Dear Members of the Dual Career ~ Spouse Network

We hope you are all ready to celebrate the summer a little. Here at ISM, we will take a small break from events during the summer, but we will be back in August with more exciting news and events for you.

The event in August will be a guided tour to Freetown Christiania. The Freetown is quite an interesting place, so you should definitely consider joining this special event. We will update the website later this month with information about the event, and we will make sure to let you know, once you can sign up for it. Also, stay tuned for many more interesting events from us in the fall!

Summer in Denmark can come in many different shapes. Some years the weather is through the roof and all Danes gather close to the sea. Other years, rain is falling nearly every day and all you want to do is escape Denmark to find warmer weather in Southern Europe.

However, Denmark has many beautiful places to visit, including great beaches, if you are longing for a swim. During July, we will do our very best to provide you with our best tips for summer in Copenhagen.

Whether you would like to stay in the city and enjoy the clean harbour to swim along with delicious ice creams or want to escape the city for a while, we have the tips ready for you. If the weather is good, there is simply nothing like the Danish summer. We truly hope that you will have the chance to experience it this year.

However, this summer we will (almost) be able to travel normally again, which opens for the possibility to travel outside of Denmark. Both our neighbours in North and South have extraordinary places to visit, and some locations can be easily reached from Denmark. Wherever you are going this summer, we wish you the very best time off and hope that you get to enjoy it with your loved ones.

Mary K. Kobia, Mark de Vos & Katrine Sandahl Mortensen
ISM Dual Career Team – University of Copenhagen

"When the sun is shining I can do anything; no mountain is too high, no trouble too difficult to overcome"
- Wilma Rudolph
How long did it take for you to find a job in DK?
I have been vigilant about developing my CV and attending career fairs and talks for about 1.5 years. Once I started applying for jobs, it took 3 months.

What has been most challenging about your job search?
Setting up a disciplined schedule of working on job applications while balancing my final year of PhD and wellbeing was the hardest step for me.

What is your best advice to someone who is not living in DK, but looking for a job there?
Do solid research on the companies you want to join. Take the initiative and contact people from those companies or find network connections and go on virtual coffee dates. Drop an email afterward with your CV. When you desperately need a job, you will overcome your fear of contacting strangers. It helps both you and the company to know why you wish to join a particular position in that company.

How has IDCN helped you?
I was lucky enough to be helped directly by Mary Kobia, who generously advised and supported me with her time, delicious enthusiasm and sample documents. The IDCN newsletter informed me about career talks that were worth attending. They helped me feel calmer about me not being alone in feeling that job search is a tough process, in addition to sharing their tips and tricks.

What surprised you the most about the Danish job interview?
The recruiters are extremely informal and encourage you to be the best version of yourself. Lack of threatening hierarchical structure in the interview panel was quite calming. They cracked jokes during my interview and I joined in contributing with the sarcastic humor.

What is your best advice to someone going for a job interview?
Know your “why” – why do you want to join their company and not any other? Why should they hire you and not someone else? If asked during the interview, owning your weaknesses while acknowledging that you have learnt from it is a strength. You want to be in a company culture that appreciates your personality, and not punish you for it. If you are nervous, consider biking to the interview venue. It helped me keep a clear head.

What kept you going – your motivation, when things didn’t always turn out the way you expected?
My fear of staying unemployed or kicked out of Denmark, my preparedness, my boyfriend, close friends, family and listening to career talks motivated me.

What are you most excited about doing in your new job?
I am excited about working in its healthy working environment, meeting my very close friend there more regularly than we currently manage to and learning about my new role and setting a new work-life balance routine.

Reflecting back on your job seeking process and experiences in DK, what advice do you have to give to other spouses?
I am not a spouse and didn’t use my boyfriend’s network for seeking jobs because his background is different from mine. I relentlessly looked for jobs that I could genuinely see myself being happy doing, catered my application for the job advert and called the recruiters/contact people when they had advertised positions to ask them my queries and to get an idea of our match. The companies in Denmark also accept unsolicited applications. If your spouse already works here in Denmark, that’s a major ticket into the inner network in a company. Don’t be shy in using that.

Spotlight: Know your “why”!

Bela Arora
From India
Senior Statistical Programmer at Novo Nordisk

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