



Mini Profile Owen

Tell us about your career steps in science so far. What have you done so far to get here?

I hold a MSc in Biomolecular Sciences and in Chemistry. During my studies I did research internships in various fields, studying crowding in yeast using FRET sensors, synthesizing acyl hydrazones with putative self-replicating properties and evolving self-replicating ribozymes in vitro. In addition, I joined the iGEM competition, where we engineered yeast with the goal to produce plastic from biowaste. Working on this project convinced me of the potential for the production of green chemicals and I decided to pursue a career in the development of cell factories.

What do you hope to learn and achieve during project HYDROCOW?

In the HYDROCOW project I am following my passion for the development of cell factories. It is my hope that this project will contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gasses and will inspire future efforts that utilise (hydrogen oxidizing) bacteria for the production of chemicals. I look forward to growing as a researcher and want to develop a strong understanding of the technical challenges encountered during the development of cell factories.

The EIC funds transformative technologies, what excites you about a career in Applied Sciences?

Working in the applied sciences provides an opportunity to test your ideas about the world. When the internet or books do not provide the answer, I can devise experiments and try and find out for myself. In the process, new technologies are developed that improve the livability of the world. I believe that cell factories can be one of these technologies. Production of bulk chemicals or proteins at an industrial scale using bacteria is not widespread. It is very exciting to work on something that is not yet possible and to be one of the people to realize it.

What do you like to do outside Science.

Outside of the lab I like to do a lot of sports. My big passion is surfing, but I also like to go climbing or swimming. I also like to travel, which I can combine well with surfing. I love to explore beautiful landscapes and talk to people from all walks of life when on the go. In my free time I like to play video- or board games, dance salsa or do theatre.