

CZEXPATS IN SCIENCE

WORLD-CLASS SCIENCE WITH CZECH ROOTS



Hundreds of talented Czech scientists live abroad and leverage their knowledge and experience for innovative research.

However, living and working abroad tend to result in the loss of contact with the scientific community in the Czech Republic, loss of opportunities to share and collaborate with scientists in the Czech Republic and, last but not least, difficulties in returning to the Czech Republic. We are convinced that the current situation is disadvantageous for Czech science and scientists.

The initiative Czexpats in Science was founded in 2018 to connect Czech scientists abroad with scientists and institutions in the Czech Republic. We foster long-term partnerships and the exchange of information, aiming to support world-class science in the Czech Republic.



We aim to

- **create a network** of Czech scientist abroad and **connect** them with scientists and research institutions in the Czech Republic,
- **help** scientists working abroad in navigating the Czech scientific landscape and developing a career in the Czech Republic,
- **give the opportunity** to Czech scientists living abroad to influence and inspire science in the Czech Republic,
- **support** mobility of Czech scientists by sharing information and experience.

our projects

Christmas conference

A unique meeting of Czech scientific expats in Prague, just before Christmas. The Conference is open to anyone interested. The 2018 event focused on (re)building a scientific career in the Czech Republic. At this year's conference, we will discuss different career opportunities in Czech academia and industry.



community development

Local Czexpats' meetings

We support the development of Czech scientific communities abroad. So far, Czexpats in Science organized meetings in Dresden, Seattle, Helsinki, and other places. We collaborate with Czech embassies.

Re-pats' meeting

We plan to launch meetings of scientists who have returned to the Czech Republic from abroad. A network of “re-pats” will be helpful for others who would like to come back to CZ. Moreover, drawing on experience from other countries and sharing this can help to improve Czech science and the academic environment.

our projects

How to choose a doctoral or a postdoctoral position abroad? What should one expect and prepare for? How to write a CV and motivation letter? What does the interview look like?

These and similar questions are answered during our workshops for Masters' and PhD students. The workshops are offered to Czech universities. The first postdoc workshop will take place in December 2019 at our Christmas Conference.



workshops



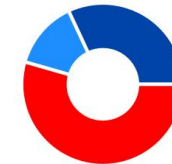
My expectations were...

surpassed.
fulfilled.
not fulfilled.
disappointed.



The most useful part was...

lectures.
small-group discussions.
chat during lunch/coffee.



My motivation for a PhD abroad...

increased.
decreased.
did not change.



To my peers, I would...

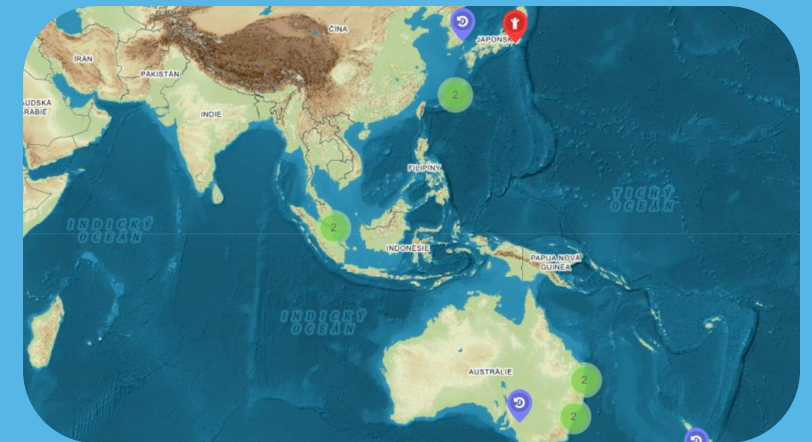
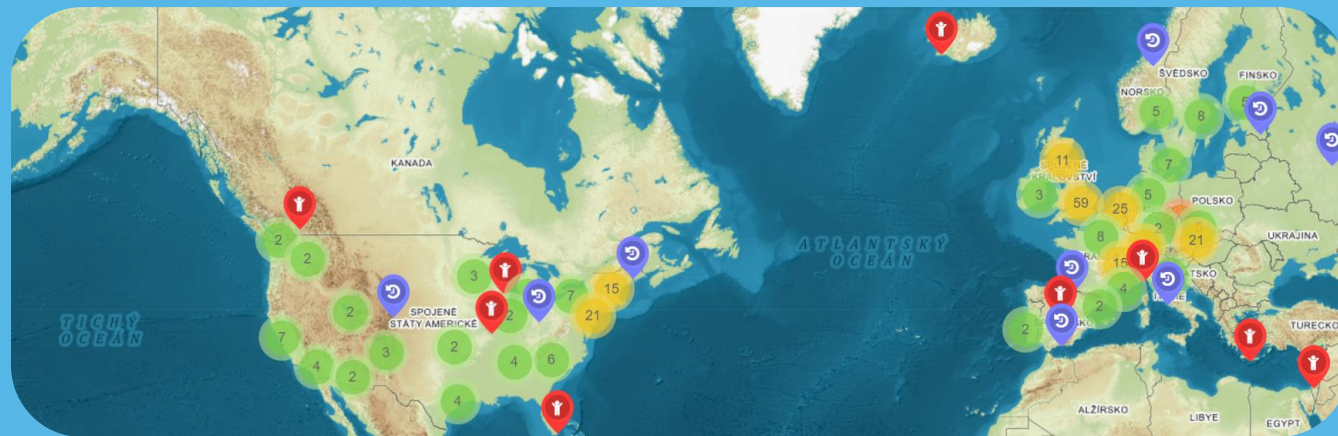
recommend the workshop.
not recommend it.

Participants' feedback after the first PhD workshop (held in October 2019 at the University of Chemistry and Technology in Prague)

our projects

map of scientists

In collaboration with the Czech startup Mapotic we have developed an interactive map of Czech scientific expats. Currently the map contains over 270 scientists who work(ed) in a total of 38 different countries. The map is a unique source of information and contacts for Czech scientists planning to venture abroad, for those planning to return to the Czech Republic, or for others such as journalists and governmental institutions. For example, we were recently contacted by the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs, who were interested in the whereabouts of Czech scientific expats.



our projects

Blog

We publish blog entries about different aspects of the life of a scientist abroad and upon return to the Czech Republic. We try to catch a broad range of experience and points of view. Our blogs are re-published by the popular portal vedavyzkum.cz.

Networking

We inform about the issues of Czech scientific expats and advocate for them. We were invited to the National round table for science policy, to CZEDUCON (forum for the internalization of higher education institutions), and we presented to the Czech Senate delegation in Finland. We are in close contact with scientific institutions and universities.

communication

Science outreach

Many Czech scientists work at top-notch institutes and universities around the world and publish their work in the most prestigious scientific journals. Unfortunately, stories of their successes hardly ever reach the audience and media in the Czech Republic. We aim to improve this by publishing short articles about important discoveries of Czech scientists working abroad.

@Czexpats_papers

Our twitterbot [@Czexpats_papers](https://twitter.com/Czexpats_papers) tweets the newest publications of senior Czech scientists working abroad.

our projects

work in progress...

Sociological research

Who are the Czech scientists abroad? Which fields do they work in and in which positions? What led them to pursue scientific careers abroad? What do they most appreciate about their current workplace? Do they wish to stay in contact with the Czech academic environment and to collaborate with scientists in the Czech Republic? If yes, how?

Are these scientists considering to come back to the Czech Republic? Which forces are pulling them back? What is preventing their return? What would make the return easier? What kind of issues are faced by those who managed to return to the Czech Republic? What advantages do they see compared to other places? What motivated their return?

Answers to these and similar questions are currently unknown. Therefore, we are planning sociological research among the Czech scientific diaspora and 'repatriated' scientists. The results of this research will serve as guidance not only for future activities of the Czexpats in Science initiative, but hopefully also for scientific and governmental institutions. The report could represent a unique source of information for setting up programs aiming to aid the return of talented Czech scientists, and in general for scientific policymaking and improving the Czech academic environment.

our team



From left to right: Anna, Vlad'ka, Markéta

the founders

Vlad'ka Petráková, Markéta Kubánková and Anna Stejskalová are alumni of Czech Technical University in Prague. All three of them decided to pursue a scientific career abroad. A few years later they started considering a return to the Czech Republic but found out that they had lost important contacts and insight into how things function in the Czech academic landscape. They realized that many of their colleagues face the same issue and that such an enclosed scientific environment is bound to negatively influence the quality of research in the Czech Republic.

Thus, in 2018, they founded the initiative Czexpats in Science. Together they lead the team of volunteers and determine the direction and main activities of the initiative, alongside their full-time scientific careers.

our team

The major projects of Czexpats in Science are always the result of teamwork. On top of that, each member has a specific role and tasks within the team.



Jaroslav Icha
application specialist / Eastport
Prague / Czechia

PR and social networks



Michal H. Kolář
group leader / VŠCHT
Prague / Czechia

analyst, technical solutions



Hana Hušková
postdoc / CRCM
Marseille / France

fundraising



Blanka Collis
postdoc / UOCHB AV ČR
Prague / Czechia

external collaboration, blog



Olga Löblová
postdoc / University of Cambridge
Cambridge / United Kingdom

social and humanities sciences



Jan Valečka
PhD student / CIML
Marseille / France

external collaborator, technical solutions

testimonials

Prof. Jiří Friml, group leader, IST Austria, Austria

“I really like your initiative. Science is an international and collective endeavour to understand the world and has no borders. I know many Czech colleagues who do fantastic work abroad and thus do great publicity for our country. It is therefore important that people at home know about them. So thank you very much for what you are doing!”



Dr. Pavel Tomančák, group leader, Max Planck Institute, Dresden, Germany

“Czechs are a nation proud of their sportsmen, artists, and other personalities with international breakthroughs. It is little known that science works a lot like professional sports and that many important scientists with Czech roots “play” for world-leading science institutions. Instead of hat-tricks, they score publications in prestigious journals, and instead of millions, they are rewarded by unravelling the secrets of nature. The initiative Czexpats in Science is a great attempt to promote Czech scientific Jągrs and Čechs to the public. I have my fingers crossed for you. It will definitely contribute to the development of Czech science, because it is well known that both leading sportsmen and scientists like to come back home.”

Monika Vondráková, chair of the Board of directors, Neuron endowment fund, Czech Republic

“In the Neuron fund we try to support young scientists who decide to come back to the Czech Republic. We welcome the Czexpats initiative, it is becoming a well organised platform for our successful scientists abroad, and we thank them for that.”



Dr. Hana Dvořáková, University of Chemistry and Technology, benefactor of science, Experientia Foundation, Czech Republic

“The main mission of Czexpats in Science, connecting Czech scientists abroad with Czech institutions and facilitating their return, is in agreement with our values.”

Dr. Martin Bunčeka, director of the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic, Prague, Czech Republic

“I first noticed the activity of Czexpats on social networks and I was really enthused. I think that activities like this are very beneficial for the Czech academic environment, where the so-called “inbreeding” prevails. Fresh opinions of people with international experience have the potential to disrupt the often false mutual assertion of the excellence and exceptionality within the Czech environment. At the same time, these activities prove the global aspect of science, diverse Czech qualities, and also provide feedback on the functioning of the Czech academic environment.”



Embassy of the Czech Republic in Helsinki, Finland

“We consider the formation of the Czexpats initiative, and especially of the map of Czech scientists abroad, as very positive. One of the many tasks of the diplomatic missions is to help the development of the relations between Czech and Finnish entities and to keep in touch with compatriots. The initiative Czexpats in Science is greatly resourceful for both these missions.”



Velvyslanectví České republiky
v Helsinkách

Czexpats in Science in the media



RESPEKT

VĚDA BEZ HRANIC  

VĚDA BEZ HRANIC

MLADÍ ČEŠTÍ VĚDCI A VĚDKYŇE ODCHÁZEJÍ VELMI ČASTO PO ŠKOLE NA ZKUŠENOU DO ZAHRAŇIČÍ, NĚKTEŘÍ I NATRVALO. KOLIK JICH ALE JE A KDE PŮSOBÍ, NIKDO PŘESNĚ NEVÍ. „TENHLE STAV BY MĚLA ZMĚNIT NOVĚ VZNIKLÁ PLATFORMA CZEXPATS IN SCIENCE,“ ŘÍKÁ JEDNA ZE ZAKLADATELEK ANNA STEJSKALOVÁ.



Soubor mladímu vědkyňám z Česka předává Anna Stejskalová. (Foto: M. Štěpánek)



Čeští vědci v zahraničí
Czexpats in Science propojuje české vědce pracující v zahraničí
15:42 ČESKO ZASÁHLO HUSTĚ SNĚŽENÍ, NĚKDE NAPADLO AŽ 25 CM SNĚHU.



ego! Magazín Hospodářských novin

HOSPODÁŘSKÉ NOVINY

Vydali se za výzkumem do světa, aby si rozšířili obzory a získali zkušenosti, které doma „za pecí“ nenajdou. A někteří se vracejí

text: Tereza Hromádková



vesmír

...mých i nepřímých pozorování odhadnout, jak se daří velkým společnostem i celým výrobním sektorům. Sledují například obsazenost parkovacích míst, míru naplnění zásobníků ropy, ale mohou monitorovat i legální těžbu nebo kácení pralesů. V uplynulých deseti letech se na oběžnou dráhu dostalo téměř 730 sondačních družic. V další dekádě jich přibude dalších 2200. Často jde o miniaturní satelity standardizované specifikace CubeSat. Třih s tímto službami zaznamenal v roce 2017 obrát 4,6 miliardy dolarů.

Pomoc českým vědcům v zahraničí
INICIATIVA Czexpats in Science (czexpatsin-science.cz) si klade za cíl propojit české vědce v zahraničí, zprostředkovat jim kontakt s českým prostředím a usnadnit jim návrat do ČR. Založily ji tři absolventky CVUT se studijními a pracovními zkušenostmi z Anglie a Německa: Markéta Kubánková, Anna Stejskalová a Vladimíra Petráková.

„K založení platformy nás vedly vlastní zkušenosti při návratu ze studia nebo práce v zahraničí do ČR, kdy je člověk limitovaný nedostatkem kontaktů a neznalostí specifického prostředí,“ vysvětlují zakladatelky v tiskové zprávě.

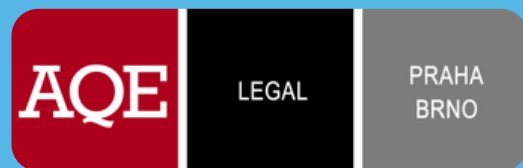
Prvního setkání iniciativy se zúčastnilo okolo osmdesáti vědců v různých fázích kariéry se zkušenostmi ze třinácti různých zemí, například z univerzity v Cambridge a Oxfordu, z ETH v Curychu, z německých ústavů Maxe Plancka, ze Stanfordské univerzity či z Weizmannova ústavu v izraelském Rehovotu. „Zúčastnění vědci se shodli na tom, že v Česku je třeba zvýšit počet a zlepšit transparentnost vypisovacích pozic pro juniorské vedoucí výzkumných skupin a zdůrazňovali důležitost stabilního institucionálního financování,“ uvádějí organizátorky. Možnosti financování pro úspěšné mladé vědce, kteří si chtějí založit vlastní výzkumnou skupinu v ČR, zatím není mnoho: „Kromě juniorských grantů GA ČR, programu Primus na Univerzitě Karlově, programu Lumina juniorerantur Akademie věd ČR vypisuje Juniorské granty pro začínající vědce například ÚOCHB AV ČR.“ Mezery ve financování poskytované státními institucemi částečně vyplňují soukromí dárci, například Nadace Experiment (Vesmir 97, 404, 2018/7) nebo Nadační fond Neuron (Vesmir 97, 130, 2018/3).

GMO: Nevím, že nic nevím
„VĚDOMÍ vlastní nevědomosti je součástí odbornosti. Pouze experti vědí, jak málo vědí,“ řekl před časem v rozhovoru pro Vesmír americký neurovědce Stuart Firestein (Vesmír 96, 620, 2017/11). Zopakoval zkušenost,



We are not alone!

Financial support



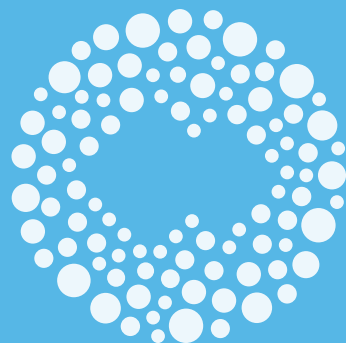
Cooperating institutions



Media partner



We are looking for new donors and partners. If you are interested in supporting the activities of Czexpats in Science, contact us!



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IN SCIENCE**

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