

Aiswarya Prasad

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Experience

Director, Strategy and Experts Lead

Oct 2024 - Present

Nucleate Switzerland

- Sourcing technology, market, and business experts to advise early-stage biotech and pharma start-ups selected to engage in Nucleate's flagship Activator program.

Consultant, The Consulting Society

May 2024 - Present

EPFL, Lausanne

- Developing consulting experience through a project on cloud-based platform use case development for a commodity trading company.
- Mentoring junior members through a semester-long consulting-style project, enhancing their research and presentation skills.

Doctoral Research Assistant

Aug 2020 - Present

University of Lausanne, Switzerland

- Developed expertise in bioinformatics, uncovering novel insight into how bacteria evolve within animal guts.
- Led research projects with international collaborators in Malaysia, India, and Kenya and initiated a collaboration in India, broadening the scope of our study with cross-country data and significantly reducing delays due to pandemic restrictions.
- Led research work experiments resulting in co-authorship of 3 peer-reviewed publications and 1 pre-print in review; presented my work at 4 international conferences and as an invited speaker (~150 audiences).
- Delivered lectures, prepared course tutorials, and supported oral examinations as a teaching assistant, enabling collaboration and effective communication of complex ideas and concepts.

Master Thesis Researcher

May 2019 - May 2020

Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

- Established a new sequencing system and analysis pipeline in the lab to enable gut microbiome analysis in a cost and resource-limited setting. The implemented system (ONT MinION sequencer) cost 10% of the price of the most common system (Illumina MiSeq) available earlier.
- Collaborated with doctors to study the gut microbiome of chronic pancreatitis patients, revealing disease-related changes driven by pancreatitis and potentially resulting in secondary health outcomes.

iGEM Undergraduate Researcher

May 2016 - Oct 2016

Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

- Co-initiated the first team from our institute in the international iGEM competition started by MIT, a synthetic biology competition in Boston, USA, to showcase innovative biotech solutions. Among ~20% of teams to receive a bronze medal.
- Brainstormed project ideas, carried out literature surveys, contributed to the design and execution of experiments in the lab and finally, co-presented our work at the competition in Boston.
- Engaged in teamwork and secured funding for research and travel, including the Indian Bioengineering Competition (iBEC) government grant of USD 15k and USD 9k from the biotechnology department of the Karnataka state government.

Education

PhD in Quantitative Biology

Aug 2020 – Present

University of Lausanne, Switzerland

- Achievements:** Faculty of Biology and Medicine PhD Fellowship (CHF ~60k/year); Mathilde Agassiz Scholarship (CHF 70k, awarded to the top placing applicant); Awarded best speaker at Microbiome international conference (MVIF.33).
- Leadership:** Advised Faculty Hiring Committee as a Student Representative; Co-organized Department Annual Scientific Retreat; Advised the Basel Computational Biology Conference in selecting workshop proposals.

BS + MS in Biology

Aug 2015 – July 2020

Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore

- Achievements:** KVPY National Science Fellowship (Rs 88k/year, awarded to ~1% of applicants by Government of India); All-India-Rank 335 (top ~0.3%).
- Leadership:** Management Coordinator of Quarks, the annual undergraduate magazine of IISc, Co-organized a music competition as part of the annual undergraduate cultural festival of IISc.

Extracurricular Engagement

BCG Academy training

Dec 2024

Zurich, Switzerland

- Immersive training focused on working through a real-life case alongside BCG consultants.

Moderator, Health & Medical Data Privacy Committee

Jul 2020

iGEM India BIOSUMMIT (Remote)

- Moderated the discussion built around the sustainable development goals and advised on selecting participants to receive special mentions.

iGEM Delegate

Nov 2018

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, Egypt

- Advocated for inclusive policymaking, prioritizing the involvement of young scientists in discussions concerning genetic engineering as an iGEM delegate.

Skills

Technical Expertise: Life Science - Microbiology, Bioinformatics, Microbiome science, NGS sequencing technologies (Diagnostics), Data analysis and visualization (R, Python, Bash)

Languages: English (Native), Tamil (Native), Hindi (Conversational), Kannada (Conversational), French (A2)