

September 2017

NEWSLETTER



Autumn 2017 is looking promising for the MCAA! Brian Cahill, Chair of the MCAA, gave us a sneak preview of what's coming up for the Association.

As you may probably know, the next General Assembly will take place in February 2018 at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven). Bala Attili, MCAA Board Member, is involved in the preparations, and told us why the university has such a strong reputation.

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The Marie Curie Alumni Association's Events and Network Working Group sponsored the recent 23rd Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA). The EEA 2017 took place in Maastricht from 30 August to 3 September, and coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Maastricht Treaty. The event was attended by between 2 000 and 2 500 participants. Angela Bellia was there and told us all about it.

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NEWS FROM THE BOARD

AUTUMN 2017: WHAT'S ON THE MCAA AGENDA?

Autumn 2017 is looking promising for the MCAA! [Brian Cahill](#), Chair of the MCAA, gave us a sneak preview of what's coming up for the Association.

SUPPORTING ESOF SESSION PROPOSALS

The sessions focus particularly on researcher mental health, pensions and researchers from the humanities field. I am waiting on a response from a professor in Ghent to see if she will join the MCAA's proposal. Her paper says the prevalence of mental health

issues among PhD candidates in Flanders is much higher than among comparable groups.

KICK-OFF FOR THE IRISH CHAPTER

This will be a relatively big event in October, and we have already asked many of the people involved in research funding from the host UCD, NCP, Enterprise Ireland and

so on. Ireland has 9 COFUND projects from H2020 and some of them will be quite big with up to 90 Fellows. We envision the Irish Chapter growing quite quickly due to the large number of current Fellows and also information from the NCP, funding advisors and so on about Alumni.

There seems to be a growing perception in the making in Ireland



NEWS FROM THE BOARD



that the value of taking part in associations such as MCAA and EU Advisory Boards is beneficial.

The new Irish NCP, Elena Martines, is a member of the MCAA. She previously worked for Science Foundation Ireland. Enterprise Ireland awarded all MSCA Fellows at the 'Champions of EU Research' event in June.

In another example, one MCAA Alumni, Prof. William Gallagher of UCD, was on the Discussion Panel of that event, and mentioned that his activity in the Marie Curie Fellowship Association, nearly 20 years ago, built a network that helps him to win funding now: his spin-off Oncomark won an award for winning H2020 funding too.

EUROPEAN RESEARCHERS' NIGHT

Brian Cahill will take part as a Jury

member at the Falling Walls Event during the European Researchers' Night in Brussels in September. Angela Bellia of our Events and Networking Group will promote the MCAA from the EU Corner.

CAREER DAY

The MCA Chair, Brian Cahill, is involved in the organization of the Career Day on Research Funding at the German Cancer Research Centre in Heidelberg on 20 October. The plenary speaker will be Stefan Hell, Nobel Prize Laureate and Marie Curie Alumnus. Alessandra Lucchetti of the Commission will speak on the MSCA. MCAA member Juliane Sauer (former Swiss NCP) will give advice on writing proposals.

STANDING UP FOR SCIENCE EU

In June 2017, MCAA joined the

first 'Standing up for Science EU' workshop in Brussels, to give early career researchers the tools and insights to inform policy, and have a stronger voice within the EU. After the over-subscription and success of the workshop, the MCAA is participating in a second 'Standing up for Science EU' workshop, at the University of Warsaw, on Friday 10th November 2017.

NEWS FROM THE BOARD

SPOTLIGHT ON KU LEUVEN: SEEN AS ONE OF THE MOST INNOVATIVE UNIVERSITIES IN EUROPE, AND HOST FOR THE NEXT MCAA GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As you may probably know, the next General Assembly will take place in February 2018 at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven). [Bala Attili](#), MCAA Board Member, is involved in the preparations, and told us why the university has such a strong reputation.

Bala, you work at KU Leuven. Is it a stimulating place to work?

Besides being one of the oldest Catholic universities in the world (established in 1425); KU Leuven is renowned for its high-quality and innovative research. To be a part of such a world class university, in my opinion, is truly an honour. Furthermore, KU Leuven is absolutely a multicultural university and the city of Leuven is also quite international, with no communication barriers.

Does KU Leuven's ranking as one of the top innovative university surprise you? Why does it rank so highly, in your opinion?

I would be surprised if KU Leuven was not ranked so highly. The most commendable attribute of the KU Leuven research community is its translation-oriented research, supervised by some of the world's leading scientific brains. Moreover, KU Leuven Research & Development (LRD) has actively fostered an entrepreneurial culture among researchers so that they know how to commercialise research outcomes. Two successful examples are antiviral agent tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (the world's leading anti-HIV drug, licenced by Gilead Sciences) and Curv® technology for lightweight yet stronger suitcases (licenced by Samsonite).

In my opinion, the opportunities for high-tech research and entrepreneurship are the reasons behind KU Leuven University's ranking.

The next MCAA General Assembly will take place in KU Leuven thanks to you, as you submitted the winning bid! How is the organisation going?

This is going to be the MCAA's 5th General Assembly. I am very excited about the fact that we have the opportunity to organise such

a prodigious event. KU Leuven is ready to host, and the city of Leuven is ready to welcome all the MC Fellows. We have started preparations with the help of Dr An Jansen, Head of the KU Leuven International Funds Unit. I also appreciate the help from my promoter, Prof. Guy Bormans (Head of Laboratory for Radiopharmaceutical Research, KUL).

What advice would you give to Fellows who would like to conduct research in KU Leuven?

KU Leuven is involved in 540 European research projects; in H2020, KU Leuven has so far secured 171 projects. The success of KU Leuven is due to its motto of research, education and service to society. I would strongly recommend Fellows to conduct their research here – it has an impressive success rate in securing funding, as well as access to infrastructure.

BALA ATTILI

RESEARCH

SPECIAL COVERAGE: LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING ABOUT THE LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETINGS



The Lindau Nobel Laureate meetings foster exchanges between scientists of different generations, cultures, and disciplines.

WHAT IS IT?

Once every year, about 30 Nobel Laureates convene at Lindau to meet the next generation of leading scientists: 400-500 undergraduates, PhD students, and post-doc researchers from all over the world.

The events are jointly organised by two institutions – the Council for Lindau Nobel Laureate meetings and the Lindau Nobel Laureate meetings Foundation. They act in concert ensure the meetings continue, and to advance their constant development.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

Attending the annual gathering of Nobel Laureates at Lindau is by invitation only; invitations are issued exclusively to young scientists aged up to 35 – undergraduates, PhD students, and post-doc researchers. To participate, they must pass a multi-step application and selection process.

For young scientists at the beginning of their careers it is a valuable opportunity to meet Nobel Prize-

winners, to seek their advice, to exchange ideas and views, and to discuss current developments in science and beyond.

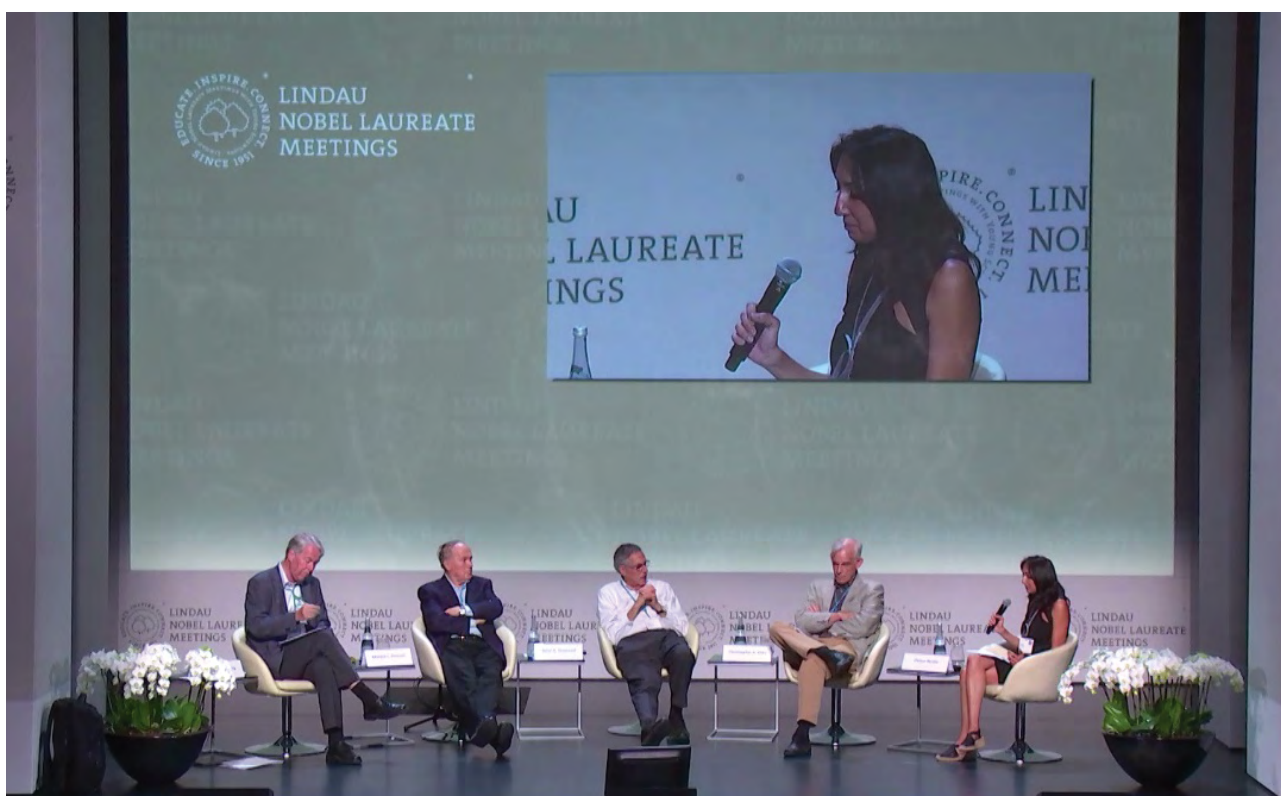


**LINDAU
NOBEL LAUREATE
MEETINGS**

MORE INFORMATION:
<http://www.lindau-nobel.org/>

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SPECIAL COVERAGE:
LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING
CHIARA PERILLO SHARED THE STAGE
WITH THREE NOBEL PRIZE WINNERS!



Economist [Chiara Perillo](#) was invited to speak at the Lindau Nobel Laureate meeting on changing monetary and fiscal policy, as well as her research on the implications of quantitative easing in the euro area.

ABOUT CHIARA PERILLO

I come from Italy, specifically from Sardinia, a wonderful island in the middle of the Mediterranean Sea, where I pursued a Bachelor's degree in Economics and Finance and a Master's degree in Economic Sciences.

I recently started the second year of my PhD in finance at the University of Zurich, within the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Innovative Training Network (ITN) BigDataFinance. The programme provides doctoral training in sophisticated data-driven risk management and research at the crossroads of finance and Big Data. It aims

at developing and implementing new quantitative and econometric methods for empirical finance and risk management with large and complex datasets.

HER PROJECT

My research project focuses on Systemic Risk and Financial Net-

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works and seeks to analyse systemic risk from a network perspective, combining theoretical modelling, empirical analysis, and practical (policy) applications. Currently, I am working on the effects of unconventional policies aimed at achieving both price and financial stability. In particular, I am investigating the real implications of Quantitative Easing in the euro area by combining a financial network analysis with econometric methods.

LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING: EXPECTATIONS

I was very enthusiastic about the idea of meeting 17 Nobel Laureates from the field I have been passionate about since high school and which I have chosen for my academic career. Having an opportunity to take part in stimulating discussions with the professors who have made history in economics terms was a huge honour for me and a dream come true.

I was really excited about taking part in the Lindau meeting, as in my opinion this would contribute to my development as an academic, especially as the focus of the event

perfectly matched my research interests and profile. Furthermore, I was sure that this experience would constitute a rich source of professional and human growth.

Honestly, I was looking forward to enjoying every single aspect of the meeting, such as the lectures, the panel discussions and the social events, because the Lindau meeting is a unique opportunity.

But if I had to select one part of the meeting that I was particularly looking forward to, it would be my participation as a panellist in the discussion on “New Conditions for Monetary and Fiscal Policy”, together with Nobel Laureates Peter A. Diamond, Edward C. Prescott and Christopher A. Sims.

THE EXPERIENCE

I was also invited to give a talk during the macroeconomic session on my research into the real implications of quantitative easing in the euro area. My audience included Nobel Laureates Prof. Hansen, Prof. Kydland, Prof. Prescott, Prof. Sims and Prof. Pissarides.

Both of my presentations were focused on the role of intra-finan-

cial interconnectedness during the last financial crisis and on developments in terms of methods and policies accounting for it. In this regard, I also paid particular attention to new challenges for the economics discipline, in terms of new methods for dealing with Big Data and accounting for them in economic models.

INSPIRING MEETINGS

I had the opportunity to talk about my research and economic issues with the Nobel prizewinners, journalists, and other young economists. The social events were the perfect opportunity to share experiences, ideas and our passion for the amazing and challenging discipline of economics.

CHIARA'S MESSAGE TO YOUNG RESEARCHERS

If someone had told me that in the first year and a half of my PhD that I was going to share the stage with three awesome Nobel Laureates in Economics, I wouldn't have believed it. Receiving feedback on my research from the most renowned economists ever during my seminar presentation and participating in a panel discussion with them was the best experience I could ever have imagined having at this amazing and unforgettable event in Lindau. So, I would advise the young economists to apply to attend the event independently during their PhD and to get in the game with original ideas.



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SPECIAL COVERAGE: LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING MEET VERONIKA STOLBOVA, WHOSE RESEARCH HAS ATTRACTED MEDIA ATTENTION!

Economist Veronika Stolbova was invited to the Lindau Nobel Laureate meeting as a speaker, and spoke to journalists about the Future of the European Economy during the 'Lindau Press Talk'.

ABOUT VERONIKA STOLBOVA

Originally from Petropavlovsk-Kamchatsky (Russia), I conduct research in the fields of climate finance, sustainable finance, macroeconomics, financial networks, systemic risk and early warning indicators.

HER PROJECT

I am currently working on the H2020 ISIGrowth project, related to social and economic dynamics and policy implications; the Carbon Bubble project, aimed at estimating climate-related risks for the Euro area economy; and the H2020 Dolfin project, focusing on helping the financial system to serve society better.

LINDAU NOBEL LAUREATE MEETING: EXPECTATIONS

I expected an incredibly interesting and high-level event. I hoped to see the Nobel Laureates during their lectures but never expected to discuss and interact with them personally.

The 6th Lindau meeting exceeded all my expectations! It was incredibly well organised to fit with the

objective of collaboration and networking between the Laureates and young economists. Beginning with lectures and seminars and finishing with numerous meetings and events taking place during the day, the Lindau organisers created an incredible atmosphere of excitement, curiosity, challenges, and inspiration.

THE EXPERIENCE

I had an amazing opportunity to take part in four different activities at the meeting. Beforehand, I had received a request to write a blog about the effect of climate change on financial institutions and the decarbonisation of the economy: <http://www.lindau-nobel.org/blog-is-the-paris-agreement-on-climate-change-bad-for-business/>. It was not only a chance to raise awareness of the problem of the impact of climate change, but also to share my research with the world and receive very valuable feedback. After the post was published (about a week before the Lindau meeting) I began to receive e-mails from young economists wanting to discuss the challenges involved in estimating climate change impact and establish possible collaborations. I was very excited. Even before the doors had opened, the Lindau meeting was connecting people.



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As a result of this blog, I was invited to participate in the 'Lindau Press Talk', which involved taking part in a panel discussion about the future of the European economy with two Nobel Prize Laureates: Chris Pissarides and Eric Maskin. Talented young economist Lenka Habetinova and two professional journalists – Frances Coppola and Romesh Vaitilingam – also took part. This was an incredible experience like no other I have had and I was very grateful for this opportunity.

After the Press Talk, I was approached by two journalists – Korneel Delbeke from De Standaard and Natalie Gratwohl from Neuer Zürcher Zeitung. We had two very fruitful and interesting discussions,

which later lead to [this article written by Natalie Gratwohl](#).

On the third day of the Lindau meeting, I had an opportunity to present my research to a panel of the Nobel Laureates, including Lars Peter Hanse, Finn E. Kydland, Sir Christopher A. Pissarides, Edward Prescott and Christopher A. Sims, as well as young economists. I was thrilled! I used the title 'Is the "climate change deal" really "bad for business"?', and received a lot of comments, especially from Prof. Pissarides and Prof. Hansen. The dialogue continued in a discussion circle and the whole exchange left me feeling excited, thrilled and inspired to continue my research. We received from each other advice on new methods, new stud-

ies, collaboration opportunities and even the challenges that feature in the life of a researcher.

During the Lindau meeting, I learned two important things.

First, all Nobel Laureates are very impressive people: the work they have done, the life they have had and are continuing to lead. They are all also people. But there was something I could not place: they looked different from most of the professors I have met. Although most of them had already celebrated their 60th birthday, they all were young. They were all curious, and they were all inspired by the work they are doing, with theories they hear, with the world. I think this curiosity that they have

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in common makes them very special. From what I have seen, they awoke the same curiosity in many of the young economists present.

Second, that there are no borders or boundaries in science. People from all over the world came to Lindau to interact, learn and discuss, and they were all speaking the same language – the language of science. Led by inspiration and curiosity and supported by their supervisors, their peers, and their interest to understand the world, they were able to communicate and understand each other perfectly. Being there and seeing all these people who had come with the same purpose and passion in life made me feel at home, even though I was very far from my hometown. I felt good knowing that I was doing what I like to do, with people I like.

INSPIRING MEETINGS

I had a lot of opportunities to speak with Nobel Laureates. The Lindau meeting is set up in a way that makes it easy for young economists to talk to Laureates. Also, the Laureates showed a lot of willingness to talk to researchers, which made it much easier to approach them.

The first Laureate I talked to was Brian Schmidt, Laureate in Physics. We discussed several topics, starting from astronomy and ending with economics. He was a big inspiration to me, as a physicist with a deep understanding of economics. With a physicist by background myself, and as someone

who conducts research on the bridge between climate change and economics, I found discussions with him very encouraging. I also got a chance to discuss the topic of my research – climate finance – with Sir Christopher Pissarides and Prof. Lars Peter Hansen. From Sir Christopher Pissarides I received very valuable and important advice on the further development of my research, for which I am extremely grateful. During the picnic on the Mainau Island, organised as a part of the Lindau meeting, I spoke with Prof. Peter A. Diamond and discussed the future of European pension funds.

I also learned a lot about writing and journalism from Romesh Vaitilingam, talked to Frances Coppola – a strong woman and inspiring journalist – and met many smart and enthusiastic young economists, with whom I hope to work one day.

VERONIKA'S MESSAGE TO YOUNG RESEARCHERS

I would definitely encourage all

researchers to participate in such events. Even if you do not plan an academic career, you will receive a boost to your creativity, encouragement to follow your ideas, and an opportunity to meet incredible, smart and inspiring people. And for those, who do plan an academic career, I would say: "A previous participant at the Lindau Nobel Laureate meeting has received a Nobel Prize." Do not miss an opportunity!



NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

100 MEMBERS FOR THE BENELUX CHAPTER!

The Benelux Chapter counts now 100 members, congratulations! Could you tell us what's on the agenda for the coming months?

Thanks a lot! We are very happy to have more than 100 members now! We managed to double the number of members over a year and this is very important for us!

We are still working on our schedule for the next activity year (from September onwards), but we are kicking off with a seminar on the Belgian taxation system for resident foreigners in Leuven, on 7 September. Topics include: your tax status; buying real estate; your pension; investments; and starting your own business.

MORE INFO:

<https://www.mariecuriealumni.eu/events/seminar-belgian-taxation-system-leuven>

We are also supporting Groningen's 2017 PhD Day, on 22 September, with a call for micro-grants (€200 for support for travel and accommodation), and with a Benelux Brunch on 23 September. This will be an opportunity to share experiences and ideas about activities that would further improve the

The Benelux Chapter is growing! [Rita Ribeiro](#), Chair of the Chapter, is enthusiastic about the coming months.

Chapter's activities!

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE EVENT.

What are the current objectives of the Chapter?

Our goals are to:

1. Encourage local networking between members through organising events like seminars, workshops and info days, especially designed for MCAA Fellows.
2. Recruit and attract new Members to the Benelux Chapter to keep providing help and support to as many MCAA Fellows in the region as possible.
3. Generally enhance the image of the MCAA within the Benelux countries (i.e. Belgium, Netherlands, and Luxembourg).

Do you already have plans for events?

We are working on the planning of several events for the next academic year, such as networking

events in several universities in the Benelux area, a Dutch taxation meeting (similar to the one happening in Leuven on 7 September) and also the award of an annual prize for exceptional members who have helped promote the image of the Benelux Chapter. All the events will be advertised in due time through the MCAA portal and our Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Benelux.Chapter/>) and Twitter (<https://twitter.com/mcaaBenelux>) pages.

What would you say to people who are considering joining the Benelux Chapter?

Joining the Benelux Chapter is an exceptional opportunity to network with fellow Marie Curie students, to attend workshops that help you develop transferable skills and broaden your career perspectives.

We are always trying to find ways to support members with administrative and financial questions by promoting events (both organised by us or by other Chapters and Working Groups) and awarding mi-

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Belgium



The Netherlands



Luxembourg

cro-grants for attendance at events such as the MCAA General Assembly and career fairs (e.g Groningen's PhD Day).

A larger membership will also help increase the Chapter's activity, as we are looking for volunteers to help us with the organisation of local events throughout the Benelux region.



RITA RIBEIRO

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

BRAZIL: A NEW CHAPTER AT A DIFFICULT TIME FOR THE COUNTRY'S UNIVERSITIES



We are pleased to announce that the Brazil Chapter has begun work! At a time when the country's universities are facing severe cuts, as described below, Leonardo Dall'Agnol, the Chapter Chair, is nonetheless planning to promote excellence through the Chapter's activities.



Leonardo, you're the Chair of the Brazil Chapter. Could you tell us about the Chapter's activities so far?

The talks for the Brazil Chapter creation started in November 2016, with the support of EURAXESS Brazil, but the formal proposal was only made in February 2017 and the official activities started in April. Until now, we have been focusing in building the basis for the Chapter's establishment and development:

- creating material for outreach promotion like the LinkedIn webpage;
- preparing a regular newsletter for sharing members' activities and profiles;
- actively contacting MCAA members or MSCA alumni who may wish to be affiliated to the Chapter;
- participating in events like the '2017 FAUBAI – New Trends in the Internationalization of Higher Education: Social Commit-

ment and Innovation';

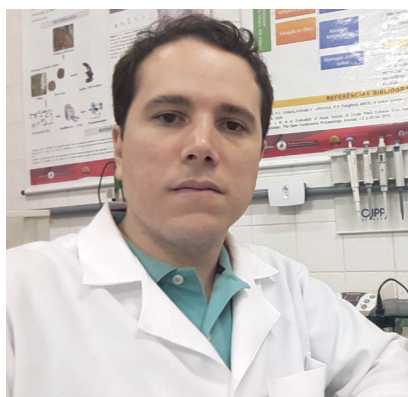
- organising the MCAA Brazil-Europe Workshop (or as we call it, BREUW).

What are your objectives for the Chapter?

The board's proposed 2017-2018 objectives are to:

- raise awareness of the MCAA and the Brazil chapter by recruiting and attracting new members;

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS



Could you tell us about the 27-29 September workshop 'Brazil-Europe'. Why are such initiatives valuable?

The '1st MCAA Brazil-Europe Workshop: Building a sustainable future based on cooperative science, technology and education', will be held from 27 to 29 September at the Universidade Federal do Maranhão in São Luís-MA, Brazil. It is the result of a partnership between the MCAA Brazil Chapter, EURAXESS Brazil and UFMA, and is supported by the Foundation for Research and Scientific and Technological Development of Maranhão (FAPEMA). The 1st MCAA BREUW on research collaboration will bring together researchers, policy-makers, and students from several Brazilian and European institutions, universities, and companies for three days of networking and discussions.

The importance of such initiatives for the MCAA Brazil chapter is that

it covers all proposed objectives in one single activity. In addition, considering that Brazil is a country of continental proportions, as well as the economic, social and scientific development disparities that exist among its five regions, it is emblematic that the first edition of BREUW is being carried out outside the Rio-São Paulo axis, where more than 60% of Brazilian science is concentrated. Our idea is to make it a permanent event in the Chapter's calendar, held in parallel to the board meeting. The location would change every year to increase opportunities for awareness-raising and networking.

You posted a poll on the MCAA website on how best to overcome the Brazilian universities crisis? Could you give us some background?

The objective of the poll was to get a discussion going and debate ideas on the subject. To begin with, it is important to make it clear that



NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

free and public education in Brazil is a right guaranteed by the constitution and that all government-related universities, whether at the federal or state level, are free for undergraduate and postgraduate studies (*stricto sensu*). It is well known that Brazil is experiencing one of its worst economic (and political) crises of the last 20 or 30 years. In this context, Brazilian education and science have been severely affected by budget cuts at both the federal and state levels, as widely reported in various national and international media (see [1](#), [2](#), [3](#), in English and [4](#), [5](#), [6](#), [7](#), [8](#) in Portuguese).

For many federal universities, the already low budget has been in-part withheld – by 25% for current expenses and 55% for capital expenditures. This has led to reduced or cancelled outsourced services such as cleaning and security, interruptions to expansions and building construction and the cutting of scholarships, grants and student assistance programmes. Many are already having to delay the payment of suppliers and service providers. In some more dramatic cases, such as the State University of the State of Rio de Janeiro (UERJ), staff salaries have not been paid for four months and the school year was cut short due to poor working conditions. In the face of this budget crisis, the National Association of Directors of Federal Institutions of Higher Education (ANDIFES) issued a [statement](#) explaining the impact on federal higher education institutions and their consequences for the future of the country.

At the federal level, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MCTI) was merged with the Ministry of Communication last year (creating the MCTIC), but rather than increasing, the budget was reduced, as had been happening since 2013. This year, in addition to being one of the lowest budgets since 2001, science was only allocated 44 % of the budget foreseen for 2017, meaning that 90 000 science undergraduate, masters, doctoral and postdoctoral fellowships paid by the National Council of Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq) may not be paid from October onwards.

In addition to an overall reduction of the science budget by 40 % in recent years, an amendment to the constitution was approved in 2016, stating that the federal budget cannot increase above inflation level for the next 20 years. This at a time when Brazil is only investing around 1.3% of its GDP in R&D, which contrasts with developed countries such as OECD members.

In view of the above situation, a campaign was created – supported by the Brazilian Society for the Progress of Science (SBPC) among other associations – called ‘Knowledge without Cuts’ ([Conhecimento sem Cortes](#) in Portuguese). It aims to “monitor and denounce budget cuts and their negative consequences for Brazilian society, in addition to sensitising the population to what is produced in universities and research institutes”.

Finally, it is important to note that

these budget cuts follow a significant expansion of the federal university system and in both teaching staff and researchers. If we return to the budget of the beginning of the 21st century, while simultaneously doubling the number of researchers, the situation becomes dramatic. The issue of brain drain is once again becoming a real threat, and would have disastrous consequences for the country’s future.

In these difficult times, what would you like to say to those considering joining the Brazil Chapter?

I would like to emphasise to them that science is a collaborative endeavour and that networking is essential for an academic career. Also, I would like to say that they will find a friendly environment in the Chapter and a group of researchers committed to promoting excellence in science and bringing it closer to society.

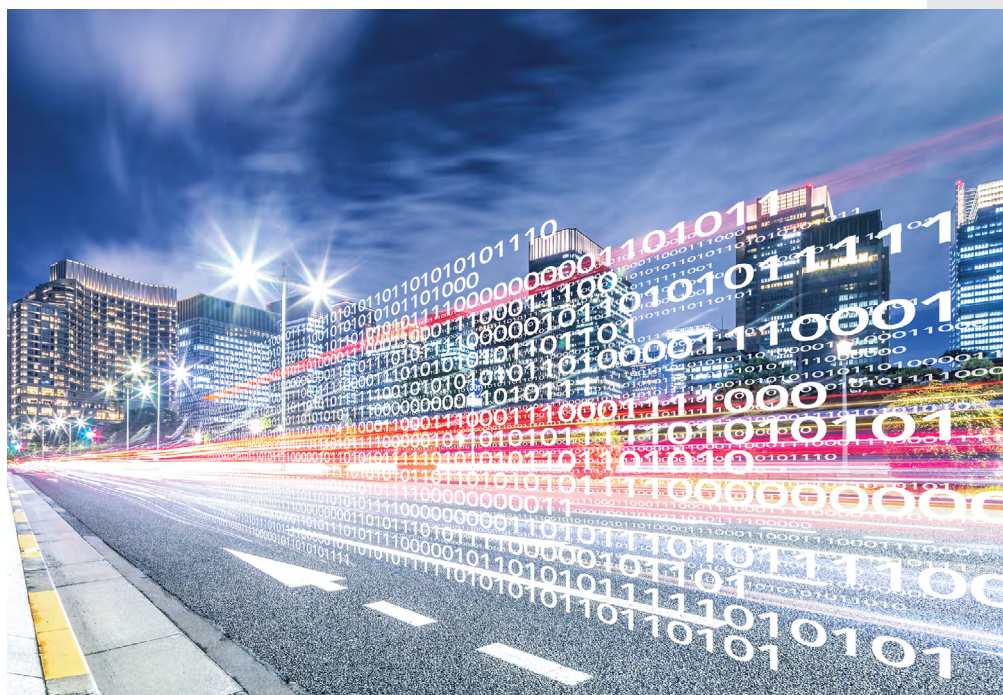
LEONARDO
DALL’AGNOL

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

FROM BEIJING TO HONG-KONG: A NEW CHINA CHAPTER



The sheer size of China makes creating a China Chapter quite challenging! [Chengjun Yu](#) tackled the challenge was not daunted though, and is now the Chair of the brand new Chapter.



Yu, the China Chapter was officially established in July 2017. What are its objectives?

The China Chapter is an official part of the MCAA. It encourages local networking, attracts and recruits new members to the MCAA, and generally enhances the image of the MCAA within the 'Greater China' region, including mainland

China, Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan.

All MCAA members residing in this area, or having the status of national, can become a member of the China Chapter.

The mission of the MCAA China Chapter is to serve the interests of Marie Curie Alumni from the

Greater China region, by providing a forum for networking, communication and collaboration. It also publicises Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions as a European programme of research excellence in the region.

A series of meetings took place in different cities in August. What can you tell us about them?

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

As a newly established Chapter, the first focus of the MCAA China Chapter is to attract and unite more Marie Curie Fellows in Greater China, and that's the reason behind the series of meetings, since China is a big country and it was not easy to invite all Marie Curie Fellows to attend kick-off events in a single city on the same day. So I met with different researchers in Beijing, Jinan, Shenzhen and Hong Kong to either encourage them to join the MCAA China Chapter or encourage them to apply for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship. So far, the official MCAA China Chapter has increased its members to 35. Also, during my stay in Beijing, I visited Mr Halldor Berg of EURAXESS in China to discuss our cooperation plan, and it's possible we'll co-organise Marie Curie Individual Fellowship Application Beijing Meeting.

What would you like to those considering joining the China Chapter?

By joining China Chapter, you'll be part of a Marie Curie Fellows network in the Greater China Region, and it's a great platform to expand your academic networking with EU officials in China and the Chinese researcher community. At the same time, the MCAA and China Chapter will financially support its members' research, travel and networking. And MCAA membership is totally free.

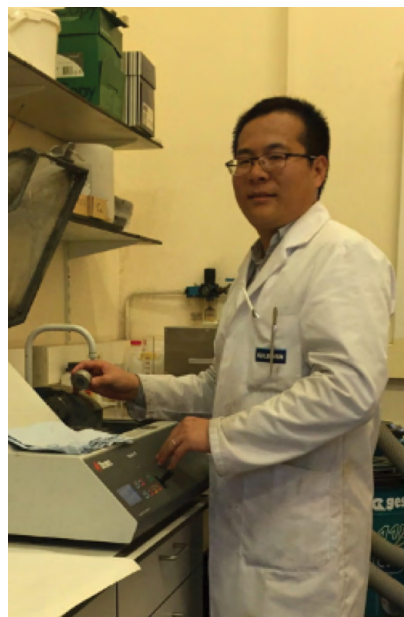
What's next for the China Chapter?

Aside from the potential application-writing event with EURAXESS, there is also Researchers' Night Beijing in September, and

European Research Day in Beijing in October.

In September, there will be a Chapter' online session to summarise the China Chapter's performance in 2017, and to draft the event and budget plan for next year to better serve our members' needs. I'll also join the MCAA Board Meeting in Porto on 18 September to learn more about managing a Chapter.

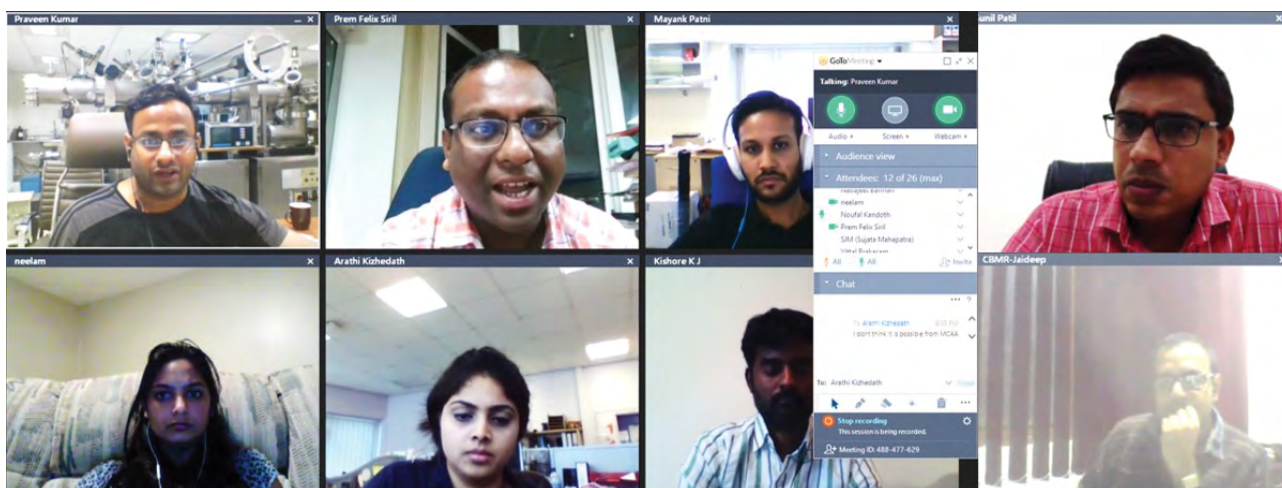
We would definitely welcome more members joining the China Chapter.



CHENGJUN YU

NEWS FROM THE CHAPTERS

MCAA INDIAN CHAPTER KICK-OFF MEETING



Around 30 Members of the Indian Chapter participated in the launch event, which took place online. Fruitful interactions, suggestions and discussion gave rise to many proposals for activities in 2018. [Praveen Kumar](#), Chair of the Indian Chapter, summarised the meeting for us.

Participants discussed having at least three Chapter meetings. One would take place in Europe, and could take place before or after the general assembly. The remaining two events would take place in different locations in India. All would be opportunities for raising awareness of the Marie Curie actions and the India Chapter, as well as networking.

Having focal point members around the globe to disseminate information and organise Chapter activities was suggested, as was having

more partially sponsored activities to promote the Chapter around the globe.

Responsibility for social networking was given to Dr Neelam and Ms Arathi Kizhedath.

Several outreach activities, such as a scientific photo competition, blog writing etc. were suggested, to be launched in association with the MCAA head office.

A proposal for a webinar series was welcomed, and responsibility

for the initiative was awarded to Mr Mayank and Mr Kishor.

The meeting was coordinated by Dr Praveen Kumar, Chapter Chair, while Dr Kiran and Dr Amit – both board members – outlined the Chapter's mandate.

PRAVEEN KUMAR

EVENT

EVENTS AND NETWORK WORKING GROUP SPONSORS ARCHAEOLOGISTS' MEETING IN MAASTRICHT

The Marie Curie Alumni Association's Events and Network Working Group sponsored the recent 23rd Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists (EEA). The EEA 2017 took place in Maastricht from 30 August to 3 September, and coincided with the 25th anniversary of the Maastricht Treaty. The event was attended by between 2 000 and 2 500 participants. [Angela Bellia](#) was there and told us all about it.



This year, the E&N WG set up a booth at the MECC conference venue to promote the MCAA's activities. Our stand was visited by over 300 scholars and researchers. The booth not only acted as an information point on MCAA activities for many young researchers and supervisors preparing proposals under the MSCA Programme, but also for the dynamic and lively community of MCAA archaeologists within the EAA.

The overall objective of our participation in the event was to reinforce the network of this particular community of MCAA Fellows: it is both dynamic and powerful in terms of intellectual ambition and practical relevance. The E&N WG plans to become a focal point for these MCAA Fellows (past and present). In this vein, the event was an opportunity to share good practice

and to encourage debate on past and ongoing experiences in archaeology.

At the booth, MCAA Fellows promoted various MCAA groups to companies, autonomous researchers, and political and research institutions. The event also furthered collaboration with the MCAA's Archaeology and Heritage Research Area Group and led to progress on the creation of a new Chapter in South America thanks to a past Marie Curie Fellow who took part in the EEA meeting.

Along with the majority of MCAA archaeologists who visited our stand, we plan to attend the 2018 EEA Annual Meeting, which will take place in Barcelona. Our MCAA panel will highlight how the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowships are contributing to the development of researchers and their future perspectives in the archaeological field. We also aim to discuss the situation in which many postdoctoral fellows find themselves, having to accept temporary and insecure posts.

MORE INFORMATION:

<https://www.mariecuriealumni.eu/events/eea-2017>

Download the Programme: http://www.eea2017maastricht.nl/program-at-a-glance_1

EEA 2017 Sponsor page: <http://www.eea2017maastricht.nl/current-sponsors-exhibitors-ambassadors-advertisers>

EVENT

IMPRESSIONS FROM THE CZECH CAREER DAY 2017, BY MATTHEW DI FRANCO

EURAXESS Czech Republic organised its first career day for young researchers on 9 June 2017 in Prague. The aim of the day was to present career opportunities in the field of research and development – both in the Czech Republic and abroad – to young researchers. [Matthew DiFranco](#), from the Management Working Group, was there to represent the MCAA.



CAREER DAY

This event was part of a Czech Science Fair sponsored by the Czech Academy of Sciences. The Science Fair was great...it took up two large halls in a convention centre and included stands from many Czech research institutes with lots of hands-on opportunities and live demos, along with stands from commercial and private research and tech firms. It was aimed more for primary and secondary schools, and there were lots of school groups and families there. I wish I were a Czech kid, because it looked like a lot of fun!

The Career Day was in an adjacent, smaller hall, and I believe EURAXESS was the organiser. They had a prominent stand, and we were well placed at the entrance. There were about 20 other stands, along with a few seminar areas. However, the event was not very well attended. We did get a few researchers coming to talk about MSCA actions and even met one recent Individual Fellowship awardee. But in general, it seems like there was not a large contingent of undergrad or postgrad students and researchers.

Nevertheless, it was good to spend the day with Lucie Homolová and

Manuel Acosta, the Czech Chapter Chair and former Chair, respectively. Since they weren't in Salamanca I could update them on our goals for Chapters. I also encouraged them to run more networking events throughout the Czech Republic and to liaise with the National Contact Points (NCPs), EURAXESS and Universities to publicise MCAA to prospective members, MSCA Project Leaders and the research community in general.

EURAXESS

I spoke with the EURAXESS representatives and discussed our de-

EVENT

sire to work more closely together. This event will definitely help with this collaboration, at the very least in the Czech Republic. I also mentioned that we would like to create a EURAXESS liaison role, as discussed in the Board Meeting. More concretely, EURAXESS is also interested in offering mentoring, so we should discuss this further with them. They have a very well-known platform and reach within the research community, so if we provide the mentors, they can probably link us up with mentees, both inside and outside of the MCAA.

Regarding the EURAXESS Liaison role, I'd like to see a job description, and am happy to help with that. Same with the net4mobility role that was discussed at the Board Meeting. If we advertise to the MCAA community that we are looking for people to take on specific roles, we should provide them with a detailed description of the role.

CHAPTER MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

I got some very good feedback from Lucie and Manuel, that even though the event was not so well attended they were very happy to have the MCAA there, since it helped them to feel more connected to the MCAA Board, and to the organisation in general. I'm very happy to hear this, as it reinforces the role of the Chapter Management Working Group – to establish better connections between the Chapters and the MCAA Board. I will encourage the Chapter Management Working Group members to attend events outside of their own chapters in the coming months.



EVENT

BRAINSTORMING WITH PROSPECTIVE CHINA-BASED MARIE CURIE INDIVIDUAL FELLOWSHIP APPLICANTS



The MCAA China Chapter and EURAXESS China held a successful brainstorming meeting with prospective China-based applicants for a Marie Curie Individual Fellowship at the German Chamber of Commerce in Beijing on 31 August.

The EURAXESS Country Representative outlined the different aspects of applying for an individual fellowship. This was followed by an hour-long discussion in both

Chinese and English during which Marie Curie Fellow Qin Xiangang of the China Chapter shared his experiences. China Chapter Chair Chengjun Yu, and Marie Curie Fellow Wei Sha, joined the discussion, answering written questions online.

The presentation slides are available [here](#).

EVENT

FIRST EVENT FOR INDIAN CHAPTER



Hot on the heels of a successful kick-off meeting, the Chapter held its first event on 30 August in Chandigarh. The event, designed to promote funding and fellowship opportunities for Indian researchers in Europe, was organised in association with the Council for Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Scientific Instruments Organisation (CSIR-CSIO), EURAXESS India and the Delegation of the European Union to India.

The feedback from participants was positive and in particular highlighted the value of sharing and comparing personal experience and observations. Attendees reported feeling encouraged in relation to future challenges, as well as a feeling that the local scientific community had been strengthened.



The Indian Chapter is going from strength to strength. Until May 2017, the Chapter had only 28 members altogether. Now, following awareness-raising by the Chapter itself, with MCAA support, it counts around 230 members. This massive increase happened in just three months.

The event received a huge response; more than 200 participants were selected from all over India, and included MCAA Indian Chapter members.

Speakers included Prof. S. M. Shivaprasad of JNCASR Bangalore and Director of Karnataka Higher Education Academy, and representatives from the co-organisers.

Motivated by a successful event, the Chapter is planning others for the coming year so that a larger community of Indian researchers – as well as the Indian Chapter – can benefit from these networking opportunities.



PRAVEEN KUMAR

CHAPTER MANAGEMENT AND EVENT ORGANISATION

CHAPTER CHAIR: Dr. Praveen Kumar

BOARD MEMBERS: Dr. Kiran Kumar Chereddy, Dr. Amit Zodge, Dr. Shikhar Agrawal, Ms. Arthi Kizhedath, Dr. Surendra Yadav

EVENT ORGANISER: Ms. Pooja D., Scientist, CSIR-CSIO, Chandigarh