

ON THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE

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FORMS OF INDEPENDENCE

Job security

Intellectual independence



HOW TO GET JOB SECURITY?

Job availability

Possibilities to apply for grants

Be ready:

- Publications
- Teaching experience
- Network

JOB AVAILABILITY AT A GLANCE

Assistantships

Postdoctoral positions

Advertised tenure-track positions



POSTDOC POSITIONS: MEANS OR END?

Successive postdocs in a row

University funded

Research councils (national and international)

Private funds and businesses



APPLYING

An ongoing activity

Joining an existing team

Applying as PI (Principal Investigator) in charge of a team

Identifying suitable schemes, modifying and retrying

IMPORTANT FACTORS IN APPLYING

Excellent research question and ideas

Clear methodology

Feasibility

Communication and presentation skills (interview)

Supportive reviewers (and luck!)



BECOMING A PI

Guarantees (financial) independence

ERC PIs are mobile and thus, have a negotiation power

PIs get experience in project management and leading teams

Caveat: still dependent on

- Institutional context
- Other team members
- Colleagues

INTELLECTUAL INDEPENDENCE: TRUE OR FALSE?

Research question must be timely

Basic research is regarded as a tool, rather than an aim

PI is required to form and run a team

MUST HAVES 1 (FLEXIBILITY)

Intellectual flexibility (cross disciplinary and cross boundaries)

Emotional flexibility (adapting to changing circumstances)

Practical flexibility (mobility)



MUST HAVES 2 (PERSONAL ASSETS)

Scientific excellence (ideas and skills)

Stamina and perseverance

A broad and healthy network

Avoiding quarrels and animosities

Enjoying the journey as much as the accomplishments

BACK TO BECOMING A PI

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