

Personal details

Name: Mirjam Elisabeth Leunissen (1 January 1979)

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Summary

I am a data journalist and visualization specialist with a scientific background. I want to inform and engage people with my curiosity and enthusiasm for data analysis, storytelling and visual communication.

Professional experience

June 2015 – present Data journalist, visualization specialist and frontend developer
National newspaper de Volkskrant (Amsterdam), crossmedia and data journalism team
Responsible for data research and the development of interactive data visualizations and new digital storytelling formats on a wide range of topics.

Jan. 2014 – present Owner of 'Dutch Data Design'
Amsterdam, www.dutchdatadesign.nl

I design and develop data visualizations for the web. For companies, government and academic institutions. I also give presentations to share my knowledge and inspire others.

Jan. 2011 – Dec. 2013 Scientific Project Leader / Assistant Professor in physics
FOM Institute AMOLF (Amsterdam), Foundation for Fundamental Research on Matter

Sep. 2009 – Dec. 2010 Postdoctoral Fellow in theoretical physics
FOM Institute AMOLF (Amsterdam) and University of Cambridge (UK)

April 2007 – July 2009 Postdoctoral Fellow in experimental physics
Center for Soft Matter Research, New York University, United States

Sep. 2002 – Feb. 2007 PhD Physics (with distinction)
Utrecht University, Foundation for Fundamental Research on Matter (FOM)

As a scientist I was responsible for the conception and implementation of innovative scientific research and the dissemination of the results to a broad audience. As a project leader I was also responsible for setting up and managing a new research group. My activities included:

- developing novel experimental and computer simulation methods in the area of self-organizing materials research
- acquiring external funding through innovative research proposals: k€ 1440 in 2011 – 2012
- recruiting and supervising talented researchers: two PhD students, one postdoctoral fellow
- directing technical support staff: successful design and construction of an advanced experimental setup in the period 2011 – 2013

- publishing research results in international journals:
more than 25 publications between 2002-2013, including articles in the prestigious journals Nature and PNAS (publication list online)
- giving oral and poster presentations at (inter-)national meetings:
more than 65 oral presentations and 20 posters between 2002-2013
- initiating and maintaining international collaborations: USA, UK, Spain

Dec. 2001 – June 2002 Internship Science Journalism

Natuur Wetenschap & Techniek Magazine (now New Scientist), Veen Magazines BV

I collected information from various sources, interviewed people, and wrote articles for the website (over 100) and magazine (more than 20, examples online).

Education

1997 – 2002 BSc & MSc Chemistry, Nijmegen University (with distinction)

Specialization in physical chemistry, biochemistry, science communication.

Honors and awards

2019	Shortlisted for the DJA Investigation of the year (with colleagues)
2018	Google Digital News Initiative grant (member of the applying team)
2017 / 2016	VOJN award for best online data journalism project
2017 / 2015	Longlisted for the Information is Beautiful Awards
2016 / 2014	Shortlisted for the Information is Beautiful Awards
2015	Malofiej 23 Silver medal for interactive news graph
2014	Shortlisted for Data Journalism Awards
2013	Shortlisted for RED magazine's 'inspiring women' election
2013 / 2009	Honorable mention in the international journal Soft Matter
2012 / 2007	Awarded prestigious research grants by NWO and FOM
2012	Elected to De Jonge Akademie of the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences
2010	Honorable mention in Viva magazine's list of most successful women
2010	Minerva prize for the best physics article written by a woman
2010	Research poster prize at international biointerface science conference
2008	Third prize popular scientific writing contest NTVN magazine
2000 / 1999	Scholarship Chemical Industry Association for outstanding achievements
1997	First place National Biology Olympiad and bronze medal International Biology Olympiad

Languages

Dutch (native), English (fluent), German (passive good, active mediocre)

References

Available upon request