GTSNEXT: AN INTERNATIONAL NETWORK TO DEVELOP THE NEXT GENERATION GEOLOGIC TIME SCALE

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The development of an international network for early career geoscientists is vital to establishing relationships that can lead to improved understanding of the science, co-authorship, future employment, and long-term friendships. As part of EARTHTIME-EU, the European Community's FP7 Marie Curie Initial Training Network (MCITN) GTSnext is an international collaboration of nine PhD candidates and three post-doctoral positions. The Network has two primary focuses – to provide exceptional training for the next generation of geoscientists and to produce an integrated multi-technique geologic timescale for the past 100 million years. The MCITN places a strong emphasis on mobility, requiring the fellows to attend a host institution in a foreign country, and thus allows for international networks to develop at the host university and through MCITN collaborations. GTSnext hosts a variety of workshops throughout Europe. Workshops focus on building and enhancing transferrable skills, such as public speaking and grant writing, as well as theory and technique training from leading researchers in the fields of astronomical and radio-isotopic dating. Additionally, these workshops have included a representative from the private sector, therefore exposing fellows to industry applications of the science. At each host institution, the GTSnext fellows conduct state-of-the-art research, comprised of field and/or laboratory experiments. Often, the research projects are multi-component, consisting of several fellows working towards the integration of astronomical and radio-isotopic time. The first results of these partnerships have been presented at international conferences, with journal publication pending. GTSnext has become closely linked to the American EARTHTIME initiative, further expanding the network of the fellows and larger global scientific community. The MCITN GTSnext demonstrates that international relationships, within Europe and extending to the United States, can enhance the experience of early career geoscientists, while simultaneously contributing to the improvement of the geologic timescale.

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