

YOUNG SCHOLARS NETWORK (YECREA)

NETWORK ACTIVITY REPORT FOR 2016

1. Organisation

Membership: The young scholars' network now has 277 members according to the status sheet provided for the Prague conference. This is a major divergence from the numbers gained through the intranet member search and thus comparison or conclusions of membership development cannot be made at this time. The membership in the YECREA facebook group is still growing steadily. While some shifting in terms of the consistency of our membership is to be expected given that "young scholar" is a temporary status (thematic interests are rather stable), we will have to be more soliciting for young scholars new to the association also to become members of the network. It will also be necessary to interpret the membership figures in relation to general developments of the association and other networks/sections/TWGs.

In 2016 a new YECREA management team was elected at the ECC. Christian Schwarzenegger (past-chair), Nuria Arauna and Torgeir Uberg Naerland (past-vice-chairs) stepped down from their positions and Anne Mollen as the new chair and Tereza Pavlickova and Raul Ferrer as new vice-chairs took over responsibility to manage the network.

2. Activities

Information dissemination

One of the main tasks of YECREA is to provide information. YECREA informs its members of job opportunities, conferences, workshops, and relevant publications through the website yecrea.eu, a bi-annual newsletter, and a Facebook group.

The Yecrea Facebook group has fostered its role as the main channel of information dissemination and interaction among members of the network. The Facebook presence has resulted in increased interactivity and we still get higher rates of our membership to share information, provide content and support the cause of the network. The group is steadily growing and now has 921 members (an increase of 96 since our 2015 report). However, what we will need to strengthen are our efforts and our success in capitalizing of this high Facebook attendance in terms of actual membership of YECREA

In 2016 YECREA continued to develop and coordinate its network of young scholar representatives in the ECREA sections and TWGs.. Especially at and post the ECC a series of new representatives was recruited. YECREA wishes to thank the outgoing representatives and wishes them success with their new tasks.

Young scholars workshops

In 2016 YECREA has again organised a variety of events, workshops, master classes and roundtables. As most activities of the network take place in the off years at the section related workshops and events the number is smaller than in previous reports:

Most notably were:

- 1) A digital games doctoral colloquium as an ECC pre-event in Prague (organized by Raul Ferrer)
- 2) A journalism studies doctoral colloquium as an ECC pre-event in Prague (organized by Corinna Lauerer)
- 3) A panel at the ECC titled “The silence of the scholars! Rethinking the (public) voice of academia (organized by Christian Schwarzenegger, Nele Heise and Sara de Vuyst)

Young Scholars Fund

YECREA developed a procedure for the selection of beneficiaries of the fee waiving for the ECC and used this routine to select 18 scholars who were supported by the fund. YECREA will continue to aid administering the young scholars fund for the ECC 2018.

3. Future plans

YECREA’s main plans for 2017 are to sustain and further develop its current activities and network of section reps. A stop to the drop in membership and to make YECREA grow again will be pursued. As the numbers above indicate, we face strong expansion in terms of Facebook followers and a decline in real membership within the organisation. One point of future action therefore is the conversion of Facebook members into YECREA members. We aim to inform more offensively about the benefits of getting involved not only in YECREA but also in sections and TWGs. More attention to the challenges that young scholars face in the general activities of ECREA might as well encourage them to engage in the association as well as in our network. There seems to be a rather high threshold for young scholars to feel like their voice matters and that they would be welcome. This is less due to the actual nature of sections and TWG hierarchies but more do a lack of awareness on the young scholars side. We also see that not all young scholars who are members of ECREA as part of institutional memberships are aware of the possibility to login to the ECREA intranet and to select their thematic section and networks. Furthermore not all of them receive personal account data from their institutional coordinators. We will provide information on that. YECREA representatives will be involved in the organisation of (events at) pre-conferences to the ECC in Lugano. The YECREA management team will sponsor a network workshop/panel at the ECC and also organize a young scholars social event in Lugano.