

# Perspectives on Early Career Researchers

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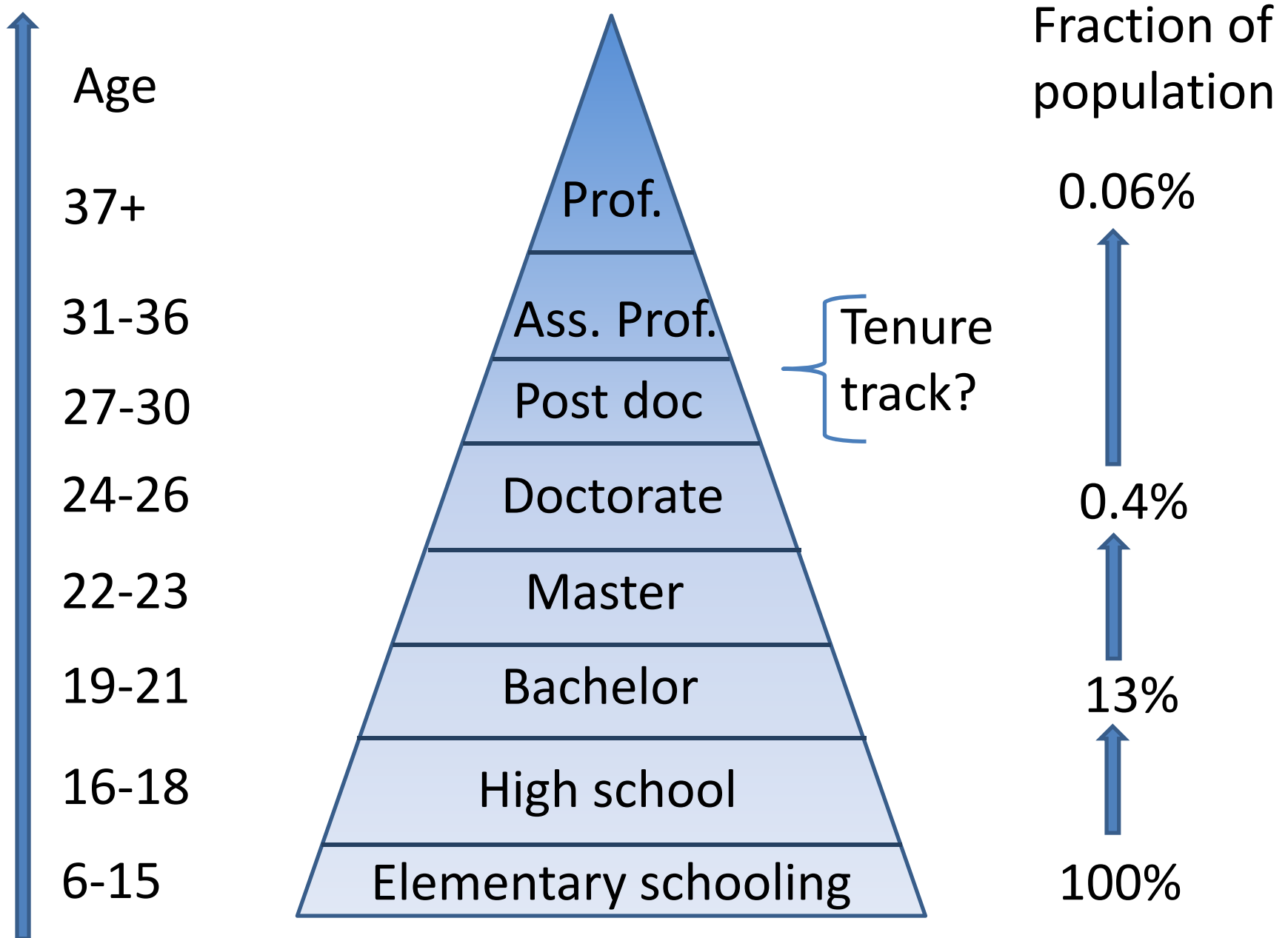
VISTA – Norwegian Academy of Sciences and Letters and Statoil ASA



# Objective

*To recruit, and facilitate the development of,  
outstanding young research talents*

# Ideal trajectory



A typical academic progression leads to the first permanent employment in mid 30s.

At any earlier stage, you can reasonably expect to not qualify for a further career in science.

*Is this attractive for the most talented people?*

A young academic is expected to leave friends and family to be «mobile» – with only moderate expectation that the mobility will be rewarded with a job.

Young professionals elsewhere are mobile within permanent employment.

*Is this attractive for the most talented people?*

An academic career progression is largely incompatible with the biological time-scales of establishing a family.

Statoil has a child care facility next to the research division so that you can have lunch with your kids.

*Is this attractive for the most talented people?*

From talking to young, talented, potential future researchers in academia:

*No.*

From talking to young, talented, potential future  
*female* researchers in academia:

*Hell, no.*



# Proposition 1: Timeliness

It is possible to assess a researcher's capabilities by the time they are in their mid 20s.

# Proposition 2: Excellence

Recruitment benefits from clear and  
predictable career paths

# Proposition 3: Fairness

Senior academicians benefit from recruiting mobile post docs as cheap and effective labor

Senior academicians benefit from having the power to fire young researchers  
(a.k.a. Tenure track)

# Suggestion 1

- The post doctoral position should be essentially eliminated.
- Funding should be reallocated to increase permanent or long-term researcher positions.

## Suggestion 2

- The possibility of considering direct permanent employment for the absolutely best PhD students should be explored.

# Suggestion 3

- Tenure track faculty positions should only be introduced as a replacement for post.doc. positions.
- Expected tenure rate should be designed to be well above 50%.

# Suggestion 4

- Enhanced researcher mobility can be achieved through increased use of reduced teaching duties for early stage permanent faculty.

*It is not necessarily those who endure the longest who are the best academicians.*

- Assoc. Prof Inga Berre