



Dynamic Interactive Nanosystems

Marie Curie Initial Training Network

Interview with Yan Zhang ER - CNRS-IEM - Montpellier, France



Yan Zhang

I come from China, a city called Yangzhou which locates close to Nanjing. I received my Bachelor's Degree in pharmaceutical science from Central South University. During my undergraduate studies, I had the opportunity to work in one chemistry lab and found it very interesting, so I chose medicinal chemistry as my major for the Master study in China Pharmaceutical University. Then I moved to Sweden to continue as a PhD student at the KTH-Royal Institute of Technology, where I obtained my Doctor's Degree in chemistry. After a short stay at National University of Singapore as a research fellow, I'm glad to find myself here in France within Dr. Barboiu's group and the DYNANO network.

**What is your Postdoc project about?
What objectives do you have to reach?
What have you achieved so far?**

My postdoc projects are centered around the concept of constitutional dynamic networks. One major project is making dynamers with hydrophobic and hydrophilic properties. Now I've made some membranes which have shown such characteristics, and I'm working on the characterizations and the potential applications. Other projects include constitutional selection from dynamic polymer system, hydrophobic/hydrophilic dendrimers and self-healing dynamers. They are still under investigation at this moment.

What is the best thing about taking a Postdoc in the framework of an ITN European Project? What is challenging?

I think the best thing is having the opportunity to discuss research with people from various specific disciplines. **From the views of their backgrounds, chemistry puzzles can be solved in different ways, and probably can inspire new research ideas.**

The challenge may also lie on the efficient communications with people from different fields, and how to grasp as much details as I can from the short presentations and discussions.



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Do you have any secondments planned in your postdoc?

I don't have any secondments planned yet. Maybe I will test some of my dynamers for biological applications later.

What do you expect from your participation to the DYNANO events coming in Bucharest?

It will be my first DYNANO network meeting, and I'm very much looking forward to meeting other students and scientists in the network, and getting to know a little bit more about their research. The lecture about patents and the lab visiting can also be interesting.

Do you have some advice to master/engineer students considering taking a PhD?

Always keep a passion for the subject you are studying. I know PhD life can sometimes be demanding or frustrating, but **think more about the exciting goals you can reach: building something new or unveiling the mystery of nature.** I believe that with enough patience, smart design and step by step walking, you will arrive there one day.



IEM building



Do you have any plans after completing your Postdoc?

I think I will try to apply some positions or probably another postdoc. Sometimes it's not easy to make a clear plan about the future career, but I will try my best to catch the possible opportunities.

Being inside a European project will it give you the idea to build one yourself? Will you apply again for European funding?

I'm impressed about the interdisciplinary and mobility requirements of the European projects. These are also exactly a young researcher need before moving on to an independent career. I'm very grateful to have the opportunity to be inside one project, and I'll definitely apply again if I had the chance.

*Thank you Yan
and all the best for DYNANO.*

Interviewed by Laurence Bosch

DYNANO in brief

Starting date: 1st November 2011

Project duration: 48 months

Number of partners: 15

Project Coordinator: Dr. Mihai BARBOIU,
European Membrane Institute -IEM, Montpellier, France.

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