

# PGR SCO December 2020

## Introduction

Ah, December. Almost made it to the end of a disastrous year! But before it ended, 2020 decided to flex its malicious muscles just once more (or several more times, considering the horrendous situation at the UK border). Anyway, one morning I ended up randomly falling flat on my face due to low blood pressure featuring a lousy attempt of getting out of bed too fast. After 14 days of recovering from a concussion, it was almost Christmas so please excuse the decreased speed of actions!

## Goals

Make it till the end of 2020 (alive). Other than that, I continued to work on the feedback received in the previous term. Among other things, I have pursued the following goals:

- Continue supporting the GTA Campaign
- Push for office access
- Improving PGR mental Health
- Training needs and how Proficio can help achieve them
- Host socials
- Finalize the YUFE (Young Universities for the Future of Europe) Selection Committee for the PostDoc Programme

## What have I done this month?

For the **GTA campaign**, I met with different stakeholders, and pushed for the numbers on employment to be released as soon as possible. We had success in that we were able to get the total number of employed GTA/GLAs up to this point in 2020, but we don't yet have a number to compare this to – so this is something I will be pushing for next month.

I'm very happy to say that I have helped some part of the **office space problem!** Since the offices have been closed for use since the winter lockdown, there have been conflicting communications between the PGRE team and the Departments. I was able to pinpoint where the critical point of miscommunication laid, and with the help of the Deputy Dean Andrew Canessa, I was able to clarify this very point, after which the Heads of

Departments were finally able to issue permissions for PGRs to enter offices again. YES! Naturally, I will continue working on the general office space issues.

In terms of **socials**, I have channelled most of my efforts through my societies this month. Among other things, I organised a session on gender-neutral language at the beginning of December, which was very well visited and started some lovely and interesting discussions.

On **Proficio**, I really enjoyed the focus group organised as part of the PGR week and I found it very fruitful. So many ideas were discussed, and I am so excited to pick many of them up in a meeting with Annecy next term.

What **PGR Mental Health** is concerned, I have proposed my initiatives to the PG Steering group, and I will be meeting with Sian Lovesy from SU Advice next month to further discuss the implementations. Really looking forward to it!

Within the **YUFE Project**, I helped select the composition, and members of the selection committee for the current PostDoc call.

### **What can be expected in the next month?**

In January, I will be meeting with Annecy Lax from the PGRE team to further discuss what we programme we can push via **Proficio**. I am particularly excited about a self-development programme, which aims to help PGRs recognize their own abilities and values, how to make use of them fully and efficiently during everyday work, and in this way prioritize and efficiently deal with issues relating to mental health, and workload.

I will also continue working with the **GTA Campaign**, hopefully being able to acquire numbers of previously employed GTA/GLAs and make a case for more GTA/GLAs being employed, if there is much of a discrepancy.

For socials, I will be pushing, and work with the PGRE team, to put on a **semi-formal PGR social**, which will provide a platform for PGRs to meet and exchange ideas interdisciplinarily! I am also hoping to continue working with my societies, and other SCOs, to put on casual socials on different topics, which are free for PGRs to join.

For my **mental health plan**, I will meet with Sian Lovesy to discuss how we can put different ideas into action. Very excited!

I will start a new attempt to push for a **better distribution of office spaces** by asking the Deputy Deans of the different Schools to co-ordinate an effort with HoDs to evaluate supply and demand of their respective Departments, with the potential of Departments with excess supply "merging" the administration

of office spaces with Departments with excess demand. Let's hope for the best!

As a new task, I am also hoping to look into different co-working platforms or so, to see whether we could somehow set up a **virtual, shared office** to help fight the feeling of isolation!

Merry Christmas!

Julia Heimann

