# Executive Board Annual Report 2021

## Name of the Section/Network/Temporary Working Group:

YECREA

## Management team:

Chair: Sandra Banjac
Vice-chair: Valentina Anania
Vice-chair: Antonio Cuartero

## Number of members:

433 members

## Social media:

## YECREA continues to provide information to its members on job opportunities, conferences,

## workshops, and relevant publications mostly through the YECREA Facebook group and Twitter account. The FB group currently has 1126 members. In September 2021 YECREA opened the Twitter account @yecrea\_eu. The account currently has 151 followers. It successfully facilitates interactivity and communication among its members, and shares relevant learning, funding, work and networking opportunities for young scholars.

## Activities in 2021:

In the first half of the year, the outgoing YECREA management team focused on organizing the YECREA pre-conference workshop “Labour & Health in Communication Research”. While the initial topic ideas were suggested by the previous management team, the event itself was planned, designed and delivered by the current management team, with the help of the current YECREA representative of the Journalism Studies section, Phoebe Maares.

The workshop was designed for postgraduate and early-career researchers to develop practical coping mechanisms for the various expectations placed on them, such as: publishing pressures (while writing their PhD); getting grants and funding; teaching; getting recognition for their work in competitive environments; dealing with imposter syndrome; searching for stable employment. We considered the issue of mental health in doctoral education a particularly salient topic in light of the global pandemic and the exacerbated isolation of young scholars.

The event was held online, with five participants. In order to fight Zoom fatigue, we delivered it on the interactive platform Gather Town. The feedback for the event was very positive, with participants requesting that similar opportunities be held more often. Participants reported that they found the open exchange about common issues helpful, even when the topic at hand was something with which they were already familiar.

The outgoing YECREA management team also focused on finding and instructing successors. They wrote a call and advertised it on YECREA’s website, newsletter and Facebook channel. They talked to interested candidates, organized the elections via Zoom during the business meeting and instructed the new management team.

In addition to these activities, YECREA has published several newsletters, including one distributing the call for applications for early career researchers at the ECC conference. The outgoing team evaluated the applications and organized the communication with the grantees. They also helped find early career assistants for the sessions at the ECC online conference.

Finally, as current vice-chair of YECREA, Valentina Anania has also been elected as the Networks representative on the Executive Board and has started collaborating with the EDI subcommittee.

## Plans for 2022:

Our plans for 2022 are focused on the new.

The YECREA team issued a new call for YECREA representatives for the S/N/TWGs that needed them. We are currently collaborating closely with S/N/TWGs management teams to finalise the selection process before the end of February 2022. We are also planning an onboarding meeting to welcome and instruct the new YECREA representatives. Our aim is to make YECREA a more closely-knit community, and events such as this will help us achieve this objective.

The YECREA team has started working with the Summer School subcommittee to prepare and evaluate the grants for the participants. In this respect, we will strive to make the Summer School accessible to disadvantaged students and to make the incoming cohort representative of the diversity existing within the Network.

We have published a call for papers for the 9th ECREA Communication Conference in Aarhus. The call focuses on what “impact” means for PhDs and Early-Career Researchers (ECRs). We seek to examine the double impact of neo-liberalization of academia and the invisible labour of ECRs as academic proletariat. We are also going to plan pre-conference events, including a YECREA party, for early-career scholars.

Finally, we will continue working with our social media, especially the Twitter account, to create a strong network and facilitate communications among its members, besides continuing our work with the FB group and the website.