



# **EASD**

# **Early Career**

# **Academy**

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**WE SUPPORT, TRAIN, MENTOR  
AND CREATE OPPORTUNITIES**



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**We support, train, mentor, and create opportunities for scientists, clinicians, and students who are at an early or intermediate stage of their career.**

## MISSION STATEMENT

The EASD Early Career Academy (ECA) 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. The ECA will support and motivate early career researchers and clinicians to become the future leaders that pursue excellence in diabetes care and research.

The ECA stands for the highest research standards and open science and provides fellows with the **SCOPE** for innovation and development.

- **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.
- **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.
- **Opportunity:** Advancing the progression of early career diabetes professionals by improving accessibility to unique opportunities within and beyond EASD, allowing ECA fellows to experience a breadth of opportunities related to diabetes research and practice.
- **Professional Development:** Offering career-oriented workshops and webinars to empower the highest scientific standards in research and clinical practice.
- **Embrace:** Supporting early-career researchers and students with mentorship from an international faculty and investigators.

## EARLY CAREER ACADEMY ACTIVITIES

### EASD Annual Meeting

The ECA is actively involved in the organisation of the programme of the EASD Annual Meeting 2024 in Madrid. A member of the ECA is also on the board of the Scientific Programme Committee for the 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.

### Several attractive sessions at EASD 2024 will be organised directly by the Early Career Academy :

- **ECA Social Event** (registration mandatory)  
*Tuesday, 10 Sept, 18:30 - 20:30, EASD Member Lounge*  
Lively interactive networking session. Join our scientific speed dating and get the possibility to talk to the ECA team, other early career researchers and clinicians, as well as more established researchers.
- **EASD ECA Symposium: Work-Life-Balance**  
*Wednesday, 11 Sept, 14:00 - 14:45, Spotlight Stage*  
An excellent discussion on how to achieve a good work-life balance in diabetes research excellence.
- **EASD ECA Symposium: ERC funding**  
*Thursday, 12 Sept, 17:30 - 18:30, Sofia Hall*  
In this session you will learn about ERC funding opportunities for young researchers.

- **EASD ECA Symposium: From Rising Star to Principal Investigator**

Friday, 13 Sept, 09:00 - 10:00, Cairo Hall

Meet the former EASD/EFSD Rising Star award winners, now leading diabetes researchers.

### **Best Abstract Awards presented by the Early Career Academy**

The Early Career Academy evaluates the abstracts submitted for the Annual Meeting by early career researchers, and assigns the “Best EASD Early Career Academy Research” award to one winner per scientific track (8 in total).

Winners will be announced during the Presidential Address and awardees will get their certificates at the Early Career Academy social event.

### **Year-round educational activities**

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

For detailed information and upcoming activities, please check:

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

- **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 from and listening to experienced ‘former’ early-career investigators who were successfully able to manage and overcome challenges will motivate and help junior scientists find their way to success.

## **WE WOULD LIKE TO KEEP YOU POSTED!**

Scan the QR code, visit our website and sign up for our newsletter.

Learn more about us and our activities!



Follow us on social media to quickly receive our latest news.

Participate in stimulating lively discussions and experience the collective spirit of the EASD Early Career Academy!



@EASDacademy

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@EASD Early Career Academy

<https://www.linkedin.com/showcase/easd-early-career-academy>



@easdacademy

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

- **Journal Clubs**

In collaboration with *Diabetologia*, a new way of science dissemination has been started in the form of an online journal club. The Journal Club serves as an interactive tool to keep up-to-date with the latest scientific advancements in the field of diabetes and gives early career researchers the opportunity to disseminate their findings. Papers accepted for publication in *Diabetologia* are selected by the ECA for online presentation in a bi-monthly session. Both clinical and basic/translational research topics are covered, addressing all aspects of diabetes research. The first/junior author of the paper is invited to present the work in a video podcast moderated by the ECA.

- **EASD Early Career Academy Mentorship Programme**

This 1-year mentorship programme brings together junior clinicians or researchers (up to assistant professorship level or equivalent) with established mentors to accelerate the development and career of the mentee, and to develop their network in the diabetes field. 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. Calls for applications will be launched twice a year. Selected candidates will get their travel expenses covered by the programme.

*The EASD Early Career Academy Mentorship Programme is generously funded by European Diabetology – but open to additional funding opportunities.*

- **Collaboration with the EASD Education Committee**

The ECA closely cooperates with the EASD Education Committee, which decides on the strategy for the EASD e-Learning platform, featuring comprehensive online courses addressing several themes in diabetes care and research, as well as other educational activities such as the Robert Turner Course and the Scientists Training Course. Two members of the ECA are part of the Education Committee to jointly design educational courses tailored to the needs of early career researchers and clinicians.

- **Collaboration with national diabetes associations**

To establish a strong European diabetes network and to outreach to health care providers, policy makers, and patient organisations, the Early Career Academy has embarked on a journey to collaborate with national diabetes associations. The aim is to support and stimulate diabetes research in the respective European countries by endorsing local meetings addressed to early career researchers, advertise national activities via the Early Career Academy communication channels and launch new programmes to foster collaborations. Furthermore, the ECA, in collaboration with national diabetes associations, investigates strategies to provide the necessary framework to support the endeavours of early and mid-career members in those national associations that currently lack an established structure dedicated to this aim.

### **JOIN EASD TO UNLOCK ALL ECA ACTIVITIES**

**We are here to help you to boost  
your career and increase your network!**

**Become an EASD member to join the activities of the ECA  
and unlock a world of opportunities and collaborations!**

Scan the QR code to learn about the benefits of EASD membership.





## MENTORSHIP TESTIMONIALS

Real-life experience from early career scientists, involved in EASD and EFSD Mentorship Programmes, may be helpful in understanding the impact this type of activities might have. Therefore, based on feedback surveys, a list of selected, first-hand quotes with mentee experiences:

*“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 ECA 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 the EFSD Mentorship Programme is a career-evolving process and a research maturity-gaining experience.”*

*“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.”*

## THE EASD EARLY CAREER ACADEMY COMMITTEE



**Patrick Schrauwen**  
Principal Investigator /  
ECA Chair  
Netherlands



**Rula Bany Bakar**  
Postdoctoral Researcher  
United Kingdom



**Ilke Sen**  
Basic Researcher,  
Group Leader  
France



**Alexandra M. Smink**  
Assistant Professor  
Netherlands



**Mijke Buitinga**  
Assistant Professor  
Netherlands



**Claudia Cavelti-Weder**  
Senior Physician and  
Group Leader  
Switzerland



**Domenico Tricò**  
Assistant Professor  
Italy



**Caterina Conte**  
Clinical Researcher  
Italy



**Romyana Boykova  
Dimova**  
Associate Professor  
Bulgaria



**Lucile Dollet**  
Postdoctoral Researcher  
Denmark



**Simon Dreher**  
Scientist, Postdoctoral Researcher  
Germany



**Jan Gojda**  
Clinical Researcher,  
Head of Research Unit  
Czech Republic



**Agata Grzelka-Wozniak**  
Physician, Clinical Researcher  
Poland



**Pierre Larraufie**  
Research Scientist  
France



**Beatriz Merino Antolin**  
Postdoctoral Researcher  
Spain

### OUR MISSION

**We are developing an international network of early and intermediate career diabetes researchers and clinicians to promote knowledge exchange within Europe and beyond.**

**Join us in shaping the future of diabetes research and practice. Be part of our platform for exchange of knowledge and experience, peer-support, and benefit from interaction with the wider EASD community!**

## BACKGROUND

The mission of the European Association for the Study of Diabetes e.V. (EASD) is to promote excellence in diabetes care through research, networking and education.

One of the tasks of EASD is to ensure that it 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.

Therefore, the EASD Board decided to establish the EASD Early Career Academy (ECA) 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 EASD Board wanted the ECA to develop autonomously. Therefore, in late 2021, clinical and basic scientists who were awarded one of the EASD and EFSD early career research grants or fellowships, were invited to submit their candidatures to take an active role in building the EASD Early Career Academy.

Ten early or intermediate career scientists representing different European countries were selected to form the first ECA Committee. The Committee has now grown to 14 members, chaired by the EASD Board member Prof. Patrick Schrauwen. Together, they are shaping the Early Career Academy in close interaction with other EASD bodies.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

The EASD Early Career Academy is part of the

**European Association for the Study of Diabetes (EASD) e.V.**

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For further specific information on the EASD Early Career Academy, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

**[EASD-Academy@easd.org](mailto:EASD-Academy@easd.org)**

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