



## Alumni spotlight: Alicia Bruzos, Crick Bioinformatician to leading a Research Group in Germany

Alicia joined the Crick as a Bioinformatician and earlier this year started her own research group at the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology... [More...](#)



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After her PhD, Helena is now in Belgium taking mucus samples from asthmatic patients with the help of clinicians, running mouse models of disease - an... [More...](#)



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Dan is using techniques developed during his PhD in his current Postdoc position at the University of Glasgow to understand how the structure of micro... [More...](#)



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After completing her PhD at the Crick, Tatiana joined Medpace as an Associate Clinical Trial Manager in the Oncology therapeutic area before being pro... [More...](#)



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Clovis left the Crick in 2024 following completion of his PhD and follow-up publications. He now works within consultancy with global management consu...



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The latest alumni spotlight is a special one as we say "Happy retirement" to Sally Leevvers who has led the Academic Training team since the Crick was ... [More...](#)



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Katrien identified a love for reading and writing that had been underpinning her scientific research and started her own company offering proofreading... [More...](#)



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## Alumni spotlight: Alicia Bruzos, Crick Bioinformatician to leading a Research Group in Germany

Alicia joined the Crick as a Bioinformatician and earlier this year started her own research group at the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology in Bremen, Germany.

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Written by Amandeep Jaspal

Alumni Spotlight



### What was your background before joining the Crick?

Before joining the Crick, I worked in Spain on human cancer genomics as part of the PanCancer Whole Genomes Analysis consortium. Later, I did my PhD studying the evolution of marine contagious cancers, combining molecular biology and bioinformatics to explore how cancer cells can spread between individuals in the ocean.

### Tell us about your work at the Crick

I joined the Crick in September 2021 as a bioinformatician in the Mosaicism and Precision Medicine Laboratory led by Dr Veronica Kinsler, where I worked until April 2023. My research focused on identifying mosaic gene fusions in children with congenital melanocytic naevi (CMN). We discovered recurrent BRAF and RAF1 fusions that cause MAPK pathway hyperactivation and the rest of the lab demonstrated the therapeutic potential of

trametinib. This work led to my first first-author publication in the UK without my PhD supervisor involved, and marked an important step towards my scientific independence. I also collaborated with Dr Melissa Riachi on cholesterol metabolism in hyperproliferative inflammatory skin diseases, contributing to RNA-Seq data analyses that revealed disrupted cholesterol pathways as potential therapeutic targets.

My time at the Crick was transformative: I learnt how top-tier science operates, experienced an inspiring and collaborative research environment, and benefited from good mentorship. I also had the privilege of being sponsored by Sir Paul Nurse to attend the Lindau Nobel Laureate Meeting, which gave me the opportunity to meet Nobel laureates and expand my network.

## What have you been doing since you left the Crick?

After leaving the Crick, I was awarded a Marie Skłodowska-Curie (MSCA) fellowship in France, where I developed my own research and supervised students. During that period, I received the L'Oréal-UNESCO Young Talents Award in 2024. In September 2025, I started my own research group at the Max Planck Institute for Marine Microbiology in Bremen, Germany. My team investigates the role of immunity and the microbiome in marine contagious cancers, supported by the Minerva Fast Track Fellowship that allowed me to hire 1 Postdoc, 1 PhD student, and 1 Technician, and includes an annual budget for research costs.

If you are a woman within two years of completing your PhD and aspire to lead your own research group, I strongly encourage you to explore the Minerva Fast Track Fellowships at the Max Planck Institutes. It is a remarkable opportunity to start your independent career.

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