

Minutes of Einstein Postdoctoral Association (EPA) - Meeting on May 16th , 2013

Total number of postdocs present:

**Carola Wilczek
Valeria Antico Arciuch
Adrian Santos
Thomas Jandl
Ulrich Kadolsky
Katie Stiles
Regina Hanstein
Esther Arwert
Sonia Schaetzlein
Kamil Khafizov
Anna Piasecka
Melissa James
Sayani Dasgupta**

Guests:

**Olivia Vergnolle
Hongling Yuan**

Missing: Eloy Bejarano Fernandez; Fernando Pereira Bruno; Christina Caescu; Jeannine Gerhardt; Sanal Madhusudana Girija; Anne-Laure F Surena

Topics discussed with all the Reps:

1. Regina represented the EPA at the first NYC council meeting in April with all the chairs from the different Postdoctoral Associations. They compared the benefits, salary, gym options, childcare etc. at the different Institutions and the differences between them. For example the NYU postdocs don't get an automatic increase in the salary, or the starting salary at Rockefeller is \$45000.

They were thinking about writing a letter about the general postdoc status in New York and send it to the administrations, city council and Major. For this purpose, a Google document was created where every institution is supposed to fill in their information. We will ask Maryanne and Jon for help with the data we don't know about.

The general feeling from Regina is that Einstein is doing pretty well compared to other institutes.

2. **QOL survey results:** 50% of the postdocs participated in the QOL survey.
Remarks:
 - o Most of the postdocs are here for 1-3 years

- Bad results obtained by payment department, technology transfer and courses offered to postdocs
 - The worst results are for benefits and childcare. Nobody knows exactly which places for kids are subsidized.
 - Most of the facilities are okay
 - We should send the results to the postdocs and clarify the courses status
 - Which counseling services are available for postdocs? Need to define between career and personal counseling.
3. **Internet:** Finally there is an option from Verizon for general Internet in all apartments in Rhinelander. The price (\$33) would be included in the rent. Jon wants feedback from the postdocs if they are interested in that (yes!!). But what is happening with the old contracts with Cablevision/Optimum during the transition time?
 4. **Housing:** There won't be any renovations this year in Rhinelander. Moreover, the number of apartments in Eastchester and Williamsbridge are being reduced. Anna complained about the payment method (paying via check), but there is probably nothing we can do about it.
 5. Counseling is not working very well. People don't know exactly what is included: personal, professional?
 6. How is the mentoring working? Is there any specific program for it? It would be a good idea to get a letter from mentors about postdoctoral performance. We should ask Jon if there is anything we could improve about this topic.
 7. **Spring party:** In general it was a great success! We had enough drinks and snacks. The advertising worked very well. 84 people responded to the e-mail about the drinks, 52 of them used the tickets, 5 used the tickets more than twice. Around 100 people came to the party. We would like to implement the Spring party as an annual event. At the moment there are some problems regarding the reimbursements, but Mary Anne said she is working on it.

Things that we can improve for next year: better coolers, music, buy cider, talk to security about the entrance door to Forchheimer. We could try to change the location as well.

8. **Interdepartmental seminars:** are working well. We will have one more in June and then a summer break in July and August. We have to ask if we have money for the last seminar. We should also ask if it would be possible to increase the budget by \$130.

9. We need to find a third person for the Interdepartmental seminars since Christophe left Einstein!!
10. It is time to start to prepare the **summer BBQ**. Since we have already used the budget for this year, we should ask Maryanne when we should organize it. Also, how is it working this year? Last year, because of the online buying, it was a mess and more expensive than in previous years.
11. **Goodbye Valeria:** Valeria is leaving the co-chair position due to professional changes. Thank you so much for your great work over the last 2 years, Valeria! The EPA will miss you a lot!! Thomas accepted to be the new co-chair. Carola will be leaving during the summer as well and we will need another new co-chair.

General-

- An effort must be made to fill all the questions for the NY postdocs council
- It would be a great improvement to have permanent internet at Rhineland by Verizon.
- QOL results were good but still many things have to be improved...
- It would be nice to clarify the counseling services provided by Einstein.
- The Spring party was a great success!!! 😊
- We need to increase the advertisement for the Town Hall meetings!
- Thomas is the new co-chair replacing Valeria!
- A new position as co-chair will be available soon.