



European Plant Science Organisation  
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**Article for members**

## **EPSO institutional members can send a colleague as internship expert to EPSO**

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*Brussels, 24.5.2016*

### **New EPSO Benefit for Institutional Members: Internship at EPSO – send your science manager / scientists for an internship to EPSO**

Only institutional members can send one of their colleagues for an internship to EPSO to work together with the EPSO Executive Director on science policy at European level. This provides a unique opportunity to learn and enlarge their network for their future work at your institution. The internship expert needs at least a PhD in plant biology and the minimum stay at EPSO will be 6 months.

The internship expert will gain experience working with the EU and for them to assist with writing position papers and advising policy makers, such as the European Commission on issues related to plant science.

This is a very exciting opportunity and we very much look forward to welcome an internship expert from the various EPSO institutional members!

Each internship expert will help to increase the number of supporting scientists from their respective country to EPSO to further the active involvement of senior as well as mid-career plant scientists in EPSO, join Karin in the science policy work and help advance EPSO resources, such as an EPSO fact collection and an EPSO image bank. Each sending organisation and the respective internship expert can suggest one theme the internship expert will have as one of their priorities.

We already have excellent experience with the first three internship experts: Marina Korn, the Scientific Manager from the Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops Großbeeren/Erfurt e.V. in Germany, Heike Slusarczyk, Scientific Coordinator of the Bioeconomy Science Center at Research Center Jülich and Dennis Eriksson, Education Coordinator at PlantLink and now at SLU Alnarp, Department of Plant Breeding in Sweden.

[Marina](#) joined the EPSO team for 6 months (March to August) in 2014. She focused on the two Horizon 2020 proposals EPSO was involved as partner from the first discussion to the final submission. In addition, Marina joined Karin Metzloff, the EPSO Executive Director, in science policy work – looking for instance at collaborations with Developing Countries, advancing the finalization of the Horticulture Working Group's White paper and assembling economic data underpinning Plants for the Future ETP's input towards Horizon 2020 Work Programmes. Finally, Marina contacted several German EPSO members to increase their number of the supporting scientists to EPSO and thereby involve these scientists more actively in EPSO's work as agreed at the 2013 General Meeting.

[Heike](#) even extended her stay at EPSO from originally 6 to now 8 months, finishing end of May 2015. Her priority was supporting, on behalf of academia, the finalization of the 'Plants for the Future' European Technology Platform Action Plans on Innovation, Research and Education and help preparing the launch event that was successfully held 24 March 2015. In addition, Heike joined Karin in ongoing science policy work with the European Commission, European Parliament and the Member States on concepts for 'Integrated crop production' and 'Sustainable growth – unlocking the potential of plants'. Finally, Heike generated input from EPSO members to the European

Commission's consultation on FP7 and worked together with Przemyslaw Wojtaszek on an ERASMUS+ Briefing for the EPSO members to inform their preparation of a respective proposal for submission in 2016.

[Dennis](#) joined the EPSO team in September 2015 for nine months. He focused on two tasks: Starting the new series of workshops on 'Sustainable growth: Unlocking the potential of plants' with the European Parliament by assisting in the preparation and carrying out of the first two workshops successfully held on 1.12.2015 and 2.6.2016; and Boosting the work of the EPSO Agricultural Technologies Working Group by preparing two WG meetings and fact sheets on crop improvement technologies including traditional breeding, NBTs and GM. In addition, Dennis increased participation of Swedish scientists in EPSO's work, led a COST proposal on improving regulation on plant breeding technologies, contributed to starting EPSO's Fact collection on the plant sector in Europe and assisted the

Now EPSO members can express their interest in sending a colleague on internship to EPSO from September 2016 on. We look forward to work with your colleagues!

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#### **Contacts**

Interested EPSO member organisations please contact [Karin.Metzlaff@epsomail.org](mailto:Karin.Metzlaff@epsomail.org)

#### **Useful links**

Template for the EPSO internship agreement: [www.epsoweb.org/file/1768](http://www.epsoweb.org/file/1768)

EPSO communications: [www.epsoweb.org/epsoweb/epsoweb-communications](http://www.epsoweb.org/epsoweb/epsoweb-communications)

EPSO member institutes and universities: [www.epsoweb.org/membership/members](http://www.epsoweb.org/membership/members)

EPSO representatives: [www.epsoweb.org/membership/representatives](http://www.epsoweb.org/membership/representatives)

#### **About EPSO**

EPSO, the European Plant Science Organisation, is an independent academic organisation that represents more than 220 research institutes, departments and universities from 28 European countries, Australia, Japan and New Zealand. EPSO's mission is to improve the impact and visibility of plant science in Europe. [www.epsoweb.org](http://www.epsoweb.org)

## EPSO Internship Expert Opportunity — Great Success for Members and for EPSO

Each EPSO Institutional Member can offer an Internship Expert to EPSO for a stay of at least 6 months. On this page we feature our three 'Alumni' who each completed a secondment at the EPSO office in Brussels, and we also hear about the benefits for the sending institutions. The next internship expert can start at EPSO from September 2016 on. Please look at the ['Internship Agreement'](#) and contact [Karin Metzlauff](#) further information.



**Dennis Eriksson** joined the EPSO team from the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) in September through a grant funded by Mistra in September 2015 for 9 months.

During his internship Dennis helped to organise a workshop in December on *Societal Challenges – The role of crop plants*, with two Members of the European Parliament as co-hosts and joined by several Commission representatives. He has also been very active in the Agricultural Technologies Working Group, with the next meeting due to take place in Barcelona on 31 May, just before the second parliamentary Societal Challenges workshop on 2 June. The EPSO statement of Crop Genetic Improvement Technologies (Dec 2015) and the set of fact sheets on NPBT (March 2016) were also well received, both mentioned recently in a Nature Editorial. He has also submitted a proposal to launch a COST Action on plant breeding

techniques, including several EPSO mem. In addition he coordinated two consultation responses from EPSO to the European Commission, one on the Horizon 2020 Societal Challenge 5 (Climate Change) and one on a H2020 Partnership for Research and Innovation in the Mediterranean Area (PRIMA).

"The period in the EPSO office has been highly stimulating and rewarding for myself and I do hope my work has contributed to the mission of EPSO. It has given me excellent networking opportunities, not only with researchers but also with other stakeholders as well as with policy makers, and I will now bring back these experiences to Sweden."

**Christopher Folkesson Welch, Mistra:**  
"The internship has provided an excellent way to contact policy makers and build up networks from within EPSO and beyond"



**Heike Slusarczyk**, the Scientific Coordinator of the Bioeconomy Science Center (BioSC) and Head of the BioSC Office at Forschungszentrum Juelich joined the EPSO team for 8 months in October 2014.

She was involved in several EPSO activities on science policy and Plant ETP joint initiatives. Her work focused on finalising Plant ETP Action Plans and the respective preparations for a high-level conference on 24 of March 2015 in Brussels.

"The finalization of the documents and brochures of the three action plans of the Plant ETP on innovation, research and education, the development and discussion of the concept of the high-level conference and its preparation in close cooperation with the coordinator and

stakeholders from academia, farmers and industry of the Plant ETP was a huge but exciting effort resulting in a successful event and very well received brochures. I got in contact and discussion with contributing representatives from the European Commission and Member States as well as with members of the European Parliament. A very fruitful experience!"

**Uli Schurr, Forschungszentrum Jülich:**  
"The internship allowed a better understanding of the European perspective and H2020 instruments. It is also a very efficient way to give members of the institute experience in ever more important aspects of science advice and marketing."



**Marina Korn**, the Scientific co-ordinator at Leibniz-Institute of Vegetable and Ornamental Crops Grossbeeren and Erfurt in Germany, joined the team in the EPSO office for a 6 month period in March 2014. Her tasks included drafting the EPSO part

in project proposals to Horizon 2020 support actions, supporting science policy work – specifically on horticulture, and contacting EPSO Institutional Members in order to increase the number of the Supporting Scientists.

"This internship provided me a look behind the scenes – to get better insight and understanding of what's going on in the EU – in general and according to the new framework program Horizon2020. It is a great chance to meet people from several organizations based in the capital of Europe and to get in contact with scientists

from all EPSO member institutions. All this in a cooperative and friendly working environment in an office located in the heart of Brussels. Six months is a very good time frame to learn a lot and take the gained knowledge and contacts back home to my Institute".

I would recommend every other scientific manager, especially the ones which are not yet familiar with the whole EU-Business in detail, to use the opportunity to come and learn".

**Eckhard George, Leibniz-Institute:**  
"Marina's secondment has benefitted the institute enormously. She has been a great source of background information on European projects for staff and students"

