

## European Young Researchers Award (EYRA) 2019-2020

Excellent European research across all disciplines is of prime importance for the well-being and prosperity of Europe. EuroScience wishes to encourage the most talented young researchers to pursue a career based on research in research institutions or in other academic professions. In order to promote this idea, [EuroScience](#) has established the European Young Researchers Award. Since 2010, it has been awarded to the most prominent representatives of two groups for the most talented young European researchers engaged in PhD projects and postdoc projects. We want to recognize young people who have already made important contributions to their disciplines, but who have also succeeded in developing the societal context of their achievements and in promoting their field of research by notable outreach activities.

The selection of an awardee in each group is made by the international EYRA Committee appointed by the EuroScience Board. To ensure the interaction with a larger audience the award will be presented at the upcoming [EuroScience Open Forum](#) (ESOF) in Trieste July 5-9 2020.

Over the years the EYRA award has grown in prestige and popularity. This year we received in the two categories 50 very high-level individual submissions supported by letters from established authorities in the field.

In view of the remarkable level of the candidates the Jury will again organize a European Young Researchers Popular Prize in addition to choosing a PhD student (or a PhD from 2019) and a postdoc as Jury winners. The Committee has selected three finalists in each group who will be invited to make a short presentation during the award ceremony at ESOF. In order to emphasize the importance of research outreach, the selection of a European Young Researchers Popular Prize in each category will be decided after a vote in the audience and made known during the award ceremony together with the names of the two Jury awardees.

***The six finalists nominated by the Jury are (in alphabetical order):***

### **PhD category**

**Michael Bossetta** finished his PhD in 2019 at Copenhagen U, Denmark, in Political Science and holds at present a Marie Curie postdoc scholarship at Lund U, Sweden, in Literature and Languages. He holds a BA in Philosophy (Columbia U, USA), a MSc in Political Science (Copenhagen U) and a MA in European Studies (Lund U). He has been a visiting scholar at Amsterdam U, the Netherlands, and North Carolina U, USA. During his academic career, Bossetta has received a number of important international grants and awards. His research interests cover a broad field within media studies and political science with a special focus on the influence of modern media platforms on the development of European democracy. Bossetta has presented his research in international channels, at conferences and in ca. 20 peer-reviewed articles and chapters to international publications.

**Francesco Valente Gonçalves** finished his PhD in 2019 in Clinical and Forensic Psychology at Leicester U, UK, after a Marie Curie scholarship affiliated with the interdisciplinary EU/Marie Curie INTREPID research group in forensic sciences in the School of Criminology at Leicester U. He has been engaged in intensive outreach and organizational activities on a European level and has used his research in companies that focus broadly on forensic studies and consultancy. He has received important grants

and awards for his interdisciplinary research in criminology, psychology and law. Gonçalves has published c. 10 peer reviewed articles and book chapters.

**Sophus Helle** is a doctoral student at Aarhus U, Denmark, since 2017 in the School of Culture and Communication/Comparative Literature. He holds a BA and a MA in Assyriology from Copenhagen U, Denmark, and Würzburg U, Germany. He has been a visiting scholar at Columbia U, USA, and has been an invited lecturer at Cambridge U, UK, Freie U, Germany, and Helsinki U, Finland. His research interests concentrate on bridging theories and methodologies of modern literary studies with the philological study of the ancient literatures of the Middle East. His research has earned him an invitation as co-editor of a publication project based at Harvard U. Helle has been engaged in editorial, organizational and other outreach activities, most notably in translation and theater, which has brought him a book contract with Yale University Press. Helle has c. 15 international peer-reviewed articles in important literary journals to his name.

#### **Postdoc category:**

**Valentina Sessini** holds a postdoc position in Chemistry at Alcalá U, Spain, after a Marie Curie postdoctoral scholarship at Mons U, Belgium. Her PhD in Engineering was defended at Perugia U, Italy, in 2016, and for her BA and MA in Material Science she studied at Cagliari U and Sassari U, Italy, and at Menéndez Pelayo U, Spain, where she has also been an assistant researcher in 2017. She has received important grants and awards. Sessini's research interests focus on the development of bio-based materials and nanotechnology, which have provided her with the opportunity to be involved in broad European research networks. She has published ca. 20 peer reviewed articles and several book chapters in significant international outlets and has taken out a patent.

**Elaine Toomey** holds a postdoc scholarship in Health Research at the National U of Ireland, Galway, and serves as the Associate Director of Cochrane Ireland. She has obtained a BSc and a MSc in Physiotherapy at Limerick U, Ireland, and defended her PhD thesis in Public Health and Physiotherapy at University College Dublin, Ireland, in 2016. She has been as visiting scholar at Newcastle U, Australia, and at Western U and Ottawa Health Research Institute, Canada, and has received prestigious international grants and prizes. Toomey's research addresses health issues in society, in particular the scientific methods and processes that can strengthen the relation between research and society. Outreach is central to Toomey's work, and she has published c. 30 peer reviewed articles in international journals and has consistently engaged in public outreach.

**Maria Viñas** is a postdoctoral fellow at Complutense U, Madrid, in Optics financed by a national grant. Her B.S. and MSc in Optics and in Biomedical Physics, also from Complutense U, have developed her ongoing research interests in optics, which brought her a number of important grants and awards and have involved her in research collaboration in the USA and across Europe, both in research institutions and industrial research labs. Her research achievements lie within the development of optical visualization techniques and technologies for visual simulation with a particular focus on the chromatic functionality of the eye. Viñas has published c. 40 international publications in high impact journals.

*The International EYRA Committee consists of Svend Erik Larsen (chair), Stephane Berghmans, Monica Brinzei, Teresa Fernandez Zafra, Anastasia Kiratzi, Genoveva Marti, Kris Myny, Magda Nico, Jan Ramon, Eleonora Viezzer.*