DANDRITE Alumni Feature
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Now: Life Science Consultant,
Astora Consulting

What were the highlights of your time at DANDRITE?
The absolute highlight was the amazing people I met. The colleagues who became lifelong friends and a network I know I can always count on. I have always felt a strong sense of community at DANDRITE, because even when people leave, the connections remain.
A close second would be my research internship in the USA (SD), where I learned a cutting-edge Breasi CRISPR technique and met real-life cowboys, which was quite fun for someone from the Central Europe!

Describe your new job?
I work as a Life Science Consultant at Astora Consulting in Copenhagen, where we support pharmaceutical, bio-tech, and medical device companies with digital transfor-mation, regulatory compliance, and process optimization.

What I love most about my job is the variety. No two days look the same. One day I might be deep into mapping out a process for pharmacovigilance reporting, and the next I'm designing a test case for validation of soft-ware supporting clinical trials. I get to dive into complex problems, learn about different parts of the life sciences industry, and figure out how to make things work a little bit better.

In what ways do you think the skills and experiences acquired during your time at DANDRITE contribute to your current position?
Beyond the obvious scientific skills, such as diligence, critical thinking, and integrity, some of the most valuable experiences came from outside the lab. During my time at DANDRITE, I was actively involved in many volunteer activities, including YoDa, the Festival of Research, and or-ganizing multiple EMBL Young Investigator Meetings (YIM) in Aarhus and abroad.

These experiences taught me how to manage projects, navigate complex tasks, reach out and collaborate with new people - skills I now use daily in my role as a consul-tant. Volunteering also helped me grow more confident in networking and public engagement.

What key lessons have you learned during your PhD?
My biggest challenge, in hindsight, was my own mindset. I was very focused on "my path" and, at times, I dismissed opportunities that didn't seem directly relevant to it. If I could go back, I would try to be more open and more curious about what's happening outside my specific area. I wish I had taken more interdisciplinary courses and spent more time building a broader network.

The biggest lesson I learned is don't get too caught up in the straight line. Some of the most valuable learning and connections happened to me when I step a little to the side.

Where do you see yourself professionally in 5 years?
I don't see myself going back to the lab. I've learned that I am not the kind of person who thrives by focusing all my energy on one small detail for years. What really motivates me is seeing the bigger picture; connecting ideas, solving problems, and helping others move things forward.

Working as a consultant has been a great fit, because I get to use my scientific background in a broader way. That drive to improve patient outcomes is still very much present, I just tackle things from a different angle than I imagined when I started my PhD. In five years, I hope to be leading complex projects, and maybe even men-toring others who are just starting out. I've found a path that challenges and inspires me, and I'm excited to keep growing in this direction.

What advice would you give to others pursuing or wanting to pursue an academic career in Denmark, based on your own experiences?
Denmark is a fantastic place to pursue a PhD. From a pragmatic perspective, PhD students are considered a full-time employee with a competitive salary. This means fewer financial worries and more focus on your research. Given the size of Denmark, it is also easier to take advan-tage of strong neuroscience community, especially with a financial support from major companies such as Lund-beck or Novo Nordisk or many small private foundations.

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