



Put some food (for thought) in your career



Lotte De Leeuw, Talent Center, HR Department

Program

What are my career opportunities?

How to carve out a fitting career path?

What now?

Program

What are my career opportunities?

How to design a fitting career path?

What now?

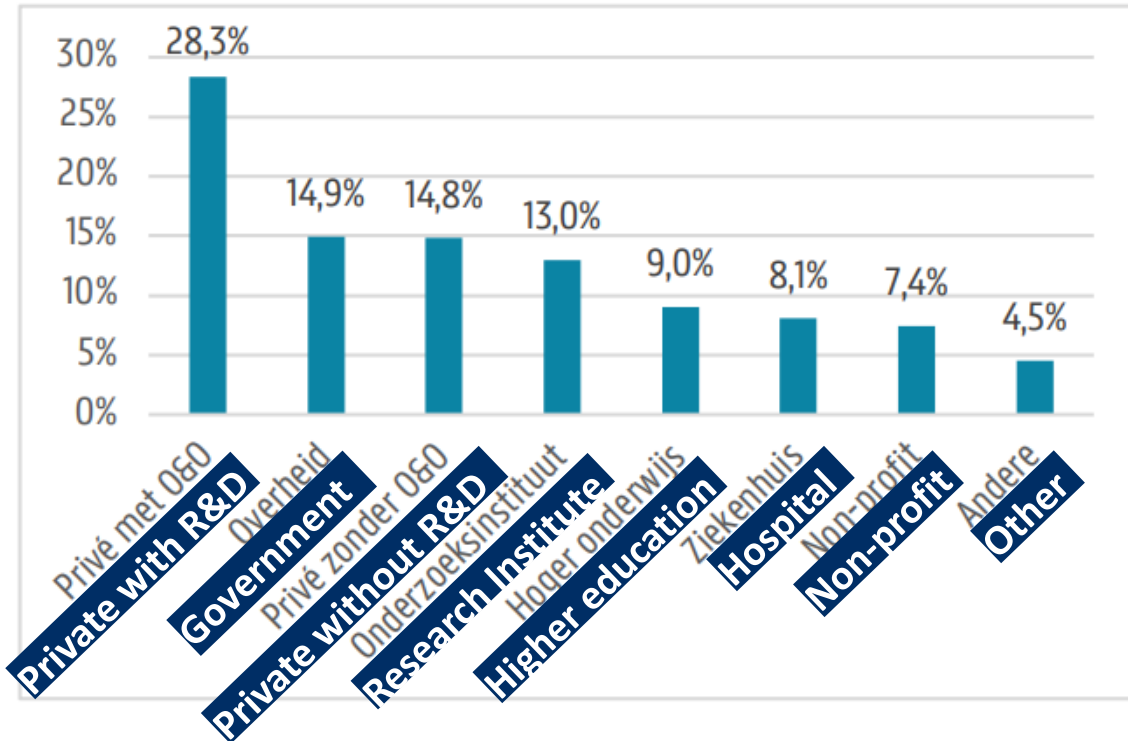
What jobs do the people (potentially PhD-holders) that inspire you, do?

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Figure 1: Percentage of PhD holders per non-academic sector in their first job after their PhD, 2017 (N=1535)

Figuur 1: Aandeel doctoraathouders per niet-academische sector in hun eerste job na het doctoraat, 2017 (N= 1535)



A myriad of options

- academic track
- non- profit
- R&D
- Governmental work
- (higher) education
- self-employment
- private sector: working at a big international company or @SME's
- ... anything you want!



So a lot of options

But how do I find my perfect match?



So a lot of options

~~But how do I find my perfect match?~~

“... reject the myth that there is a single, perfect job out there waiting for us to discover it, and instead **identify our multiple selves** – a range of potential careers that might suit the different sides of our character.”

From ‘How to find fulfilling work’ – Roman Krznaric, School of Life



So a lot of options

~~But how do I find my perfect match?~~

→ How do I identify a (range of) **potential career(s) that** might **suit** (the different sides of) **my character**

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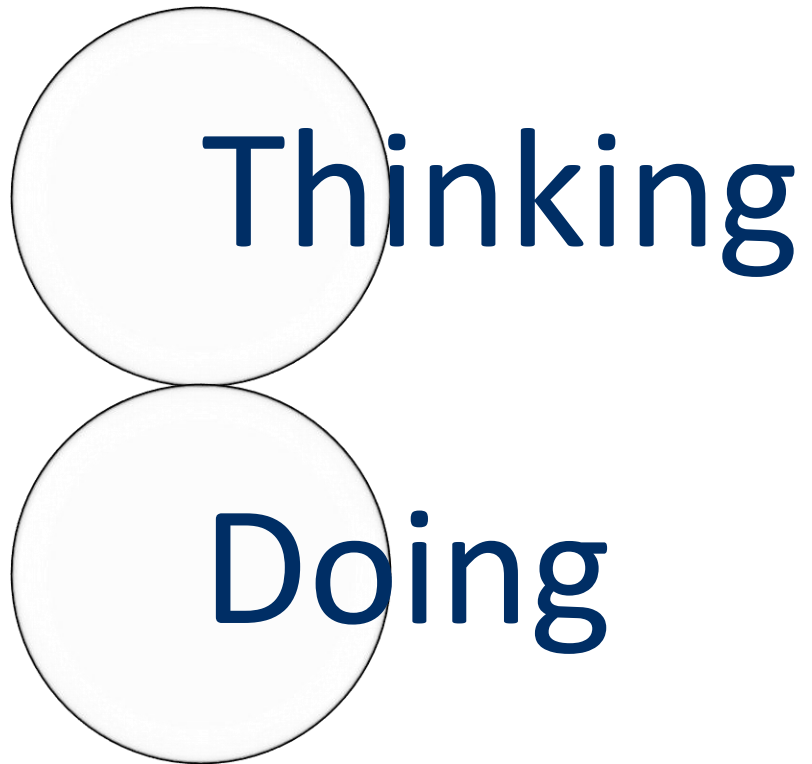
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Designing a fitting career path

by:



Thinking

We spend most of our waking lives at work in occupations most often chosen by our inexperienced younger selves. And yet we rarely ask ourselves how we got there or what our jobs mean to us.

Alain De Botton, *The Pleasures and Sorrows of Work*

What does doing a PhD mean to you?



Thinking

- What drives me in life?
- What are my ambitions & (career) values?
- What are my strengths?
- What are my learning opportunities?
- What drains my energy?
- What makes me lose track of time?
- What do I enjoy in my work environment?
- If I could solve 1 problem in the world, it would be...
- ...

What are the best parts of your day?

Reflect on one moment this (or past) week where you felt most energized? What were you doing? Who was with you? Make it specific

What tasks are you enjoying the most while doing your PhD?

Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Start the presentation to see live content. For screen share software, share the entire screen. Get help at pollev.com/app

How/where can you do more of that?

What skills are you obtaining by doing your PhD? (that you also enjoy putting to use)





Nobody has responded yet.

Hang tight! Responses are coming in.

Top 10 skills of 2025

Some good news!

Type of skill

-  Problem-solving
-  Self-management
-  Working with people
-  Technology use and development



Analytical thinking and innovation



Active learning and learning strategies



Complex problem-solving



Critical thinking and analysis



Creativity, originality and initiative



Leadership and social influence



Technology use, monitoring and control



Technology design and programming



Resilience, stress tolerance and flexibility

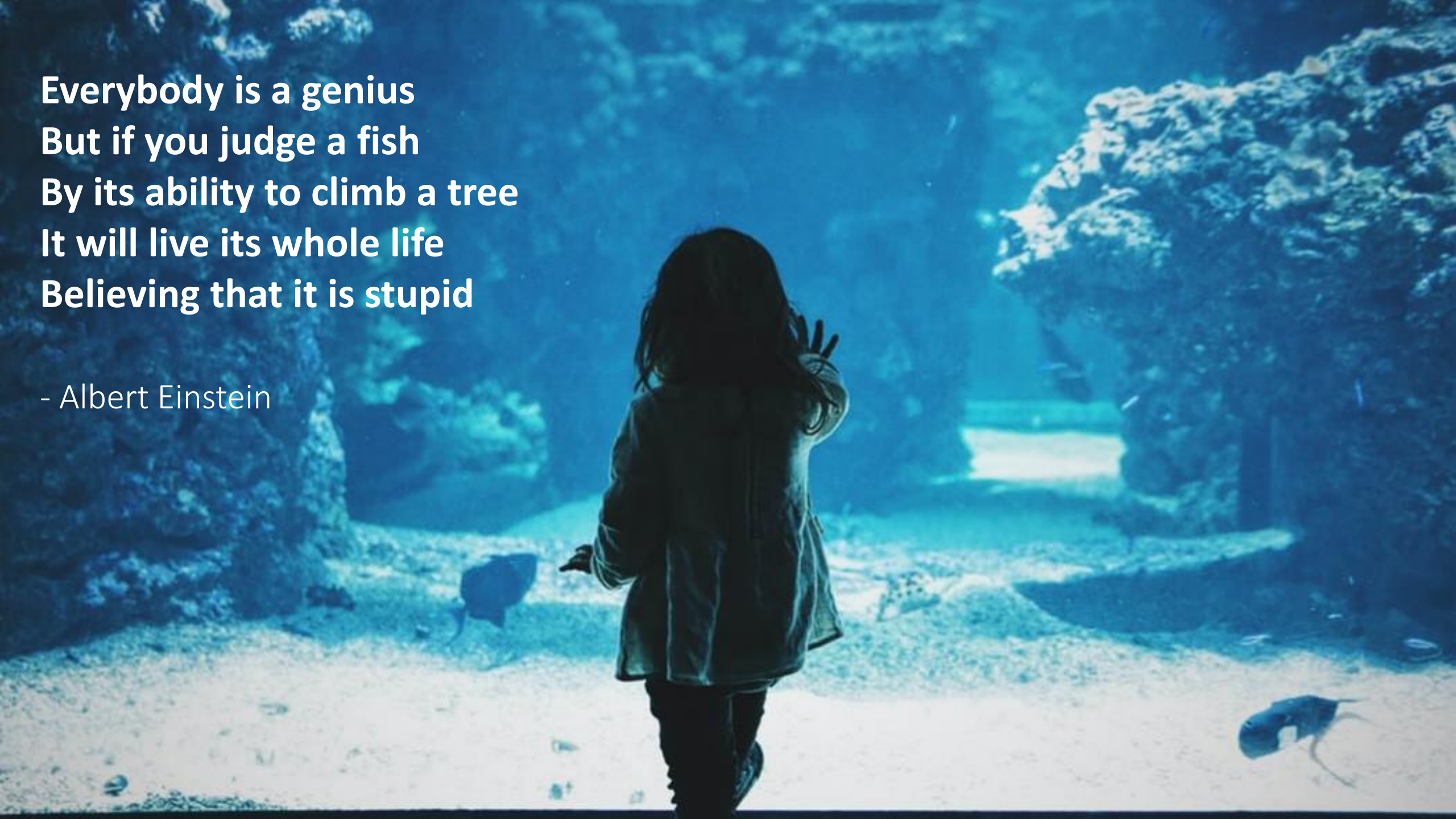


Reasoning, problem-solving and ideation

Source: Future of Jobs Report 2020, World Economic Forum.

**Everybody is a genius
But if you judge a fish
By its ability to climb a tree
It will live its whole life
Believing that it is stupid**

- Albert Einstein





Translate your PhD and add to it

Your PhD \neq YOU

YOU are also defined by

- the critical decisions you made throughout your career
- your professional as well as your personal development
- all the (personal) skills in your backpack
- your interests

Some more good news!

92,6% Employment rate for PhD-holders

→ This is higher than the numbers for Bachelors and Masters

- <https://www.vario.be/sites/default/files/documents/studiereeks27.pdf>



The secret to getting
ahead is getting started.

Mark Twain

“ quote fancy



Doing

By far the biggest mistake people make when trying to change careers is to delay taking the first step until they have settled on the destination...

Herminia Ibarra, Working Identity



Doing

- Radical sabbaticals
- Branching projects
- Conversational research

From: how to find fulfilling work, School of life

But also

- Following workshops
- Investing in your interests/ hobbies
- Getting out there

Think of three people that you might want to reach out to, people who are doing something that inspires you or who are working at a company that you like: what questions would you like to ask them?

Contact one of them right now!

- **100 Questions, a Toolkit for Careers, School of Life**

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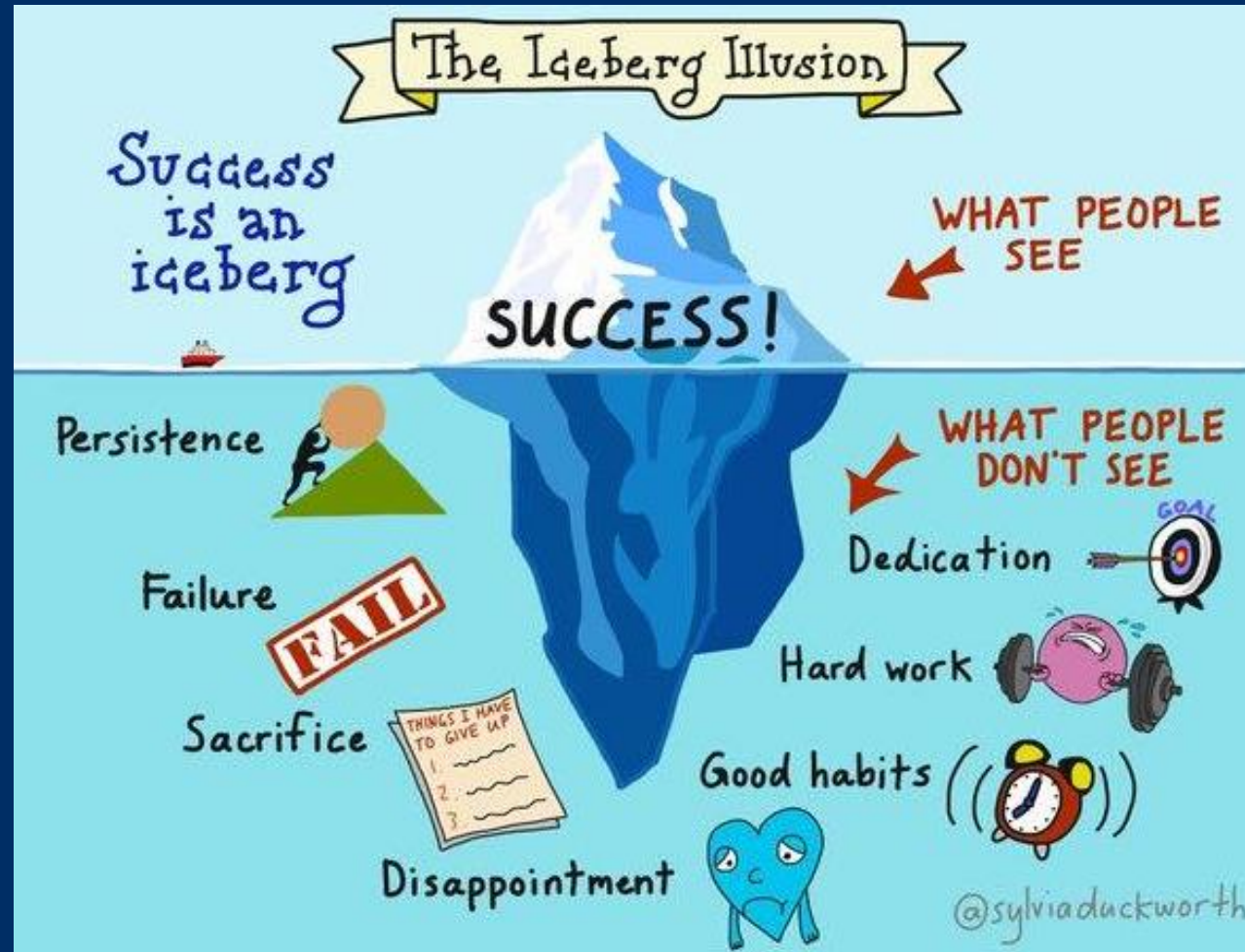
How to design a fitting career path?

What now?

Try to enjoy the ride



But also: luck is no accident – it is a case of planned ‘happenstance’



We are here to help:

**Talent Center
RIVA
The Antwerp Doctoral School
The HR department
...**

Courses

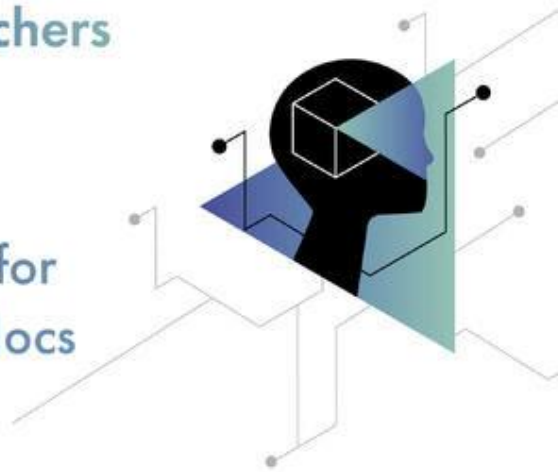
- **Grow your future career**
- **Write an effective non-academic cv and cover letter**
- **Inside a company**
- **Applying for a job**
- **My personal development plan as a PhD researcher**
- **Welcome to the real world**

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Interuniversity Job Market for Young Researchers

— 06.02 – 21.03.2024 ONLINE
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EXPO GENT

visit Flanders'
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PhDs and postdocs



jobmarketforyoungresearchers.be

partners



KU LEUVEN



Job Shadowing for PhD candidates & postdocs 2024

<https://vlir.be/events/job-shadowing-for-phd-candidates-postdocs-2024/>

**Imagine your future work self: what do they look like,
where are they going, what is happening, what do you
do,...**

What are you going to do today that your future work self is going to thank you for?

Further reading

- PhD career stories: <https://www.vitae.ac.uk/researcher-careers/researcher-career-stories>)
- Career paths for PhDs: <https://www.jobs.ac.uk/media/pdf/careers/resources/10-career-paths-for-phds.pdf>
- <https://fromphdtolife.com/resources/transition-q-as/>
- PhD Career Guide: <http://www.phdcareerguide.com/>
- PhD's at work: <http://phdsatwork.com/>
- <https://www.jobs.ac.uk/careers-advice/job-profiles>
- <https://versatilephd.com/>
- <http://en.phdcentre.eu/inhoud/uploads/2018/02/Which-grass-is-greener-Digital-edition.pdf>
- Working Identity: Unconventional Strategies for Reinventing Your Career – Herminia Ibarra
- How to find fulfilling work – Roman Krznaric, The School of Life