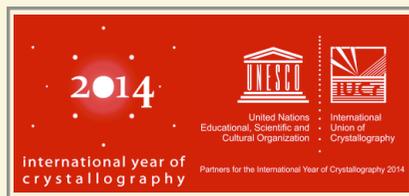


Declaration of Young Talented Crystallographers of the World

From the Opening Ceremony of the United Nations
International Year of Crystallography
UNESCO, Paris, France
20-21 January 2014



“Young Talented Crystallographers of the World” session of the Opening
Ceremony
has been moderated by Dr Philip Ball



We, the participants of the Round Table of Young Talented Crystallographers of the World at UNESCO on the occasion of the Opening Ceremony, discussed the challenges that face researchers in various regions of the world at the early stage of their careers. We identified the following common issues and problems that we wish to share.

Extreme workloads: Young researchers face problems with long working hours, high pressure and expectations to obtain results and to publish papers quickly and in top journals, job insecurity, and large teaching commitments. These pressures are intensifying, and make it hard to balance professional and family life. They hinder the freedom to explore original and innovative directions or to think about long-term research goals. These problems are echoed in a recent global survey of young scientists.*

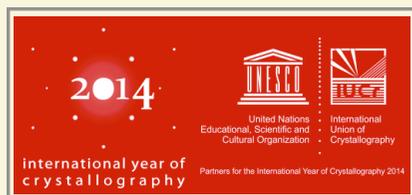
Access to facilities and journals: Research is often hampered by the inability to access specialised experimental facilities, either because these are regionally absent or because younger researchers can find it hard to compete for limited availability. For cost reasons, many libraries no longer stock some important journals. These are problems that all researchers face, but such obstacles and the resultant delays are especially damaging in early-stage careers.

Training: Many panellists had benefitted enormously from training courses at both general and advanced levels, which can offer expert tuition and hands-on experience. But such opportunities are limited, and not all universities, institutions or national research bodies provide them. The panel stresses the vital importance of training for young researchers.

Funding: Some countries provide funding streams specifically for early-stage researchers. But others do not. In some developing countries, funding even for day-to-day expenses is essentially non-existent. The panel urges that due consideration be given to ensuring that some funding is earmarked for this purpose.

Collaboration: Exchanges and collaborations between developed and developing countries play a vital role in alleviating the disparities that exist in opportunities and resources globally. But it is essential that such collaborations are meaningful and mutually beneficial partnerships between all parties, and that they result in the creation of jobs, laboratories or other infrastructure in the less wealthy partners, rather than becoming a recruiting strategy for richer nations.

We, the undersigned, support this declaration. We call on senior scientists, policymakers and heads of institutions to recognize these concerns, and to work towards a situation in which the efforts and abilities of young researchers can be most effectively used.



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