

naturejobs

**JOBS OF
THE WEEK**

It starts with a panic attack in the middle of the night. You realize that spending your days pipetting — or collecting soil samples or mixing solutions or sorting through reams of data related to the collision of atomic particles — might not be for you. Perhaps the slow pace of your research irks you; perhaps you are more fascinated by the ‘bigger picture’. Perhaps, you realize while in that strange place between sleep and wakefulness, a more ‘unconventional’ science career is in order.

Shobita Parthasarathy recounted how she went about pursuing a ‘big-picture’ career at a graduate conference on careers in science and technology in Washington DC on 5 April. She considered a career in research, but decided to do a PhD in science and technology studies at Cornell University in Ithaca, New York. It is a niche field, focusing on analysis of the social and political aspects of research and innovation. She went on to become an assistant professor of public policy at the University of Michigan, where she also co-directs the university’s certificate programme in science, technology and society.

There is an incredible and ever-expanding range of opportunities open to intelligent people with a desire to branch out beyond the traditional disciplines. But how can a fledgling science specialist find these various career niches, large and small?

We hope that Naturejobs is a valuable source of information and insight for those looking for their first science job, contemplating career changes or just monitoring career trends. And to develop that role we would like your input: What sort of career insights are you looking for? What stories do you find informative and enjoyable? Let us know by filling out a brief readership survey that will help reshape our section: it’s available at <http://tinyurl.com/6c6hmy>. As an incentive, two randomly selected respondents will receive online gift certificates.

We will continue to provide scientist job-seekers and others with analysis, advice and stories of career rebirth. Maybe we will even help some of you sleep a bit easier.

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