

# naturejobs

**THE CAREERS  
MAGAZINE FOR  
SCIENTISTS**

It may sound odd, but a recent *Nature* initiative reminds me of the film *Field of Dreams*, starring Kevin Costner. The film features a recurring phrase — “If you build it, he will come” — which is whispered to Costner’s character by a disembodied voice. The voice exhorts Costner to carve out a baseball diamond on his farm’s profitable cornfield. The results are not altogether predictable. Yes, deprived of a lucrative crop, his farm slides towards bankruptcy, but the makeshift baseball pitch also plays host to the ghosts of disgraced baseball players. Most importantly for Costner’s character, the pitch also allows him to make peace with his deceased father. And, even more remarkably, the real-life diamond has since become a tourist attraction.

The film’s famous phrase is now commonplace in the popular media, reworked as “If we build it, they will come” — and in that spirit we have seen some unexpected events at *Nature*’s Network website. When we launched it last June, we were not sure who would join in or what they would say. The website was set up as a social networking site to connect like-minded people through forums, message boards and blogs. We hoped that scientists would meet up in this virtual world to discuss their research and build new collaborations. Today the site seems to have evolved into a forum for young scientists to discuss their career aspirations and obstacles. British postdocs, researchers at the Marie Curie Research Institute in Oxted, UK, and young scientists in the Boston area have all established a presence. And many postdocs and graduate students are adding blogs or linking out to existing ones.

With the launch of the London network last month, and other international nodes to follow, we expect such activity to grow. This growth shows that young scientists are hungry for career information and are willing to share what they know. We welcome such activity, even though we don’t know which direction the content will take. If you haven’t visited yet, please check out this growing network at <http://network.nature.com> and feel free to join in the discussions or start your own, and blog away. We built it, and we’re pleased you’re coming.

**Paul Smaglik, *Naturejobs* editor**

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