

S

or of neurobiology,
Germany

13-05: Associate professor,
Department of Entomology,
University of California,
Berkeley
19-2005: Head, independent
research group, Berlin
1985-99: Postdoctoral fellow,
University Berlin
1983-95: Postdoctoral fellow,
Max Planck Institute, Tübingen
1989-93: Doctoral research,
University of Cambridge, UK

Type of researcher of which
I dream. He is young, gifted,
born in his native Germany
but until recently Galizia
with leading an
interest in the Volkswagen
University of Berlin.

When he started thinking about
science, he was inspired by the big questions:
What life is all about, and how it
evolved. He didn't have a preference for
biology or physics, although in time he
chose biology and mathematics,
and neurobiology of odour

The olfactory system is similar
in insects, and he hopes that he will
be able to understand other species. By
studying the olfactory system with
studies of entire cell
and understanding a model neural

SCIENTISTS & SOCIETIES

A collective approach

Scientists everywhere — in academia as well as industry — face many of the same work issues at some point during their careers. People get laid off, for instance, or decide to switch jobs, or need to take time off for illness or child care.

To face these challenges, Swedish scientists have historically banded together, rather than going it alone. The Swedish Association of Scientists has, for over 50 years, provided researchers with a collective voice. The organization's unity has been in great demand lately, as biotechnology companies merge, and telecommunication and information-technology firms face greater financial pressures.

The organization has 21,000 members with a university degree in the field of science; more than 25% have a PhD and 20% hold a managerial position. The group is part of the Swedish Confederation of Professional Associations, which unites more than 570,000 members from different professional associations.

In Sweden, most terms of employment are regulated in collective agreements, and these tend to be negotiated by unions and professional associations. According to Swedish legislation, the professional associations and traditional trade

unions are the main advocates for employees' rights.

The Swedish Association of Scientists helps to negotiate terms for members when they leave jobs. And when members suffer job losses, as a result of lay-offs or bankruptcy, the association can supplement their income with insurance, as well as help them find training or other job opportunities.

As a professional organization, it also offers members individual career and salary coaching as well as legal advice. Collectively the group pools its knowledge and resources to lobby for better working conditions, including those within the lab, and on quality-of-life issues and medical care.

This has proved to be a very effective way not just to improve working conditions for Sweden's scientists but also to increase efficiency, and therefore productivity, for its researchers, their institutions and for the country as a whole.

Organizing scientists has worked well in Sweden, but it may not be an option in countries that prohibit scientists from unionizing. Perhaps professional organizations can still offer members advocacy and support.

Marita Teräs is editor of the Swedish Association of Scientists' newsletter.
♦ www.naturvetareforbundet.se

日本で働き
いま、日本の研究所が

研究分野	職
有機化学	有機合 材料化
生化学	タンパ 創薬開
物理化学	半導体

国際会議の
つくば、東京、京都

会場予約、募金活動、
会費徴収、アブストラ
通訳手配、司会手配、
展示会、評価委員会、

R&D 研究支援
株式会社ア

Director Position
The Institute of Brain Science
Fudan University, Shanghai

The Institute of Brain Science
China, is a newly founded insti
Institute of Brain Science now in
The strength of neuroscience re