

CAREERS OUTSIDE ACADEMIA 2020

Speakers' Biosketches



1. Alexander Mata, PhD

Equity Analyst Healthcare
Alecta



After receiving his PhD in Cell and Molecular Biology at Karolinska Institute in 2001, Alexander worked as a Postdoctoral Fellow at the University of California, San Diego for two years. He returned to Karolinska Institute as an Assistant Professor at the Neuroscience Department in 2005. Before starting his career in the pharmaceutical industry, Alexander conducted his MBA at IESE Business School in Barcelona (2006-2008) and gained first experiences as an MBA Project Intern at Advance Medical. Afterwards, he worked in multiple strategic management positions at several pharmaceutical companies: Alexander joined Novartis in Basel in 2008, where he was responsible for triaging incoming business development proposals in pre-clinical stage. He later moved with the company back to Spain to start his first Medical Science Liaison position where he launched products in the cardiovascular and respiratory areas. In 2012, he returned to Sweden and worked at Vanadis Capital AB as an Investment Analyst. In 2013, he joined Bayer Pharmaceuticals in Sweden as Medical Science Liaison and later became the team manager. In this position, he was responsible for launching cardiovascular products, foster scientific engagement of key opinion leaders and identify collaboration opportunities with local health tech start-ups.

Since 2018, Alexander is an Equity Analyst Healthcare for Alecta, where his main focus is managing a healthcare investment portfolio currently consisting of about 13 pharmaceutical and medtech companies and valued at about SEK 50bn.

2. Ann Lundström, PhD

Assistant CEO
Naturvetarna



Ann defended her PhD in microbiology at Stockholm university in 2004. Being a PhD representative for 5 years Ann showed already at that time that she likes to stand up for others. After a 1-year postdoc at KI, she became product specialist for BioNordika where she stayed until 2008. Next, she was recruited as product manager at Nordic BioSite. As product manager Ann was responsible for the supplier Roche which was her next employer being account manager from 2010 to 2011. Since 2011 she is working for Naturvetarna the Swedish Association of Professional Scientists trade union for science graduates. At Naturvetarna she started as Career Advisor, became first head of the team "career service" followed by the team "member development". Ann then became head of the division negotiation and member service and is since 2019 assistant CEO at Naturvetarna.

3. Barbara Albiger, PhD

Senior Expert, Chief Scientist
Scientific Quality, Scientific Advice Coordination Section
European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC)



Dr. Albiger obtained her PhD degree in molecular and cellular biology in 1998 from the University of Strasbourg, France, and then in 2008 became Associate Professor in medical microbiology from Lund University, Sweden. Before joining ECDC in 2011, she worked at the Karolinska Institute and the Public Health Agency of Sweden (1998–2006) and at Lund University (2006–2011), where she coordinated research projects on the role of innate immunity in protection against bacterial infections.

At ECDC, she was the Programme Manager and the Deputy Head of the Programme, Antimicrobial Resistance & Healthcare-Associated Infections from 2011 to 2015. In 2016, she joined the Microbiology Coordination Section to support ECDC mandate of fostering sufficient capacity within the

European Union for the diagnosis, detection, identification and characterisation of infectious agents. In 2017, she joined the Scientific Advice Coordination Section to promote ECDC scientific excellence and leadership to become a major resource for scientific information and advice on infectious diseases for the Member States and their citizens. Lately, during the SARS-COV-2 pandemic, she is supporting the response team.

She is passionate about public health and microbiology. Her interest lies in how to gather high quality data and information for actions and how to effectively translate the data and to communicate them to a wider audience of health professionals, policy makers and general public.

4. Christina Patlaka, PhD

Product Transfer Scientist
Cepheid



After completing a MSc in Applied Biotechnology, I entered the field of cell and molecular biology research by doing my PhD and PostDoc at the Department of Laboratory Medicine, Division of Pathology at Karolinska Institutet. My work with ELISA assay development and biomarker research at KI led me to the Swedish Medical Products Agency, Läkemedelsverket, where I worked as a laboratory assessor, focusing on laboratory controls of biological drugs and assays. I have since over a year moved away from laboratory work and to my current role at the Medical Device company

Cepheid, where I work as Product Transfer Scientist. My focus is on driving and designing projects for qualification and validation activities for on-market products on the field of medical device and diagnostics.

5. Elisa Martini, PhD

Program Officer
Advocacy and Policy
International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA)



Elisa received her MSc in pharmacy from the University of Ferrara (Italy) and her PhD degree from Karolinska Institutet in 2018, with a thesis on the immunology of psoriasis. She has been active in several non-profit organizations at a local and international level during her studies. A few months after her defense, Elisa started her current position as Program Officer - Advocacy and Policy at the International Federation of Psoriasis Associations (IFPA), an international patient association based in Stockholm. In her role, Elisa works to promote psoriasis in the global health agenda, participates to meetings organized by intergovernmental organizations and creates supporting material on advocacy for IFPA members.

6. Francesco Vezzi, PhD

Bioinformatic Manager
Devyser



Francesco Vezzi finished the master programme in computer science at the University of Udine in Italy in 2008. The same year, he started a PhD program with focus on algorithm for bio-informatic application. During his PhD, he spent several months at the New York University in New York and at KTH in Stockholm which is the city where Francesco decided to move for a postdoctoral position in 2013. In this period, he continued his research in the bio-informatics field with focus on reconstructing and analysing large plant genomes. In 2013, Francesco was part of the Swedish team that publish on Nature the sequence of the largest genome ever sequenced: the spruce genome. In the same year, Francesco joined the R&D team at the National Genomic Infrastructure at SciLifeLab, working as senior bioinformatician. From 2017, Francesco was ready for the next step; he decided to join a small but fast-growing company, Devyser, specialised in developing genetic tests for clinical laboratories. Today, Francesco is Bioinformatic Manager at Devyser and guides a team of 4 bioinformaticians.

7. Helena Faust, PhD

Clinical Assessor
Läkemedelsverket



Born in Estonia, studied biology. After MSc worked and studied in Finland. Moved to Sweden 2007, started PhD at Lund University. Invested a lot of time and energy to study Swedish. Defended PhD in 2012. Have 2 children born in Malmö. Started post-doc at KI 2015. Discovered that KI is not a sustainable environment for young researchers and decided to leave academy and basic research. At 2018 took a 6 months intensive course Clinical Drug Development at Uppsala University. After that got a job at Läkemedelsverket.

8. Håkan Yildirim, PhD

Head of Intellectual Property & European Patent Attorney
Xbrane Biopharma AB



Dr Håkan Yildirim is a European Patent Attorney who is also specialized in IP management and business intelligence.

He obtained his PhD in medical sciences at Karolinska Institutet in 2005 with specialization in analytical chemistry, organic chemistry and biochemistry applied in vaccine research. Afterwards, he got engaged in teaching biology, chemistry, physics and technology as the Head of the Science Department at Internationella Engelska Skolan.

The turn of his career path towards working as a patent professional took place in 2007 as he became patent examiner at the Swedish Patent and Registration Office (PRV). He has performed search and examination of biochemistry, biotech and medtech inventions, became expert in consultancy services such as freedom-to-operate; moreover, he undertook in his parallel role as Key-Account Manager the responsibility for the growth of PRV's consultancy services in the UK, German, Swiss and Turkish markets.

He started working as a patent attorney in 2012 and his 3-year studies in patent law to become an EQE-qualified European Patent Attorney commenced the next year. He has also studied intellectual property at Lunds Universitet which has been beneficial in his role as patent attorney. At present, he applies his expertise as the Head of Intellectual Property at Xbrane Biopharma AB in the field of biosimilars which is a cross-disciplinary area that involves everything from biotechnology and protein chemistry to pharmaceutical sciences.

9. Jens Gertow, PhD

Head of Marketing and Sales
Mabtech AB



Jens received his PhD in Transplantation Immunology at Karolinska Institute in 2013 and continued as a Postdoctoral Fellow until 2015. Afterwards, he joined Mabtech AB, a biotech company that develops, manufactures and markets monoclonal antibodies, kits and instruments for ELISA, ELISpot and FluoroSpot, and worked in several positions: In 2015, he started as a Global manager in Marketing & Sales, where he was responsible for the company's distributors worldwide. During a period in 2018, Jens worked as a Business Development Manager, a position in which he managed key accounts. Since 2019, Jens is the Head of Marketing and Sales at Mabtech AB, and is as such in charge of all communication, marketing strategies, and of course sales of

products.

10. Johan Lundkvist, PhD

CEO

Sinfonia Biotherapeutics

Cofounder

AlzeCure Foundation



Johan defended his PhD in Neurochemistry at Stockholm University in 1998. As a Postdoc at KI (1998- 2004) he studied Notch signaling, Alzheimer's disease as well as the vascular dementia syndrome CADASIL. He became assistant professor at KI in 2005. From 2004 until 2012 Johan worked in different positions at AstraZeneca: starting as Scientific Team Leader for enzyme targets in neurology/pain drug discovery projects, then moving on to different positions such as target biology leader, discovery project leader, member of the strategy team for the neurology disease modifier portfolio and heading the externalization outreach team (EOT) for the neurology portfolio. In 2012 he was one of the cofounders of the AlzeCure Foundation, which is a drug discovery group that focuses on making novel therapeutics and diagnostics in Alzheimer's disease and related disorders using collaborative efforts with academic and industrial expertise. As a result of this work two companies, AlzeCure Pharma AB and Sinfonia Biotherapeutics AB, were established in 2016 and 2017, respectively. Both companies are devoted to develop novel treatments of Alzheimer's disease and related disorders. Johan is the CEO of Sinfonia Biotherapeutics AB, which develops precision therapies for genetically defined dementia and related neurodegenerative diseases.

11. Lisa Månsson, PhD

Director

Vasa Museum

Board member

Vetenskap & Allmänhet; Nobel Center Foundation



How did somebody with a PhD in Medical Science end up as a museum director of a historic maritime museum? The answer to that question lays in a fundamental interest in exploring and sharing the wonders of life in a broad scientific context.

As an undergraduate student Lisa spent most of her time at the Biomedical program at Uppsala University, Sweden, but did also a number of exchange programs in Sri Lanka, New Zealand and Canada. After completing a Master's degree in Medical Science, she moved to Stockholm for doctoral studies in infection biology at Karolinska Institutet. She defended her thesis in 2007 and moved to Vancouver to perform a postdoc at the BC Children's Hospital, University of British Columbia. In Vancouver she was introduced to a research environment that encouraged interactions with society. She became a volunteer for the "Let's talk science" initiative and contributed as a science expert at the local Science Center.

Curious to explore the popular science opportunities in Sweden, she started working at Sweden's largest Science Center, Tom Tits Experiment in 2010. She had various roles, starting as a science communicator, moved on as the Head of Exhibitions and finished as the interim CEO. Since October 2015 Lisa is the Museum Director of the Vasa museum. Vasa is a maritime museum located in Stockholm and is the most visited museum in Scandinavia with approximately 1,5 million visitors yearly. Lisa is also a board member of the non-profit membership organization Vetenskap & Allmänhet - that works to promote dialogue and openness between researchers and the public - as well as a board member of the Nobel Center Foundation.

In June 2020, Lisa is making her next career move. To where and why you will find out if you join the seminar!

12. Luminita Färnström, PhD

Senior Data Scientist
Nordic Entertainment Group



Luminita Färnström holds a PhD in Bioinformatics from Stockholm University. Her research revolved around retention time prediction in Liquid Chromatography, and its applications to protein identification. After her PhD, she has been vacillating between continuing her research career, and completely changing course by switching to industry. She chose the latter option, working first as a software engineer and Business Intelligence consultant. She then discovered the field of data science, which felt like a perfect mix of data analysis and software engineering. She now works as a

Senior Data Scientist in the Applied Machine Learning team at Nordic Entertainment Group, focusing mainly on developing machine learning algorithms to personalize the online customer journey.

13. Maria Knudsen, PhD

Business Developer
Salipro Biotech AB



Maria completed her PhD studies in Vaccine Development at Karolinska Institutet in 2014. During her Ph.D. work, Maria gained valuable industry experience through the Internship Program offered through Karolinska Institutet Career Service at the Venture Capital firm HealthCap (2012), focusing on competitive landscaping and attending meetings with potential new investments. After obtaining her Ph.D., she joined the National University of Singapore as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow from 2015 to 2017, where she screened for neutralizing antibody candidates against Dengue virus in a collaboration with GlaxoSmithKline. In 2017, she moved to Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center (Fred Hutch) in Seattle, where she worked as a Postdoctoral Research Fellow in HIV Vaccine Development. Outside of the lab at Fred Hutch, she was part of the

leadership team of a Diversity & Inclusion organization as well as a Business Development Fellow, which involved commercial evaluation of new technologies developed at Fred Hutch. In January 2020, Maria joined Salipro Biotech AB in Stockholm as a Business Developer. Her current role involves fostering relationships with research-based pharma and biotech partners as well as identifying, evaluating and executing partnership opportunities.

14. Nadine Schweizer, PhD

National contact point for Horizon 2020
Vinnova



I am currently the National contact point (NCP) for Horizon 2020 in life sciences and bioeconomy at Vinnova, Sweden's Innovation Agency. In my role as NCP I support Swedish applicants in the process of applying and obtaining funding from Horizon 2020 for Societal Challenge 1 (Health, demographic change and well-being) and Societal Challenge 2 (Food security, sustainable agriculture, and forestry, marine and maritime and inland water research and the bioeconomy), as well as facilitate the connection between Swedish academic, public and private business parts to promote participation

in Horizon calls. As NCPs we work closely together with national and European policy makers to shape a common space for science and engage in the political discussion on behalf of our national research and innovation ecosystems. At the moment, much of our efforts focus on implementing the emergency actions for research and innovation directed towards fighting the corona pandemic, as well as moving

forward the upcoming European research and innovation programme Horizon Europe bound to start in 2021, and the five European Missions. What intrigued me about the work as NCP is to be in daily contact with the forefront of Swedish research and Innovation as well as being in direct touch with the European Union's work to create the best conditions for pan-European science. It allows me to stay in touch with my scientific roots while simultaneously working for a political concept I genuinely believe in.

I graduated with a master's degree in biology from Albert Ludwigs University Freiburg, Germany in 2012 and subsequently pursued a PhD in Neuroscience followed by a first postdoc at Uppsala University, Sweden. Eventually, I moved to Karolinska Institute for second postdoc at the Department of Neurobiology, care sciences and society. While pursuing a postdoc for 70% of time, I took on a role as research coordinator at the Strategic Research Program in Cancer (StratCan-KICancer) in 2018. I was an active member of both UUPA and KIPA throughout my postdoc period, which proved both meriting and educational for me, as well as further kindled my interest in research policy.

15. Olle Rengby, PhD

Medical Advisor
Novartis Sverige AB



Olle Rengby was one of those outstanding researchers at Karolinska Institutet who has not only published in high-impact journals and received grants to fund his own research during his PhD and Postdoc but he has also been unshakably engaged in creating strategic value or medical use of his inventions.

He has produced recombinant selenoproteins which have been commercialized since then and became the first person employed at a newly established KI spin off company to produce a medical device for the treatment of sepsis. As the Head of Research and Development, he has established a functional lab base for the firm and conducted research on the idea of blood purification as treatment for sepsis in ICU thereby, building his future in academia further as Postdoc then soon after, as Assistant Professor. Even so, Olle is currently working at Novartis Sverige AB as Medical Advisor in oncology. His career as Medical Advisor has been started at Medhouse where he spent about half a decade first as Project Manager in neurology, respiratory, infection, rheumatology, autoimmune diseases and oncology then as Medical Science Liaison in hematology/oncology.

What makes an Assistant Professor to take the leap from academia after such success? Here comes the opportunity to hear about his career moves and professional experience outside academia firsthand.

16. Valtteri Wirta, PhD

Facility director
Clinical Genomics Stockholm
Science for Life Laboratory



Dr Valtteri Wirta, PhD serves as Director of the Clinical Genomics Stockholm facility at Science for Life Laboratory, Sweden. Dr Wirta is affiliated to Department of Microbiology, Tumour and Cell Biology at Karolinska Institutet and School of Engineering Sciences in Chemistry, Biotechnology and Health at KTH Royal Institute of Technology (Stockholm, Sweden). As the head of the Clinical Genomics, Dr Wirta and his team are working with the Swedish healthcare system to facilitate the transition of genomics technologies, especially massively parallel DNA sequencing, into routine diagnostic use. Dr Wirta has significant experience in working with genomics-based technologies and managing interdisciplinary teams both in biotech industry and academia. Since 2012 he has been

managing research service facilities at Science for Life Laboratory. Dr Wirta is also co-chairing the working group for informatics in the Genomic Medicine Sweden initiative, and is vice-chair for the Nordic Alliance of Clinical Genomics. He received M.Sc. in molecular biology from Stockholm University in 2001 and Ph.D. in biotechnology from KTH Royal Institute of Technology in 2006.