

**Press release****Hochschule Geisenheim University****Marilena Schulte**

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Biology, Nutrition / healthcare / nursing  
transregional, national**Geisenheim Geneticist Receives Prestigious Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship**

**Dr. Hannah Robinson, a researcher at Geisenheim's Department of Plant Breeding, has been approved for a postdoctoral fellowship under the European Union's Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) program. These highly coveted research grants are awarded to exceptional scientists for their innovative research approaches.**

Dr. Hannah Robinson has worked as a geneticist at Hochschule Geisenheim University's Department of Plant Breeding since July 2024. Under the direction of Professor Kai Voss-Fels and together with her department colleagues, the young Australian scientist is working to accelerate the cultivation process for important wine and horticultural crops.

The goal: improving cultivation methods

"It currently takes around 25 years for new grape varieties to be approved. This process is far too slow when you consider the speed at which climate conditions are currently changing and the population is growing," says Dr. Robinson on the urgency of her research work.

Using modern technologies, scientists at the Department of Plant Breeding are aiming to identify the right partner early on to produce a plant with the desired characteristics in the shortest time possible. One method, for example, is analyzing the DNA of the plants and comparing them with a pool of DNA data. Dr. Robinson wants to further improve prediction methods in plant breeding by incorporating other areas of research, including phenotyping and epigenetics, in addition to genomics.

From Australia to Geisenheim

Dr. Robinson has now been awarded a MSCA fellowship for her research project. The MSCA program was established by the European Union in order to fund postdoctoral researchers who want to improve their skills through further training and international mobility. "Being able to leave my home country of Australia and conduct research in Europe, as well as expand my professional network – it's a fantastic opportunity for my scientific career," said Dr. Robinson. She also emphasized a key advantage to working at Geisenheim, namely the chance to carry out research directly in the surrounding vineyards: "In Australia I had to drive for hours to reach the test sites."

Dr. Robinson completed her PhD in cereal crop genetics at the University of Queensland and subsequently worked at Intergrain, one of Australia's leading cereal breeding companies. She is also an honorary professor at the University of Queensland.

"With her expertise in the field of quantitative genetics, Dr. Robinson is a great addition to our team," affirms Professor Kai Voss-Fels, head of the Department of Plant Breeding. "We got to know each other in Australia, and I tried to recruit

her for Hochschule Geisenheim University right away. I am very pleased that it has now worked out. The MSCA fellowship is a great honor for researchers – and one that Dr. Robinson truly deserves.”

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URL for press release: <https://www.hs-geisenheim.de/en/hochschule/mitteilungen-veranstaltungen-termine/nachrichten/archiv/details-view-start/pflanzenzuechtung-forscherin-der-hochschule-geisenheim-erhaelt-renommiertes-marie-sklodowska-curie-stipendium-der-eu>



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