



Future Talent Programme Goes from Strength to Strength

When Agnese Sbroolini – a PhD student at Università Politecnica delle Marche in Italy, who is researching sport-related sudden cardiac death - was approached by Consortium GARR with the opportunity to take part in speaker training and the possibility to present at TNC19, she did not hesitate for a moment.

The opportunity was provided through GÉANT's Future Talent Programme (FTP), which aims to bring up-and-coming professionals like Agnese in touch with the GÉANT community and vice versa. Why? Because they are our future.

Words: Nadia Sluer

“We have been very happy that this kind of opportunity has been raised to a European level”

Federico Ruggieri, Director of GARR and member of the GÉANT Board

Designed by GÉANT Learning and Development (GLAD) the Future Talent Programme is benefiting an ever-increasing number of NREs and students. It is built on three pillars: professional development, networking and mentorship. These elements are woven consistently into engaging programmes such as ‘Lightning Talk Challenge’, ‘Trust and Identity Mentorship Programme’ (TIM) and in the past ‘Poster Pursuit’.

Professional development of young professionals is always at the core of these programmes. The Learning and Development team wants every participant to be prepared for their next step, whatever that may be. Through various skills workshops the programme develops soft skills which will stay with them for the rest of their lives, as will their experience with GÉANT.

“During this course I learnt how to do a wonderful lightning talk, and, in this conference, I presented my research on monitoring athletes. I want to thank GÉANT, GARR and my mentor, because everything I have learnt gave me confidence about my research and the skills to convince people about it!”

Agnese Sbrollini, Student

Networking is another aspect that plays an important role in the Future Talent Programme. It provides an opportunity for young professionals to meet GÉANT community experts, learn about their work in the R&E field, and present their own ideas and work.

“Thanks to this programme I made some awesome friendships and I am excited to see where it takes me in the future”

Era Adjaraga, Student

However, key to the success of the FTP is the mentorship offered by the NREN. NREN mentors play a crucial role by reaching out and staying close to their protégées throughout the programme to provide guidance, support and encouragement.

“At FCCN we know that to continue to push the possibilities of technology, we need people who are smart thinkers, good speakers and willing to be curious and make brave decisions. It is very rewarding to see them getting new skills about presenting in public in such an important conference like TNC”

Salomé Branco, HR manager at FCCN

Until now, TNC is the biggest event the FTP takes part in. With the ‘Lightning Talk Challenge’, its participants compete for a place in the TNC Lightning Talks sessions, where they deliver their talk to the conference’s plenary audience. So far 21 students had a taste of this amazing experience in the past three years and impressed the audiences with outstanding talks.

“TNC has been a fantastic experience for me because it allowed me to overcome my fear in public speaking. I met new incredible people and it allowed me to present my work in a fun and interesting way”

Pierre van Houtryve, Student

The ‘TIM’ Trust and Identity Mentorship Programme, a collaboration between GLAD and the Trust & Identity team, is the newest initiative of the Future Talent Programme. As its name suggests, the emphasis is on mentorship. Young researchers work with their NREN mentor and with subject matter experts on new ideas in the Trust and Identity space during a 6 months internship. The TIM programme runs 1-2 times a year with the next run starting June 2020.

However, NREs interested in GÉANT young talent programmes do not have to wait until June. Registration for the Lightning Talk Challenge for TNC20 is now open until the end of February, and registration for the next TIM run is coming up soon.

GLAD invites NREs to offer the young professionals in their communities the same opportunities that were given to Agnese, Era and Pierre and the other future talents who took part in this programme.

For more information about participation in Future Talent Programme, contact nadia.sluer@geant.org or glad@geant.org

Picture
Clockwise from top left: Era Adjaraga, Enrico Pietrocola, Pierre van Houtryve, Agnese Sbrollini,