

Report of the PhD student Vendula Rašková

I took the supervision of Vendula when she was already appointed as a PhD student in the Institute of Parasitology, directed by Prof. Julius Lukeš. To achieve this, she succeeded to pass an admission exam. I was not present and therefore had no decision in the selection process that granted her with her PhD position. When I took the supervision of her PhD, I was told by her former supervisor, Dr. Jan Pyrih, that the previous formation she received was not strong enough to cope with some academic exigencies. Indeed, during her PhD she had to overcome limitations regarding English language, and experimental and scientific skills.

In this process, she was able to significantly improve several of the above-mentioned aspects, and she was able to pass her state exam, evaluated by academic authorities in an independent process in which I had not involvement nor decision.

Vendula has a kind and respectful personal report and responds to instructions. She acquired skills in general molecular biology techniques, such as cloning, WB, PCR and parasite culture and transfection, amongst others. She performed functional mitochondrial assays and visited Bratislava where she analysed the activity of respiratory complexes under the supervision of Dr. Ingrid Škodová-Sveráková.

She has collaborated in several publications with experimental work, co-authoring enough publications to fulfil the academic requirements needed to obtain a PhD.

Additionally, she independently wrote a Thesis that obtained positive reviews by Dr. Dave Speijer and Dr. Vyacheslav Yurchenko, both recommending her to be granted with a PhD title.

Some remaining aspects to be yet developed by her are the ability to perform independent, unsupervised work, which at this point is still needed. The deliveries also must be supervised, and she must strengthen critical thinking.

I believe that in time she will either succeed in pursuing these goals or find the proper niche where to find the motivation to function satisfactorily and a keen environment for her personal and professional development. Vendula shall then continue her journey.

In all, it is my opinion that Vendula has acquired several skills which are useful at the bench in a molecular biology laboratory, and would perform well under supervision while she continues with her learning process.

As my first PhD student, it was challenging for me to try to motivate and guide the process to this final step. I conclude my allocution wishing her the best of luck in any endeavour towards self-development.

Dr. Ignacio Durante.