Learn & Network
How to choose your career path
Welcome!
What is the Forum EPFL?

**WHO?**
190 companies, 85 startups

**WHY?**
Many events during the year: **Workshops, Mentoring Program, Networking Evenings**

**HOW?**
To get ready to find your dream job

**WHO?**
More than **2000 registered students**

**WHY?**
To meet young talented students, to network and present your company

**HOW?**
To recruit the **best engineers of tomorrow**, to work in your company

**WHEN?**
One week: from **4th to 8th of October 2021**
Program of the event:

6pm - 7pm: Plenary session with 5 speakers from different career paths

Speakers:

- **Corporate Career**: Mahdi Tamizifar - Global Program Manager at Roche
- **International Organizations**: Dominique Berod - Head, Earth System Monitoring division
- **PhDs**: Chiara Masellis - Project Manager at Coherent GmbH
- **Consulting**: Vincent Vanneau - Engagement Manager at Mckinsey
- **Start-Ups**: Rafael Guglielmetti - Software engineer at Inpher

7pm - 8pm: Networking session in rooms, sorted by career paths
- 2 sessions of 30 minutes -
Corporate Career
by Mahdi Tamizifar
My Journey: From Tehran To Basel

Mahdi Tamizifar
My Journey: From Tehran To Basel

- **Tehran, Iran**
  - Parents: Materials Sci. Professors
  - Grandfathers: Businessmen
  - May 1993

- **Tehran, Iran**
  - Sep. 2011

- **Tehran, Iran**
  - Co-founded NetNazar Startup
  - An online marketing platform
  - Oct. 2014

- **Lausanne, Switzerland**
  - Sep. 2015

- **Basel, Switzerland**
  - F. Hoffmann-La Roche Ltd
  - Operations Rotational Development Program (ORDP)
  - 2018-2020
  - Global Program Manager, Digital Systems
  - 2020-Now
  - Sep. 2018
What I Have Learnt in This Journey:

- The more you know yourself, the better you can make decisions

- Don’t take rejections personally, it is a MARATHON!

- We can be working for the next 50 years! The first career isn’t that big of a deal…
International organizations
by Dominique Berod
My carrier path: a kind of Markov chain
What I’m looking for...
Working for an international organization (either NGO, intergovernmental, UN family) as an engineer

- You will enjoy multidisciplinarity and pluricultural environment
- Be sure the organization has tangible impact
- Be patient with slow pace of governance, multiple working groups, paperwork, …
- Be sure to gather practical experience before
- Start collaboration with international bodies as national level
PhDs
by Chiara Masellis
How to choose a career path?

2011
Bachelor’s Degree in Physics
Turin - Italy

2013
Master’s Degree in Physics
Turin - Italy

2013-2018
PhD in Physical Chemistry
Lausanne - Switzerland

From 2018
Project Leader
Coherent GmbH
Munich - Germany


GalNac α(1-3) Gal

GalNac β(1-3) Gal

3200  3300  3400  3500  3600  3700
Infrared wavenumber / cm⁻¹

C. Masellis et al. JASMS 2017 (28) 2217-2222

C. Masellis – How to choose a career path – Forum EPFL 04.05.2021, Lausanne
My reasons for a PhD

I loved studying

I was passionate about the research topic

I felt that science was my «purpose»

I was told I would have been good at it

The research topic was useful for the progress of the society

I wanted to become a professor

The salary was good

I wanted to work at the interface between physics and medicine

C. Masellis – How to choose a career path – Forum EPFL 04.05.2021, Lausanne
What you should know before embarking on a PhD

• A PhD is **hard**, but highly **rewarding**

• Be prepared for **failing** (a lot) and **learn** from your failures

• It is **valued** in industry (sometimes)

• It teaches you how to **think out of the box**, how to be independent, how to analyze and **solve** complex problems

• It teaches you the value of **patience**

• It is (in my opinion) one of the best tools to **grow personally and professionally**

• What you mostly need are both **curiosity** and **perseverance**
Consulting
by Vincent Vanneau
Learn & Network: How to choose a career path

Vincent Vanneau (MX’14) – Consulting

- Bachelor and Master in Materials Science at EPFL
- No minor in MTE
- Many associations (Enigma, Forum, Balélec)
- Master Project abroad
- Internships at Rolex and Philip Morris
- McKinsey & Company for 6.5 years
- M.B.A. at INSEAD

- Consulting was my «nonchoice»
- Not for everyone
- Many consulting types and companies
- Help to refine my preferences
- Door opener (skills, name, network)
  into more than engineering
Entrepreneurship and Start-Ups
by Rafael Guglielmetti
My journey so far

- Studied mathematics @ EPFL: 2007-2012
- PhD in mathematics @ University of Fribourg: 2012-2017
- Different roles @ Bestmile: 2017-2021
Wanted to do applied mathematics

Ended up studying pure mathematics (algebra, algebraic geometry)
I wanted:
- personal challenge
- continue doing mathematics

~ decided to do a PhD
Mathematical side:
- research (pure maths)

Less-mathematical side:
- teaching assistant
Suspected that I did not want to pursue academic career, so I tried to acquire different computer science skills:

- development of open source software (in the context of the thesis and outside)

- IT guy

- a few Coursera (Scala specialization)
What is Bestmile?

- Startup founded in 2014
  - HQ in Lausanne
  - ~ 40 employees

- Goal: provide a software to orchestrate and optimize a fleet of vehicles (taxis, public on-demand transportation system)
Algorithm Researcher / Software Engineer:

- Algorithmics ∩ Computer programming ∩ Transportation

- Designing and implementing algorithms (Scala, C++)

- Consulting services

- Facilitating collaboration between research and backend teams
Research Team Lead:

- Coaching the team (agile methodology, CI/CD, coding standards, priorities)

- Defining goals and processes for the research team

- Management
Characteristics of a job in a start-up (subjectively)

- Possibility to work on a lot of different things
- Plenty of opportunities to grow/change roles
- Learn by doing
- Freedom and autonomy
- Challenging work (cutting edge)
- Uncertainty & short runway (typically a few months)
- Compensation and benefits are usually lower than in other companies
A few generic advices/opinions (subjectively)

- Don’t be afraid of changes (of directions)
- But... anticipate what you want to do and prepare
- Accept change of status/seniority
- Take the time to identify what you like/don’t like: domain/topic, values, type of work, atmosphere, level of autonomy
  - Make your choices accordingly
  - Don’t hesitate to discuss these points in interviews
Thank you!
Networking Session
7pm - 8pm

**Consulting Room**
Vincent Vanneau (Engagement Manager - McKinsey)
Ivan Kostakov (Senior Consultant in Supply Chain Planning - Deloitte Consulting)

**Corporate Room**
Mahdi Tamizifar (Global Program Manager, Digital Systems - Roche)
Vincent Defalque (CapEx Project Manager - Rolex)

**Entrepreneurship Room**
Rafael Guglielmetti (Software Engineer Privacy-preserving AI - Inpher)
Anthony Aho (CEO - PB&B SA)

**International Organization Room**
Dominique Berod (Head, Earth System Monitoring Division - WMO)
Pauline Emery (GIS / IT project manager - Geocom Informatik AG)
Max Carrel (Foundation Antenna Technologies)

**PhDs Room**
Chiara Masellis (Project Manager in Optical Engineering R&D - Coherent Gmbh)
Flavia Camponovo (Postdoc in infectious disease - Harvard T. Chan School of Public Health)
Fabio Cicoira (Full Professor - Polytechnique Montreal)
Networking Advice from EPFL Alumni

• Turn on your video
• Quickly introduce yourself
• Ask relevant questions
  ○ How did you manage to occupy your current job?
  ○ What do you like most/least about your job?
  ○ What are the classic / critical tasks you must solve in your job?
  ○ What talents and skills do you need to be successful in this job?
• Your objective is to get information, not a job or an internship
• Say “Thank you” and ask if you can keep in touch by connecting on LinkedIn or sharing contact details