

DINI Newsletter

Dear doctoral researchers,

Can you believe it's already August? Do not forget to take your well-deserved holidays after such a stressful few months behind us.



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Report: Midterm meeting Helmholtz Juniors 2020

On July 31st 2020 the Helmholtz Juniors Midterm Meeting took place for the first time as an online version. The Helmholtz Juniors are your representatives on the Helmholtz Association level and they meet twice a year to network and coordinate upcoming tasks. Also affected from the Corona-Situation, we still wanted to make the meeting happen and it worked out very well. From HMGU **Theresa Kuhl** (HeJu) and **Anna Kilanowski** (soon to be HeJu) joined the meeting.

Main topics:

- Situation of stipend holders (internal and external): Internal stipends should be completely abolished and replaced by a regular contract. External stipend holders should be informed about advantages and disadvantages before they have to sign.

- Pension: 1. Get one! 2. More info on that in the next newsletter

- Awareness Month for mental health and power abuse. Stay tuned!

To get a feeling of being together, we all decided to cook the same meal for the virtual HeJu meeting. You would be surprised how many versions can exist from the same recipe ;)

If you have questions or are interested in becoming a HeJu do not hesitate to contact us.

August 15 – TUM study fees

Don't forget to register for the winter semester 2020/2021! All information available via TUM online.



September 23 – Virtual PubQuiz

We will have our next **PhD Get Together** on **September 23** via **Zoom!**

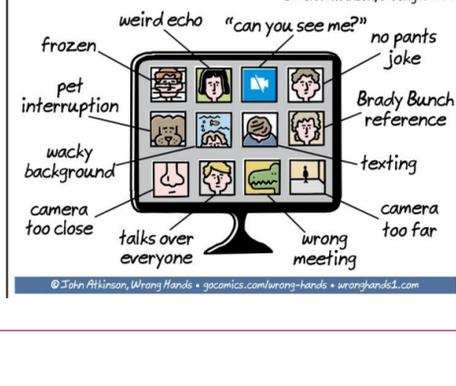
Get your drinks ready and choose your funniest background picture.

Stay tuned for the super cool PubQuiz!

We organize get-togethers for the Helmholtz-DR students once a month (usually in the middle of the month) to get to know each other, to meet again and have fun. So come and spend some time with your colleagues and friends and have a chat in a relaxed atmosphere. This is highly recommended for new PhD students to get the chance to meet new people in a more relaxed and casual environment.

Bring along your PhD mates and have a great time.

Looking forward to meet you all virtually!



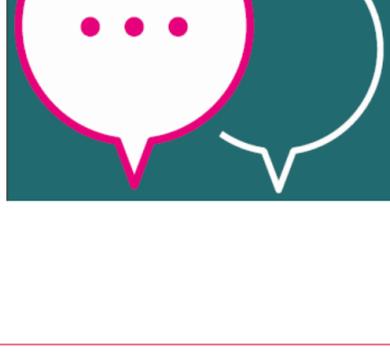
Career talk

October 2nd 10:00-12:00

To receive the link, register [here](#).

Dr. Jana Tretter studied Molecular Biotechnology at the TU Munich. Afterwards she did her doctoral degree at HMGU at the Institute of Structural Biology. Her PhD project focused on the establishment and the performance of a high content screen for small-molecule inhibitors of a specific cancer signaling pathway. Before she switched to Kearney in May 18, she completed her post-doctoral research at the Institute of Structural Biology. At Kearney (one of the major international management consulting firm) she is working as a consultant in the Health Practice. You will have the possibility to get in touch with Jana Tretter more personally during the FAQs and Coffee Session.

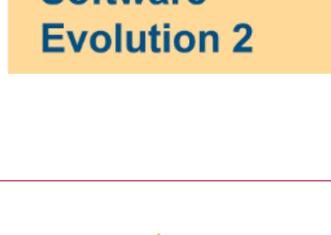
Theresa Kuhl (DINI) will chair this Career Talk.



Request holidays

Since December the Breitenbach system is the center's time management system. If you are not familiar with all the functions yet or not sure how to request holidays, you can look at the explanatory videos [here](#).

Your requested time off will be sent to your appointed supervisor (whom you choose from the list). After the approval lands in your email inbox, your holidays are successfully registered. Have a great vacation!



2020 Sustainability Series

Chapter 3

Recycle



It's been a while since we talked about sustainability. Last time we discussed the principle of "Refuse, Reduce, Reuse" as a way to avoid generating waste. But what if we cannot avoid producing waste? In this issue, we will focus on recycling.

In the lab, many of the plastics we use are recyclable. Have you ever noticed the PET symbol on the bottom of a PBS plastic bottle? Also, many of the packaging materials are recyclable. At the Helmholtz Center, we have containers for plastic, glass, and paper waste to dispose of non-dangerous recyclables.

So, let's talk about the term "recyclable". How do I know something can be recycled? This is rather complicated, indeed. When we look at the tiny symbols on different packaging materials, we find numbers in little recycling symbols 1-7 or symbols for plastics, such as PP, PS, etc. Whether a plastic can be recycled is determined foremost by its chemistry, indicated by this symbol. But whether it will be recycled also depends on which facility processes the waste, what technology they use, how they sort out plastics, what their capacity is, etc. In Germany, more plastic is used than in the neighboring countries and less is recycled.

There are only estimates of how much of the plastic is recycled, which could be as low as **5 %**. Munich it is especially hard to recycle. In most German towns, every house has its own "yellow bin". In Munich, the idea is to set up common recycling islands in the city, where all recyclable waste is collected. However, for most people, the effort to bring their waste here is not worth and the bins are often overfilled. Moreover, the effort of the recyclables are collected by private companies, such as "Duales System Deutschland", a very successful trash business with a huge **income**. Private recycling companies have a lot of interest in people not using the communal "yellow bin", collected by the Abfallwirtschaft München, AWM. If the city collected our recyclables instead, the income could be used for local infrastructure.

So what happens to all the plastic trash we do not recycle? Do we just burn it? Yes and no. Germany does burn household waste but there is a third option: export. Germany exports around one-sixth of plastic waste, holding third place of the biggest **trash exporters** in the world. Our waste is mostly exported into South East Asia for recycling. Recycling in those countries is much cheaper but is also much less regulated. Not even talking about the CO₂ balance of export. Moreover, the trash is often not sorted before export, so much of it is burnt or disposed of in landfills or waters in the destination country. Now, the EU wants to forbid the export of **unsorted waste**.

So what can I do? Is recycling still worth it? Yes! After avoiding generating waste, recycling is our best option. But putting your plastic bag in a recycling bin is not where it ends. We must require transparency, an open discussion, and improvement from our government.

By Sara Bilekova



About DINI

We are the doctoral student's initiative at Helmholtz Zentrum München (DINI), a free association of graduate students. We organize social events, welcome new PhDs and support you when you have problems.

Want to contact us? doktorandeninitiative@helmholtz-muenchen.de

Want to join us? Great, we are always happy to welcome new members.

New at HMGU? Welcome Team: dini.welcome.team@helmholtz-muenchen.de

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