

MEET THE NEW JSMC PHD SPEAKERS GARY AND HENRIK INTRODUCING THEMSELVES

THIS MONTH: GARY EIDKUM

Text by Gary Eidkum

Hello everyone!

My name is Gary Eidkum and I'm a chemical biologist in my first year as a PhD candidate in the lab of Dr. Markus Lakemeyer, where we try to use chemical probes to better understand microbial interactions and their impact on human health and disease.

I wanted to become a speaker in order to get more deeply involved in the PhD community

of Jena and try to organize events that can bring us all closer together.

Although work often takes up a large part of your time during your PhD, there are also other things in life that can bring you fulfillment - and maybe even the distraction you sometimes desperately need.

Having a supportive and fun community to connect with

is something I want to make possible for everyone!

As a new speaker, I would love to make our PhD years not only productive, but genuinely enjoyable as well!

Gary

STAY TUNED FOR HENRIK'S INTRODUCTION NEXT MONTH

JOIN AS A MENTEE

JSMC CAREER MENTORING PROGRAM 2026

What is the Mentoring Program?

Based on the great success so far and now in its third year, the JSMC Career Mentoring Program supports our early-career researchers preparing for the next steps in their careers. All JSMC and Microverse PhD candidates and postdocs can now apply for one-on-one mentorship with experienced professionals for advice concerning career, work life, and work-life-balance.

Who can apply?

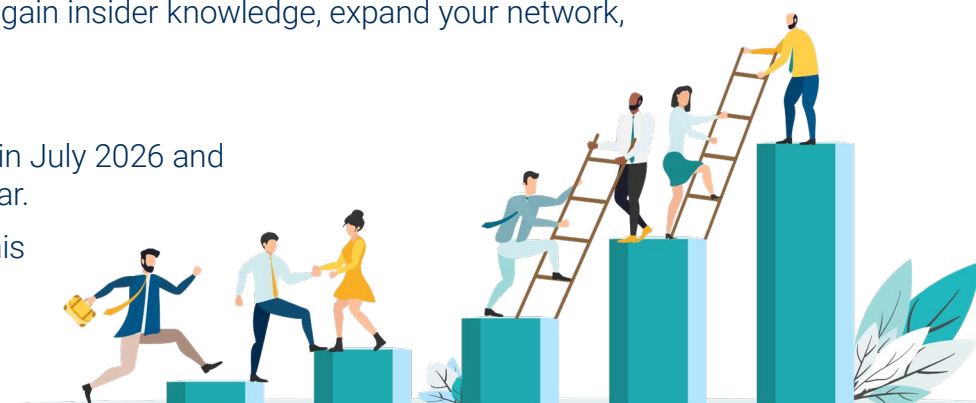
All JSMC and Microverse PhD candidates and postdocs are eligible to apply. Don't miss this opportunity to gain insider knowledge, expand your network, and accelerate your career!

How to apply?

This round is planned to start in July 2026 and we will support you for one year.

To participate, please follow this [link](#) and fill out the respective questionnaire.

The deadline is April 19th.



DID YOU KNOW...? OUR NEW COLUMN ON JSMC OFFERS FOR YOU

The JSMC has **two grants** permanently available to you:



The Career Orientation Grant

How does the JSMC support me after I graduate? What is the Career Orientation Grant?

If you are at the end of your PhD project - the end in sight - and planning your future, keep in mind:

JSMC can kick-start your next career-step by financing you up to 6 months after you graduated. The Career Orientation Grant is a scholarship to help you step into a new project.

What kind of project?

The project has to be different from your PhD project, meaning it has to be in a new lab, you cannot just continue with your previous supervisor. It can be a different topic too in a German institute or a lab abroad.

Does the JSMC help me finding a new job?

No, that is up to you and your preferences.

What if I find a new lab abroad?

Cool! The JSMC can support you with up to 2000 € just for visiting one or several research labs outside Germany.

Do I have to stay in academia?

No. You can completely switch your career and start in industry or leave research altogether and join new career path (e.g. patent law, science journalism, science management, etc.).

Is there a time limit for my application?

Yes. You need to make sure to find a new lab or 'boss' and arrange everything including recruitment and a possible relocation within three months after your defense.

What do I need to do?

For the application with the JSMC you need a written confirmation from the supervisor of your new position, stating clearly that they agree and are willing to take you on after the end of the JSMC scholarship.

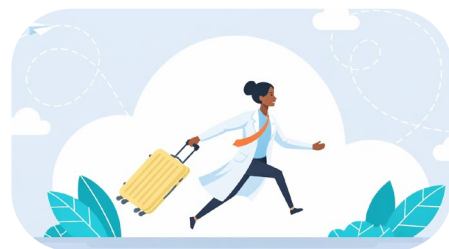
That can happen by fully financing you with their own funding or write a serious funding application for your position within the duration of the scholarship.

What conditions do I need to fulfill?

Proven excellence in some form. Please see the guide in our cloud for the various examples.

Does the Career Orientation Grant support JSMC postdocs?

No. It is an exclusive benefit for JSMC PhD graduates. The postdocs will get temporarily available funding opportunities every year. Therefore, please look out for emails from the office!



The Travel Grant

What is the Travel Grant?

You can apply for financial support of your research related travels all year. PhD candidates can apply for up to 1000 € and postdocs up to 2000 € every year.

Which kind of travels are supported?

The JSMC supports attending conferences, summer schools, research exchanges (the Microverse does too), short research stays aboard, etc.

What do I need to do?

All you need is a confirmation of acceptance (e.g. email notification), a short list of your expenses, and a cover letter introducing yourself, what you would like to attend, and a little about your motivation.



My name is **Rebecca Sequeira**, I grew up in Lisbon (Portugal) and moved to Jena in 1999 to study political science, where I fell in love with the city and decided to stay.

After graduation, I started working in administration and spent over 10 years working as a team assistant at the Institute of Sociology at the FSU.

After my boss retired, I sought a new challenge, which is why I moved to the MPI GEA, which—like the JSMC—is a strongly internationally oriented institute.

WE ARE EXPANDING!

MEET REBECCA - OUR NEW JSMC ADMIN

While the international aspect was a great addition to my daily work, I found that certain administrative tasks were missing from my responsibilities there.

What are you looking forward when taking on this new role?

My new position at the JSMC now combines the administrative challenge with the international aspect, which is why I'm really looking forward to working here!

I'm looking forward to contributing to the JSMC by taking some of the administrative workload off Jasmin and the Executive Board, thereby giving them more time to focus on their research and content work.

I also enjoy supporting doctoral students and hope to somehow

help them successfully complete their projects through my work.

Which computer program did you use most in the last two weeks?

I'd say it's a tie between outlook for communication, the explorer for organization and the internet browser to access the FSU and other platforms (SAP, website etc.). And, of course: Excel. 😊

What shouldn't be missing on a good day at work?

I think work should always be fun, too. So: a laugh should be always be part of a working day!

What's in your bottom desk drawer?

As I'm still moving in and haven't brought a lot of things with me yet, the bottom desk draw is still filled with old stamps from Katja.



JOIN THE JSMC NEWSLETTER TEAM!

There is still a free spot in our newsletter team. If you enjoy reading the newsletter, we would love it if you considered joining us!

- Collect **fun stories** from the JSMC community
- Gather **highlights** and **cool lab moments**
- Shape the newsletter **layout and visual style**
- **No previous experience** required

E-mail us [here!](#)





SAVE THE DATE!

The next **JSMC retreat** will take place on **July 16–17 at Rosensäle** in Jena. Possibly, there will also be a paddling tour on the Saale on July 18.

Complete **this short survey by April 26** to help us design a program that reflects your interests and needs. This is **no binding registration** and only used for planning.

Thank you for your input!

It will be essential in shaping the scientific program, workshops, and social activities.

LINK TO THE JSMC CLOUD FOLDER

It contains recent news, information on mental health services, PhD training, postdoc career program, grants, etc.



Regular updates to come!

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL 27, LEIBNIZ-HKI
DYNAMIC42 WORKSHOP
 BOOK YOUR HANDS-ON SESSION [HERE](#)

! No ECRE SEMINAR IN MAY!

JUNE 19, 1 PM, ERBERTSTRASSE 1
ECRE SEMINAR

More information on all events
 in the [JSMC EVENT CALENDAR](#)

MEME OF THE MONTH



BE PART OF THE NEWSLETTER!

WE WANT TO KNOW ABOUT

- Your publications
- Awards and prizes
- Your graduations
- Your research stays abroad
- Anything fun happening in our JSMC labs

E-mail us [here!](#)



Do you also have **meme-worthy content** to share?
 Send it to us [here!](#)

