

BioCop Fellowship Scheme 2007

I am pleased to announce that the winner of the BioCop Fellowship Scheme 2007 is Dr Priscilla Bowens from the University of Zurich, Switzerland (UNIZH, Partner 5).

Dr Bowens obtained her primary degree Bachelor of Science in Animal Science (with high honours) in May 2002 and received Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (with honours) in May 2006, before starting the PhD program in Zurich. During her undergraduate study, she interned with Pfizer Inc. in New York and Michigan, USA in technical services and pharmaceutical development. She also had a role of Veterinary student representative for Nestlè Purina (2003 – 2005). Dr Bowens joined the BioCop project in 2006 and has since been working on developing a low-cost high-throughput *DNA-microchip platform* for the determination of mycotoxins in cereals and cereal-based baby foods by application of transcriptomic fingerprinting techniques using real time-PCR.

Dr Bowens has proposed a two-week visit to the Laboratory for Food and Residue Analysis (ARO) interacting with Hans Peter van Egmond to allow for technology transfer and collaboration between different laboratories. Activities include introducing cell culture techniques, RNA extraction methods, cDNA synthesis and quantitative RT-PCR analysis to ARO, whilst learning the methods of extraction and clean up of various types of grain samples at ARO which will be applied to transcript analysis. It is anticipated that this visit should result in a more fluid analysis process from sample extraction to transcriptomic analysis that can be carried out at all of the partner laboratories in WP's 1 and 10, and should benefit both the BioCop project and the applicant.

On completion of the visit, Dr Bowens will provide a report on what has been achieved in respect of both research and personal objectives.

BioCop Fellowship Scheme is to be an annual event with primary aims of promoting women's participation in science, providing career development opportunities training in new technologies for women scientists working on the BioCop project. Next year's programme will start in early February 2008 and I will be looking forward to receiving your applications.

Dr. Chen Situ
BioCop Gender Manager
Queen's University Belfast