr. I. Chiricuta”, Cluj-Napoca. Dr. Cruceriu’s primary research interest lies in elucidating the molecular mechanisms underlying cancer metastasis, with a keen eye on identifying potential targets for future personalized therapies.

This training for a postdoctoral fellow at the beginning of his career comes at the best possible time. They allowed us to build relationships and gain knowledge, for which we can all be grateful. Starting from the basics, on Friday we got to the point where we understood the application systems. Now we can easily search, find information, and new tenders. In addition, we can confidently stand up to it, a system that until now we have only looked at with fear. The practical examples help us to feel confident when we have to launch and plan a tender. I am grateful to be part of the VUB training. I think, I will take back home, that even a young researcher can have a big dream of winning a big tender.

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ZSEJKE-RÉKA TÓTH

I am working as a scientific researcher at the Interdisciplinary Research Institute on Bio-Nano-Sciences, at Babeș-Bolyai University. In my postdoctoral work, I am focusing on wound healing processes, with great emphasis on the first stage of wound healing—hemostasis. For this, we are synthesizing cerium-oxide nanoparticles and trying the enhance their properties. We are also testing the material.

The VUB training provided a comprehensive and practical guide to crafting European research projects funded by the EU's Horizon program. It offered invaluable insights and specific tips and tricks, making it both informative and highly beneficial. Moreover, the program fostered a conducive environment for engaging with peers, facilitating discussions on diverse approaches and strategies in project writing, with a focus on interdisciplinarity.

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ANDREJ STUDEN

Assistant Professor at t he Faculty of Mathematics and Physics, University of Ljubljana. My research is related to effective use of data in medical physics. More specifically we are researching use of daily imaging in real-time adaptive particle radiotherapy, quantifying treatment efficacy and adverse events with PET images in immunotherapy and improving prediction of risk in breast cancer screening.

In training, I was able to meet colleagues with similar struggles in ensuring financing for research ideas, which provided motivation and tools to tackle this challenging goal. What remained from the training was a general idea that submitting a grant is a task I could perform, and that doing it involves more than having great ideas. So far, the knowledge helps me to understand that minor tasks which I am doing will nevertheless contribute to the future submission goals.

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ARMIN PARAVLIC

Assistant Professor at the Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubljana. I focus on conducting research in the field of neuromuscular function, athletic performance improvement, and aging. My primary research interests revolve around understanding the intricacies of both neuromuscular and cardiovascular function and exploring strategies to enhance athletic performance across various age groups, including older adults. Specifically, I am intrigued by how aging affects both neuromuscular and cardiovascular function and identifying interventions to optimize performance and mitigate age-related declines.

The comprehensive framework developed by the VUB EU Support Team will provide me with the necessary knowledge and support to write competitive proposals for the upcoming Horizon for Health EU calls. The training offers valuable insights into the methodology of writing projects, including how to identify key strengths and weaknesses in proposals. Additionally, it equips me with the tools and techniques needed to develop compelling project proposals that align with the objectives of Horizon for Health EU calls. The methodology of writing projects and insights on the strengths and weaknesses of proposals gained from the training are invaluable assets that I will apply to my future work. Specifically, I plan to leverage this knowledge to enhance the quality and competitiveness of my research applications, particularly in securing funding for projects related to my field of interest.

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KATJA GROLEGER SRŠEN

MD, Head of the Department for (Re)habilitation of Children at URI Soča, affiliated with Faculty of Medicine, University of Ljubljana. My research focuses on sleep disorders in children with impairment of the central nervous system and their parents, exploring influencing factors and possibilities to enhance sleep quality.

The main pros of the training include face-to-face meetings, extensive interaction opportunities, and networking with researchers from various faculties and diverse research interests. From the training, benefit of this workshop is the step-by-step guidance from project proposal to project submission. I gained invaluable insights and knowledge that I can directly apply to my own research and work. The presented information and instructions are systematically organised and clear, providing excellent guidelines for preparing research projects for grant applications. This training equips me with the tools and methodologies necessary to enhance the quality and impact of my research in the field of pediatric sleep disorders.

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KATJA TOMAŽIN

Professor, Faculty of Sport, University of Ljubljana. My research interests focus on the interaction between the nervous system and the mechanical components of human movement. I am particularly interested in studying the acute and chronic effects of exercise on people with chronic neurological diseases.

In this excellent workshop, I gained valuable experience in developing research proposals and received information on the best funding opportunities. Through hands-on exercises, I learned how to structure an effective research proposal, organise my ideas, formulate clear goals and present my research plan in a compelling way. The key benefits of this workshop also included the knowledge and tools to develop realistic budgets, allocate resources efficiently and justify funding applications effectively. I would particularly like to emphasise that the greatest benefit of this workshop is the step-by-step guidance from project proposal to project submission. I would incorporate the knowledge and skills I gained in this workshop into my curriculum by helping students work on their proposals and improve their writing skills. I would offer resources, templates, and guidelines for proposal writing.

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