

Biologist to Head-hunter

I sometimes overlook what I've achieved or overcome to arrive at this point in my career. The opportunities I've embraced, the advice I've received and the heartfelt decisions I've made. So sharing my journey with you was an opportunity to pause and reflect, strengthening my belief that change is not always easy, but it can be very rewarding.

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Originally from Colombia, I trained as a Biologist and Microbiologist before moving to Brazil for academic research. After earning my Masters and starting a PhD in Neglected Tropical Diseases, I sought a career that combined my interest in science with a broader community impact. During this period, I was contacted by a leader who saw how my transferable skills from my scientific background could be applied to Executive Recruitment for the Healthcare Industry in Brazil and Latin America. Despite being outside of my comfort zone, this new career path aligned with both the scientific and social elements I wanted to combine. Which eventually led to my first interaction with Novartis.

I joined Novartis Brazil as a Talent Scout Lead for Latin America and Canada. Embracing new opportunities, I supported the Global Executive Scouting team in a short-term assignment. This project provided me with so much experience and paved the way for my current role as Talent Management Director for Operations and Global Functions. In June of this year, I relocated to Ireland.

Relocating to Ireland

The decision to move was easy! I grew up in an international family and I think that's embedded in me. I consider myself a world citizen. I really love to travel and explore new cultures. Therefore, the opportunity to experience living somewhere totally different like Dublin was something I couldn't pass up.

Ireland has been a big adjustment not just in terms of language, but culture too. But what really surprised me was how international this city is, how welcoming Irish people are, and how they support you. My colleagues have helped me integrate not only into the company, but into their community; and that has really helped my transition.

There are moments that have been overwhelming, but I don't regret it for a second. I think we underestimate the challenges that can arise from relocating for a role, changing countries and cultures. When I see candidates that have international experience, they often have more skills than are shown on their CV. The resilience, curiosity, and adaptability that one needs to make the international leap can be easily overlooked. I believe this experience helps you grow as a person and as a professional. My advice to anyone thinking of relocating is don't let fear stop you! I was so grateful for the supports I received from Novartis; They helped me by arranging temporary accommodation, support in finding a new home, and immigration guidance.



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Lina Borda Samper, Talent Management Director for Operations and Global Functions

Pursuing my Passions

As part of the Talent Management team in Dublin, I focus on ensuring that the business has healthy succession pipelines as well as ensuring our people have opportunities to develop and grow. That's a huge part of my role and it ties in with my purpose and passion for human health. I think being in Human Resources (HR) in a company like Novartis is the best place for me. Going from Biologist to HR wasn't an option before because I didn't know it was a possibility. Sometimes in life, you don't know you can do something until you

see someone else make that first step. Or you have a leader or coach that gives you the guidance and opportunity to learn and develop. I feel like that is what Novartis has provided for me.

Having said that, science will always be a part of my life and part of what I love. My scientific career is what initiated my curiosity. It has allowed me to have deeper discussions with industry leaders and talent due to my scientific knowledge and background, which I feel has helped advance my career.

Here in Novartis, I have been lucky to have leaders who have given me the exposure to new opportunities, as well as the support to keep learning and developing the skills that first took me on this journey. For me it's not just about what you've done, but also about the skills that you can develop along the way. It's about being intentional in your decisions.

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