HOW TO PROMOTE ERC WELL-BEING

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THE AIMS FOR THIS WORKSHOP

• Enhance research based understanding on factors contributing to ECR well-being.

• Provide tools and resources for overcoming stressors typically faced during the doctoral and post-doctoral experience.

• Provide an arena for reflecting on and sharing your experiences.
ACTIVITIES

• Introduction
• Activity 1: group work
• Presentation
• Activity 2: group work
• Plenary session
• Feedback
WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS AND THEIR WELL-BEING?

• ECRs are a highly selected group of individuals based on their academic backgrounds

• Yet, doctoral studies and the career after earning the PhD degree can be challenging.

• ECRs have shown to suffer from stress, strain, exhaustion, unhappiness and depression, and, sleeping problems.

• At the same time they have reported to experience high levels of research engagement

(Appel & Dahlgren, 2003; Barry et al., 2017; Cornér et al., 2017; Hunter & Divine, 2016; Gardner & Gopaul, 2012; Ivankova & Stick, 2007; Jairam & Kahl, 2012; Jiranek, 2010; Levecque et al. 2017; Meijer et al, 2017; Stubb et al., 2011; Pyhältö et al., 2009, 2011; Peltonen et al., 2017; Vekkaila et al., 2016)
2/2 WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS AND THEIR WELL-BEING?

- Attrition rates range from 33% to 70%.
- Prolonged work-related stress for ECRs can increase the risk of developing burnout.
- Compared to other highly educated people in the general population, the prevalence of having or developing mental illness has been shown to be more than double for ECRs.
- Lack of social support have been associated with increased risk of attrition, and reduced levels of well-being.

(Appel & Dahlgren, 2003; Barry et al., 2017; Cornér et al., 2017; Hunter & Divine, 2016; Gardner & Gopaul, 2012; Ivankova & Stick, 2007; Jairam & Kahl, 2010; Levecque et al. 2017; Meijer et al., 2017; Stubb et al., 2011; Pyhältö et al., 2009, 2011; Peltonen et al., 2017; Vekkaila et al., 2016)
GROUP DISCUSSION

1. Please, reflect together upon the following questions:
   - What promotes ERC well-being?
   - What reduces ERC well-being?

2. Work in groups of 4-5 people.
   - Please, report your reflections by using Flinga
   - Join the link: https://edu.flinga.fi/s/E8YAAHL
     Session name: Promoting ERC well-being
FACTORS PROMOTING ECR WELL-BEING

RESOURCES THAT ENHANCES ERC WELL-BEING

- Having researcher networks
- Sense of belonging
- Integration into research team or seminar group
- Feedback
- Co-supervision
- Frequent supervision
- Social support, especially informational and emotional support
- Equal and fair treatment in the researcher community
- Having informal networks of support (peers, family and friends)

- Reduced risk for attrition
- Reduced risk for experiencing emotional exhaustion
- Research engagement
- Satisfaction with doctoral studies
- Satisfaction with supervision
- Experiences of being acknowledgement and appreciation by the researcher community

(Cornér et al, 2017, 2018; Bengtsen, 2016b; Bryan & Guccione, 2018; Elliot et al., 2016; Hoopwood, 2010; Ives & Rowley, 2005; Jones, 2013; Malfroy, 2005; McAlpine & Amundsen, 2012; Pyhältö et al., 2009, 2018; Sala-Bubare & Castello, 2017; Vekkaila et al; 2012; Wao & Onwuegbuzie, 2011; Wisker et al., 2017)
FACTORS REDUCING ECR WELL-BEING?

CHALLENGES THAT REDUCES WELL-BEING

- Insufficient integration into the research community
- Lack of or inadequate supervision
- Frictions in supervisory relationship
- Opacity or changing expectations
- Experiences of inequality in the research community
- Lack of adequate and sufficient formal and informal social support
- Being outsider (International at risk)
- Lack of networks and social support

- Feelings of isolation, increased levels of stress, exhaustion, and cynicism
- Increased risk for developing burnout
- Increased risk for dropping out of the studies
- Dissatisfaction with doctoral studies
- Reduced levels of research engagement

(Al i & Kohun, 2007; Castello et al., 2017; Cornér et al., 2018; Hunter & Divine, 2016; 2006; Jairam & Kahl, 2012; Levecque et al., 2017; Lovitts, 2001; Stubb et al., 2011; Peltonen et al., 2017; Pyhältö et al., 2009, 2012; 2015; Vekkaila et al., 2016)
The social support that ERC:s receive from the supervisory and researcher community is fundamental to their well-being and for the successful transition into post PhD careers.

(Barnes et al., 2010; Chen et al., 2015; Halse & Malfroy, 2010; Jones, 2013; McAlpine & Amundsen, 2012).
The Researcher Community Support and Supervisory Support – model (Pyhältö, 2018)
Discuss in your group: How to promote ECRs well-being?

What can different stakeholders do?

- ECRs themselves
- Supervisor(s)
- Local researcher community e.g. research group
- Institution(s) e.g. Faculty or doctoral school
- International Research Community

Based on your discussion, prepare to make 3-5 action items, focusing on 1-2 stakeholder groups. Each group will report their action items/recommendations (please choose a reporter).
Institutions: providing equal opportunity. Maybe allocate some funding gained from the PhD degrees to scholarships for doctoral students. Provide a room for doctoral students to meet each other—PhD launch.

ECR: just do it or don’t you do not die e.g. take year or month or week off if needed! Map and use the support sources; research out; be active, even pro-active; be realistic; have plan B, C…etc.

Supervisor(s): create networking opportunities! For ECR: participate in them.

Good supervision: No one solution, but engineer case specific solutions.
WE WOULD BE HAPY TO RECEIVE YOUR FEEDBACK

Please, fill in a short feedback form at this open session:

www.prolearning.realto.ch/login > I’m a student > (pick a session):

=> ERC well-being.


REFERENCES


THANK YOU!

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