



MRS Bulletin names Le Ferrand as Postdoctoral Publication Prize recipient

www.mrs.org/bulletin-prize

Hortense Le Ferrand, Nanyang Technological University (NTU), Singapore, received the 2018 *MRS* (Materials Research Society) *Bulletin* Postdoctoral Publication Prize. This award recognizes postdoctoral researchers for their intellectual merit, the impact of their research and scholarship, and their interest in science writing and communications.

Hortense was selected from more than 75 well-qualified applicants and nominations. She is recognized “for her excellent academic credentials, high-quality scientific publications, science writing and science communications efforts, and potential for future scientific leadership in the materials field.”

Hortense is currently a second-year postdoc and will continue her career in academia with an assistant professorship at NTU in the Schools of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering. The Swiss National Science Foundation is providing financing for her current postdoctoral position at the Center for Biological

Sensor Science at NTU, where she is also exploring written science communication in various media, including peer-reviewed journals, news articles, and blogs, in addition to her research.

Her research interests focus on bio-inspired materials and fabrication of composites with internal microstructures close to natural materials, specifically hard materials (e.g., bone, shell, squid beak) with a high content of organics and inorganics. When trying to recreate these composite materials, it has been very challenging because most traditional manufacturing methods do not allow for combination of high density with structural complexity. The goal of the recreation is to make a material that is damage resistant and resilient and that has better mechanical properties than ceramics or polymers.

During her education, she had the opportunity to be exposed to diverse environments, which provided experiences for her to discuss in her blog. By studying various art, literature, nature, and cultures during her travels, she explored different

materials, which motivated her to create summaries about what she had learned.

When asked if she has any words of advice for new writers, Hortense said one exercise that helped her was to study an image and explain, in words, what is seen in detail. This taught her the art of being descriptive on all points of what makes something interesting. She said you should also know your audience and target them. “Write persuasively, like you are speaking to a colleague.”

“It is also important to be open to meeting new people from different backgrounds and experiencing new places and things. When working on your PhD, it is easy to get stuck on one subject or one group of people, which can be isolating. The more variety you see in the world, you realize you aren’t alone. And the MRS meetings are perfect for this type of exposure.”

MRS acknowledges the Jiang Family Foundation and MTI Corporation for their generous contributions to support the Postdoctoral Publication Prize.



Le Ferrand receives the *MRS Bulletin* Postdoctoral Publication Prize from 2018 MRS President Sean J. Hearne (left) and Immediate Past President Susan Trolier-McKinstry (right) at the 2018 MRS Fall Meeting.



POSTDOCTORAL PUBLICATION PRIZE

The *MRS Bulletin* Postdoctoral Publication Prize recognizes postdoctoral researchers for their intellectual merit and the impact of their research and scholarship. **Candidates should have an interest in scientific publications and/or science writing and communications**, and show promise for future scientific contributions in the broad materials field.

2019 Application Deadline— July 31

Visit www.mrs.org/bulletin-prize for additional information, including application requirements and process.