

MEMBER STORIES

TRAVEL GRANT AWARDEES - JSMC MEETS THE WORLD: SHEILA AT THE MEDICA EXHIBITION IN DÜSSELDORF

Text and Photos by Sheila Hoshyaripour

In November 2025, I received the JSMC Travel Grant to visit the MEDICA Exhibition, Trade Fair for Medical Technology & Healthcare, in Düsseldorf. There, I had the chance to see international exhibitors of medical imaging, health IT, laboratory equipment, diagnostics, disposables, and much more.

During the exhibition, there were several forums for hearing about new advancements and challenges in medical equipment and healthcare systems. As



you can imagine, AI was a hot topic!

I also enjoyed the MEDICA Start-Up Park and Competition, where I met many enthusiastic young companies. This valuable opportunity allowed me to gain insight into the medical technology sector, an area in which I might consider working in the near future.

Despite the absence of several major German companies, I was able



to experience the latest medical technology and network with several people in the industry.

I would like to sincerely thank the JSMC for accepting my travel grant application and supporting me in my career development plans.

I would encourage all PhD students to apply for the JSMC Travel Grant and take advantage of this opportunity!

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NEWSLETTER ON THE ROAD

OUR INDUSTRY VISIT TO SPRINGER NATURE IN HEIDELBERG



The newsletter editorial board was invited to visit Springer Nature in Heidelberg. Springer was originally founded as a bookshop by Julius Springer in 1842, grew into a scientific publishing house, and merged with Nature, the renowned journal, to form Springer Nature 10 years ago. Now, Springer Nature publishes nearly half a million articles in around 3,000 journals annually, in addition to more than 14,000 books, and is therefore a leading global research publisher.

Our day started with an introduction by Dr. Niels Peter Thomas, the Executive Vice President for Books,

who gave an insightful presentation on his career path. This was followed by an overview of Springer Nature by Felicitas Kalb-Behrendt, the Senior Communications Manager.

Especially interesting was how Springer Nature is advancing with AI technology, for example as a helpful tool for researchers to connect their pending article to the right journal.

Next, we received an overview of editorial tasks for scientific journals and books by Dr. Sabine Schwarz and Dr. Andrea Pillmann, who gave insights into their tasks and daily routines.

Dr. Sabine Schwarz's responsibilities as the Executive Editor of Biomedicine and Life Sciences include strategic planning, performance and data analysis, editorial oversight, and, to a smaller degree, marketing and outreach. Her daily work includes computer-based publishing tasks such as corresponding with editors and reviewers, online collaboration meetings, and meeting researchers at conferences.

She mentioned that approximately 20% of submitted articles are accepted and AI is used in this process to support editors with article assessment, ensure publishing ethics, and promote articles.

What she enjoys most about her job is the engagement with science and the community, the collaborative work environment and strategic analytical work such as analysing the field and discussing with other editors. However, her work also includes a lot of reporting tasks and sometimes finding the right person to answer a question can be tedious.

In her opinion, a good manuscript includes a strong and clear abstract and an interesting cover letter (mostly the abstract and cover letter are read for a first decision whether a paper is considered for publication), as well as attractive figures, original data, and a clearly structured results section.



As the Executive Editor of the Molecular Life Sciences (MLS) Biomedicine branch, Dr. Andrea Pillmann's responsibilities include the acquisition of new book ideas, finding authors or editors, and project management as she has multiple books at various stages of publishing. A commercial component, including the negotiation of contracts, and travelling to conferences to stay up to date in the field and network with researchers are also part of her position.



In her opinion, the prerequisites for becoming a publishing editor include a science degree (ideally with a PhD), fluency in English, an entrepreneurial or commercial mindset, being flexible, resilient, as well as a team player, a creative mindset, and having a willingness to travel internationally.

What she enjoys most about her job is being independent, travelling to conferences to stay connected to science and meet researchers from all over the world, as well as a good work-life balance with set working hours. Nonetheless, it is an office job with many repetitive elements and standardised workflows. Also, travelling can be difficult with small children at home.

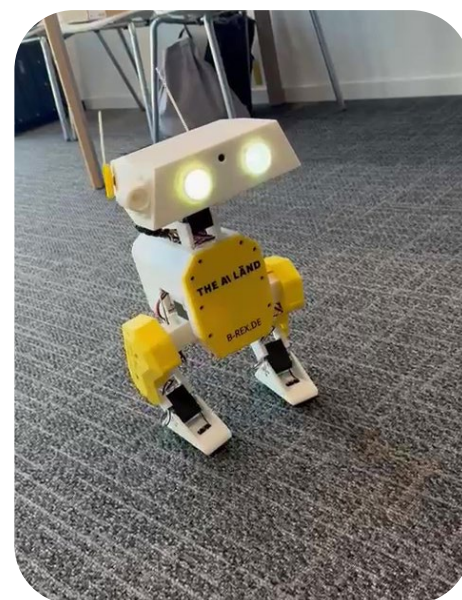
In the afternoon, we learned about possible starter jobs from Simone Groß, who is the human resources

representative responsible for Early Careers. Entry-level job opportunities in editing or publishing include a trainee programme (no PhD required) and publishing assistant, associate editor, or editor positions. More information about possible job openings can be found [here](#).

The day finished with informal talks with Tanja Weyandt (Editor, Biomedicine and Life Sciences), Benedetta Monetti (Associate Publisher, MLS Biomedicine), and other members of Springer Nature in early career stages. That way we got a better understanding of their day-to-day lives, their career paths and pros and cons of their jobs.

After the official part, we got the opportunity to chat with a representative of b-rex, a digital agency developing AI based virtual media products. They were advertising their products to Springer Nature that day. Along with a virtual Joseph von Fraunhofer to answer scientific questions, the company had a cute little robot with them to showcase their services.

All in all, we had an amazing time in Heidelberg and received invaluable insight into the world of publishing.



watch the robot move by clicking on the image

WE ARE EXPANDING!

GARIMA JOINS OUR NEWSLETTER TEAM

Hi! I'm Garima Kalakoti, a second-year PhD student in Microbial Bioinformatics in Dr. Zimmerman's M³I (Mechanisms of Microbial Metabolic Interactions) group at the Microverse Cluster. I joined the JSMC newsletter team because... why not?

As a newbie, the newsletter honestly helped me feel connected, it gave me access to experiences, perspectives, and achievements I would've easily

missed otherwise. Now I'd love to give back and help create that same positive, inspiring vibe for others.

I enjoy trying new things and believe you don't have to be good at something to enjoy it (that comes naturally with time).

And for the record, it's officially a good day when all my Slurm jobs go straight to R instead of PD on the first try 😊 iykyk :)



JOIN THE JSMC NEWSLETTER TEAM!

Some of our members are leaving the JSMC so there's open positions. 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!](#)



ECRE SEMINARS 2026

JANUARY 23 (1 PM)

FEBRUARY 20 (1 PM)

MARCH 20 (1 PM)

APRIL 17 (1 PM)

MAY 22 (1 PM)

JUNE 19 (1 PM)

SEPTEMBER 18 (1 PM)

OCTOBER 23 (1 PM)

NOVEMBER 20 (1 PM)

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!

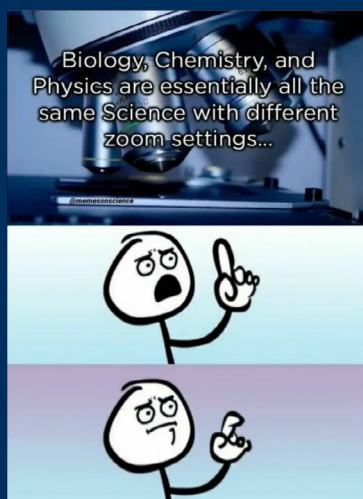
UPCOMING EVENTS

JANUARY 23, 1 PM, SR101, NEUGASSE 23
ECRE SEMINAR

JANUARY 29, 1-6 PM, ROSENSÄLE
PHD AND POSTDOC DAY
GRADUATE ACADEMY

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

MEME OF THE MONTH



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Send it to us [here!](#)



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WE WANT TO
KNOW ABOUT

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

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