

> IUBMB TI – Your Monthly Minutes

Your favorite monthly newsletter



It is finally time to hear from our Chair!

Hello everyone, we are approaching something special today with our minutes introducing Élyse Fischer. Given her experiences being chair, we will double down on leadership but also on career advice in and outside of academic research – so let's go for it:

> *Who Élyse is*

Grew up in the United States

– Currently, working at a startup

One of the few having used EPR!

– Endurance sports is her second passion



I have been in love with science ever since high school. At that time, I did my first research internship and then continued with an undergraduate in Molecular Biology. Eventually, I did my PhD at Cambridge. I think you could call me a structural biologist given my background in Crystallography, NMR, EPR, and Electron-Microscopy, but now I work in Protein Design.



Currently, I work at a start-up called Monod Bio, where I use machine learning to design sensitive biosensors. For example, I am developing a diagnostic tool to measure D-Dimer levels in blood samples. D-Dimer is a protein that is upregulated during blood clotting. Most available tests are antibody based and rates of false positive and negatives are quite high. positives



Working at a start-up is fast paced and from time to time hectic. However, this is the environment I thrive in. I work really close with the CEO, COO and CSO – and I can see myself later becoming a Chief Scientific Officer where I can lead people and manage projects.

Élyse, many young researchers dream of working in a startup – share your experiences thus far!

Monod Bio is not a chill and easy going place. Rather, it is a high stress environment. But I like it because I learn a lot quickly – I lead projects, do my own experiments, fix equipment, or buy stuff we need (also from eBay from time to time :D). We are about 30 people here and I like that I feel close to everyone! Of course, it is an economical undertaking which means your project can be canceled at any time if it does not seem to succeed. Although sometimes sad, it can at times be really relieving too!

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Leading ≠ Leading

When I started as chair, I was not aware of all the various leadership roles there are. It is not the same to host conferences vs. mentoring in the lab vs. being on a committee vs. starting an initiative from the ground up. Different people need different leading given their different cultures and different personalities. Often, members just need to believe in their ideas, knowing that they are good enough to add value and make a difference.



Lessons being Chair

When taking a leadership role, it is easy to take over everything yourself, especially when you are an “A-type” personality. I have learned that it is important to trust the people you work with and push them to act in roles in which they take leadership themselves. This means working with them and guiding them instead of telling them what to do or doing it yourself. It can feel slower – but this is better for everyone!



Learning Broadly

In my free time, I hike, run, ski, and bike, and while doing this I am constantly listening to science podcasts such as [Synbiobeta](#). I also love to listen to inspiring adventure books such as “Savage Summit”. However, these days I also listen more and more to news because I want to be better aware of the ‘outside’ world. I have always been very sciency and it is super easy to be enveloped and consumed by my work.



Our Future

I am proud of what we have created from scratch. Now, I am very excited for the committee change-over to have fresh minds come in and see where they take it. I would be super open to anyone taking the TI in a completely different direction as well. I would like to see more leadership and focus from Asia or Africa since these regions are still relatively weakly represented in the IUBMB TI.

> Advice For You

Find out what type of research you really enjoy. Do internships and get research experience instead of focusing on getting the best grades. Even when you are not the very best in school, you will be able to get into good programs for your research. Also, don't be afraid to look at the industry. Do not listen to people suggesting that leaving academia is like selling your soul. Craft your own way forward!

That was it from our chair

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Trainee Initiative

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Next time, this year's grand finale