Closing Session and ERG Meeting

The Annual ERG meeting took place on Friday 3rd September 2021. It was combined with the closing ceremony, and what would otherwise have been the first ERC lunchtime session on 'Making the most of the ERC and Getting to know EERA' session. The closing session was titled 'Getting to Know EERA, Making the Most of the ECER and ERC Closing Ceremony', and it provided an opportunity for EERA's emerging researchers, their supervisors and research leaders to engage in interactive discussions which supported:

- broadening professional development opportunities and research dissemination experiences internationally;
- exchanging experiences and ideas about research and researcher development;
- actively participating in an European research community for Emerging Researchers.

All ERC participants were invited to this informal session which was jointly facilitated by experienced academics and the ERG co-conveners who enabled those attending to understand the EERA structure and chart their way through the ECER conference program. The session also formed a useful opportunity to connect with fellow emerging researchers.

The following themes were covered during the session in the breakout groups, for informal discussions pertaining with the experienced academics and the ERG co-convenor teams.

Doing Educational Research: The session included representation from the Editors of 'Doing Educational Research: Overcoming Challenges in Practice'. This SAGE/EERA book was developed as a result of feedback from PhD students and addresses challenges researchers have encountered in their projects. In this there are accounts of how experienced researchers handled entry into the research field, how they discussed and managed research result that posed problems when accounted back to the field, and how doing research in a second language, i.e. English, creates a complex set of challenges from interpretation to communication of your research.

Networks, Networking and Development Opportunities: Discussions around how emerging researchers could connect with experts in their field by identifying their network and attending their programs. Also discussed were opportunities and strategies for building professional networks during ECER and beyond.

Converting a conference paper into a publication: Participants were given insights into the unique opportunities available to them after the Emerging Researchers' Conference, to maximise their publication success. Also discussed were the multitude of possibilities that the ERC offers for emerging researchers to receive feedback on their work, for example during and after their conference presentationss.

ERG co-convenors: Meet the Emerging Researchers' Group co-conveners who shared their recent experiences as Early Career Researchers and provided helpful tips for making the most of the conference experience.

Academics who kindly volunteered to facilitate this session, and their representation, include:
- Joe O'Hara, EERA President and EERA Blog editor
- Maria Pacheco Figueiredo, EERA Secretary General, Network 11: Educational Improvement and Quality Assurance and EERA Network 27: Didactics - Learning and Teaching
- Andreas Hadjar, EERA incoming Treasurer and EERA Network 05: Children and Youth at Risk and Urban Education

- Petra Grell, Networks' Representative on Council and EERA Network 06: Open Learning: Media, Environments and Cultures
- Jani Ursin, past Networks' Representative on Council and EERA Network 22. Research in Higher Education
- Ali Sameer, ERG co-Convenor and EERA Network 23: Policy Studies and Politics of Education
- Arnaud Dubois, EERA Network 13, Philosophy of Education: Education and Psychoanalysis
- Branislava Baranovic, Zagreb Institute for Social Research (ZISR) and EERA Network 33: Gender and Education
- Burcu Toptas, ERC Shadow co-Convenor and EERA Network 26: Educational Leadership
- Edwin Keiner, ERG Senior Fellow and EERA Network 13: Philosophy of Education: Education and Psychoanalysis
- Hosay Adina-Safi, ERG co-Convenor and EERA Network 31. LEd – Network on Language and Education
- George Head, Scottish Educational Research Association (SERA), Outgoing ERG Senior Mentor and EERA Network 04: Inclusive Education
- Irina Usanova, 31. LEd – Network on Language and Education
- Lisa Bugno, ERG co-Convenor and EERA Network 07: Social Justice and Intercultural Education
- Marco Rieckmann, German Educational Research Association (GERA) and EERA Network 30: Environmental and Sustainability Education Research, ESER
- Marit Honerod Hoveid, ERG Senior Fellow and EERA Network 13: Philosophy of Education: Education and Psychoanalysis
- Natasha Ziebell, ERG co-Convenor and EERA Network 03: Curriculum Innovation
- ML White, EERA Network 10: Teacher Education Research and EERA Blog editor
- Paulina Korsnakova, Slovak Educational Research Society (SERS)
- Saneeya Qureshi, ERG Link Convenor and EERA Network 01: Professional Learning and Development
- Satu Perälä-Littunen, Finnish Educational Research Association (FERA) representative, ERG Senior Mentor and EERA Network 14: Communities, Families, and Schooling in Educational Research
- Xeniya Tursunbayeva, ERG co-Convenor and EERA Network 03: Curriculum Innovation

The ERG meeting part of the meeting covered the annual activities of the ERG and projects for the future. As is now practice during the ERG meeting, following the introduction about the goals and activities of the ERG, all the participants broke up into small breakout groups in Zoom. Each subgroup was facilitated by either one or two members of the ERG team, EERA Council, EERA Exec, EERA Networks, ERG senior mentor and senior fellows who facilitated discussion about participants' suggestions for specific areas of development and further initiatives that can meet participants' needs. A collaborative Padlet activity was undertaken during the breakout activity.

A thematic synthesis of the discussions, developed by Burcu Toptas, an ERG co-convenor, is indicated on the following pages (n=21 respondents) and numbers in brackets **(#n)** indicate how many times it was upvoted/liked:

What topics for emerging researchers would you like to see in the EERA Blog?
- Traps in educational research (mistakes, misconceptions) **(#2)**
- Immigrants and education **(#2)**
- Support for publications - review process, publication processes **(#2)**
- Publishing in English **(#1)**

What development activities would you like to see in the ERG programme, eg: academic writing workshop, etc.

- Networking activities between emerging and senior researchers **(#4)**
- Activities for the transition into the ECER conference (from ERC), particularly how to join a network **(#1)**
- Mixed Methods workshops (e.g. mixed methods research, Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis, how to analyse data - and particularly, how to start) **(#1)**
- Networking skills (there can be group networking regarding interesting areas) **(#1)**
- Beneficial to hear about the editing process. Repeat workshops would be beneficial. **(#1)**
- Learn more about open access journals and some of the options that might be worthwhile **(#2)**

Any other additional comments, eg: what have you gained from the ERC so far?

- Qi gong was also great, and so very necessary! **(#1)**
- Thought provoking **(#2)**
    - ✓ It's been a really great conference with very useful keynotes and so many thought-provoking presentations from researchers. I have made a LOT of notes and have so many ideas to follow up and much literature to explore. It's always good to find out about other people's stories. The IT has been slick and I love the movement sessions in the breaks. Many thanks for all the hard work from the organisers.
- Marit Hoveid's keynote **(#2)**
    - ✓ *Was very useful for re-thinking our own relationship to educational research. Thank you!)*
- Very welcoming **(#3)**
- Small number of sessions, Opportunities to question and discuss **(#2)**
    - ✓ *It was a pity not to be able to hear many interesting sessions due to time clash (own presentation at the same time!*
- Try to link to mentors for publications and presentations **(#1)**
- More informal social interaction opportunities during the (online) conference would have been great. Also knowing who are participating, what their interests are etc. **(#2)**
    - ✓ *The OnAir platform for connecting for example is a bit complicated (and we only found out about it now)*
    - ✓ *I agree it would be helpful to have a way to quickly find people with similar interests which might be methodological rather than topic connections.*
    - ✓ *Yes, i found it a bit limited to connect with other researchers - perhaps, that's the negative side of this online event despite that of many benefits such as having a flexible schedule*

The EERA blog topics have been shared with the EERA Blog Manager, to feed into the overall strategy for galvanising blog contributions from EERA Council members and Network representatives.