T4EU Summer School for Refugee Researchers and Scholars at Risk, Sofia 01-06.09.2025 (T 5.5)

General Description

The **target group** for this training is:
- Refugee researchers and
- Scholars at risk.

They could be at any stage of the academic career:
- PhD student,
- Post Doc,
- Experienced researchers.

Number of participants: 30

The event is envisaged for 30 participants. Each university sends up to 3 refugee researchers. They are identified internally depending on own criteria, incl. on first come first take basis.

Length: 4 full days training

Attendance of sessions: Although in the format of a Summer School, this activity could be characterized more likely as a training program. The program is based on several main points steaming from EURAXESS network 10 years experience in supporting refugee researchers and exploring their needs. The workshops are envisaged to be interactive and practice oriented. They are structured in a logical flow. In this regard it is required that the participants attend all of them.

Objective of the Summer School

The main objective is to improve the **integration of the participants in the European labor market**. As a result of the forced mobility that refugee researchers and researchers at risk experience they are not well prepared to deal with local cultures, local research systems and local labor market for highly qualified specialists. Generally most of them were mainly university lecturers in their countries and in most of the cases they will not be able to enter the local teaching process (at least not very soon if at all) in the universities due to the local regulations and high competitiveness of the university positions. Something more many of them has psychological traumas that need specialized treatment. In this situation they need extensive support to integrate and become the active side in the process.

The training program is built on mixed approach using presentations, discussions, group and individual work and networking activities. It is constructed small 1.5 hour workshops and includes all main topics related to overcoming the difficulties and improving their soft skills. The facilitators of the workshops will be mixed experienced practitioners and members of the alliance universities.

Outcome

By attending and active working during the event the participants will learn about or be able to:
- Communicate with different audience in a foreign country,
- Identify symptoms of psychological trauma,
- Collaborate in international teams,
- Identify, evaluate and solve problems,
- Research funding opportunities in European context,
- Apply for funding or for a job.

Program

Day 1	Topics
	Arrival
19:00	*Get to know event – Dinner/TBC*
Day 2	**Topics**
09:00-09:30	Registration
09:30-10:00	Welcome and Greetings/ Program and Practicalities
10:00-10:30	**Icebreaker Activity:** Participants introduce themselves and share their research interests
10:30-11:00	*Coffee break*
11:00-12:00	T4EUAllinace and activities; What is EURAXESS?; How to benefit from EURAXESS Science4Refugees Hub
12:00-13:00	**Workshop: Communication Skills:** • Importance of verbal and non-verbal communication in research. • Techniques for effective communication with diverse audiences.
13:00-14:00	*Lunch break*
14:00-15:00	*Our host: Sofia University St. Kliment Ohridski Tour*
15:00-15:30	*Coffee break*
15:30-17:00	**Workshop: Mental Health and Well-Being** • Overview of mental health and its importance in research. • Strategies for coping with stress, anxiety, and emotional challenges. • Mindfulness techniques and relaxation exercises, such as guided meditation or breathing exercises.

17:00-19:00	*Sofia City Tour/TBC*
19:00	*Dinner /TBC*
Day 3	**Topics**
09:30-11:00	**Workshop: Teamwork and Collaboration:** • Exploring the significance of teamwork in research projects. • Group activities focusing on collaboration techniques.
11:00-11:30	*Coffee break*
11:30-13:00	**Workshop: Critical Thinking and Problem Solving:** • Strategies for evaluating information and making decisions. • Case studies related to research challenges and solutions.
13:00-14:00	*Lunch break*
14:00-15:30	**Workshop: Intercultural Competence - interactive session** • Identities • The image of the other: how useful are generalisations • Cultural adaptation and intercultural sensitivity
15:30-17:00	*Transfer to Plovdiv/TBC*
17:00-19:00	*Visit ancient Plovdiv/TBC*
19:00	*Dinner in Plovdiv /TBC*
22:00	*Return to Sofia*
Day 4	Topics
09:30-11:00	**Overview of Funding Opportunities:** • Types of funding available (grants, fellowships, project funding). • Key European funding programs (e.g., Horizon Europe, Erasmus+, MSCA).

11:00-11:30	*Coffee break*
11:30-13:00	**Workshop: Writing Grant Proposals:** • Essential components of a successful funding proposal. • Tips for tailoring applications to specific funding bodies.
13:00-14:00	*Lunch break*
14:00-15:30	**Group Activity: Drafting a Proposal Outline:** • Participants work in teams to create a preliminary funding proposal. • Presentation and Feedback: Teams present their ideas, and facilitators provide constructive feedback.
15:30-17:00	*Transfer to Bankya Spa Center/TBC*
17:00-19:00	*Bankya City Tour/SPA/TBC*
19:00	*Dinner in Bankya /TBC*
22:00	*Return to Sofia*
Day 5	Topics
09:30-11:00	**Overview of Research Careers Beyond Academia:** • Types of organizations that hire researchers (NGOs, think tanks, government agencies, other organizations from the public sector (libraries, museums, etc.), private sector). • Career pathways and job roles available.
11:00-11:30	*Coffee break*
11:30-13:00	**Workshop: Crafting CVs/Resumes and Cover Letters:** • Key differences between academic and non-academic CVs. • Tips for highlighting transferable skills and relevant experience. • Use of AI in research and services (Albena Antonova)
13:00-14:00	*Lunch break*

14:00-15:30	**Mock Interviews:** • Role-playing common interview scenarios for research positions outside academia. • Peer and facilitator feedback on performance. **Networking Strategies:** • Building professional networks and leveraging platforms like LinkedIn. • Tips for effective networking within and outside the research community.
15:30-19:00	*Free time*
19:00	*Dinner/TBC*
Day 6	Topics
	Departure