

REFLEX scenario workshop series

National scenario workshop in Denmark – University of Copenhagen (UCPH)

Outcomes report (November 2015)

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Part 1: Background and purpose

1.1 About the REFLEX project

In today's ever changing world, systematic and focused career management is becoming increasingly important for both researchers and their employers. However, research organisations face the challenge of how to guide researchers through this process and how to enable them to become creative, critical and autonomous intellectual risk takers.

Currently a variety of career development tools is available, some of them are formal and structured, others are based on informal and self-directed approach. But how to ensure that these tools, usually designed for the use in certain research environments, can be transferred to other contexts? And how to make them more reflexive to the increasing variability of career patterns and opportunities which arise with the creation of brand new jobs in the near future?

REFLEX - A two-year project joining forces of partners from five European countries, will address these challenges through the designing of intelligent career development framework based on the direct involvement of researchers, their employers, HR departments, EURAXESS Service Centres and other relevant actors.

What steps will we take to create this framework?

- The pool of existing career development tools and practices will be collected and analysed with regard to their applicability in different national contexts.
- Scenario workshops with researchers and other local stakeholders will be organised in every project country to learn about the country specific situation.
- A set of modules will be defined to describe certain practices, procedures and skills, which will be combined into the common framework and its country specific mutations. The framework will integrate and complement existing tools into the context sensitive models of career development services.
- Practical testing and implementation of the framework carried out within the project will help to spread these tools towards the researchers and other stakeholders.
- Training model scheme focusing on the development of career management skills for researchers will be designed, adapted, and tested to different national contexts.
- Mutual learning and feedback activities will ensure the coherence and continuous improvement of all project outcomes.
- To increase the transferability of this framework to other national and institutional contexts, European level workshop will be organised together with other EURAXESS networks and organisations representing the researchers and their employers.

1.2 Methodological remarks

1.2.1 What is a scenario workshop?

Central principle of the project activities is the bottom-up approach and direct involvement of researchers, their employers and other stakeholders who are engaged in the career development support. Project encourages this involvement through the specific activities such as organisation of scenario workshop in all project countries. These events will help identify issues of crucial importance for the career development of different groups of researchers in the respective country.

Our intention was to bring together researchers, funding institutions, state and private institutions and other stakeholders to reflect and discuss on the concept of career development framework, and what such a framework should include. Already identified career development practices and tools was debated, with the intention to enhance the existing tools and practices. The workshop also aimed to identify new tools and practices that could be included in a career development framework.

Aim of a scenario workshop include raising awareness of anticipated problems, helping to develop common definitions, facilitating discussions between different actors, examining the differences and similarities, as well as problems and solutions as perceived by the participating role groups; cultivating steps and solutions for foreseen problems and stimulating teamwork in coming up with solutions and/or recommendations for the specific problem. (See <http://participedia.net/de/methods/scenario-workshop>)

The original scenario workshops methodology was adapted according to the needs of the project and specific topic it addresses. Up to 40 participants including researchers and representatives of relevant stakeholder groups participated in each of the national workshops. The composition of the groups was based on the outcomes of the stakeholders mapping process and differed from country to country. However, the following groups were represented in each of the events: (1) Delegates of national organizations representing researchers, (2) Individual researchers (diversity of the individuals researchers with regard to gender, career stage, type of career pathway, sectorial background etc. will be ensured), (3) Researchers' employers from various sectors (public, private, NGO) and research funders, and (4) Researchers' career support professionals.

1.2.2 Main outline of the workshop

The stakeholders were at the first session placed in a group with similar stakeholders (homogeneous) and asked to identify blocker to career development for researchers from their perspective. Methodology used was International Café.

Plenary sessions was used to outline the aim and set a common starting point for the whole group, by introducing examples of career development strategies and activities already in place and outline the state of the art in the country. Later the plenary was a setting for input from the groups sum up and a reflection on the outcome. The last group session ended in a poster session where each group chose a blocker, than presented actions and boosters related to the chosen blocker.

Agenda for the Copenhagen Scenario Workshop 3th November 2015

09.00-09.30:	Welcome + Icebreaker	Mark de Vos
09.30-10.15:	“PhD Statistics and Careers” – presentation “Postdoc Statistics, Focus Group Interviews and Careers” presentation	Ditte Thøgersen Iben Rørbye
10.15-10.35:	Break	
10.35-10.40:	Introduction group work	Iben Rørbye
10.40-11.10:	Group work (homogeneous groups) Blockers for researchers career development	Iben/Mark
11.10-11.50:	Group work (heterogeneous groups) Boosters for researchers career development	Iben/Mark
11.50-12.15:	Sharing results	Iben/Mark
12.15-13.00:	Lunch	

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Researcher Career Development Workshop



About the workshop

We would like to invite you to an interactive workshop which is an initiative emerged from an EU financed project, aiming to develop a career development framework for researchers (from PhD to Professor), which is adaptable to a variety of national and institutional backgrounds.

We bring together researchers, career advisors, labour unions, universities and private companies to reflect on researcher career development, the concept of a researcher career development framework, and what such a framework should include. Already identified career development practices and tools will also be discussed and debated.

Our goal is to create an open atmosphere in which new ideas are shared and discussed for the benefit of researchers.

Please reply to our invitation, latest by October 12, 2015, by registering via the **following link**.

Date
November 3rd, 2015

Time
9:00 - 13:00 (incl. lunch)

Location
Gyldenløvesgade 11
(6th floor)
International House
1600 Copenhagen

Hosts
Mark de Vos
MARK.DEVOS@ADM.KU.DK
Iben Rørbye
IBER@ADM.KU.DK



1.2.3 Selection of participants

The intention was to bring together researchers, funding institutions, state and private institutions and other stakeholders to reflect and discuss on the concept of a researcher career development framework, and what such a framework should include. The number of participants was limited to 45 participants.

Participants of the Copenhagen Scenario Workshop 3th November 2015

Gert Foget	Hansen	Danske stemmer i USA og Argentina, INSS
Ting	Yang	University of Copenhagen
Aki	Tonami	NIAS, Department of Political Science
Berit	Hildebrandt	SAXO/KU and University of Hannover
Claire	Hewitson	Copenhagen Business School
Manpreet K	Janeja	Faculty of Humanities, ToRS, Copenhagen University
jørgen	Staun	Faculty of Arts
Mary	Kobia	ISM
Jonas	Olsson	Department of Chemistry
Johanna	Generosi	Department of Chemistry
Jeanette	From Dack	Novo Nordisk R&D
Bi Yun	Zhen Wu	Maersk Oil and Gas A/S and University of Copenhagen
Martin	Broe	GEUS
Morten	Esmann	Ingeniørforeningen, IDA
Annemarie	Andersen	Novo Nordisk A/S
Mariya	Zhukova	Centre for Social Evolution, Department of Biology
Birgitte	Hoier	NEXS
Mafalda	Resende	Sund – ISIM
Rute	Fonseca	University of Copenhagen
Maria R.	Bassi	Panum
Eva	Op De Beeck	Biogen
Alexandra	Rouillard	The University of Western Australia
Yu-ting	LIU	University of Copenhagen, the department of sociology
Abbas	Jafari	Institute of Cellular & Molecular Medicine
Nazaret	Reverón-Gómez	Biotech Research & Innovation Centre
Arshnee	Moodley	Department of Veterinary Disease Biology
Petra	Schwertman	CPR, panum
Suzan	Fares	Panum
Mohamed	Shehata	KU
Panos	Sapountzis	Center for Social Evolution, Section for Ecology and Evolution
Jerzy	Dorosz	Drug design and pharmacology
Chiara	Biscaro	Dark Cosmology Centre
Franziska	Mende	KU, SUND
Sait	Üstebay	Department of Anthropology
Kaushik	Sengupta	University of Copenhagen
Corinne	THEPAUT CABASSET	CTR/SAXO Institute UCPH
Shaai	Wang	China
Nina	Wallin	Danmarks Meteorologiske Institut
Sabrina	Tomasini	IFRO
Azeem	Tariq	University of Copenhagen
Cecilie	Cohrt	Dansk Magisterforening
Indranil	Paul	University of Copenhagen

Part II: Outcomes and conclusions of the workshop

2.1 Blockers

In general most stakeholders mentioned the same kind of blockers. Stakeholders focused mostly on the blockers relevant for their sectors. Companies mentioned mostly lack of practical skills, while researchers focused a lot on lack of information and network within industry. There was not a clear distinction between early stage researchers and experienced researchers, but most blockers were mentioned as relevant for the younger group of researchers (PhD and Postdocs). People were very engaged in the topic, interested in sharing experiences and determined to continue trying to improve or remove the blockers in the future.

Knowledge and information blockers

- Lack of information about transferable skills
- Lack of information about jobs that are available
- Lack of knowledge about employers' willingness and ability to further educate new employees
- Lack of knowledge about writing scientific grant applications
- Lack of knowledge about the defined academic career path
- Lack of practical skills
- Lack of language skills (both English and local language)

Guidance, network and financial restrictions

- Lack of network
- Lack of network with other job sectors
- Lack of funding opportunities
- Not a stable financial situation
- PhD wait too long thinking about their career – lack of guidance
- Too much dependent on supervisor
- Lack of qualified mentors

Social blockers

- Family - children – housing - Dual Career
- Differences in working culture
- International mobility (pressure to move)
- Legal obstacles (work permit)

Other blockers

- Restriction of positions
 - The taboo of wanting to leave academia
 - Fixed term contracts and short contracts
 - Publication pressure
 - Lack of diversification
-

2.2 Boosters

The discussion about boosters was a continuation of the previous discussion about blockers. Many of the blockers were transformed into boosters. Interestingly enough not a lot of boosters mentioned, were actually present or in place in the current situation. Many people spoke in the “it would be good if...” sense. Again, as with the blockers, there was not a clear distinction between early stage researchers and experienced researchers.

Supervision boosters

- Supervisor should be trained to actually supervise
- Option to choose a supervisor with knowledge within industry
- Performance Development Review (individual talk with a manager at least once a year) should be further developed.

Industry boosters

- Career Fairs
- Career workshops
- Company visits
- Workshops focussing on skills needed for industry
- Close cooperation between labour unions and academia
- Seminars where companies are present

Training and coaching boosters

- International mobility coaches
- Mentor programmes (both within academia and industry)
- Individual career coaching
- More visibility of options in a very early career stage

Network boosters

- Possibility to participate in conferences (expand network)
- Being updated on novel technologies
- Acquiring international experience
- Information about networking
- Good information about legal issues (work permit)

Financial boosters

- Help with funding applications
 - Financial support for courses
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2.3 General Conclusions/Reflections on findings

- What was known in advance – new insight
- What is country specific
- What is most critical

A lot of the information mentioned at the scenario workshop was already familiar knowledge, since the University of Copenhagen has been conducting several focus group interviews with researchers and workshops with management and administrative staff working with career

development. Most new information came from industry and labour unions, which were not present in previous workshops. The high level of match between the answers from different stakeholders is interesting to observe. Everybody seems to know and agree about the existing blockers and boosters, but it is also characteristic that it seems difficult to act (both for researchers and other stakeholders involved in researcher career development training and counselling).

Especially the information about Danish language training and courses and the involvement of labour unions seems very country, or rather region specific.

Most crucial is the fact that there will be an increase in focus on researcher career development within research institutions and universities in the near future. All the people present at the scenario workshop agreed that this will be beneficial.

2.4 Documentations and links

At the time of writing this report, one research report based on statistical data about the careers of PhD students is already available in Danish on the intranet. A translation is planned in 2016. Another report which focuses on Postdocs career paths will be published early in 2016.

Contact information

For more information about the report or scenario workshop in Denmark, please contact the authors of this document:

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Senior HR Consultant and Project Manager
Project Management and HR Director's office – University of Copenhagen

For more information about the REFLEX visit the project website www.euraxess-reflex.eu.