ITN - PARTNER SEARCH MCITN-EU-HOS7-1

01 dicembre 2017

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Per maggiori informazioni sulla Ricerca Partner e per conoscere i contatti del proponente, potete consultare il seguente indirizzo web:

http://www.apre.it/formaAssist/scheda.asp?id=1036

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<Reference n.: MCITN-EU-HOS7-1>
<Deadline: 01/08/2008>
<Programme: Marie Curie - Network per la formazione iniziale>
<Project Title: SPIRIT (Social Psychology Initiative for Relevance and Idea Technology)>
<Financial Scheme: Azioni Marie Curie - Initial Training Networks, ITN>
<Description: Social psychology Ph. D. training programs in Europe are currently very much focused on preparing students for academic careers, with the possible exception of work psychology oriented departments that focus on group dynamics and work motivation. However, many other areas of social psychology are potentially of use to business. Research into attitudes, well-being, and intergroup issues are of particular interest to mediating enterprises such as consulting and marketing firms. Our proposal will recruit and train Ph. D. social psychology students to be capable of going into either business or academic settings, increasing the appeal of the degree. At the same time this promotes social psychological solutions to business problems, it will also promote greater external validity of social psychological research in academia.

Description
This ITN has three goals:
Goal 1: to increase the relevance of the discipline of social psychology to external settings, with a focus on business applications,
Goal 2: to give academics and students contact with small to medium consulting firms as a

point of interface between research and business settings
Goal 3: to open avenues for Ph. D. students to pursue business as well as academic careers.

Our selection of centres and goals will be based on four research areas in which social psychology and business can intersect:
1. Work psychology - intragroup and leadership processes
2. Marketing - attitude processes, affect and decision making
3. Employee wellbeing - stress, coping, wellbeing promotion
4. Intercultural and intergroup issues - sexism, prejudice, diversity issues

An important guiding idea is that the research supported by this network will include both applied and basic research. While applied research is certainly important to the consulting enterprise, it should be recognized that basic research can also play an important part in generating ideas for consulting, beyond the strict scope of applied research. To borrow a term from social psychologist Barry Schwartz, basic research findings can be expressed as an idea technology based in empirically validated views of human nature. This ITN aims to make both aspects of research understandable to business professionals.

Overview of activities
Studentships: The network will fund 10-20 three-year Ph. D. studentships (and possibly early postdoctoral fellowships as well) that require a student to attend one of the academic centres of the network in a country other than his or her country of origin. These studentships will fund tuition, living expenses, and a stipend for research expenses related to the goal of expanding participant populations in research. The usual requirements of doctoral education and research at the institution will apply to the student. However, students will be expected to enrich their education by taking part in the other activities of the network.
General conferences: At least one three-day event will be funded each year, inviting 40-60 academics and students, as well as representatives of industry, both from the network and from other places, with an approximately 50-50 mix. The purpose of this event will be to present research by academics and students, and talks by consulting industry professionals, in a way that communicates and explores the potential relevance of social psychology research -- both basic and applied -- to business and other settings.
Student workshops: Three workshops yearly will be funded for network students. Academics and consulting industry experts from within and outside the network will be invited to take part as teachers and advisors. One workshop will be a week-long summer school, while the others will be half-week consultation events. Structured presentations and workshops will be held on the topics.
Student and industry exchanges: Students funded by the network will be required to undertake a two-to-six-month exchange with an industry consulting partner. The nature of the student's involvement is up to the student; a reactive approach may be taken, taking part in the work of the consulting firm, or a more active approach may be taken, in which the student develops an original research project within the consulting firm that collaboratively answers a question of interest. It is expected that sites will allow some quid-pro-quo regarding the student's interest and their own. Travel for these exchanges will be funded, and living expenses will be part of the normal student budget.
Board meetings: Rotating about the sites, there will be yearly meetings of representatives of each site to plan the coming year's activities and assess the past year's work. These meetings should take no more than two days. Travel and accommodation will be funded.

Goal 1: To increase the relevance of the discipline of social psychology to external settings.
External validity: Expansion of methods and populations in social psychology. Two decades after the social psychologist David Sears noted an over-reliance on undergraduate student samples of convenience in social psychological research, the great majority of articles published in top social psychology journals still rely on psychology student samples, who

tend to be younger, more educated, more well-off, and more likely to be female than members of the general population. These characteristics, along with a reliance on samples from Western cultures, limit the external validity of our field's findings to a degree we rarely acknowledge. However, a recent meta-analysis (Peterson, 2001) found that in nearly half of social psychology research topics where samples could be compared, general population samples found results that were substantially different from student samples, in direction or magnitude. Our program plans to tackle this problem through a combination of funding (funds for students to pay non-student populations, and hire researchers who can access difficult to reach populations) and training (workshops on using the Internet to collect samples, survey and archival data, field research, and cross-cultural research).

External outreach: Communication of social psychology findings outside academia. Another persistent concern not addressed by current models of social psychology training is the communication of those findings to the larger public. Spending time on communicating findings outside the social psychology community is seen as potentially detrimental rather than essential to a researcher's career. As a consequence, the empirical findings of social psychologists are often bypassed in popular media where they are relevant. The proposed workshops would include sessions on working with the media and other outlets to publicize findings, and media representatives will also be invited to the conferences, as we feel that the accessible presentations given at such conferences will be ideal for further dissemination.

Goal 2: To give academics and students contact with small to medium consulting firms as a point of interface between research and business settings

In the world of consulting, large firms can afford their own research departments. Therefore, it is the small and medium sized firms who stand most to benefit from a strategic partnership with universities, and from connections with researchers and students that this network intends to build. The points of contact in this ITN will be many, from initial planning at the highest level involving both academics and consultancy professionals, to workshops and conferences where the needs and offerings of each side are on the agenda, to student placements in which students gain hands-on experience with the work of consulting and integrate it with their own research.

Goal 3: To open avenues for Ph. D. students to pursue business as well as academic careers

In the UK and other countries, the social psychology Ph.D. is still largely seen as preparation for an academic career. However, the research skills and theoretical insights of our graduates are also potentially applicable to many roles in business, including consulting, management, marketing and public relations. Even as we continue to train excellent academics, awareness of these career paths would undoubtedly help attract more candidates to our Ph. D. programs, and would give more options to existing students. The ITN's requirement to have an interface with industry will involve consulting with businesspeople (in particular, consulting firms) about what skills they deem important in a Ph. D., then offering content in the workshops and seminars tailored to these needs. Our business partners will also benefit from sessions and workshops led by academic members of the network, creating dialogue about the relevance of current social psychology findings to concerns in business. Finally, we hope that the above points on more general samples and communication will act in synergy to strengthen the offering of our graduates in terms of business careers, as well as academic.

Our version of the ITN will expand career opportunities for social psychology Ph.D. students. Having this relationship with consultants can give students a better understanding of opportunities outside of academics. Also it should simultaneously increase the demand for individuals that can span the gap from research to application. Through training sessions and internships, graduates can gain valuable professional experience whilst attaining academic credentials. Formal training in this process from a university level can help create and maintain an exchange of knowledge. The academic department is presented with "real world" problems upon which to develop hypotheses and

consultancies receive scientifically grounded solutions. Ultimately, this makes for a well-rounded researcher who feels comfortable in the lab, as well as the field.

<Organisation Type: Università>
<Partner Sought: Participating sites:
Our University, Department of Psychology, will take primary responsibility for preparing the application, although other participating institutions will be invited to become involved in the application process beyond giving the information required of them.
We are aiming for 4-6 academic sites in Europe (including us) and 2-3 industry partners in different European countries. Among these academic sites it would be desirable to have at least one each from Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece) and Eastern Europe (principally the 2004 and 2007 EU accession countries).

For further information about this Partner Search, including Contact Person's details, please consult this web address:
http://www.apre.it/formaAssist/scheda.asp?id=1036