

Postdoc Day - 9 June 2026 - Programme

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| WELCOME | | |
| 09u00 - 09u30 | Registration and welcome coffee | Albrecht Dürerzaal |
| 09u30 – 12u00 WORKSHOPS | | |
| 09u30 - 12u00 | <p><u>OPTION 1: Self-insight as cornerstone of your career management</u></p> <p>Feeling puzzled by your career path is perfectly normal. While clarity often comes from a mix of taking action and intentional self-reflection, this workshop specifically dives into the reflective part of that journey. Through guided exercises and peer exchange, we will explore your core motivations, interests, and values. This session offers a safe space to pause, reflect, and take a first step toward greater career clarity.</p> <p><i>Talent Center</i></p> | F. de Tassiszaal |
| 09u30 - 12u00 | <p><u>OPTION 2: Perfectly Driven or (Im)perfect?</u></p> <p>In academic environments, high standards are the norm. Perfectionism can fuel quality, ambition and excellence, but it can also lead to stress, procrastination, self-doubt and difficulty setting boundaries. This workshop explores when perfectionism is helpful, and when it starts to undermine wellbeing, focus and sustainable performance.</p> <p><i>The Human Link</i></p> | Prentenkabinet |

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| 09u30 - 12u00 | <p>OPTION 3: A Rapid Framework for Interdisciplinary Alignment and Mutual Understanding</p> <p>An intensive workshop for Postdoctoral researchers to explore working across disciplinary boundaries'</p> <p>In this fast-paced, interactive workshop, postdocs from diverse disciplines are paired up to engage in a "pressure-cooker" style interdisciplinary reflection exercise. Without prior acquaintance, each pair navigates a structured series of short, intensive activities designed to reveal how experts from different fields think, communicate, and approach problems. Through guided prompts, rapid co-creation tasks, and facilitated reflection moments, participants experience firsthand the process of aligning perspectives, bridging disciplinary assumptions, and building a shared vocabulary. By the end of the session, postdocs not only gain insight into the dynamics of interdisciplinary collaboration but also acquire practical strategies for effectively connecting their expertise with that of others.</p> <p><i>Grants Office</i></p> | Willem Elsschotzaal |
| 12u00 – 13u00 NETWORKING LUNCH | | |
| 13u00 – 14u00 PLENARY SESSIONS | | |
| 13u00 - 13u30 | <p>Introduction <i>dr. Tim Engels, head of Departement Research, Innovation and Valorisation Antwerp</i></p> <p>Welcome speech <i>Prof. Maarten Weyn, Vice-Rector of Research and Impact.</i></p> | F. De Tassiszaal |
| 13u30 - 14u00 | <p>Presentation of courses and initiatives for postdocs (pitches)</p> <p>Dive-into-projects, Dive-into-Business, OJO call, VLIR IUI website, PhD Talent Pool, YUFE (4Postdocs), MONDO, Antwerp Summer and Winter University, wellbeing initiatives, Postdoc Community, postdocs website, toolkit for entrepreneurial minds, talent center, science Communication, global engagement, interdisciplinary research, climate team, MARCOM...</p> | F. De Tassiszaal |
| 14u00 - 14u05 | Time to move towards the break-out sessions | |

14u05 – 14u45

BREAK-OUT SESSIONS

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| <p>14u05 - 14u45</p> | <p><u>OPTION 1: Life after postdocs: exchanging career stories inside & outside academia</u></p> <p>During this panel, you'll hear from three professionals with a PhD who followed different career paths, reflecting on the decisions they made and what they learned along this way.</p> <p><i>Talent Center</i></p> | <p>F. De Tassiszaal</p> |
| <p>14u05 - 14u45</p> | <p><u>OPTION 2: How to valorise your research: insights from entrepreneurial (former) postdocs</u></p> <p>In this session, you will learn how to translate your research into socio-economic impact and discover how the Valorisation Office can support you in bringing your ideas beyond academia. You will hear from three (former) postdocs who have launched spin-offs in different fields, sharing their experiences, challenges, and lessons learned. The session includes a panel discussion and Q&A, offering inspiration and practical insights for (future) entrepreneurial researchers.</p> <p><i>Valorisation Office</i></p> | <p>Willem Elsschotzaal</p> |
| <p>14u05 - 14u45</p> | <p><u>OPTION 3: Science communication</u></p> <p>In this session, you will gain insight in the importance of translating your research for audiences outside academia and get concrete tips to communicate your work in a clear, compelling, and accessible way. We will explore practical techniques for shaping your message, adapting your story to your audience and ways to overcome common challenges researchers face when communicating beyond their field. The session will highlight concrete tools that are available at our university to help increase the visibility, relevance, and societal impact of your work.</p> <p><i>RIVA MARCOM U&S</i></p> | |

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| 14u45 - 15u15 COFFEE BREAK | | |
| 13u – 14u00 PLENARY SESSIONS | | |
| 15u15 - 15u45 | <p>Keynote ‘Relational Leadership for Academics: Leading Without Losing Yourself or Others’</p> <p>Academics often lead without explicitly taking up a leadership role: they supervise students, coordinate projects, and navigate complex team dynamics. Yet leadership in academia is rarely made explicit or reflective. In this talk, I invite participants to pause and reflect on how they (wish to) lead, and on whether their leadership style fits both who they are and the people they work with.</p> <p>Drawing on research on prestige- and dominance-based leadership, psychological empowerment, and interpersonal relations dynamics, I explore why effective leadership is not primarily about control or charisma, but about flexibility, relational awareness, and fit. I approach leadership as a relational practice: shaped by how we position ourselves in interaction, and by how we communicate with and respond to others.</p> <p>Participants are invited to reflect on their own (desired) leadership patterns and will be offered concrete prompts and exercises to help them develop a leadership style that is both effective and sustainable for themselves and for those around them.</p> <p><i>Prof. Charlotte De Backer</i></p> | F. De Tassiszaal |
| 15u45 – 16u00 | Quiz and wrap-up | F. De Tassiszaal |