Life Outside the Ivory Tower
Alternatives to an academic career

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“A PhD can be a gateway to a scientific career. But the majority of people undertaking a PhD will end up in careers outside scientific research”


Innovation Union: “Europe will need 1 million extra researchers by 2020, mostly in the private sector”

Setting the scene...

Where will a biology PhD take you?

86,000
current US biology PhD students

9,000
Receive PhDs

720
Leave the US

1,900 to 3,900
foreign-trained PhDs start postdocs

30% do more than one postdoc

37-68,000
current postdocs

15% of postdocs get tenure-track faculty jobs within 6 years post PhD.

29,000
current tenured and tenure track faculty

17,000
current bio PhDs doing non-science jobs

22,500
current industry researchers

24,000
current non-research, science related jobs

7,000
current gov’t researchers

7 years
average time to degree

37% drop out

30%
(2,500)
Don’t postdoc

US PhDs spend an average of 4 years, but others must spend longer to account for number of postdocs.

10% of former postdocs (up from 2% in 2010) consider themselves unemployed.

A faculty job is an “alternative” career.

At this rate, <4% of entering PhD students will become tenure-track faculty. Yet, 53% rank research professorships as their most desired career.

Sources:
3. Weisberg & Becher, 2012 PLUS ONE, DOI: 10.1371/journal.pgen.0060387 (unless otherwise noted, NIH/Biomedical Workforce Working Group (2013))
Where can a background in Biological Sciences take you?
My Background

Degree in Biology Applied to Animal Resources, branch of Marine Resources

PhD in Marine Ecology

Project /Researcher Officer

European Officer

High School

Cork

Cardiff

Lisbon

Sydney

Macau
My Background – Research
My Background – Outside Research
My Background – Outside Research

Next Stop for me?
Can be anywhere in the world

Depends on where the next exciting opportunity comes from
Having a plan is important but remember nothing is carved in stone.

There is mobility among the various sectors, so don’t feel like you’re trapped if you’re unhappy… If an interesting challenge/opportunity comes along Go for it!
Useful Links – Career Planning

**Career Planning**
*Charting a course for a successful research career*

**Science Careers**

**Next Gen PhD: A Guide to Career Paths in Science** *(Melanie V. Sinche, 2016)*

**Career Trends: Exploring Careers Beyond the Bench**

**Career Trends: Careers Away from the Bench**

**Career Trends: Industry or Academia: Where do I fit in?**

**Job Search**
*Nature jobs*

**New Scientist Jobs**

**Research Jobs**

**Euraxess**
Thank You

Questions?