



Cecilia Lanny Winata (fourth from right) has built a multinational genomics lab in Warsaw.

adviser to the new centre. “The molecular-beam facilities they now have in Warsaw are pretty unique in Europe,” he says.

Winners of the second open call will be announced in April, and two more calls will follow. Żylicz hopes that the programme will eventually draw a few dozen principal investigators and hundreds of international postdocs to do science in Poland. Funding for each centre is limited to five years. “But as they learn to swim in Polish waters I hope that many newcomers will opt to stay longer,” he says.

ABUNDANT OPENINGS

Competition for funds is much less fierce in Poland than in Germany and many other countries, says Austrian-born structural biologist Sebastian Glatt, who leads an independent research group funded by the Max Planck Society at the Małopolskie Centre of Biotechnology. Things there have turned out so well for him that he is considering extending his stay in Poland beyond the envisaged five years. Within a year of starting, his lab had grown to 16 members — including postdocs from Austria, Spain, Taiwan and Ukraine — and it is set to keep expanding. He has no teaching obligations and is pleased with his success in attracting foreign talent and securing grant money from Polish and European sources. “There is abundant grant money available in Poland now and it is easy for junior scientists with a good track record to get funded here,” he says. “That’s a huge advantage — and from the large number of

job applications I receive, I can see that many people are aware of it.”

Scientists who consider moving to Poland, says Winata, should make sure that their host institute is prepared to help foreigners to acclimatize, for example by supporting them in dealing with authorities and landlords. They should also choose institutes that adopt an open-minded and communicative research culture. Glatt is keen for students to openly discuss their work in department seminars and for scientists to exchange ideas while meeting in core research facilities or during social events. “Office doors at our institutes are wide open all the time,” he says.

The government is set to continue to enlarge and modernize Poland’s research base. Teaming up with high-profile institutes in Western Europe will assist that effort, and will also help Polish science to get international recognition, says Żylicz. The Max Planck Society plans to expand its collaboration with Poland, and France, Switzerland and Spain are also potential partners.

Outside the new labs and campuses, Poland has turned into a colourful place with liberal cities brimming with restaurants, bars and theatres. “Poland has become a much different country to the one I had left ten years ago,” says Malinkiewicz. “Something is happening here, and now is a perfect moment for scientists to come and grab their piece of cake.” ■

Quirin Schiermeier is a senior reporter for *Nature* in Germany.

FINANCE

Pan-European pension

A pension-investment scheme for researchers in Europe is open for contributions. The Retirement Savings Vehicle for European Research Institutions (RESAVER) aims to help mobile researchers within the European Economic Area (EEA) to save for retirement and to supplement their social-security pensions. Those eligible to contribute include researchers with employment contracts within the EEA and researchers coming into the EEA, as long as the employers are members of the scheme. The EEA includes Norway, Iceland, Liechtenstein and European Union member states. Early-career scientists, who move often between institutions and nations, have baulked at institutional pension-savings plans because they often do not stay long enough to gain vesting rights and must forfeit contributions when they leave. RESAVER says that contributors to the new scheme may withdraw their full assets, including dividends and external contributions, if they move within the EEA. If they leave, they can collect the account’s total funds at retirement.

EMPLOYMENT

Male majority

Men outnumber women in US science positions across academia, government, industry and the entrepreneurial sector, according to a report from the US National Science Foundation. *Women, Minorities, and Persons with Disabilities in Science and Engineering* found that 4.7 million people were working in science positions in the United States in 2015, across all disciplines and employment sectors. The figure included twice as many men as women. Of that total, 17% worked in academia, including at universities and undergraduate institutions, and men held 53% of those positions. Of the 5% who worked for the federal government, men held two-thirds of the jobs. About 3.5% of scientists were self-employed, two-thirds of whom were men. Of the 5% of scientists who work in state or local government jobs, two-thirds were men. More than half of all scientists, about 59%, were employed in industry or business, and three-quarters of these scientists were men. Another 6% worked in non-profit positions, in which women outnumbered men by 1 percentage point. Women held two-thirds of science jobs at other educational institutions, including two-year and community colleges.