

Reflections from the CREATE Workshop 2021

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As early-career researchers – so early, in fact, that we had to stop ourselves from writing “aspiring researchers” – getting yourself funded, published and disseminated are some

of the most intimidating tasks. Many of us have had our fair share of impostor syndrome (1) from the start and heard plenty about the harsh reality of rejections from journals, awards and grants. That is why CREATE, the early-career research network of the EHPS, decided to dedicate this year’s workshop to “getting your research out there”. Next to many informative sessions who covered this topic, the workshop was also a good introduction to the EHPS for early-career researchers.

Due to the measures surrounding the SARS-CoV2 pandemic, this year’s conference took place digitally, and this workshop was no exception. But this did not make the workshop less engaging. Organizers and speakers left room for connection, socializing and other beneficial activities. There was even a WhatsApp group that allowed us to connect further and exchange some ideas. And amazingly, despite the number of speakers and a tight schedule, everything ran like clockwork. The stage was therefore set for a great workshop.

When we logged into our first Zoom session, an introduction round was, of course, mandatory. After all, CREATE is a *network* of early-career researchers. In our heads, we all went through the little standard introductions that we have ready to

1) a syndrome of which high achieving individuals can be affected and that is displayed as doubting oneself and one’s abilities despite of being successful and capable (Kolligian & Sternberg, 1991)

go: This is my name, this is where I work, this is what I do. Somehow, the question of which animal best represents my social media presence was not something we had prepared. Yet this was one of the first questions Dr. Marita Hennessy – the first speaker – asked us that morning. And while answers varied, most of us agreed that we were mostly silent observers, occasionally tweeting into the void. In this short report we will share how Marita and other prominent experts in the field helped us set further steps away from the mouse and towards more effective strategies.

On top of being a postdoctoral researcher in Ireland, Marita runs a twitter account with more than 10.000 followers, talking about her research. Promoting your own work on social media can be tough for us for two main reasons: On the one hand, we do not want to draw too much attention to ourselves out of fear that we have made some mistake and will be criticized heavily. On the other hand, we don’t want to seem arrogant by showing off work that we are proud of. Marita helped us let go of that worry – at least partially. She explained that social media, including twitter, is a tool that can be used to promote your own research as well as the research of your colleagues. That is why she chose to describe her social media presence as a *meerkat*: Constantly on the lookout for opportunities to lift each other up. After a short two hours, we had learned about the why’s and how’s of research communication, added some resources to our toolbox and shared tips on how to make social media work



Created by Anniken & Andreas
from Noun Project

Greta M. A. Steckhan @steckhan_greta
 #ThrowbackThursday - @EHPSCreators in Dubrovnik two years ago
 Looking forward to participate in #CREATE today. I'm glad to see familiar faces at least online.
 #EHPS2021 @EHPsociety #HealthPsychology



9:21 AM · Aug 19, 2021 · Twitter Web App

3 Retweets 2 Quote Tweets 15 Likes



Tweet your reply Reply

CREATE @EHPSCreators · Aug 19
 Replying to @steckhan_greta and @EHPsociety
 Ahh such fantastic memories 🥰🥰🥰🥰

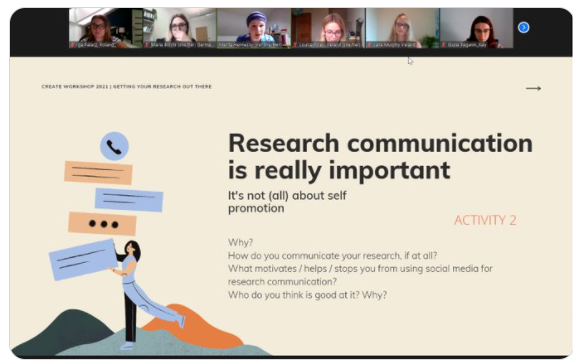
Michele Mulqueen @michelemlqueen
 The @EHPSCreators #EHPSCreators2021 session was absolutely fantastic. So much info & advice that can be used for thinking about & planning the next stages. Thank you all so much!

Needed a walk in one of my fav spots afterwards (where I can also look across the river to Germany!)



2:30 PM · Aug 20, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

Iga Palacz-Poborczyk @igapalacz
 Thank you @MaritaHennessy for this amazing workshop (Using social media to share your research and build your networks). It was a pleasure to get to know you all and become a part of #EHPSCreators @EHPSCreators



CREATE @EHPSCreators · Aug 17
 For those of you coming to our CREATE Early Career Researcher Workshop this Thursday and Friday, your invites should have arrived via email this afternoon! If you haven't received it, please check your junk email folder! #CREATE #healthpsychology #EHPS #EHPS2021 #EHPSCreators2021

12:22 PM · Aug 19, 2021 · Twitter Web App

for us. Most of the CREATE participants are now represented on twitter and have gained a handful of followers from the group by the end of the workshop. You can find some examples of participants' social media presence during the workshop above.

In the afternoon, Dr Angela Rodrigues, editor in chief of the EHP magazine and senior lecturer in health psychology provided a workshop on publication strategies. After a short introduction, we immediately got to practice going through the first steps of creating our own publication plan. One of the biggest insights for us was to also consider non-academic writing throughout our PhD studies as a way to disseminate our research. While we usually consider journal articles and poster presentations our main way of dissemination, articles and social media posts can be more effective when trying to reach non-academic populations. For both academic and non-academic writing, we need a thought-through and flexible plan to move forward in a way that is targeted and goal-driven like an *eagle* catching prey, instead of running from corner to corner like a mouse trying to get away.

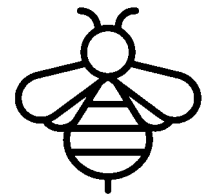


Created by Hey Rabbit
from Noun Project

In the last session of the workshop, we got to know more about funding our research. Here, we got to meet a wide range of experts. Dr Elaine Toomey talked about getting research funding via grants and awards and stressed the importance of putting in the work early on in your career. She used the behaviour change techniques we all know, to explain how we can plan on grant applications: Goal-setting and Action Planning (Michie et al., 2013). She recommended we sit down and think of how many and which grants we want to apply for during our time as PhD students (or whatever time we are in) and then make a plan to work on those applications. This technique also reduces pressure

on us to always go on and get another grant – we can just stick with our plan and have some rest from time to time instead of running after anything and lead ourselves into burnout – something that can also be caused by the imposter syndrome (Kolligian & Sternberg, 1991).

Hema Chaplin focused on the more administrative side of funding and gave us some practical advice on how to approach this. Dr Marta Marques talked about individual fellowship funding, with a special focus on the Marie Curie Fellowship. Lastly, Wendy Lawrence talked about the option to earn funding via consultancy work. For many of us, this side of research was severely underexplored and at least the two of us immediately started planning a handful of spreadsheets in our heads to get started on this. The systematic approach, but also the importance of a broad network that benefits each other, were the two main takeaways for us from this session. That is why we chose the bee to represent a well thought-through strategy for receiving funding.



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from Noun Project

Of course, little animal icons were not our main takeaway from these sessions. The workshop was highly practical, introducing a variety of tools and resources to participants in different areas of research. It felt less like following classes and workshops and more like getting useful tips from colleagues who happen to be a bit further on in their journey. By creating this welcoming and casual atmosphere, CREATE enabled us to take what appealed to us from the huge variety of ideas. The speakers created activities where we could briefly apply what we just learned to our own research and our own needs. This made the workshop very personal and catalyzing for our future research. Although everyone took part in the same workshop, it seemed it was tailored to each one of us and our needs. The focus was not on getting the

most followers or the most prestigious grants, but on working with the system in a way that suits your working style and needs. Knowing what a high-pressure environment academics can be, this was definitely a refreshing (and much-needed) perspective. At the end of these workshops, we were not overwhelmed by a mental list of to-dos, but rather excited about some cool opportunities.

CREATE is not only a workshop but has proved itself to be a safe place for early-career researchers. The speakers and organizers have been very authentic and honest about their own journeys, struggles and experiences so that we were invited to follow those role models and formed our identity as early-career researchers. At this place, we would like to thank the speakers Dr Marita Hennessey, Dr Angela Rodrigues, Dr Elaine Toomey, Dr Marta Marques, Hema Chaplin and Dr Wendy Lawrence as well as the executive committee Milou Frederix, Daniella Watson, Jane Murphy, Louise Foley, Maria Blöchl and Claire Reidy for their commitment to create this great opportunity. We already look forward to the next CREATE workshop, hopefully in person!

References

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