

# naturejobs

**THE CAREERS  
MAGAZINE FOR  
SCIENTISTS**

**S**ometimes it's hard to be a pioneer. When you're among the first to enter a new research field or a non-traditional career, there's always uncertainty and no well trodden path forward.

That's the impression I got from 12 fellows on a postdoc programme in drug research and regulatory review, launched jointly by the US National Cancer Institute and the US Food and Drug Administration in February 2005 to provide professionals in the emerging field of 'biological' cancer drugs. The first class finishes the programme this spring and only one of the people I visited knows definitely what they want to do when it ends. They all have some idea of the opportunities in this field, of course; that's what made them choose this specialized training programme.

So what can they and others in similarly specialized and novel career paths do? The answer is easy — do their homework. Scientists exploring their career options should fire up their search engines and aim their browsers at some answers. Look for professional associations, trade journals and regional hubs in particular.

For regulatory affairs in the United States, for example, there's the Regulatory Affairs Professional Society. General industry organizations include the Biotechnology Industry Organization and the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America, covering biotech and pharma jobs. Regulatory-affairs professionals are also in demand in the expanding contract-research field, so a visit to the Association of Clinical Research Organizations might prove fruitful.

If one has a regional preference that meshes with regulatory affairs for, say, Massachusetts, there's the Massachusetts Biotechnology Council. San Francisco and San Diego have robust biotechnology associations as well.

If pioneers are still worried, there's no need to fret. They can look to the success of institutions such as the Keck Graduate Institute in California, which combines science and business training — including regulatory affairs — in a masters degree (see page 582). Almost all the graduates from that course got jobs in the life-sciences industry within six months. Being a pioneer does pay off.

**Paul Smaglik, *Naturejobs* editor**

## CONTACTS

**Editor:** Paul Smaglik  
**Assistant Editor:** Gene Russo

**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](mailto:naturejobs@nature.com)

**European Sales Manager:**  
Andy Douglas (4975)  
e-mail: [a.douglas@nature.com](mailto:a.douglas@nature.com)  
**Business Development Manager:**  
Amelie Pequignot (4974)  
e-mail: [a.pequignot@nature.com](mailto:a.pequignot@nature.com)  
**Natureevents:**  
Claudia Paulsen Young  
(+44 (0) 20 7014 4015)  
e-mail: [c.paulsenyoung@nature.com](mailto:c.paulsenyoung@nature.com)

**France/Switzerland/Belgium:**  
Muriel Lestringuez (4994)  
**UK/Ireland/Italy/RoW:**  
Nils Moeller (4953)  
**Scandinavia/Spain/Portugal:**  
Evelina Rubio-Morgan (4973)  
**Germany/Austria/The Netherlands:**  
Reya Silao (4970)  
**Online Job Postings:**  
Matthew Ward (+44 (0) 20 7014 4059)

**Advertising Production Manager:**  
Stephen Russell  
To send materials use London  
address above.  
Tel: +44 (0) 20 7843 4816  
Fax: +44 (0) 20 7843 4996  
e-mail: [naturejobs@nature.com](mailto:naturejobs@nature.com)  
**Naturejobs web development:**  
Tom Hancock  
**Naturejobs online production:**  
Catherine Alexander

**US Head Office, New York**  
75 Varick Street,  
9th Floor,  
New York,  
NY 10013-1917  
Tel: +1 800 989 7718  
Fax: +1 800 989 7103  
e-mail: [naturejobs@natureny.com](mailto:naturejobs@natureny.com)

**US Sales Manager:** Peter Bless

**Japan Head Office, Tokyo**  
Chiyoda Building,  
2-37 Ichigayatamachi,  
Shinjuku-ku,  
Tokyo 162-0843  
Tel: +81 3 3267 8751  
Fax: +81 3 3267 8746

**Asia-Pacific Sales Manager:**  
Ayako Watanabe  
e-mail: [a.watanabe@natureasia.com](mailto:a.watanabe@natureasia.com)