

Proposal: ASPHER 2020 Implementation of the Strategic Objective 2

Strategic objective 2:

Strengthening research capacity among all members

- 2.1.** Support joint research of the main public health problems and emerging challenges;
- 2.2.** Develop platform of research expertise among members;
- 2.3.** Encourage the open access interface and sharing of knowledge between academia and practice of public health.

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2.1. Support joint research of the main public health problems and emerging challenges. The present main public health problems and emerging challenges are better addressed by multidisciplinary teams able to develop effective responses in relatively short time spans. During the last decades, multiple high quality research consortia have been created in Europe and are pursuing their activity as they are able to effectively recruit funding from diversified sources. ASPHER could approach such groups already in place, particularly those that work in the field of public health or allied sciences and build on their expertise to attract more partners and to help cover all the region. A forum is proposed to discuss complementarities and the ability to address the most relevant public health questions, promoting a virtuous balance between the quest of established research questions and the ability to confront imposing problems often viewed as less challenging or less prone to obtain successful funding. ASPHER will advocate towards such balance influencing the agenda and reflecting the interests of the member in the global arena. The facilitation of joint research proposals among ASPHER members and partners, namely resulting from the forum discussion will be further promote in annual Workshops and agreed networks on topics of interests.

The quality of the work force in Public Health is dependent on a strong research commitment and once the nature of their activities and the dimension of the problems is essentially that of a global environment, facilitating mobility at doctoral and postdoctoral levels but also for short time tasks or training is essential. To implement it, a detailed repository on the available mobility schemes will be created and support for mobility thought namely by creating a specific prize to the best annual presentation at the ASPHER early career researchers forum.

2.2. The development of a platform of research expertise among ASPHER members. To pursuit this objective we propose:

- a) to survey on the available research expertise, the areas of interest pursued by each school, their scientific outputs and offer in advanced training – this will provide a quantitative picture of the items that can contribute to the platform content;

b) to invite key informants (from the Schools, the policy makers and the field institutions) to be part of a Delphi panel to evaluate under a qualitative perspective the willingness to cooperate and what would be the most appropriate ways that participation and collaboration could take in order to meet the convenience and the expectations of schools and possible financing structures;

c) to scope revise the existing relevant literature on research platforms (how to design, implement and sustain them);

d) to undertake an inventory of, to contact and to involve the relevant authorities towards making accessible information on potential common resources - laboratories and other research structures such as cohorts, registries, routine available data bases – regardless of being the direct responsibility of ASPHER members.

A special platform will thus be developed on the ASPHER web page with two major objectives:

1. To create a data base keeping up-dated information on available persons and structures to be contacted in due time to build consortia or specific responses to internal or external demands;

2. To actively promote interactions between members. It can be based on reflections made after evaluation exercises (where possible areas in need are identified)

The interested Schools, departments and programmes of Public Health are invited to publish or submit their experience with the platform, how can it be improved, how it promote the exchange of research expertise, or how it helped to solve specific questions. Every two years ASPHER will select good examples to be displayed on the platform and invited to make a presentation at the yearly Deans and Directors retreat.

2.3. Encourage the open access interface and sharing of knowledge between academia and practice of public health.

It is proposed that ASPHER will encourage and promote open access by:

1. Writing editorials and position papers on the importance of open access to equity in research (because it is an ethical imperative of research to make the findings publically available);

2. To advocate in the European and other international adequate for a the central role of open access to increase literacy and science citizenship;

3. To stand for and encourage proper conduct in research and research communication;

4. To make Public Health Reviews as the journal of ASPHER, promote it across the Association's network and beyond, constituting an objective for the medium term to make it one of the leading journals in the field of public health, thus reflecting the excellence of ASPHER.
