

The Value and Role of Postdoctoral Periods in Shaping and Securing Sustainable Career Pathways

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Gender Summit 3 North America 2013

Roadmap Development Session 2: Empowering Voices of Early Career Scientists

MY STORY



AN AUSTRALIAN POSTDOC IN CANADA



The cold was not the only challenge...

FUNDING

**CLASSED AS A TRAINEE –
BUT WHAT TRAINING?**

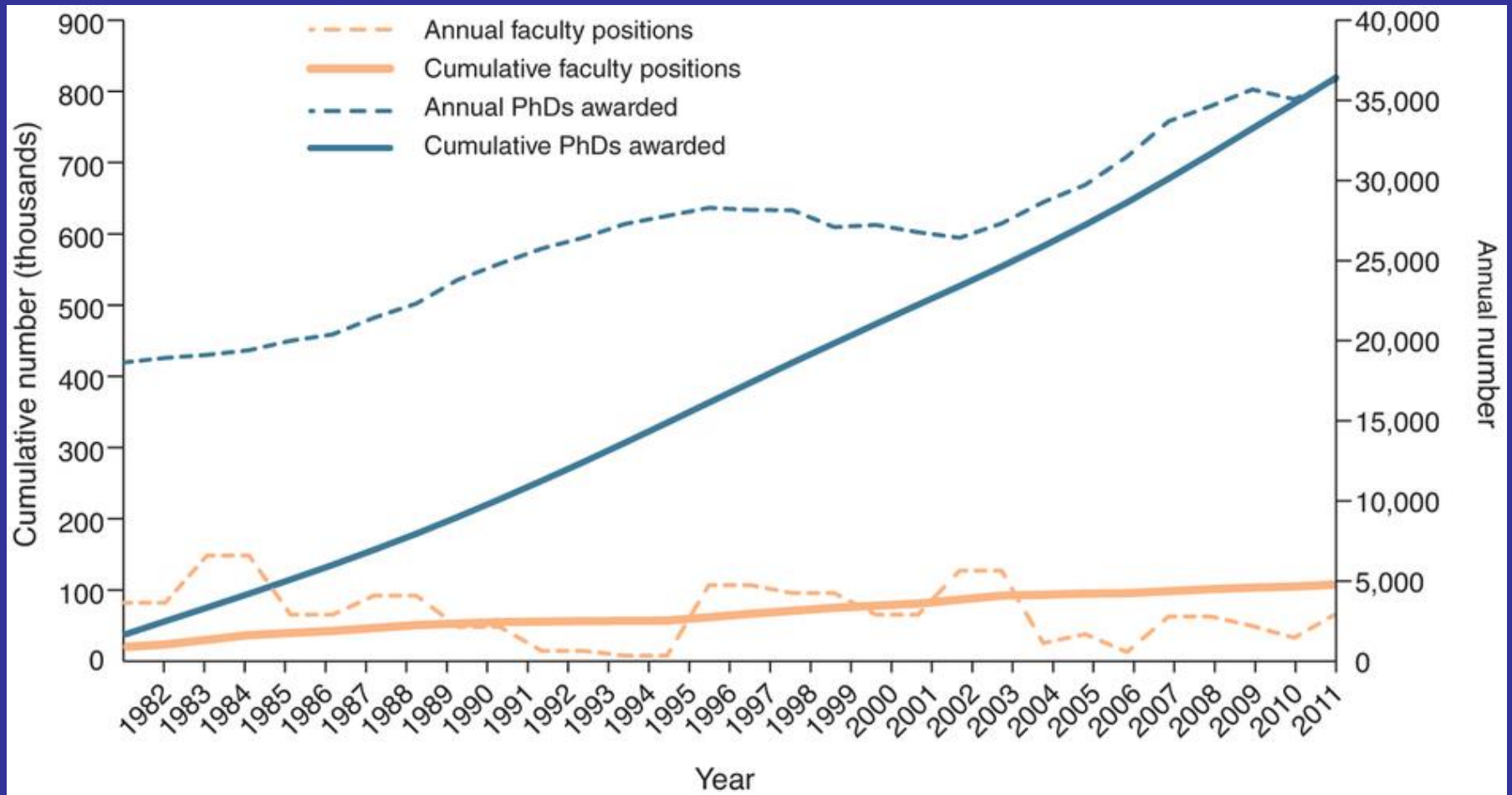
**BUILDING A
NETWORK**

**ACCESS TO
SERVICES**

RESPECT

**WHY IS THE POSTDOCTORAL
PERIOD SO IMPORTANT?**

IT'S A NUMBERS GAME



AND WE ARE NOT GETTING ANY YOUNGER

AGE (yrs)

Undergraduate degree

18 - 20

Undergraduate degree

First class Honours/Masters

21 - 23

First class Honours/Masters

PhD

23 - 30

PhD

Postdoctoral Fellow

30 - 32

Postdoctoral Fellow

Assistant Professor (TT)

32 - 34

Postdoctoral Fellow

34 - 36

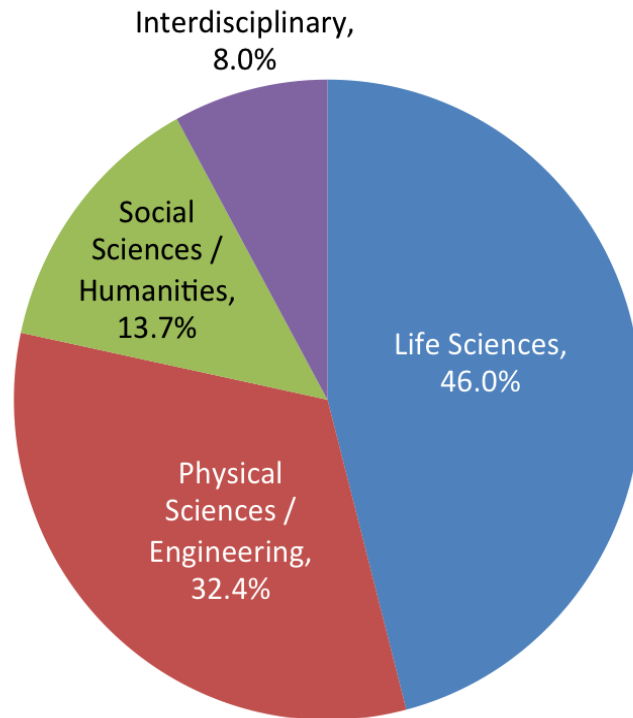
Postdoctoral Fellow

???

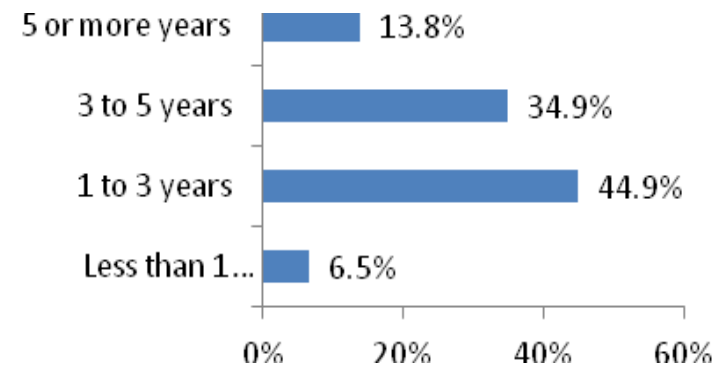
DATA FROM THE AVERAGE CANADIAN POSTDOC

		%	<i>n</i>
Gender	Female	46.5%	839
	Male	53.4%	963
	Other	0.1%	2
	<i>Prefer not to answer</i>		26
Age	25 to 29	15.2%	277
	30 to 34	51.5%	938
	35 to 39	21.8%	397
	40+	11.5%	209
	<i>Prefer not to answer</i>		9
Marital status	Single, never married	29.2%	524
	Married/common-law	68.9%	1238
	Divorced/separated/widowed	1.9%	34
	<i>Prefer not to answer</i>		34
Dependent children	No dependent children	64.7%	1166
	1	19.1%	345
	2	12.2%	220
	3 or more	4.0%	71
	<i>Prefer not to answer</i>		28

DATA FROM THE AVERAGE CANADIAN POSTDOC



Field of Research



Total Expected Number of Years as a Postdoctoral Fellow

WHY DO WE NEED POSTDOCS?

Postdoctoral fellows were first authors on 43% of papers published in Science

Yet, Postdoctoral fellows comprise just over a third of research personnel.

Vogel, 1999, Science, Vol. 285 no. 5433 pp. 1531-1532

More recent estimates = 50% of all research is conducted by Postdoctoral Fellows

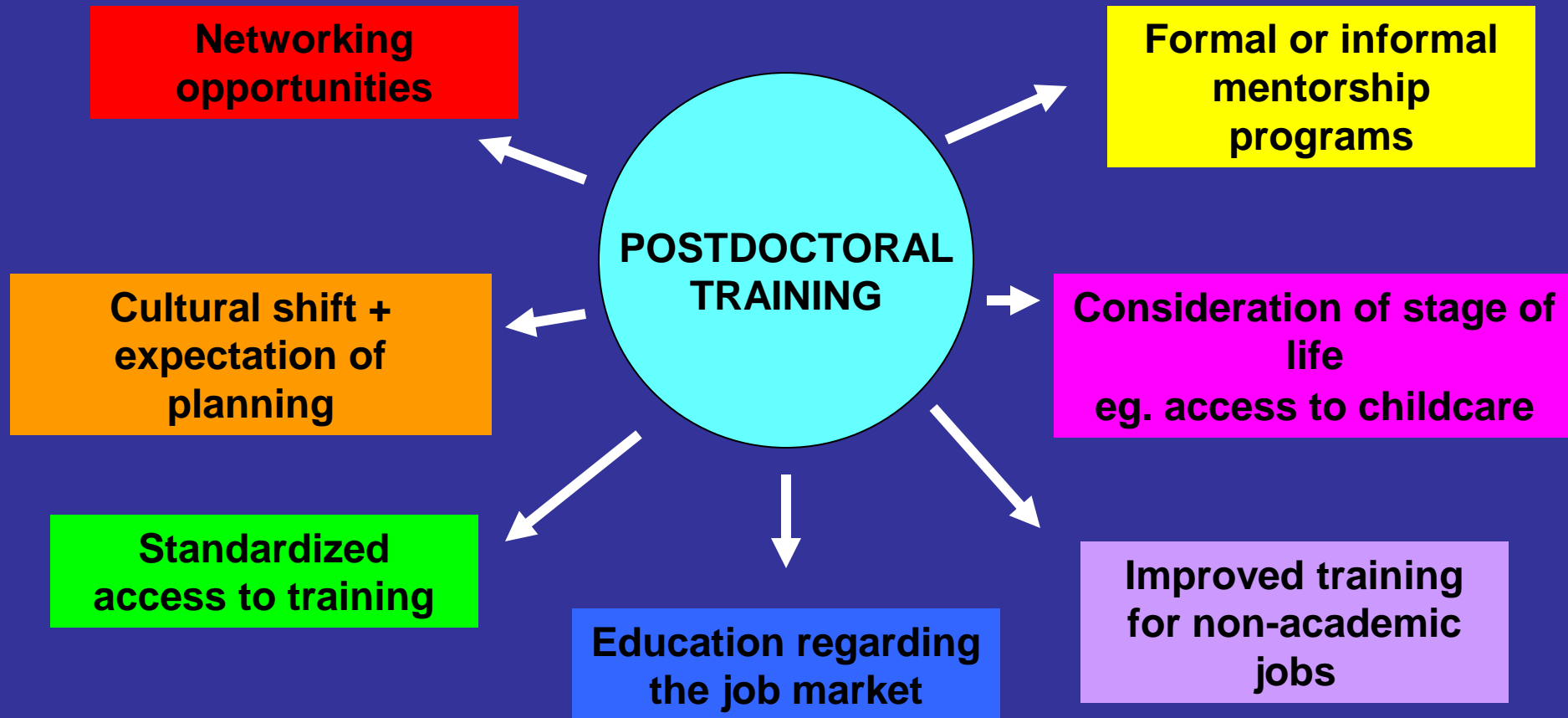
Supervisory role for Masters and PhD students

Lab management

Grant writing

Teaching

WHAT NEEDS TO CHANGE TO ALLOW BETTER DEVELOPMENT OF SECURE AND SUSTAINABLE CAREERS?



HOW DO WE CHANGE?