



Welcome to the third training pillar of IJPH: Young Researcher Editorials

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The International Journal of Public Health (IJPH) is owned by the Swiss School of Public Health (SSPH+), the national inter-university faculty of public health sciences and coordinating body for the promotion of education and research in public health sciences in Switzerland (Künzli et al. 2015; Maurice 2017). The IJPH editorial board regularly discusses how the journal of SSPH+ can contribute to training the next generation of public health scientists. In this issue, we proudly introduce a third innovative pillar of our training strategy.

The first pillar goes back to 2010 when IJPH decided to invest in social media by hiring a young public health professional as social media editor. Led by Tonia, the IJPH blog became a successful platform to present ideas and projects and comment on those of others (Tonia 2014). The blog was among 30 top public health blogs in 2012 (MPHDP 2013) and ranked 13 out of 75 top public health blogs in 2018 (Feedspot 2018). IJPH currently has more than 4300 followers on Twitter, and over 3100 Facebook users. While IJPH articles in social media do not affect the impact factor of IJPH according to our controlled trial (Tonia et al. 2016), the main reason to engage social media is to reach a larger community interested in public health. Not surprisingly, IJPH social media are well used by the younger generation of public health scientists.

The second training pillar, dating from 2015, is our unique postgraduate course “Walking in the editors’ shoes: peer reviewing and journal editing for young researchers in health sciences.” This hands-on, blended learning course

offers theoretical background and practical training in all academic steps of scientific publishing, and with support from Springer Nature is partly based on the IJPH Editorial Manager. During online and in-class training, students take on the various roles and activities of academic editors, from prescreening decisions and selecting reviewers, to handling point-by-point responses and revised manuscripts, and final manuscript decisions. We encourage our students to take up roles such as that of IJPH Associate Editor, which was filled by adolescent health expert Jana Holubikova, a 2016 course participant.

The third pillar originated in questions posed by a Ph.D. student at the Swiss Tropical and Public Health Institute. The questions were as follows: How can young public health researchers engage in discussions about relevant topics in public health research and practice, and how could SSPH+ train and support them in doing so? We thus introduce *Young Researcher Editorials* in this issue. Young Researcher Editorials (YRE) combine two innovative training features. First, young authors from across the world can publish short opinion pieces on relevant public health topics. YRE are only written by one or a very small team of Ph.D. students or first-year postdocs. Authorship by supervisors or other senior researchers is not accepted. Second, the new YRE editorial board consists of Ph.D. students of the more than 150 SSPH+ faculty members. YRE board members independently develop strategies for calls for YRE, make prescreening decisions, and handle the peer review of YRE. Once accepted by the YRE Editor, an editorial must clear the same final step all articles face before publication in IJPH: approval of the Editor-in-Chief. All ethical and procedural standards of IJPH fully apply to YRE and the YRE editorial board. As a special service, SSPH+ funds professional English editing as a further training service for all YRE accepted for publication. Details about the YRE criteria are published on the IJPH Web site (instructions for authors/editorials). IJPH welcomes Hassan as the first chair of the YRE board (Hassan

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2017). We are confident that he and the YRE team will profit from the experience in leading this section.

The first young researcher editorial, “Aging, noncommunicable diseases, and old-age disability in low- and middle-income countries: a challenge for global health,” in this issue, is written by a Ph.D. student in economics (Kaempfen et al. 2018). It is a remarkable coincidence that the first of—we hope—many YRE to come deals with aging. We take it as a sign that YRE will build stronger bridges between junior and more senior public health researchers. We are curious to see how the YRE editors will develop the series, and we encourage Ph.D. students everywhere to submit YRE!

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