

EASD EARLY CAREER ACADEMY BROCHURE



TO SUPPORT
TRAIN, MENTOR,
AND CREATE
OPPORTUNITIES
FOR SCIENTISTS,
CLINICIANS,
AND STUDENTS
WHO ARE AT
AN EARLY OR
INTERMEDIATE
STAGE OF THEIR
CAREER

BY EASD EARLY
CAREER ACADEMY

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CONTACT INFORMATION



The EASD Early Career Academy is part of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) e.V.

Rheindorfer Weg 3
40591 Düsseldorf
Germany
Tel: +49 211 758 469 0
Fax: +49 211 758 469 29

For further specific information on the EASD academy, do not hesitate to contact us: EASD-Academy@easd.org



EASD
ACADEMY



We support, train, mentor and create opportunities
for early-career researchers and clinicians

BACKGROUND

The aims of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) are to encourage and support research in the field of diabetes, promote the rapid diffusion of acquired knowledge, and facilitate its application. One of the tasks of the members of the EASD Board is to ensure that EASD remains a lively association that is constantly developing and strives, together with its members, for its members, to establish a strong European and global diabetes network. But this can only be achieved together with the members who are at the beginning of their careers, as they represent the future of diabetes research in Europe.

Therefore, the EASD Board decided to establish an EASD Early Career Academy for early-career researchers where promising future leaders, as well as young students, in the field of diabetes, can elaborate plans and directly collaborate with EASD to make the association also an attractive place for members in the early phases of their careers. Importantly, the Board wanted the 'Academy' to develop autonomously. This is why, in late 2021, clinical and basic scientists who were awarded one of the EASD/EFSD early career Research Programmes in recent years were invited to submit their candidatures to take an active role in building the EASD Early Career Academy. Prof. Patrick Schrauwen, as Board member of the EASD, acts as a chair of the Academy.

Ten early/intermediate-career scientists representing different European countries were selected to form the first Early Career Academy Committee. Together, they have shaped the Academy, in close interaction with other EASD bodies. This brochure illustrates the SCOPE of the Academy, its main

activities for members and presents the members of the EASD Early Career Academy management committee.

1.

MISSION STATEMENT

The EASD Early Career Academy is an initiative to support, train, mentor, and create opportunities for scientists, clinicians, and students who are at an early or intermediate stage of their career, with an interest in diabetes research and/or clinical practice.

Its core objective is to provide unique opportunities for development, a platform for the exchange of knowledge and experience, peer support, and interaction with the wider EASD community.

“DEVELOP AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK OF EARLY- CAREER DIABETES RESEARCHERS AND CLINICIANS”

Through its activities, it supports and motivates early-career researchers and clinicians to become future leaders that pursue excellence in diabetes research and care. The Academy stands for the highest research standards as well as open science, and provides to its members the scope for innovation and development.

1. **Share:** Developing an international network of early-career researchers and clinicians who can share experience and learning in research training and associated activities, share their expertise, tips, as well as job opportunities, and offer peer support.
2. **Collaborate:** Fostering an environment that enables greater scientific collaboration addressing scientific needs and sharing of resources, as well as ideas to stimulate research excellence, training, and innovation for the benefit of people with diabetes.
3. **Opportunity:** Advancing the progression of early-career diabetes professionals by improving accessibility to

unique opportunities within and beyond the EASD organisation allowing Early Career Academy Fellows to experience a breadth of opportunities related to diabetes research and practice outside the organisation.

4. **Professional development:** Offering career-oriented workshops and webinars to empower the highest scientific standards in research and clinical practice.

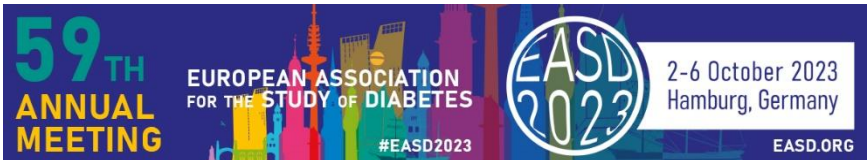
5. **Embrace:** Supporting early-career researchers and students with mentorship from appropriate faculty and investigators, internationally.

2.

EASD EARLY CAREER ACADEMY ACTIVITIES

EASD ANNUAL MEETING

After its official launch at the Annual meeting in 2022 in Stockholm, the Early Career Academy's ambition is to organize several sessions for early career researchers and clinicians throughout the EASD Annual Meeting. Background stories from renowned diabetes researchers, key decisions at the early career stage that finally shaped a high-esteemed career trajectory, leadership skills, mistakes, and career development insights will provide “condensed” knowledge of critical importance to early career scientists. Attendees will have the opportunity to witness an alternative take on diabetes research and get a different “bird’s eye” reflection on career evolution from diabetes experts at all stages of their careers.



The Early Career Academy is actively involved in the development of the programme for the meeting in Hamburg 2023. A member of the Academy committee is also on the board of the Scientific Programme Committee of the meeting.

Several attractive sessions will be organized directly by the Early Career Academy:

- A Q&A session 'Towards independence in scientific research'. Early Career Academy members can ask questions to a panel of outstanding speakers from science and industry across different career spectra to get more insight into different journeys towards scientific excellence.
- The 'EASD future' session. A 60 minutes session with PhD students, fellows, and more established scientists to talk about science and career development.
- The 'mentorship programme' session.
- The EASD Early Career Academy social gathering event will be a lively interactive networking session. Members can join our scientific speed dating and get the possibility to talk to the Academy team, other early-career researchers and clinicians, as well as more established researchers.

YEAR-ROUND EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

The Early Career Academy organizes scientific educational events throughout the year, including online webinars, workshops, a journal club, and joint activities with the EASD Postgraduate Education Committee (PGEC).

Interactive webinars

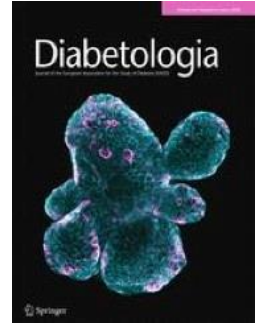
The webinars are lively and engaging events held by senior experts who provide guidance on practical, key topics that would help early-career clinical and basic/translational investigators to move their skills forward. Grant writing, work-life balance, manuscript reviewing, and scientific communication to the public are just some of the topics that will be delivered by experienced leaders in the field of diabetes. The path to success is often paved with difficulties, which may seem insurmountable sometimes. Receiving advice and listening to the experience of “former” early-career investigators who were successfully able to manage and overcome challenges they had to face would motivate and help junior scientists finding their way to success.

<https://www.easd.org/academy/academy-activities.html>



Academy Journal Club

In collaboration with Diabetologia, a new way of science dissemination has been started in the form of a live, online journal club. The Journal Club serves as an interactive tool for members of the EASD/Diabetologia community who wish to keep up to date with the latest scientific advancements in the field of diabetes in a timely, interactive fashion and gives early-career researchers the opportunity to disseminate their findings. Papers accepted for publication in Diabetologia are selected by the EASD Early Career Academy committee for online presentation in a two-monthly session. Both clinical and basic/ translational research topics are covered, addressing all aspects of diabetes research, to ensure relevance to the EASD/ Diabetologia community. The first/junior author of the paper is invited to present the work in a live webinar moderated by the Early Career Academy.



ASD Academy Journal Club - 20 Oct 2022

JOURNAL CLUB
in collaboration with *Diabetologia*

Date: Thursday, 20 October 2022 19:00 - 20:00 (GMT+1)

Speaker: Ji Soo (Samatha) Yoon - Early career basic researcher

Title: Calcium-dependent transcriptional changes in human pancreatic islets reveal functional diversity in islet cell subtypes

Vysílá: YouTube @EASDecademy

ASD Academy Journal Club - 1 Dec 2022

JOURNAL CLUB
in collaboration with *Diabetologia*

Date: Thursday, 1 December 2022 19:00 - 20:00 (GMT+1)

Speaker: Theresia Sarabhai - Early career clinical researcher

Title: Hyperbaric oxygen rapidly improves tissue-specific insulin sensitivity and mitochondrial capacity in humans with type 2 diabetes: a randomised placebo-controlled crossover trial

Vysílá: YouTube @EASDecademy

The journal club is highly interactive: a Q&A session allows the audience to ask questions and discuss directly with the author. A recording of the journal club is available offline for those who are unable to attend the live event. The Academy Journal Club is advertised through the Early Career Academy and Diabetologia social media, websites and newsletters.

Collaboration with the EASD Postgraduate Education Committee

The EASD Early Career Academy closely cooperates with the EASD Postgraduate Education Committee (PGEC), which decides the strategy for the e-Learning platform and other educational activities such as the Robert Turner Clinical Research Course that is held yearly in Oxford, UK, and the Scientists Training Course, which moves around European centers. The EASD e-Learning platform featuring comprehensive online courses addressing several themes in diabetes research has been created to expand the reach of EASD's educational goal to disseminate knowledge and proficiency in diabetes research and care worldwide. Two members of the Early Career Academy are also members of the PGEC. This allows for high interaction between the Early Career Academy and the PGEC, to jointly design postgraduate courses tailored to all the Early Career Academy members, and to develop spin-off webinars based on PGE courses. Members of the Early Career Academy will also serve as teachers in the EASD postgraduate courses to provide them with experience in organising postgraduate education. The PGEC would help advertise other EASD Early Career Academy activities and increase the number of young members joining the Early Career Academy.

EASD EARLY CAREER ACADEMY MENTORSHIP PROGRAMMES

There is a global challenge to recruit and train the next generation of clinical and translational researchers, not least in endocrinology and diabetes. Meeting this challenge requires identifying highly promising young clinicians and researchers with a commitment to pursuing a career in diabetes research both within academia and industry and supporting them early in their endeavors. The EASD Early Career Academy seeks to fill this gap by providing mentorship support.

EASD Early Career Academy Network Mentorship programme is kindly supported by European Diabetology

**“PROMOTING KNOWLEDGE
EXCHANGE BETWEEN
DIABETES RESEARCHERS
WITHIN EUROPE”**

The EASD Early Career Academy Mentorship Programme brings together junior clinicians or researchers with established mentors to accelerate the development and career of the mentee, and to develop their network in the diabetes field.



European Association
for the Study of Diabetes

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EASD Academy Mentorship Programme

10 mentorship programmes of each 1,000 Euro available - Application deadline on 16 April 2023

The EASD Academy Mentorship Programme, supported by European Diabetology, aims to bring together junior clinicians or researchers with established mentors to accelerate the development and career of the mentee, and to develop their network in the diabetes field.

The aim of this 1-year ***EASD Early Career Academy Network Mentorship Programme*** is to bring together early-career researchers/ clinicians (up to assistant professorship level or equivalent) with established mentors. The purpose of the mentorship is to discuss mentoring-, coaching- and project-related topics in an informal atmosphere at approximately five meetings a year, which can be held virtually or in person.

To connect mentees with outstanding diabetologists from the EASD network and beyond, a call for applications would be launched twice a year. Selected early career researchers would be awarded and their travel expenses covered by the programme.

Future plans: Parallel mentorship prospects

Next to the Mentorship Programme, the EASD Early Career Academy would also help early-career researchers in finding a mentor for a more informal, short mentee-mentor collaboration. Such informal mentorship activities would mostly include online sessions where early-career scientists can discuss the progress of their research - both for content as well as for general career advice - with an established EASD member. This type of mentorship activity, favoring flexibility and reachability at the expense of formal funding, might help invigorate diabetes research throughout the continent, expand the reach of quality diabetes mentoring, and foster new partnerships.

EASD EARLY CAREER ACADEMY ONLINE AND REAL- LIFE

The Early Career Academy encompasses not only internal activities directed towards the EASD community, but also towards external actors. The Early Career Academy would co-partner with national diabetes organisations with the aim to outreach to health care providers, policy makers, and patient organisations.

All that with the ultimate aim to build a strong position of the EASD in terms of career support of the Early Career Academy members both at the international level and at their respective institutions in their respective countries.



Newsletter

The Early Career Academy newsletter, handled by EASD, is being sent through the networking platform every month, to inform all members about news and activities, as well as informing members about opportunities, including grant or position advertisements. The newsletter also presents the hot topics discussed on the platform or in relationship with past activities, webinars, and workshops.

EASD Early Career Academy online

The Academy is part of the EASD web structure. The web interface serves as a first contact for those interested in news, membership, and an overview of future and past activities. It is also the interface for new member applications, access to the networking platform, and a signpost for external feedback.

The EASD Early Career Academy for scientists & clinicians

The EASD Early Career Academy is an initiative to support, train, mentor, and create opportunities for scientists, clinicians, and students who are at an early or intermediate stage of their career, with an interest in diabetes research and/or clinical practice.

Its core objective is to provide unique opportunities for development, a platform for exchange of knowledge and experience, peer-support, and interaction with the wider EASD community.

Through these activities it will support and motivate early-career researchers and clinicians in the field of diabetes to become the future leaders that pursue excellence in diabetes care and research.

The EASD Early Career Academy stands for the highest research standards and open science.

The EASD Early Career Academy will provide fellows with the **SCOPE** for innovation and development.



Social media



To gain public attention and progressively build a network of young researchers we use social media channels to quickly disseminate news, stimulate lively discussion, and foster the collective spirit of the EASD Early Career Academy.

Please follow us on **@EASDacademy**

<https://www.easd.org/academy>

<https://twitter.com/EASDacademy>

<https://www.instagram.com/easdacademy/>

Collaboration with the National Diabetes associations

To fulfill the EASD mission goal to establish a strong European and diabetes network the Early Career Academy has embarked on a journey to the national diabetes associations. To support and stimulate diabetes research in respective European countries and to extend the ranks of active members the Early Career Academy would help with co-organizing and endorsing local meetings addressed to early career researchers, advertise national activities via EASD Early Career Academy website, newsletter, and social media channels and launch new programmes to foster the collaboration: The Best of the EASD webinar and The Best poster and presentation award of the EASD Early Career Academy.

Furthermore, the Early Career Academy, in collaboration with national diabetes associations, investigates strategies to provide the necessary framework to support the endeavors of young and mid-career members in those national associations that currently lack an established structure dedicated to this aim.

Future plans: Best of EASD Annual Meeting webinar

To support and foster the close collaboration between the Academy and national associations best of EASD webinar would enable researchers selected by the national association to attend the EASD Annual meeting at the expense of a travel grant. Highlighted topics from all eight scientific tracks would be then presented by them in a live webinar session.

Future plans: Best EASD abstract awards by the Early Career Academy

The EASD Early Career Academy committee members will evaluate the abstracts submitted by EASD travel grant awardees (students, post-docs), and assign the “Best EASD Early Career Academy research” award to their favourite. One winner per scientific track (so 8 in total). Winners will be announced in Presidential Address and will get their certificates at the social gathering.

Membership

Until the end of 2023, Membership to the EASD Early Career academy is free to all early career researchers involved in diabetes research. From January 2024 onward, membership to the EASD academy is free for all paid members of EASD.

FUTURE PLANS: ACADEMY NETWORKING PLATFORM

The objective of the EASD Early Career Academy is to create a strong community of early career researchers that can easily network, exchange new ideas and techniques, and promote cutting-edge science in the field of diabetes. One key element of the Academy will be the development of communication tools to bring together this community and encourage collaborations and open science across Europe, grouped as the EASD Early Career Academy platform.



The EASD Early Career Academy platform will be part of the main EASD website with dedicated access to Academy members and some interfaces opened to non-members. Moreover, the platform will link together the different Academy activities by creating the space to advertise them and follow-ups through online discussions.

The Early Career Academy networking platform would include:

- an extended member profile database where members can detail their main topics of interest, expertise, participation in workshops, interest in developing collaborations, and provide links to personal pages. These profiles can be browsed by other members in an Academy directory and facilitate direct communication between members when looking for specific profiles. This information system will only be opened to the Academy members only and comply with GPDR rules, with members committing themselves to participate actively in the community.
- a forum structure, organised by channels corresponding to main topics of interest. These forums can be used to discuss on, technical and methodological issues, grant applications, possibilities for collaborative projects, job opportunities and mobility exchange, and/or internship offers.
- discussion rooms related to Early Career Academy activities such as the journal club, the mentorship program, and the workshops/webinars. Participants will be granted access to a dedicated channel where they can reconnect for follow-up discussions and maintain network activities. These channels would include updates about the incoming activities, but also a history of the past ones, with access to recorded ones.

Members can choose the channels they want to participate in and get a notification for updates on these channels or use a system of keywords. The forum will be an open, friendly space, where members can freely ask a question and discuss important aspects of their research.

This platform will be an innovative tool to help connect Academy members together and facilitate discussion across Europe in a flexible way and create new opportunities for researchers at a stage where they need doors to open to promote outstanding research and care.

3.

TESTIMONIES

Real-life experience from early career scientists, involved in EASD mentorship programmes, may be helpful in understanding the impact this type of activities might have. Therefore, following a brief survey, structured feedback from early career scientists is presented as a list of selected, first-hand mentee experience quotes.

“The interaction with my Mentor was key to increasing my research independence and setting up a complex research project involving the use of state-of-the-art methodology to assess in vivo substrate metabolism. The EFSD Mentorship Programme has also been a gateway for new career opportunities, such as achieving an Associate Professorship and joining the EASD Early Career Academy.”

“My mentor helped me to develop the skills of a research leader. I joined the programme in 2017 after completing my PhD but lacked direction. By the end of the 3-years I developed a new vision, had the confidence to execute it and secured a 5-year Wellcome-Trust intermediate fellowship”

“I strongly believe that the Early Career Academy will allow more early-career researchers from around the world to benefit from this amazing career elevator, to get into the research community, and that the Early Career Academy will serve as an incubator for the most promising candidates for EFSD support.”

"It is simple when your research is heading as planned. Yet, things can be heading south. This is when a mentor is mostly needed: to walk you through stalemates, while serving as a role-model in many aspects. Thus, I can attest that EFSD Mentorship Programme is a career-evolving process and a research maturity-gaining experience."

"The mentorship program helped me expand my network within the European community of scientists working in the field of metabolic research."

"Thanks to the support of the EFSD Rising Star Programme that I was awarded in 2020, I have been able to start my leadership as a junior PI. The visibility of this magnificent programme has allowed me to broaden my network and collaborations with other research groups, which will surely be a professional and scientific enrichment."

"The mentorship programme provided me with the opportunity to collaborate with leading experts in the field of diabetes clinical research. The time spent on the programme stimulates critical reflection upon my prior knowledge and experience and promotes the generation of new knowledge and practical skills. This gave me the confidence to continue developing and upgrading the scientific work in my clinical centre."

4.

ACADEMY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Prof. Dr. Patrick Schrauwen



Role: Principal investigator / Chair of EASD academy

Institution: Maastricht University, department of nutrition and Movement sciences, Maastricht, the Netherlands

Research background: In my research I focus on human translational research in the field

of type 2 diabetes mellitus, with a special emphasis on (skeletal muscle) insulin resistance, lipotoxicity, mitochondrial dysfunction, and human energy metabolism. We perform human (clinical) intervention trials, combining molecular techniques, state-of-the-art imaging technology (PET/MRI-MRS) and deep metabolic phenotyping, to investigate the impact of lifestyle and pharmacological interventions on insulin sensitivity. with. Areas of interest are circadian metabolism, cold exposure, exercise, diet and liver metabolism. Currently I work as a Professor of Metabolic aspects of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus at Maastricht University

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: When I joined the management board of the EASD I was particularly

interested in the ideas to make EASD an attractive association for everyone in the field of diabetes. Early career researchers are the future of the field and I strongly believe they need to be involved at an early stage in the development of the field. By creating and chairing the EASD academy I hope to contribute to this goal, and help and facilitate early career researchers in developing into the future leaders in the diabetes field.

Dr. Claudia Cavelti-Weder



Role: Senior physician and group leader Lab “Translational Diabetes”

Institute: Endocrinology, Diabetology and Clinical Nutrition, University Hospital Zurich, Switzerland Department of Biomedicine, University of Basel, Switzerland

Research background: I am board certified in Internal Medicine and Endocrinology/Diabetology. I pursued a postdoctoral fellowship at the Joslin Diabetes Center and achieved a Masters degree in Public Health at Harvard University, Boston. In 2015, I was appointed senior physician and independent group leader at the University of Basel. In 2020, I took a position as a senior physician at the University Hospital Zurich and continue to have my research group called “Translational Diabetes”.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: In 2019, I was awarded the EFSD Mentorship programme supported by AstraZeneca. My mentor, Prof. Marjo-Riitta Jarvelin from the Imperial College London (UK), and me developed a project to elucidate different aspects of immune cell activation before and after weight loss. Thanks to my mentor’s broad network, I was able to set up several international collaborations so support different aspects of our project. I feel myself very fortunate to have become part of this group of researcher and grow as a leader and scientist within the field of diabetes

research. By joining the EASD Academy, I aim to pass on this collaborative spirit to other early career researchers in the field.



Dr. Caterina Conte Associate Professor of Internal Medicine

Role: Clinical researcher

Institutions: San Raffaele Roma Open University (Rome) and IRCCS MultiMedica (Milan), Italy

Research background: I am a clinical researcher, with an expertise on the use of state-of-the-art methodology to assess in vivo insulin sensitivity and substrate metabolism. My research focuses on obesity and the mechanisms underlying obesity-associated metabolic alterations, including insulin resistance, type 2 diabetes and sarcopenic obesity.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: When I was invited to join this new EASD Academy targeted to early-career members, it seemed to me a great chance to transfer my passion for research and clinical diabetology to the new generations of investigators and clinicians in the field of diabetes. Furthermore, I felt that putting time and effort in building the Academy would be a way to give back to the EASD/EFSD, which gave me the unique opportunity to take part in the EFSD Mentorship Programme for Clinical Diabetologists as a mentee. Having benefitted from such an initiative, which opened up new possibilities for me, I am highly motivated to collaborate with the other EASD Academy board members to further broaden the range of opportunities offered by the EASD to early-career members.

Dr. Lucile Dollet



Role: Post doctoral Researcher

Institution: Center for Basic Metabolic Research, University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Research background: From my PhD in France, I developed an interest in the endocrine role of adipose tissue and muscles

in metabolic diseases. I then joined the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm, and later the University of Copenhagen, where I pursue my research on inter-organ crosstalk and its role in the regulation of metabolism, in the context of exercise, diabetes and obesity.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: I was very excited when I received the opportunity to join the board of the EASD Academy. The EASD has always been a reference for diabetes researchers, contributing to communicate the newest discoveries both on basic science and medicine, and to create a strong network between European researchers. Furthermore, the EASD supported my research and allowed me to develop independent projects from an early stage in my career, by receiving the EFSD Rising Star and the Young Investigator Awards. Being part of the Academy board represent for me a formidable opportunity to develop and implement new actions to provide educational and training contents specific to the needs of early career researchers.

Dr. Jan Gojda



Role: Clinical researcher, Head of research group

Institute: Dept. of Internal Medicine, University Hospital Kralovske Vinohrady,

Third Faculty of Medicine, Charles University, Prague, Czech Rep.

Research background: As my PhD I explored mechanisms of how dietary branched-chain amino acids related to insulin sensitivity and described their incretin-based insulinogenic potential. Once I defended my thesis I became a head of the Clinical Research Unit at the Dept. of Medicine. In 2018 I was awarded the EFSD Mentorship programme supported by AstraZeneca. I am exploring substrate preferences and insulin function measures in the complex physiological model of pancreatic cancer cachexia. Further, I continue my research into BCAA among other postbiotics contributing to mechanisms linking diet, intestinal microbiome and metabolic health.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: Now when my program is closing I see how it helped me to boost my career and to get into the EASD community. Here is the time to help back. I believe, the Academy could allow for the continuous support and expanding the leading research community around EASD. We will make the Academy such, that it will attract, draw in and keeps inside the most promising researchers from the field of diabetes and beyond.

Dr. Pierre Larraufie



Role: Research Scientist

Institute:: Institut Micalis, Université Paris-Saclay, INRAE, AgroParisTech, France

Research background: My main interest is to understand the physiology of endocrine functions of the gut relates to intestinal

microbiota since my PhD at the Institut Micalis on the regulation of gut hormone production by different microbial compounds and my postdoc in Prof Gribble and Prof Reimann's laboratory at University of Cambridge where I used omics

approaches to precisely characterise enteroendocrine cells in different contexts.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: The EASD represents a great network on metabolic and Diabetes research, mixing both clinicians and basic researchers and with various activities to enhance research activities and networks. Obtaining an EFSD Rising Star award in 2020 helped me to develop my own research project in my lab. I was very happy to be given the opportunity to join the EASD academy to develop new projects with other early career researchers and be part of this great community.

Dr. Beatriz Merino-Antolin



Role: Postdoctoral Researcher at University of Valladolid, Basic researcher

Institutions: Dept. of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology and Physiology, University of Valladolid – CSIC, Valladolid, Spain.

Research background: I have devoted my entire professional career to understanding

the molecular mechanisms involved in the pathophysiology of endocrine cells in diabetes. I started my career in 2011 as a PhD student, in the Diabetes Basic Research Unit (Miguel Hernández University, Elche, Spain), developing a study on pancreatic alpha-cells function and adaptation during obesity. Nowadays, I am a postdoctoral researcher in the group of Pathophysiology of metabolic diseases at the IBGM (CSIC-University of Valladolid), where I have expanded my research field to pancreatic beta-cells and hepatocytes. I am mainly interested in the study of the molecular mechanisms involved in the regulation of pancreatic alpha-cells and hyperglucagonemia.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: Recently, I have achieved recognition as a junior leader by the EFSD

Rising Star 2020 program and the Spanish Diabetes Society's grants for young researchers. These achievements have allowed me to start my independent career. EASD Academy expands the opportunities to actively participate in leadership and mentoring as well as training on good article review practices. In this line, I am currently co-director of a PhD thesis and supervisor of multiple undergraduate and master students at the University of Valladolid, focused on the training of new biomedical researchers.



Dr. Shivani Misra

Role: Senior Clinical Lecturer in Diabetes & Consultant Physician in Metabolic Medicine
Institute: Imperial College London & Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust

Research background: I am a clinician scientist and lead a portfolio of studies that investigate early-onset type 2 diabetes, defined as a

diagnosis of type 2 diabetes in childhood or early-adulthood (<40 years). In 2021, I was awarded a Wellcome Trust Clinical Career Development Fellowship for 5 years to specifically study the genetics and epidemiology of early-onset type 2 diabetes in different ethnic groups and am co-investigator on a £2.1 million NIHR programme grant that investigates the treatment of early-onset type 2 diabetes.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: It was an easy decision to join the EASD Academy and have the opportunity to help shape the future of this important organisation. It was in 2017 when I became a mentee on the inaugural EASD Mentorship Programme (mentored by Professor Chantal Mathieu) I understood more about the ethos of the organisation and how supporting training and education was a core value. Joining the Academy board has enabled me to shape a more targeted & co-ordinated approach for early-career researchers. Together with other board members we bring a

fresh perspective to delivering the vision for training and education, with exciting content, innovation, and networking opportunities.



Dr. Alexandra (Sandra) Maria Smink

Title: Assistant professor

Institute: Universitair Medische Centrum Groningen, The Netherlands

Research background: My research focuses on creating an optimal microenvironment under the skin mimicking the native pancreas to improve long-term islet

transplantation outcomes. To this end, I created a polymeric scaffold with a biomaterial that does not negatively impact islet function, facilitates quick revascularisation, and allows adequate glucose sensing and insulin release. Transplantation of islets into this subcutaneous device has shown success in rodents and pigs. This approach will promote long-term functional islet survival and thereby leads to more widespread application of transplantation of insulin-producing cells and ultimately improves the quality of life of patients with type 1 diabetes.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: Early-career investigators are the future of diabetes-related research, they are as dedicated to bringing their research to the clinic as the established diabetes researchers and so it is important to invest in them. Bringing them together will strengthen existing collaborations, provides the opportunity to exchange knowledge, and set up new collaborations, which all are imperative for facilitating research progress

Dr. Ben Stocks



Role: Post-doctoral researcher

Institution: Novo Nordisk Foundation
Center for Basic Metabolic Research,
University of Copenhagen, Denmark

Research background: My background is in
exercise physiology and metabolism,
particularly focusing on pathways that

transduce adaptive signalling. My research primarily uses proteomic techniques – which typically measure thousands of proteins simultaneously – to unpick the mechanisms of obesity and type 2 diabetes development and their therapeutic interventions.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: The EASD is a fantastic organisation that supports clinicians and researchers in their quest to reduce the burden of Diabetes for both patients and society. Thus, the opportunity to join the Board of the newly established EASD Academy and, in doing so, shape the direction of EASD to provide even more supportive networks, interactive opportunities, and representation for early career clinicians and researchers was too exciting to turn down.

Dr. Konstantinos Toulis



Role: Consultant in Endocrinology, Diabetes &
Metabolism Honorary Clinical Research
Fellow

Institutions: 424 General Military Training
Hospital (GMTH), Thessaloniki, Greece and
Institute of Applied Health Research,

University of Birmingham, UK

Research background: My current area of research is
pharmacoepidemiology in type 2 diabetes, with a primary

focus on the pleiotropic effects of hypoglycaemic medications using routinely collected patient-level data for healthcare databases. I am also interested in research methodology and the interplay between glucose and skeletal homeostasis.

Motivations for joining the Early Career Academy: Having a network of like-minded individuals at different stages of their career in diabetes research is a multiplier of efficiency that helps you flourish, self-develop and mature as a researcher. “What if the latter could be complemented by a network of researchers under the auspices of EASD? Wouldn’t that be a catalyst for research accessibility in diabetes across Europe?” Having the privilege of being mentored by world experts within EASD programme, this is what I thought when I first learned about EASD Academy and its scope and promptly decided to join.



The EASD Early Career Academy is part of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD e.V)

Rheindorfer Weg 3
40591 Düsseldorf
Germany

Tel: +49 211 758 469 0
Fax: +49 211 758 469 29
EASD-Academy@easd.org

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We support, train, mentor and create opportunities
for early-career researchers and clinicians

