

Introducing the Young Researchers in Health Network (YRIHN)

Networking, receiving feedback on one's papers and ideas and having the possibility to discuss different angles are key factors when starting an academic career. In comparison with other fields like medicine or law, PhD students and PostDocs in health and social sciences have little access to networks geared to their needs. One exception constitutes the PhD courses offered by the Centre for Health Economics at the University of York during one of which the idea to such a network was born. Participants from Brazil to Palestine, Scotland to Nigeria all agreed that such a network would be useful and helpful.

A broad interdisciplinary network, bridging different health, social and life sciences, will offer the perfect opportunity to encourage young researchers at the early stage of their career and inspire many to action through provocative, idealistic and passionate ideas. We aim to utilize the knowledge of health economics, public health, international health care systems and health policy issues within our network and develop a multinational and multidisciplinary perspective, network of support and contacts and share research and work experience in our fields of study. Improving health and health care systems is only possible when thinking multidisciplinary and involving all players. Hence, the sooner young researchers in health gain access to the various fields concerned and learn to work in a multidisciplinary setting, the better they will be prepared for future excellence.

Currently, the Young Researchers in Health Network has already won the International Health Economics Association (iHEA) and the International Network for Integrated Care as supporters of our idea. YRIHN will be officially launched in our own workshop during the 8th iHEA conference in Toronto, on Tuesday July 10th. If you are there, come and get to know us in person!

Within the health care system, every single (international) experience is an advantage, as it helps to widen horizons and raise awareness of the systems. To share them in an international network of young researchers is a chance of a lifetime. Getting in touch with different health care systems, methodical trends, political discussions and different approaches, is essential in health care research. We are convinced that listening to different points of views, and supporting each other by sharing and discussing them from the very beginning, contributes a great deal to the work we do. And that it is of great importance to do this in an interdisciplinary as well as transnational setting. If you want to find out more about us or want to help shape the future of young researchers in health, get in touch with the founders: Dr. K. Viktoria Stein, founding president, katharina.v.stein@meduniwien.ac.at or Susanne Bethge, MSc, founding general secretary, susanne.bethge@googlemail.com.

Vision (first draft):

Health is fundamental to human development, social and economic advancement and active participation in one's community and society. The Network aims at connecting young researchers working towards a better understanding and promotion of health.

The Network will evolve into a world-spanning organisation with chapters at relevant universities, national platforms and an international board, supporting young researchers in health on all levels and positioning them as a key to promoting new methodologies in theory and practice to shape the health care systems and its research of the future.

Mission (first draft):

The Network promotes cooperation among young researchers in health, fosters exchange of ideas and experiences, assists in publishing results, organises workshops and seminars and hence furthers the knowledge and understanding of the multi-faceted influences/drivers/triggers that affect health. We want to ameliorate the situation of young researchers in health and lobby towards a better representation of their work in conference programmes and top journals. Furthermore, we emphasise the importance of adequate funding for young researchers to attend said conferences, participate in summer schools and exchange programmes and, more generally, partake in the international scientific community.

Goals:

1. To build an international platform for young researchers (YR) who are concerned with health in their respective fields.

2. To offer a possibility of exchange of ideas and experiences when starting an academic career or following a PhD.
3. To receive feedback on ones' research approach and work by peers.
4. To foster new cooperations, joint papers or projects across borders and professional fields.
5. To promote research in health on national, European and international level.
6. To strengthen the position of young researchers in universities and scientific communities.
7. To offer workshops and seminars regarding the development of personal skills as well as professional input.
8. To support projects and workshops organised by individual YR in health.
9. To pool resources and activities which already exist and speak with a stronger voice.

Specific offers:

- eReview – get feedback from peers and professors for your research paper before submission
- Research partner procurement
- Workshops and seminars (formal skills as well as themed input, e.g. presentation skills, economic evaluation methods)
- Assistance with organisation of events and/or procurement of grants and funding
- Discussion and feedback groups
- Interactive homepage (event calendar; chats, blogs and discussion forums; simulated submission procedure, etc.)
- Meetings at topical conferences (e.g. iHEA, EUPHA, WONCA, INIC)

We appreciate any feedback you might have on our vision, mission and goals as well!

Membership:

As a prerequisite the interested person should aspire to a research career, have at least started her PhD and focus her research activities on the analysis, promotion, organisation, achievement and/or maintenance of health and health services, whether on an individual or public level. Researchers from health economics, public health, social and community medicine, epidemiology, health care management, are especially encouraged to join, as are people looking into the matter from a political sciences or sociological point of view, but we are not limited to these studies. A strong interest in international and multidisciplinary teamwork as well as the willingness to share knowledge and experience and organise events are vital.

Membership fees:

PhD students: EUR 50/U\$ 60 per year

PostDocs and other individuals: EUR 80/U\$ 90 per year