

Here's to the Next Generation Scientists: How to navigate the rocky road towards a scientific career – experiences made and lessons learned from a legend in malacology

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This invited lecture will build on the WCM 2022 key motto “Meeting of Generations“. Using Gerhard Haszprunar, one of the most influential malacologists of the past decades, as a role model, I will provide a personal view on some key issues and prerequisites when pursuing a scientific career in modern-day academia. I will particularly address questions revolving around important decisions of early stage scientists such as choosing the right lab and supervisor, as well as sacrifices and benefits of early and late career academic life. I will highlight the influence and hence responsibilities PIs, supervisors, and academic teachers have concerning the motivation, scientific, and personal development of their mentees. By specifically addressing Gerhard Haszprunar's achievements in scientific research, teaching, and mentoring, I will conclude with what, in my view, are key factors when evaluating the success of a scientific career, way beyond impact factors and other seemingly “objective“ metrical measures.