

ECREA 2010 International Conference Hamburg. Oct. 12th – 15th

YECREA Workshop “Planning an Academic Career”

Wed. Oct. 13th | 11:15-12:45

Room: VMP8 – 05

Thematic Strand – Mobility

Dr. Roberto Suárez Candel

Marie Curie Research Fellow

Hans Bredow Institut for Media Research

1. PERSONAL PROFILE

- I got my PhD at the Department of Communication of the Pompeu Fabra University in Barcelona (sept. 2009).
- In my dissertation I compared public policy for Digital Terrestrial Television in **Sweden and Spain**. Because of that, I was forced to develop an **international profile** (or I had that topic because I was interested in having an international profile, you never know).
- I did a **research visit** at the University of Stockholm (2004) and that **CHANGED my life**: new people, new ways of working, new ideas, etc. I had to come back to Barcelona, but I immediately started to think about going abroad again.
- At the **last stage of my PhD**, I decided to apply for a **Marie Curie Fellowship** in order to carry out a post-doc at the Hans Bredow Institute for Media Research in Hamburg (Germany). I wanted to work at the HBI because I knew its excellent reputation and because **they had expertise** in the field I was interested. **You need to know who is doing what in your field!!**
- Do not choose countries or cities (although that's is also important) but **people / team**.
- I visited the HBI in advance and we worked on the project and the application for about 4/5 months. You need to plan this **preparation procedure** (time, money, availability).
- For having a Marie Curie Intra-European Fellowship for Career Development, **you don't need your PhD**, but 4 years of full-time research activities)
- Be constant! It might not work the first time: I only got it after applying twice and presenting a redressing procedure the second time. It was not easy.

2. CHALLENGES

- **A good and competitive project**. There are thousands of PhD students in Europe offering interesting projects. **Why should your one be funded?**
- You have to have an interesting, innovative and aggressive, but also a feasible and realistic project.
- Communication Sciences are not as well known and/or considered as we might think. They are weak in front of other disciplines.

- Try to **look AHEAD** (or at least the present), analysing the past is not always the best option for such a competitive application. You need to clearly point out the **contribution / benefits** of your project.
- You'll have to answer weird questions like: How does your project contribute to the excellence of Europe.
- When evaluating your personal profile, **publications** and international experience are very important. Teaching is necessary but not the most relevant value.
- **Research experience** in (diverse) projects is also important and can compensate the lack of a long publications list.
- You'll need **recommendation letters**, so you and your work need to be known. By who? Professors!! Then, you need to travel around and get in contact to them.
- At the same time, **professors need to pay more attention to PhD candidates**, as they might be a source of qualified work/experience, competitive projects, income and prestige for their institutions.

3. FOREIGN EXPERIENCE

- Use your PhD time and the support of your institution to **travel as much as possible**.
- Do it **from the very beginning!!!** Do not be afraid!!
- You might need to **invest your personal resources** (money for holidays). It's up to you but for me, it paid off when I needed recommendation letters.
- **Big conferences** are good to meet a lot of people, but you can also feel lonely and insignificant. They are good to get to know faces, names, tendencies.
- **Small conferences** are better to establish relevant contacts that can evolve in the future. You can meet your post-doc supervisor!! They are also a better opportunity to show your work, to get very valuable feed-back. At the beginning, they are even more scary.
- Try to participate in a **thematic section** of ECREA/IAMCR or at least follow what they do.
- Go to the **summer school** of ECREA. Go to a summer school specialized in your field of work. Have fun and make friends!! Those friends might be able to give you a hand in the future.
- Improve your **English** and your communication skills.
- Help as paper / article **reviewer** for conferences and journals.
- At the same time, do not forget to keep in touch with your **national research community**. You don't know whether you'll be able to develop an academic career abroad.

4. FUNDING OPTIONS

- Besides the Marie Curie actions for Post-docs, you can also apply for funding for a research visit (training networks).
- The Marie Curie Programme: <http://ec.europa.eu/research/mariecurieactions/>

- Look for foundations. In the case of Germany there are several: AvH, WV, etc.
 - Ask directly to the institution that you are interested in, but be aware that you need then a good proposal.
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For any comment, questions or further discussion, please, do not hesitate to contact me:

Dr. Roberto Suárez Candel
Marie Curie Research Fellow
Hans Bredow Institut für Medienforschung
Hamburg – Germany

Tel.: +49.40.450.217.43

Fax: +49.40.450.217.77

r.suarez@hans-bredow-institut.de

www.psb-digital.eu

www.hans-bredow-institut.de

www.robertosuarez.es