



April 2022

**From the Council**

Dear postdocs,

We hope that everyone had a good holiday and enjoyed the warm weather - and maybe had some time to relax and rejuvenate before finishing this last academic block...?

As you might have already seen in the recent staff news, Prof. Joost Frenken will be the new dean for FSE starting on July 1, 2022. The PDC will be meeting with Prof. Frenken sometime this upcoming fall to update and discuss our postdoc community's accomplishments and challenges. To better reflect the voices from our community, we would like to invite all postdocs to come and chat with us during lunch (times and locations to be determined). These lunch conversations can also provide a way for you to come meet and chat with other postdocs ... and some of the current PDC members. ;)

We would also like to introduce and welcome Dr. Sonja Billerbeck - our incoming PDC ambassador! Dr. Billerbeck, who is featured in this month's PDC spotlight, steps in for Dr. Anna Salvati, who has supported us at the PDC and been our ambassador since its inception in 2017.

Best regards,

PostDoc Council

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## News from the Institutes

<p>Groningen Institute for Evolutionary Life Sciences (GELIFES)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ European Conference on Behavioural Biology (ECBB2022), July 20 – 23, 2022 Groningen. We are happy to announce that the ECBB website is now open for registration and abstract submission.</li> </ul> <p>The theme of the conference is “All of Life is social!” Come explore with us the many facets of social life, from proximate to ultimate mechanisms in a wide variety of species. The link to the website is: <a href="http://www.ecbb22.com">www.ecbb22.com</a></p>
<p>Institute for Science Education and Communication (ISEC)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On May 19th, Dr. <a href="#">Nathália Helena Azevedo</a> will be at the Fryslân campus presenting the OTTER (Outdoor Science Education for a Sustainable Future) project and discussing the role of science education and communication in promoting sustainable futures.</li> </ul>
<p>Kapteyn Astronomical Institute</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Prof. dr. <a href="#">Karina Kaputi</a> received the NWO VICI grant to study the first steps of galaxy evolution with the largest space telescope ever built: the James Webb Space Telescope.</li> </ul>
<p>Stratingh Institute for Chemistry</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <a href="#">Three postdocs</a> were awarded Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) Postdoctoral Fellowships:</li> </ul> <p>Dr. Franco Della-Felice from Prof. <a href="#">Gerard Roelfes</a> group, Dr. <a href="#">Yohan Gisbert</a> and Dr. Robert Hein, both from Prof. <a href="#">Ben Feringa</a>'s group.</p> <p>Congratulations, and good luck to you all!</p>

In this issue, news was not available from the following institutes: Bernoulli Institute for Mathematics, Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence, Engineering and Technology Institute Groningen (ENTEG), Energy and Sustainability Research Institute Groningen (ESRIG), Groningen Biomolecular Sciences and Biotechnology (GBB), Groningen Research Institute of Pharmacy (GRIP), Van Swinderen Institute for Particle Physics and Gravity (VSI), and Zernike Institute for Advanced Materials (ZIAM).

## PDC April Spotlight

### **Sonja Billerbeck**

*Groningen Biomolecular Sciences and Biotechnology*

#### **What does your research focus on?**

I am active in the field of Synthetic Biology and in my research, I engineer various yeast species towards their use in medicine or the bio economy. Currently I focus on developing new antimicrobials based on the way microbes defend themselves in the environment.

#### **What do you do in your spare time?**

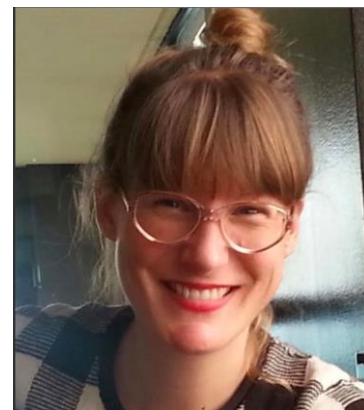
I like sports, traveling, and being social. That means in my spare time you will find me running or race biking around Groningen, having a beer with friends or being abroad.

#### **What is one thing you wished you knew before starting a postdoc?**

I think it is three, hahaha...

Know your plan, know your people and know your work visas.

1. I wish I had been more focused earlier on what is coming after my Postdoc and what my options were. Time flies and after a short period of focused research, it was already time to keep my eyes on the job market. I was lucky that my plan A worked and I got an academic position but I did not have a solid plan B. I think there are many exciting career paths besides academia that one can already line up as Plan B and do small things to get experience.
2. For any application or future plan, it is important to know higher up professionals that you can rely on to support you. I did not strategically make these connections, but maybe that is wise.
3. For internationals, I think it is also worthwhile checking immigration and visa options early on such that one is aware and realistic about employment options outside academic visas. For me, that was the case in the US and it took some stress away to be informed what Visa needed to be applied for and when; even if eventually I ended up in my home (European) employment market where I do not need a visa.



## Upcoming Events

<p><b>Spring BBQ</b> May 12th 16:30 – 19:30 <i>Zernike Campus, more info will follow</i></p>	<p><b><i>Our first social event in person</i></b> will be a Spring BBQ with (free) food, games, and music! This is a great opportunity to meet other postdocs from outside your lab and institute in a fun and casual environment. An invitation email will follow so be sure to RSVP then!</p>
<p><b>Career Chat</b> June 2nd 16:00 – 18:00 <i>TBD, hybrid</i></p>	<p>The third installment of <b>Career Chat</b> will focus on newly minted professors: <b><i>key lessons for the transition from postdoc to PI.</i></b> This will be a hybrid event (hosted on the Zernike campus and on Google Meet). There will be refreshments provided and an opportunity to chat with the panelists and fellow attendees after the session so be sure to RSVP!</p>

## About the Newsletter

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