

nccr —→
on the move

National Center of Competence in Research—
The Migration-Mobility Nexus
nccr-onthemove.ch

unine
Université de Neuchâtel

Workshop Careers Beyond Academia

**Wednesday 29 April 2026
09:30 - 16:15 CET
University of Neuchâtel**

Please register [here](#) by 22 April 2026

This workshop is organized by the nccr – on the move. It is tailored for PhD students and PostDocs but we welcome all members of the NCCR community and doctoral students enrolled in a CUSO program to join us.

General Description

In the morning, a workshop with Verity Elston will focus on the strengths and interests that can help guide your career choices. Through interactive exercises, you will identify the transversal skills you already use in your research, reflect on their importance and learn how to express them clearly for audiences within and beyond academia. And because making the right choice also depends on what drives you, you will also explore what motivates and energises you. By the end of the workshop, you will have a personalised skills profile, and clear language to describe your potential contribution. This session is practical, reflective, and empowering – ideal for anyone curious about their next steps beyond academia (or even if your choice is to stay).

In the afternoon, participants will benefit from an interactive session with four professionals who completed their PhDs on migration-related topics and have since transitioned into non-academic careers. This panel will showcase the diverse career trajectories available to doctoral graduates, offering insights into how specialized research skills can be applied across a wide range of sectors.

Speakers

Verity Elston earned her PhD in Anthropology at the University of Chicago, with a focus on migration before moving into researcher development. For over twenty years, she has worked in universities and research institutions designing training, advising researchers, and developing programmes that support career planning, skills development, and transitions to a wide range of professional roles. She holds formal qualifications in coaching and adult training, which underpin her approach to supporting individual researchers and groups in reflective, practical, and empowering ways. Verity is currently Co-Director of the Graduate Campus at the University of Lausanne, where she leads initiatives that strengthen the professional development and career readiness of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers across disciplines.

Ayla Bonfiglio has been the Regional Head of the Mixed Migration Center Eastern and Southern Africa, Egypt and Yemen since 2022. From 2019-2022, she was the Regional Head of MMC's North Africa hub. For more than 15 years, she has worked on issues of forced migration and mobility across North and Sub-Saharan Africa. In 2016, Ayla co-founded the Conflict and Education

Learning Laboratory (CELL) in the Netherlands, a non-profit research foundation. Formerly, she was a Research Officer at the International Migration Institute, Oxford. She holds a PhD in Public Policy from Maastricht University, an MSc in Forced Migration from the University of Oxford, and a BA (Hons) in Political Science from Columbia University.

Metka Herzog is a Research Manager at swisspeace, Swiss Peace Foundation, where she contributes to shaping the institute's research agenda and coordinates research and teaching activities. She also teaches political science at the University of Basel. Metka holds an MSc in International Development Studies from Utrecht University and a PhD in Public Policy and Policy Analysis from Maastricht University. Her research focuses on highly skilled mobilities, the politics of migration, migrants' civic and political engagement, and migration policy.

Anne Kristol is an anthropologist specializing in issues of inclusion and citizenship, and a cultural manager. Since 2022, she has been in charge of the community interpreting service 'se comprendre' at Caritas Switzerland. Previously, she was curator of the exhibition 'Naturalisation: immersion in the making of the Swiss'. Combining participatory research and an artistic approach, her research focused on the implementation of citizenship policies and the dynamics of inclusion and exclusion in the context of naturalization, questioning in particular the imaginaries linked to the notions of belonging and nationality. In the cultural field, she has been working since 2009 on the implementation and coordination of various projects, notably within the framework of Belluard Bollwerk International, with choreographer Sofia Silva, and for the Cultural Department of the City of Fribourg.

Johanna Probst was born and educated in Germany. She studied sociology in Nancy and Strasbourg and completed a PhD on the asylum procedure. She then moved to Switzerland to join the Swiss Forum for Migration and Population Studies (SFM) at the University of Neuchâtel where she held the positions of scientific collaborator and project leader during seven years. Since 2021, she is a group leader in the domain of demographic analysis at the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, focusing on the dissemination of population statistics.

Practical Information

The workshop will be held on **Wednesday 29 April 2026 from 9:30 to 16:15 at the University of Neuchâtel, Rue Abram-Louis Breguet 2, Room 2.310**. Please register through [this link](#) **no later than 22 April 2026**. If you have further questions, please contact Robin Stünzi via email at robin.stunzi@unine.ch.

Timetable

09:30 - 12:30 **Workshop on careers beyond academia**
Verity Elston, University of Lausanne

12:30 - 14:15 Lunch

14:15 - 16:15 **Interactive session with professionals**

Ayla Bonfiglio, Head of MMC Eastern and Southern Africa/Egypt & Yemen
Metka Hercog, Swisspeace
Anne Kristol, Caritas
Johanna Probst, Swiss Federal Statistical Office

19:00 Dinner