Staff Scientist Webinar

Laura Contreras-Ruiz, Ph.D.
Staff Scientist
Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
Boston, MA

May 20th, 2019
Laura Contreras-Ruiz, Ph.D.

- **Ph.D. in Visual Sciences**
  - University of Valladolid, Spain

- **Internship in Industry**
  - Allergan Inc., US

- **Postdoctoral Fellowship**
  - Schepens Eye Research Institute / Harvard Medical School
  - Boston University School of Medicine

- ... ??
Staff Scientist... What?

- Bench Work
- Teaching/Mentoring
- Academic Environment

- Looking for funding
- Administrative tasks
- Person in charge?
Staff Scientist... What?

- Eva Guinan – Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Overqualified !!
- What about a Staff Scientist Position?
A staff scientist is a Ph.D. who wants to keep doing bench research in academia but do not want to become a principal investigator.

- Highly-trained, non-tenure researchers focused on research.
- Permanent position (stability)
- Better-paid & benefits
- Academic environment (flexibility)
- Mentoring/Teaching opportunities
- Career development opportunities
- Supportive environment
What does a Staff Scientist do?

- **The Lab project**
  Pre-clinical studies for a new cell immunotherapy in organ transplantation

- **Independent research project**
  Scientific freedom, highly-risk projects, no pressure, ...

- **Mentoring junior lab members**
  Postdocs, technicians

- **Day to day lab interactions**
  Make sure than the lab runs smoothly

- **Support on lab management**
  Collaborations, Interviews, lab organization, budgets, ...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lab</th>
<th>Staff Scientist</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Technical expertise</td>
<td>✓ Career development:</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Rigorous &amp; thorough research</td>
<td>- Translational/Clinical Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Scientific creativity/New ideas</td>
<td>- New techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Mentoring junior lab members</td>
<td>- Management skills</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Continuity</td>
<td>✓ Mentoring / Teaching</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Lab runs smoothly</td>
<td>✓ Network</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Productivity</td>
<td>- Collaboration</td>
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<td>- Academia/Industry</td>
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Definitely good... but not perfect

- For many academic researchers, the costs of hiring staff scientists are unsustainable
- How do staff scientists fund their independent research projects?
- Stigma against the role of staff scientist
What is next? ...
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