

Personal details

Name: Mirjam Elisabeth Leunissen (1 January 1979)

City: Amsterdam, The Netherlands

Summary

I am a very curious out-of-the-box thinker with a background in science, data visualization and journalism. I love to delight people with new insights and surprising ideas. And to co-creatively cook up solutions, e.g. using design thinking methods.

Professional experience

Jan. 2021 – Mar. 2021 Team leader infographics desk
National newspaper de Volkskrant (Amsterdam)

Managing the team, setting journalistic priorities and promoting crossmedia collaboration

June 2015 – Dec. 2020 Data journalist, visualization specialist and frontend developer
National newspaper de Volkskrant (Amsterdam), crossmedia and data journalism teams

Responsible for research, project management, concept design and the development of interactive data visualizations and new storytelling formats on a wide range of topics.

Jan. 2014 – Jan. 2019 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
- recruiting and supervising talented researchers
- initiating and maintaining international collaborations (USA, UK, Spain)
- acquiring external funding through innovative proposals (M€1.4 in 2011 – 2012)

- directing technical support staff, e.g. in the 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 international meetings:
more than 65 oral presentations and 20 posters between 2002 – 2013

Education

1997 – 2002 BSc & MSc Chemistry, Nijmegen University (with distinction)
Specialization in physical chemistry, biochemistry, science communication.

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 and printed magazine.

Honors and awards

2019	European Newspaper Awards for data journalism & animated graphics
2019	Shortlisted for the DJA Investigation of the year (with colleagues)
2018	Google Digital News Initiative grant (member of the innovation 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

Languages

Dutch (native), English (fluent), Spanish (beginner A2, currently taking classes), German (highschool level - passive good, active mediocre)

References

Available upon request