



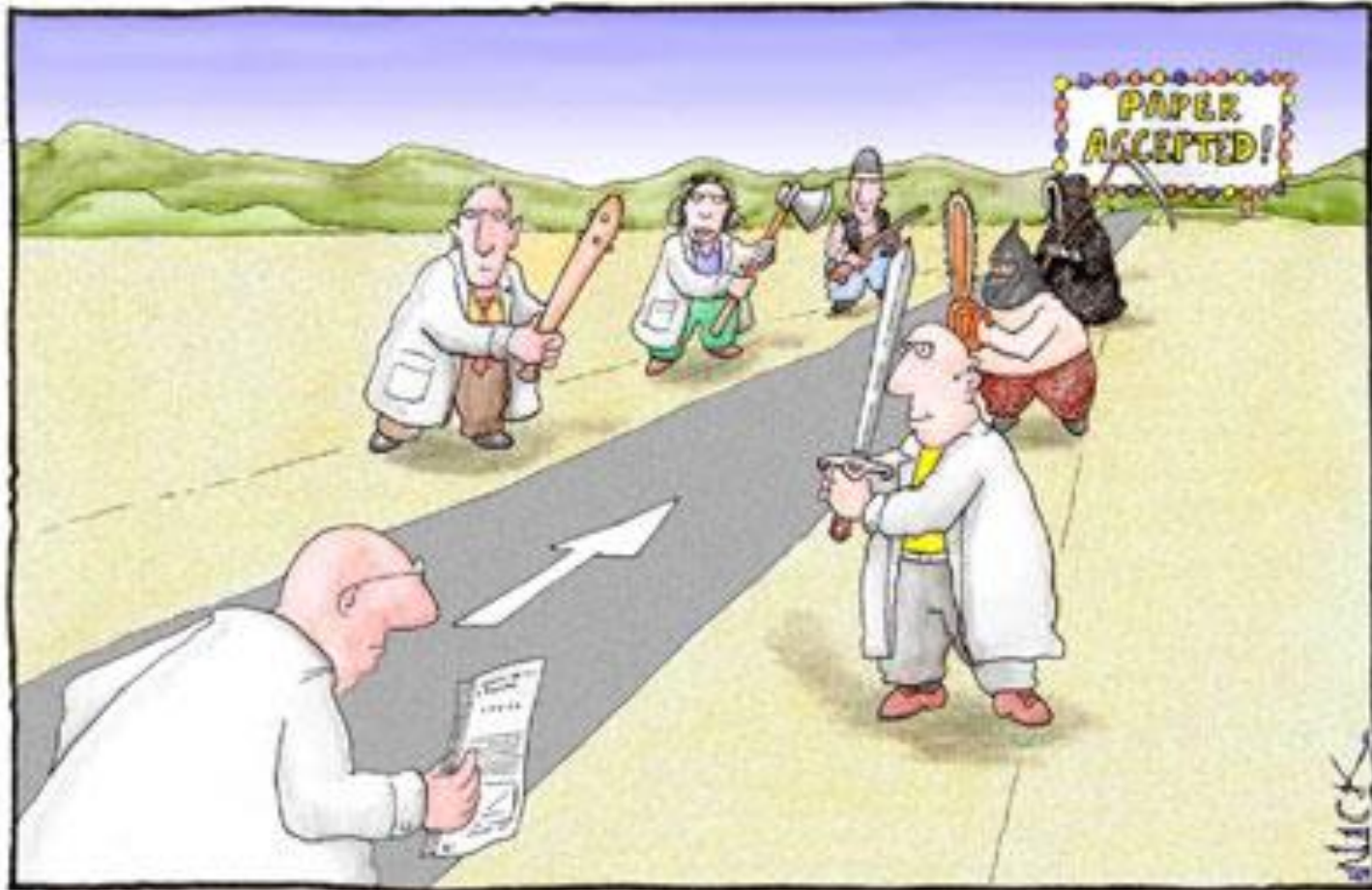
OMG...What next???

Life After the PhD



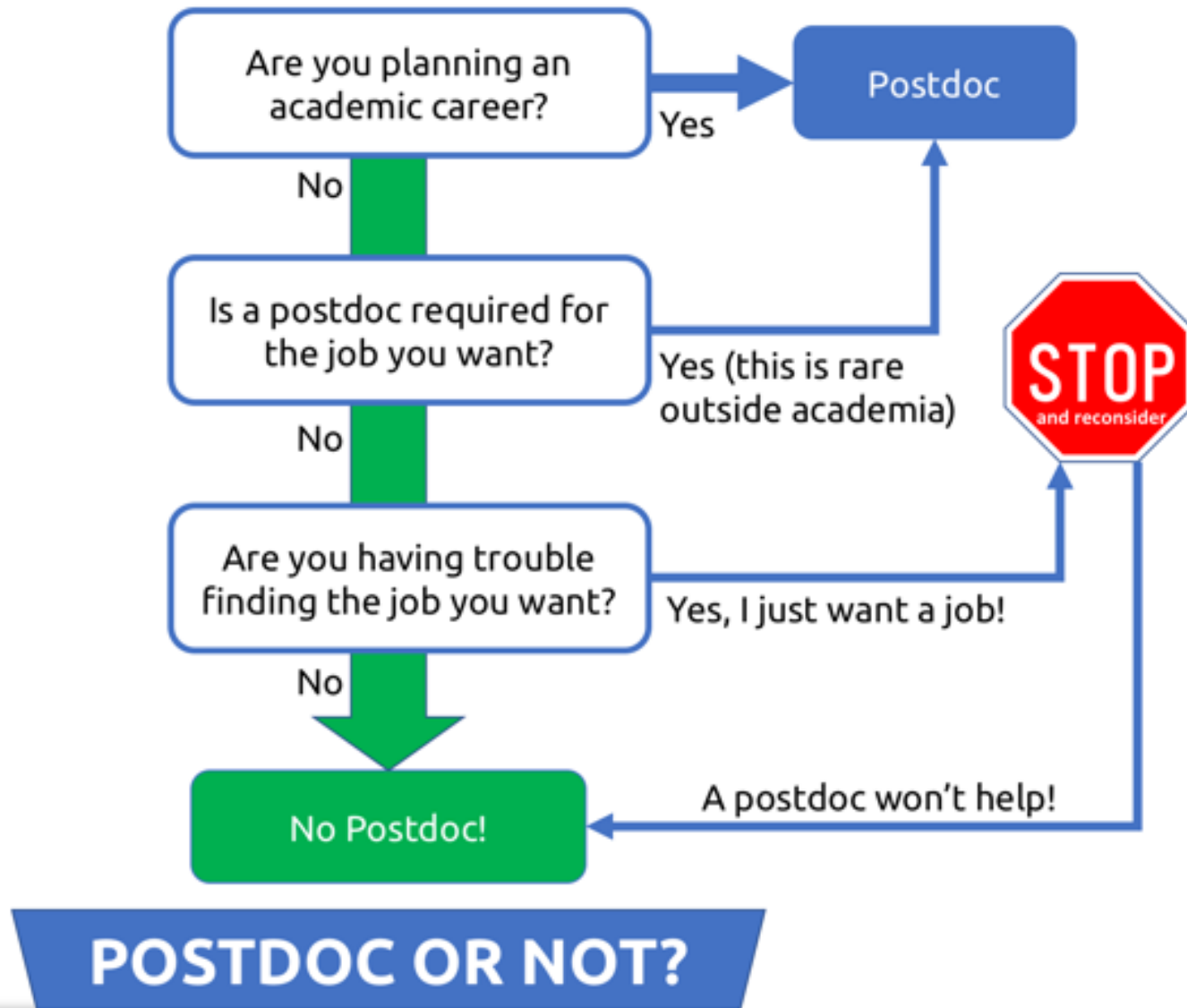
Deborah Burks, PhD
Postdoc 1991-1998

Research is a tough life.
Think about it.

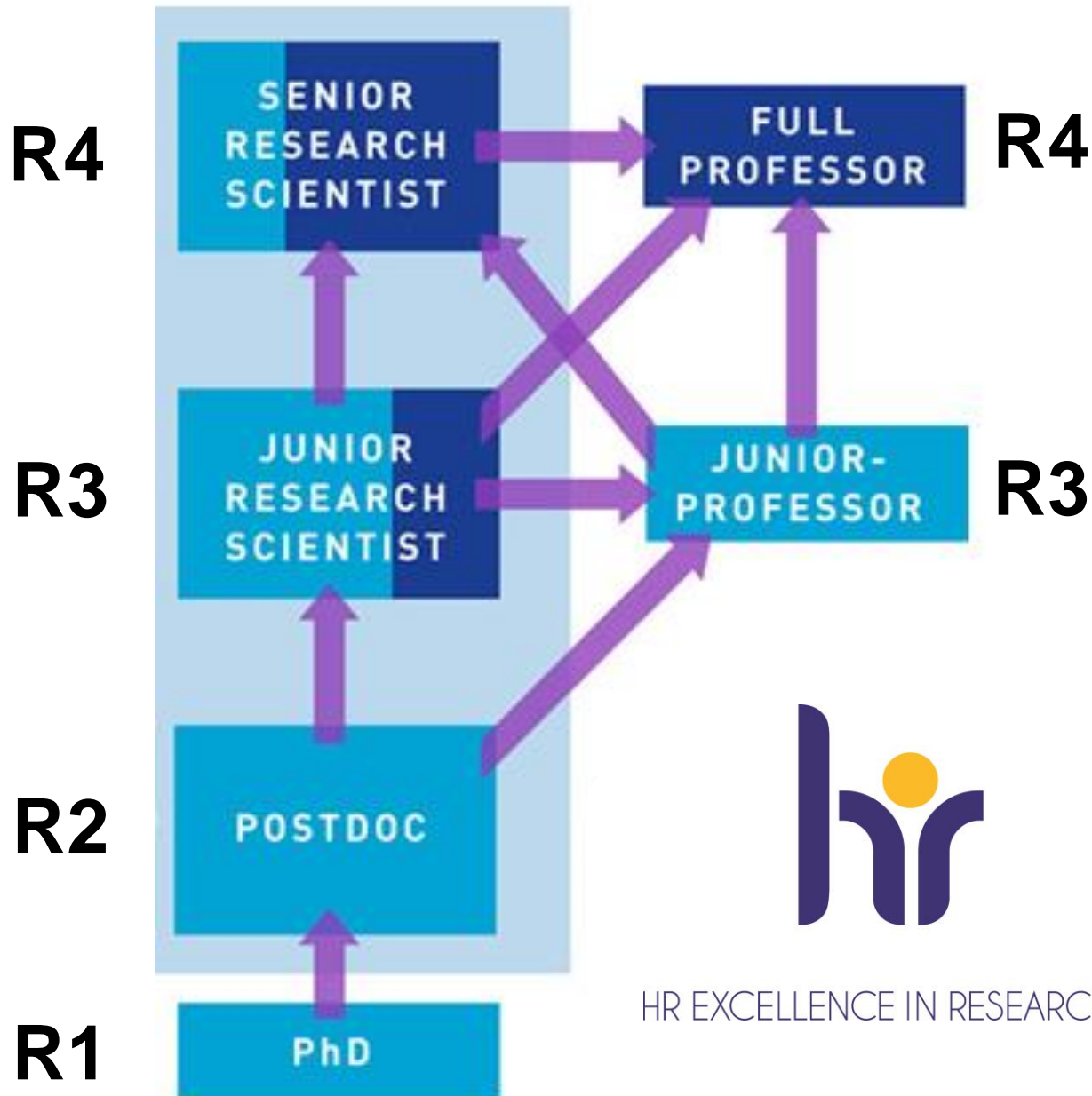


What is your goal?

Is a postdoc your next step?



Research Track: EU HRS4R Program



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

WHY DO A POSTDOC?

Doing a postdoc is required for research career!

- Broadens your expertise: gives you more flexibility for your future research
- Positions you better for seeking employment: your market value increases as your Ph.D. papers get out, you get involved in more projects, get to know more people, etc.
- Gives you a breather to think about what you want to do, apply for positions
- Allows you to carry out research with little interference from other duties and at a time in your life when commitment to research may be relatively easy; your postdoc may produce the best papers of your career!
- Great personal experience, especially if international

HOW TO LOOK FOR A POSTDOC JOB

Don't just look for advertisements!! Most postdoc jobs are obtained by networking.

- **Step 1:** decide on the area you want to go into. Ideally it should broaden significantly your grad school experience while also building on it.

HOW TO LOOK FOR A POSTDOC JOB

Step 2: identify a few PIs you would like to work with. Nothing is more important than to have a boss who is a mentor, someone that you respect and from whom you want to learn.

Step 3: contact them by e-mail, or talk to them at a meeting. Tell them you're very interested in their research and would like to work with them. You don't have to identify a specific project – you can, but it's their job to suggest. Offer to apply for fellowships – they may have fellowships to suggest, or they may tell you it doesn't matter.

HOW TO GET THE POSITION: INTERVIEW

- Have some idea of what your future boss is doing and how you may fit in, but the most important thing is to demonstrate expertise in your PhD work and to communicate effectively. Your prospective boss doesn't expect you to have expertise in their line of work but will rather look for clarity of thinking, vision, creativity.
- Your interview talk is very important: be **confident**. Show vision and mastery of your work. The most common criticisms from professors: "S/he couldn't explain why what s/he was doing was important"

The majority of US academics working in biology are postdocs



■ Post-docs (high estimate)

■ Post-docs (low estimate)

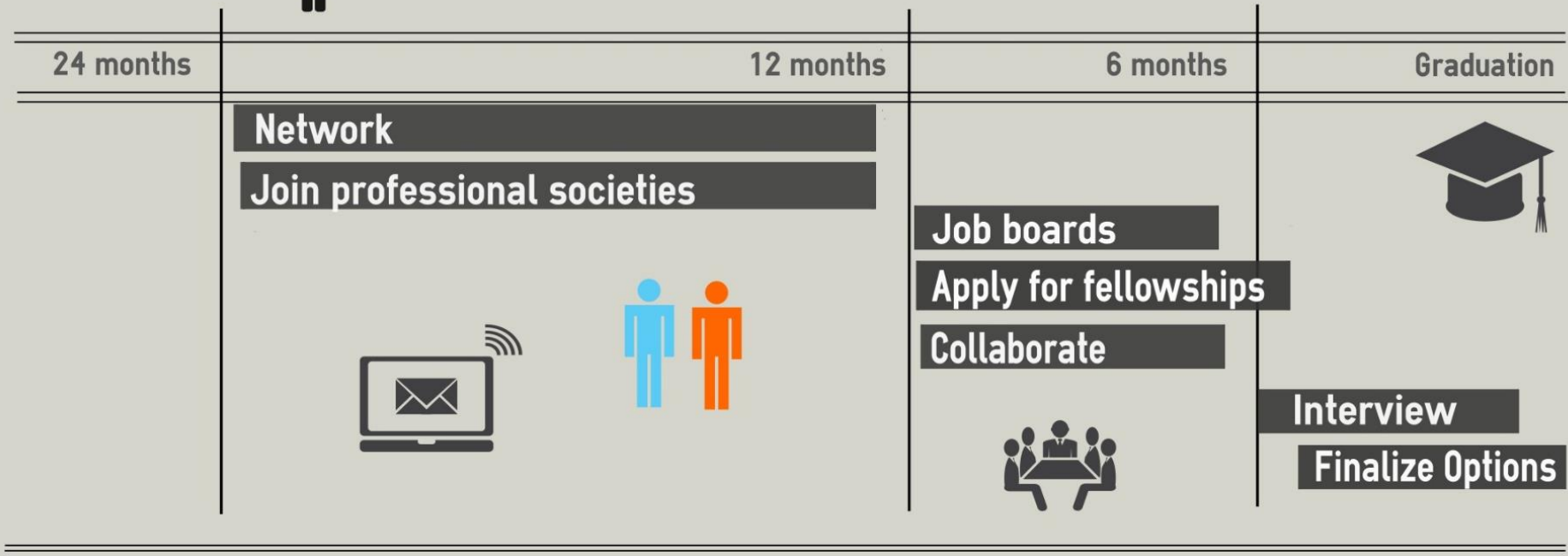
■ Faculty

*Estimates of the number of postdocs vary due to poor tracking

Timing: Start applying before you defend thesis!

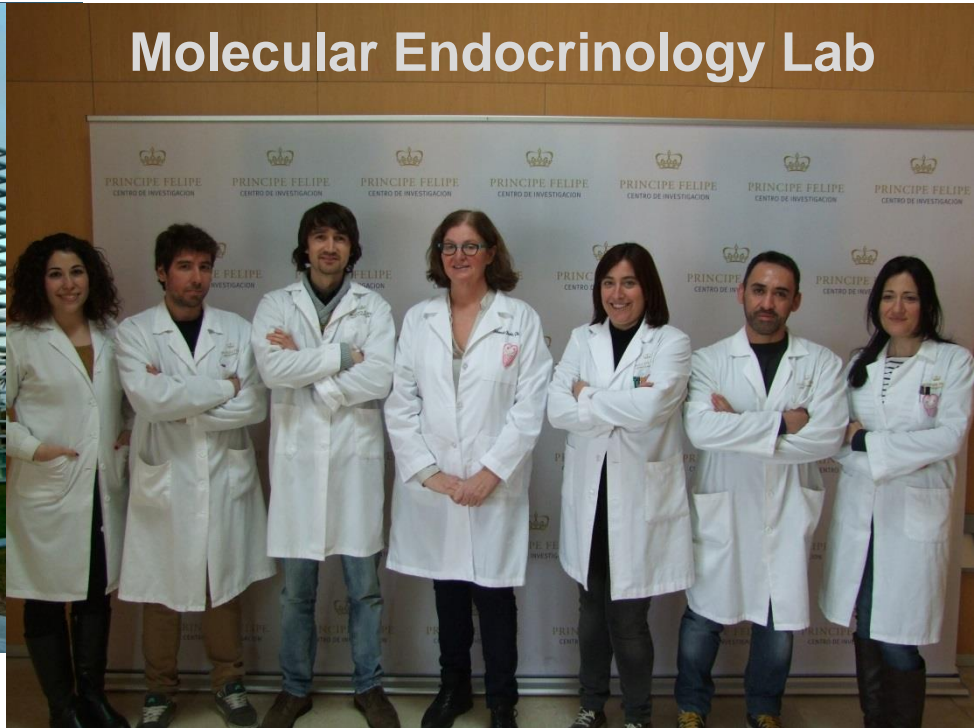


THE POSTDOC SEARCH TIMELINE



<http://blogs.nature.com/naturejobs/files/2014/12/shimi-rii-postdoc-timeline.jpg>

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