



Yuliana Mihaylova PhD

Of worms and men

Immortal worms

She is originally from Sofia, Bulgaria. She moved to England for her university education where she graduated as a Bachelor of Psychology from the University of Nottingham. Approaching the end of her course, she realised that her true passion lies in the biological sciences. She did her Masters and PhD in Genetics working on 'immortal' worms. More specifically, she and her colleagues call these worms 'immortal under the edge of the knife'. This means they can be cut into hundreds of pieces, each one of them giving rise to a new fully functional worm. These animals perform such regenerative feats by employing a large number of adult stem cells. Her lab studies different aspects of these stem cells.

Science as a magnifying glass

What she dislikes about working in science is the publishing frenzy and the 'publish or perish' mentality. Researchers are asked to publish really frequently in top-tier journals in order to get funding. This results in a lot of half-baked conclusions and premature irreproducible data being published all the time.

"What I love about science is its vast potential (if done right). It is like a magnifying glass - turn it towards the past and you would see what the world was like; turn it towards the future and imagine what it would be like."

Answer the four-year-old:

How was earth made?

"Imagine an old bearded man in the sky creating water, soil, animals and plants. Now remove the man from the picture."



This is a two-tailed flatworm. It has been stained by Yuliana to show the incredibly high number of stem cells throughout its body.

Immortality for ever!

"The idea of immortality has always fascinated me. I love reading books about the decadent shades of immortality and its consequences. My most favorite one is "The Picture of Dorian Gray."