

LET'S MOVE BEYOND

www.shift-cost.eu

Image credit | Вадим Биць

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

SHIFT YRC SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

**Career Development and
Professional Pathways
for Early-Career Researchers**

Are you a PhD candidate
or an early-career researcher?

Are you trying to navigate career development,
professional identity, and future career pathways
both within and beyond academia?

Then this workshop is for you!

IN A NUTSHELL |

WHEN |

July 15-17th, 2026

WHERE |

Politecnico di Torino, Turin (Italy)

HOW TO PARTICIPATE |

Fill the **Application Form!**
Grants are available.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATIONS |

June 15th, 2026

READ THE FULL PROGRAMME AND APPLY!

For more info | cost.shift.yrc@gmail.com

SHIFT YRC SUMMER SCHOOL 2026

Turin (Italy), July 15-17th, 2026

WHAT |

The SHiFT YRC Summer School 2026 is a 3-days focused workshop designed to support PhD candidates and early-career researchers in navigating career development, professional identity, and future career pathways both within and beyond academia.

The programme combines reflective coaching tools, practical career guidance, peer exchange, and professional development activities to help participants build confidence and clarity regarding their next career steps.

Structured across three interconnected sessions, the summer school addresses career awareness, transferable skills, grant writing, networking, job search strategies, and long-term career planning. A strong emphasis is placed on interactive learning, self-reflection, and peer-supported discussion in order to normalize uncertainty and foster a supportive research community.

WHY |

Early-career researchers increasingly face complex and uncertain career landscapes. While doctoral and postdoctoral training develops advanced analytical, research, and project-management skills, many researchers receive limited structured support in translating these competencies into broader professional pathways. At the same time, growing awareness of non-linear career trajectories has highlighted the need for career development initiatives that address both practical and emotional dimensions of career planning.

The SHiFT YRC Summer School responds to these challenges by creating a reflective and action-oriented environment where participants can:

- better understand their transferable skills,
- explore multiple career pathways,
- develop practical job and funding strategies,
- and build confidence in navigating professional uncertainty.

The programme also seeks to strengthen peer support networks among early-career researchers and encourage more sustainable, meaningful, and impactful career development approaches.

WHO |

The Summer School is intended for:

- PhD candidates,
- postdoctoral researchers,
- and other early-career researchers across disciplines.

The programme is particularly suitable for participants who are:

- considering career transitions,
- exploring academic and non-academic opportunities,
- seeking professional development support,
- or reflecting on long-term career goals.

IMPACTS |

By the end of the programme, participants are expected to:

- gain greater clarity regarding their career aspirations and options,
- better understand how to communicate their transferable skills,
- develop practical strategies for funding and job applications,
- strengthen networking and professional development skills,
- and build supportive peer connections.

Longer-term impacts may include:

- increased confidence in career decision-making,
- improved employability across sectors,
- stronger interdisciplinary networks,
- and enhanced researcher wellbeing through peer validation and support.

WHAT'S SHiFT YRC? |

The SHiFT Young Researchers Council (YRC) of the SHiFT COST Action is a team of early-career researchers and professionals passionate about driving community building and supporting peers in career development.

PROGRAMME & FORMAT

The summer school consists of three thematic sessions delivered through a combination of short presentations, facilitated discussions, practical exercises, and individual coaching tools.

DAILY SESSION THEMES I

DAY 1

July 15, 2026
Afternoon | 13:00 – 17:30

Theme 1 | Self-awareness, Career Landscape, and Peer Exchange

Participants reflect on their current position, transferable skills, and possible future career directions. Topics include:

- mapping PhD skills to professional contexts,
- exploring career pathways,
- discussing fears, uncertainty, and opportunities,
- and peer exchange activities.

DAY 2

July 16, 2026
Full-Day | 09:00 – 17:30

Theme 2 | Practical Pathways – Jobs, Grants, and Next Steps

This session focuses on practical career-development strategies, including:

- entering different employment sectors,
- identifying skill gaps,
- grant writing and funding opportunities,
- networking and job search strategies,
- and personal action planning.

DAY 3

July 17, 2026
Morning | 09:00 – 13:30

Theme 3 | Skills Development and Career Visioning

The final session provides participants with structured self-assessment and planning tools focused on:

- personal values,
- career visioning,
- strengths and weaknesses,
- skill assessment,
- goal setting,
- and future planning.

TEACHING APPROACH I

The programme uses an interactive and participant-centred methodology, including:

- small-group discussions,
- peer feedback,
- guided reflection,
- coaching exercises,
- collaborative activities,
- and facilitated discussions.

Rather than relying solely on lectures, the school prioritizes active engagement and co-created learning experiences.

LOCATION I

The summer school will take place on the premises of Politecnico di Torino, situated close to the city centre of Turin (Italy) and easily reachable by public transportation, including bus, tram, and metro connections.

Detailed information regarding the venue will be provided to registered participants prior to the event.

ABOUT THE TRAINERS



LARISSA JANE H. HOUSTON LL.M. DR. IUR.

Larissa is an R&D Project Manager at FLIGHTKEYS, where she supports the development and advancement of innovative projects in flight planning services and aviation technology. With an interdisciplinary background spanning law, economics, research, and project management, she brings a unique perspective to innovation, operational efficiency, and cross-sector collaboration.

Alongside her professional role, Larissa serves as the General Secretary of the SHiFT COST Action Young Researchers Council (YRC), where she supports the coordination of initiatives, activities, and collaborative projects aimed at strengthening the early-career researcher community. She is also actively involved in mentorship and career counselling for emerging professionals and researchers.

Prior to joining FLIGHTKEYS, she worked as a legal researcher at the Università degli Studi di Padova, specialising in legal and regulatory frameworks. She also served as a project manager and researcher at ClimLaw: Graz, where she led interdisciplinary research projects focused on decarbonisation, climate governance, and stakeholder engagement. In addition, she worked with the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law, where she designed and implemented a mentorship programme for early-career professionals.

Larissa holds degrees from Rhodes University, Stellenbosch University, and the University of Graz, with academic specialisations in law, economics, and international trade. She has authored several publications in the fields of energy and climate change law, sustainable development, and model law.

Her professional transition into aviation technology reflects a strong commitment to adaptability, innovation, and the application of interdisciplinary expertise to emerging global challenges. Within the summer school, she contributes expertise in career development, project management, interdisciplinary collaboration, and professional skills development for early-career researchers.



MARIA BEKIARI LL.M.

Maria Bekiari is a qualified legal professional, lecturer, certified coach, soft-skills trainer, and mentor with more than 15 years of combined experience in academic research, university teaching, legal practice, and professional training across Greece, Germany, and international contexts.

Her work specialises in environmental law, environmental corporate liability, and marine environmental protection, with a strong interdisciplinary focus that combines legal expertise, strategic thinking, and professional development. Throughout her career, Maria has worked extensively on complex legal and regulatory issues, supporting both academic and professional audiences through research, teaching, counselling, training, and coaching.

Maria collaborates with scientific institutions, companies, legal professionals, and researchers on topics related to environmental corporate strategy, legal compliance, professional development, and organisational performance. In addition to her legal expertise, she provides soft-skills training, business coaching, and mentoring for professionals, legal scholars, and early-career researchers.

Her approach is characterised by a strong commitment to quality, interdisciplinary analysis, ethical standards, and solution-oriented thinking. She brings extensive experience in intercultural collaboration, stakeholder engagement, and professional capacity building, combined with a holistic and multi-perspective understanding of legal and organisational challenges.

Within the summer school, Maria contributes expertise in professional development, career coaching, skills training, reflective practice, and interdisciplinary approaches to career planning and personal growth.

HOW TO PARTICIPATE

APPLICATION |

Participation is open to all PhD candidates and early-career researcher and is free of charge, as the conference is supported by COST Action SHiFT - CA21166.

Interested applicants are invited to complete the [Application Form](#) **by June 15, 2026, 13:00 PM CET**.

The selection results will be communicated via email and e-COST within one week.

GRANTS |

The SHiFT COST Action offers travel **grants for 9 participants** coming from COST Member Countries. The grants cover long-distance travel costs (more than 101 km) and a daily allowance of 207 EUR/day. All participants must make arrangements for travel on their own. The reimbursement of grant holders is made after the event by e-COST platform. Participants without grants must cover their travel and accommodation.

Decisions on travel grants will take into consideration the COST Excellence and Inclusiveness Policy. Please confirm your grant eligibility in Section 6.4. Eligibility to Receive Financial Support in the COST Annotated Rules. Please refer to the Reimbursement Rules for other details on the daily allowance calculation and reimbursement process.

FILL THE APPLICATION FORM!

by June 15, 2026, 13:00 PM CET

SCIENTIFIC & ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Larissa Jane H. Houston

Lead Coordinator & Trainer
[SHiFT YRC Secretary General]

FLIGHTKEYS GmbH, Austria and Centre for International Humanitarian and Operational Law at Faculty of Law, Palacký University Olomouc, Czech Republic

Joana Ralão

Lead Coordinator [SHiFT YRC Gender and Ethics Representative]

Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas, Universidade NOVA de Lisboa, Portugal

Barbara Maria Frigione

Communication Coordinator
[SHiFT YRC Communication and Dissemination Coordinator]

Department of Civil, Environmental, Architectural Engineering and Mathematics (DICATAM), University of Brescia, Italy

Valeria Federighi

Local Coordination Support

Architect and Assistant Professor, Politecnico di Torino, Italy

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS



Thanks to the support of



Politecnico di Torino



DAD
Dipartimento
di Architettura
e Design



The SHiFT YRC Summer School 2026 is based upon work from COST Action SHiFT, CA21166, supported by COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) <https://shift-cost.eu/> COST (European Cooperation in Science and Technology) is a funding agency for research and innovation networks. Our Actions help connect research initiatives across Europe and enable scientists to grow their ideas by sharing them with their peers. This boosts their research, career and innovation. <https://www.cost.eu/>