

Tuesday late morning session Track B, Tuesday, Sep 23 2025, 11:30-13:00

Location: Seminar 1

Session: Research Culture

Chair: Nina Peršak

OR-05

Empowering early career researchers to foster research culture change towards a responsible research climate

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A healthy research culture often goes hand in hand with the practice of responsible science. The contributions of early-career researchers (ECRs) are an essential component of this culture. Still, ECRs often fail to understand or recognize the important role they could play in changing or influencing research culture within their institutions or research teams. Empowerment can be a crucial element to support ECRs in this difficult task. To this end, we have developed a set of educational workshops that aim to empower ECRs to gain insights into what role they can play in this change and how they can contribute to a responsible research climate.

The educational workshop is designed to enhance the conversational skills of ECRs by utilizing four videos. Each of these videos depicts common dilemmas ECRs may encounter in their day-to-day lives in academia and research: dealing with incapable supervisors, burdens of collaborative work, conflicts of interest, and difficulties in taking initiative. In our educational program, ECRs are encouraged to reflect on and consider different ways to respond to each situation through a "choose your own adventure" mechanism embedded in the videos. These scenarios will be played out and are used as conversation starters for their own practices.

Through a pre- and post-workshop questionnaire, we aim to better understand the factors that may influence empowerment among ECRs. By doing so, the workshop can be better adapted to fit the needs of ECRs. In the presentation, we will present the first results of the 4 workshops that we have conducted in the past year. We will present what factors are associated with empowerment and how you can contribute to a better research culture.