

Consciously Designed Social Media Profiles as Career Catalysts for Scientists

Being a scientist often requires securing funding for research. In the following, I will briefly discuss why visibility on social media supports this goal.

Securing research funding usually requires a team. In the case of international research funding, the team must be cross-border – involving both colleagues from one's own institution and scientists from other countries. Moreover, most large research funding tenders require the inclusion of the public sector, private companies, and other stakeholders. At some point, scientists realize that their own social networks are insufficient to meet these needs or that they are relatively unknown outside their immediate circle of colleagues. However, having an extensive social network is a cornerstone for inviting collaborators to apply for research funding – or, to put it differently, for ensuring that funding applications address societal needs.

In today's world of information overload, it is unlikely (though not impossible) that a CEO from another country would approach a scientist with a collaboration request simply because they read a high-level Q1 paper authored by that scientist. More often, such connections are established through networking events (which must be attended) or via general email inquiries forwarded from an institution's main contact address – messages that typically state something along the lines of: *"Here is a CEO looking to collaborate with the university – please respond!"*

At this point (or ideally even earlier), a well-crafted and consistently updated social media profile becomes invaluable. It provides the CEO with an overview of the scientist's real-world expertise and skills. However, it does more than that – it also helps build trust by demystifying the stereotype of a distant, inaccessible scientist. Instead, it introduces an approachable and enterprising professional who actively participates in events, engages with colleagues in the field, shares valuable insights, invites collaboration, and – even smiles in photos.

A well-maintained social media profile communicates not only what we do but also what we aspire to do and with whom we seek to collaborate. The number of relevant connections on our profile validates our ability to engage in partnerships, while the profiles of our connections subtly reflect our expertise in the field. For instance, at an international event, a scientist meets Mr. or Ms. X for the first time. X might say, *"You gave a great presentation, and I completely agree with your views—could we collaborate in the future? Can I find you on LinkedIn?"* At that moment, all the scientist needs is a LinkedIn profile that effectively communicates: *"Yes, by collaborating, we can achieve our goals more*

effectively!” Taking it a step further, the scientist can approach X directly and say, “I saw that you are looking for collaborators on your projects, and they are a perfect match for me—would you mind if I contact you via LinkedIn?” This establishes the connection, allows the scientist to learn more about X, and initiates collaboration!

So, connect with me on LinkedIn, and let’s create something great together!

Janika Leoste

LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/janika-leoste-56b45822a/>

See also: Academic Profiles for EdTech Needs – an Analysis of Researcher Profiles
<https://www.preprints.org/manuscript/202409.1338/v1>



*Successful R & I in Europe 2024, 11th European Networking Event
Düsseldorf, 15th February 2024*