

Contacts

Publisher: Ben Crowe
Editor: Paul Smaglik
Marketing Manager: David Bowen

European Head Office, London

The Macmillan Building
 4 Crinan Street
 London N1 9XW, UK
 Tel +44 (0) 20 7843 4961
 Fax +44 (0) 20 7843 4996
 e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com

Senior European Sales Manager:
 Nevin Bayoumi (4978)

UK/ RoW/ Ireland:

Matt Powell (4953)
 Andy Douglas (4975)
 Frank Phelan (4944)
 Amelie Pequignot (4974)
 Laura Pearson (4977)

Netherlands/ Italy/ Iberia:

Evelina Rubio Hakansson (4973)
Scandinavia: Silje Opstrup (4994)

Production Manager:

Billie Franklin
 To send materials use London address above.
 Tel +44 (0) 20 7843 4814
 Fax +44 (0) 20 7843 4996
 e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com

International

Advertising Coordinator:

Hind Berrada (4935)

Naturejobs web development:

Tom Hancock

Naturejobs online production:

Ben Lund

European Satellite Offices

France/ Belgium:

Christine Niox-Chateau
 Tel + 33 (0) 1 43 20 16 51
 Fax + 33 (0) 1 43 20 51 52
 e-mail: c.nioxchateau@nature.com

Germany/ Austria/ Switzerland:

Patrick Phelan, Odo Wulffen
 Tel + 49 89 54 90 57 11/-2
 Fax + 49 89 54 90 57 20
 e-mail: p.phelan@nature.com
o.wulffen@nature.com

US Head Office, New York

345 Park Avenue South,
 10th Floor, New York, NY 10010-1707
 Tel +1 800 989 7718
 Fax +1 800 989 7103
 e-mail: naturejobs@nature.com

US Sales Manager: Peyton Mason

US Advertising Coordinator:

Ashly de Leon

Japan Head Office, Tokyo

MG Ichigaya Building (5F),
 19-1 Harakatomachi,
 Shinjuku-ku,
 Tokyo 162-0841
 Tel +81 3 3267 8751
 Fax +81 3 3267 8746
 e-mail: k.johnson@naturejpn.com

Asia-Pacific Advertising Manager:

Kewyn Johnson

Fresh paths in Europe

Claude Kordon suspects that there are two important trends in European science employment — career paths are changing, and European scientists aren't fully prepared for these changes. Kordon — editor of the journal *Neuroendocrinology*, a researcher at the Necker Institute in Paris, and a former president of Euroscience, a young pan-European scientific society — reached his conclusions as a result of both anecdote and experience. And he has spent the past few years of his own career studying these European trends.

Kordon anticipates that there will be an increase in interdisciplinary interactions and a rise in short-term contracts across Europe. He says that more opportunities may arise in industry than academia, but adds that many European scientists are not aware of those opportunities — especially 'alternative' careers in areas such as law, finance and marketing — and are not prepared for them.

To complicate matters further, Kordon feels that the information currently available on the Internet about European career opportunities tends to be of limited use. "There are a certain number of databases, but usually they are local and fragmented," he says.

As a first step to providing more global and complete information, Kordon is helping Euroscience to organize a November conference on new science- and technology-based professions in Europe. The conference will act as a sort of a survey by bringing together scientists, science managers, sociologists, teachers, employers, trade unionists and representatives of young-scientists' associations. Gathering data will be the easy part. Creating new career paths and making young scientists more aware of them will be much more difficult. "We still have a long way to go," Kordon says.

Paul Smaglik
Naturejobs editor



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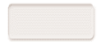
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