UVM Postdoctoral Association Meeting

05.28.2026 | Davis Center 413, Chittenden Bank Room

I. **Call to Order**
   a. 3:30pm ET

II. **Attendance**
   a. Jill Stockwell
   b. Postdocs in attendance: 16

III. **Mode of Meeting**
   a. Hybrid (in-person + virtual)

IV. **Agenda**
   a. Welcome
   b. Annual report briefing by all Executive committee members
   c. Bylaws amendment: Vote and adoption of 3 amendments
   d. Announcement of the PDA election results and introduction of the newly elected officers
   e. General questions and discussions
   f. Adjournment

V. **Welcome**
   a. The Chair welcomed all participants attending both in person and online. He noted that this meeting marked the PDA's end-of-term gathering and provided an opportunity to reflect on accomplishments during the year and introduce the newly elected Executive Committee.

VI. **Annual report briefing by all Executive committee members**
   a. **Chair – Dr. Emmanuel Abah**
      i. Highlighted the revival and growth of the PDA following Dr. Jill Stockwell's appointment as Asst. Dean & Manager of Postdoctoral affairs
      ii. Served as a liaison between postdoctoral scholars and the UVM administration, including representing postdocs at Faculty Senate meetings
      iii. Represented UVM postdoctoral scholars at the National Postdoctoral Association (NPA) Annual Conference
      iv. Led and coordinated PDA monthly meetings throughout the year

   b. **Webmaster – Dr. Stacia McIntosh**
      i. Launched the official UVM PDA website
      ii. Led the redesign and development of the website in collaboration with the UVM technology team

    iii. Ensured that PDA activities, meeting minutes, and organizational information are accessible through the website

c. **Treasurer – Dr. Morgan Crump**
    i. Assumed the Treasurer position following the departure of the previous Treasurer from UVM
    ii. Led fundraising efforts and worked to establish purchasing card access to support PDA activities and events

d. **Secretary – Dr. Amasha Withana**
    i. Recorded and maintained meeting minutes and documentation for PDA meetings and activities
    ii. Coordinated meeting scheduling and room reservations in collaboration with Dr. Jill Stockwell
    iii. Distributed meeting minutes and organizational updates to the postdoctoral community

e. **PR – Dr. Ariane De Almeida Rodrigues**
    i. Led PDA social and professional development initiatives
    ii. Coordinated the Postdoctoral Needs Assessment Survey with assistance from former Postdoc-at-Large Dr. Saul Huerta de la Cruz
    iii. Established a PDA Social Events Committee consisting of:
        1. Ariane De Almeida Rodrigues
        2. Dr. Saul Huerta de la Cruz
        3. Dr. Pedro Francisco Soler Llorens

VII. Bylaws amendment: vote and adopt 3 amendments

a. The PDA membership reviewed and voted on three proposed amendments to the PDA bylaws.
    i. Amendment 1: Split the Public Relations Officer role into two positions
        1. The existing Public Relations Officer position will be divided into two separate positions:
            a. Social media and communications Officer
            b. Events and engagement Officer
        2. Rationale: The responsibilities associated with communications, social media, outreach, and event planning had become too extensive for a single officer. Creating two positions will improve effectiveness and ensure adequate attention to both functions
        3. Outcome: Approved unanimously by attending members

    ii. Amendment 2: Empower the PDA leadership to convene a special session to amend the bylaws when the need arises:

1. “The PDA leadership shall convene a PDA meeting to amend the bylaws following Executive Committee review of amendment proposals.”
2. Rationale: The previous bylaws allowed amendments only once per year. The amendment provides flexibility to address organizational needs as they arise
3. Outcome: Approved unanimously by attending members

iii. Amendment 3: Determine the start date for newly elected officers:
1. “The newly elected officers shall take office on June 1. From this date until the next PDA monthly meeting, the outgoing Executive Committee shall meet with the incoming Executive Committee to provide an operational briefing and ensure a smooth transition.”
2. Rationale: This amendment promotes continuity and facilitates a smooth transition between Executive Committees

Outcome: Approved unanimously by attending members

VIII. Announcement of the PDA election results and introduction of the newly elected officers

a. Election summary
   i. Voting concluded on May 27, 2026
   ii. A total of 13 votes were cast by PDA members
   iii. Five candidates were elected to Executive Committee positions

b. Additional elections required
   i. Due to the approved restructuring of the Public Relations position and the absence of a Treasurer candidate, the incoming Executive Committee will organize a special election to fill:
      1. Treasurer
      2. Social Media and Communications Officer
      3. Events and Engagement Officer

c. Newly appointed Executive committee

Position	Name	Department
Co-chair	Dr. Morgan Crump	Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources
Co-chair	Dr. Julia Zimmerman	Vermont Complex Systems Institute
PR*	Dr. Pedro Francisco Soler Llorens	Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics
Webmaster	Dr. Amaya Carrasco	Department of Agriculture, Landscape, and Environment
Secretary	Dr. Amasha Withana	Department of Agriculture, Landscape, and Environment

*Position subject to transition following implementation of the approved bylaws amendments

IX. General questions and discussions

a. Purchasing card
    i. Discussion regarding the possibility of obtaining a purchasing card under the UVM PDA name rather than under the Treasurer's name
b. Time commitment for PDA activities
    i. PDA is entirely voluntary, and neither Executive Committee members nor postdoctoral scholars receive compensation for their participation
    ii. The time commitment varies depending on the officer's position. However, most positions require approximately 2 or more hours per month
    iii. It was suggested that the UVM PDA website include information describing the responsibilities and approximate time commitment associated with each Executive Committee position

X. Adjourn

a. 4:30 pm ET. Participants remained for networking, pizza, and refreshments until approximately 5:45 PM ET