

# PRANAV UNNIKRISHNAN

PhD candidate

## Contact

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## Profile

I am a PhD candidate (awaiting defense date) in Evolutionary Biology at Jagiellonian University, Poland, with a diverse research background spanning *Drosophila*, birds, squirrels, and bulb mites. Alongside my academic career, I have developed strong science communication, social media management, and event organization skills, which make me well-suited for roles at the intersection of scientific outreach and digital engagement.

I have hands-on experience managing social media accounts (Twitter/X, Instagram) for international conferences such as EMPSEB29 and PEC, handling event promotions, audience engagement, and email communications. My strong writing skills are demonstrated by my peer-reviewed scientific publications, and I am adept at translating complex scientific concepts into accessible content for diverse audiences. Additionally, I have graphic design experience, having created promotional materials and the official logo for EMPSEB29.

Equally passionate about science and art, I actively pursue both digital and traditional illustration. This artistic side enriches my ability to create clear, engaging, and visually appealing scientific communication. My strength lies in combining creativity with scientific rigor to produce content that is both accurate and compelling for diverse audiences.

## Education

### PHD IN BIOLOGY (2021 - PRESENT)

Jagiellonian University, Krakow, Poland

Doctoral Thesis: "Testing for factors maintaining 6Pgdh polymorphism in bulb mites"

Supervisor: Prof hab. Dr. Wiesław Babik

Assistant supervisor: Dr. Agata Plesnar-Bielak

### INTEGRATED BS-MS (2015 - 2020)

Indian Institute of Science Education and Research,  
Tirupati, India

Masters Thesis: "Evolution of coat color and pattern in squirrels of the world"

Supervisor: Prof. Dr. Nandini Rajamani

## Relevant experience

### EVENT ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP

#### **EMPSEB29 (European Meeting of PhD Students in Evolutionary Biology) – Organizer, Designer and Social media management**

- Coordinated an international conference with 100+ participants.
- Managed official social media accounts (Twitter/X, Instagram), email correspondence, and digital promotion.
- Collaborated with a global team to handle logistics, scheduling, speaker coordination, and participant engagement.
- Designed promotional materials, including the official conference logo

#### **PEC2023 (Polish Evolutionary Conference 2023) – Volunteer & Communications Support**

- Assisted with event coordination, managed communication channels, and contributed to social media promotion.
- Collaborated with the officials to highlight key speakers, sessions, and updates.

#### **Science Outreach & Academic Events, IISER (Indian Institute of Science Education and Research) - Organizer**

- Planned and led public outreach events (e.g. Science Day, R workshops) engaging students and researchers.

#### **University Fest (Attendance ~2000) – Lead Organizer**

- Managed logistics, promotions, and team coordination for one of the largest student-led festivals at IISER.
- Coordinated celebrity invitations, hospitality and ensuring proper communication between the guests and the audience.

### GRAPHIC DESIGN & CREATIVE COMMUNICATION

#### **Conference Branding & Materials**

- Designed the official EMPSEB29 logo and developed cohesive branding across promotional materials.
- Produced banners, posters, infographics, ID cards, and digital templates for social media campaigns.

#### **Social Media Visual Content**

- Created engaging digital assets for EMPSEB29, PEC, and university workshops, ensuring consistent design and high audience engagement.

#### **Illustration & Game Development (Master's Project)**

- Designed illustrations and visual elements for an interactive game assessing camouflage efficiency in squirrels.
- Applied Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator to produce scientifically accurate visuals for behavioral experiments.

#### **Digital & Traditional Illustration**

- Skilled in producing creative and science-themed artwork, presentations, and outreach materials using traditional sketching and digital tools (Photoshop, Illustrator, Canva, Krita).
- Created scientific illustrations, diagrams and figures for peer reviewed scientific papers and PhD thesis making complex techniques and methods easy to understand.

Selected design and illustration samples available on request.

# Awards & Scholarships

2023	Visibility and Mobility module (travel grant) to attend SMBE 2023
2022	Outstanding student poster in ESEB 2022
2020	NCN Scholarship for three years
2020	All India Rank of 52 in GATE (Graduate Aptitude Test in Engineering) in Ecology and Evolution
2015	DST Inspire Scholarship for five years

# Major Presentations & conferences

PEC 2023	: Oral + Poster presentation
EMPSEB 28	: Oral + Poster presentation
SMBE 23	: Poster presentation
PEC 2022	: Poster presentation
ESEB 2022	: Poster presentation

# Skills

- Science Communication & Writing – Translate complex scientific ideas into accessible content for diverse audiences; experience with outreach, conference promotion, and research highlights.
- Digital & Traditional Illustration – Strong artistic background in both hand-drawn and digital media; create original visuals and illustrations for science communication and outreach.
- Graphic Design & Visual Communication – Experienced in producing logos, infographics, posters, and cohesive branding for events and academic presentations.
- Social Media Strategy & Community Engagement – Skilled in building visibility and interaction for scientific conferences and initiatives across multiple platforms.
- Research & Data Analysis – Background in evolutionary biology, genetics, and ecology; experienced in experimental design, statistical analysis, and interdisciplinary collaboration.
- Project & Time Management – Coordinate research projects, mentor students, and deliver on multiple deadlines simultaneously.

## Graphic design

### softwares:-

- Canva
- Adobe Photoshop
- Adobe Illustrator
- Inkscape
- Krita
- Procreate
- ImageJ

## Social media

### management expertise:-

- Instagram
- Twitter/X
- Facebook
- Mailing list
- Blue sky
- LinkedIn
- Mastodon

# WRITING & SCIENCE COMMUNICATION

## Peer-Reviewed Publications & Academic Writing

- Published peer-reviewed research articles (1, 2); experienced in manuscript preparation, literature reviews, and grant proposals. Successfully wrote and submitted the PhD thesis.
- Presented findings at international conferences through talks and posters.

## Editorial & Reviewing Experience

- Reviewed manuscripts, student theses, and research proposals, providing constructive feedback for clarity and coherence.
- Experience in editing academic texts and summarizing complex scientific concepts for broader audiences.

## Outreach & Event Communication

- Developed content for social media and outreach events, crafting posts and highlights that made scientific discussions accessible to broader audiences.
- Coordinated events with local schools to communicate scientific concepts to high school students to increase engagement.
- Experienced in communicating science across academic and non-academic audiences; familiar with the role of science communication in supporting policy and sponsors.

## Visual Storytelling

- Integrated writing and design to create presentations, outreach content, and science communication visuals that balance accuracy with creativity.

# Additional activities

## TEACHING & MENTORING

### Master’s level courses

- Taught Master’s-level courses in science communication and bioinformatics for 3 years (100+ students).
- Organized poster competitions, seminars and other scientific events for the students to improve scientific outreach.

### Mentoring

- Mentored Bachelor’s and Master’s students on research projects and theses through to completion.

### Training and scientific workshops

- Completed training workshops in pedagogy and science communication.

# ARTISTIC AND PERSONAL PURSUITS

## Drawing & Illustration

- Pursue both traditional sketching and digital art as a personal hobby, a way to relax and express creativity.

## Dance

- Member of a dance school ensemble for 2+ years, performing on stage in group productions

# References

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