



What connects Białystok, Rotterdam and Greifswald?

These three cities form the heart of population-based, long-term research projects, which carry out extensive health examinations on randomly selected inhabitants of their study regions. Many years of research create a wealth and in-depth information about the health of people living in these regions, which help to create disease prevention programs and support activities promoting a healthy lifestyle.

We want research to better serve our regions and their local societies! In Horizon 2020, the European Union has identified the need to build effective collaboration between science and society, in order to attract new perspectives for research and innovation, combining scientific excellence with social awareness and responsibility. The programme promotes the idea of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), which encourages all societal actors (researchers, citizens, policy makers, business, third sector organisations, etc.) to collaborate throughout the research and innovation process in order to better align both the process and the results with the values, needs and expectations of European Societies.

Prospective cohort studies allow investigating disease incidences as well as the relationships between risk factors, subclinical disorders and disease outcomes in a population-based sample. The possibility of many years of observation of a randomly selected group of members of a given community uncovers new areas of research for scientists, as well as guiding decision making in health by healthcare professionals and policy makers. Due to these opportunities, studies such as Białystok PLUS, SHIP in Greifswald or the Rotterdam Study provide an excellent environment to implement RRI practices. To explore how RRI can be implemented in these studies, the project JoinUs4Health („Join Us to Optimize Health Through Cohort Research”) was created.

Hence, as part of the joint JoinUs4Health project, we invite citizens of all ages (age requirement: 16+), genders and backgrounds, as well as non-governmental organizations, government officials as well as representatives of the education and business sectors to collaborate and jointly create outputs, which meet the needs of our local society, combine perspectives of various individuals, groups and sectors and join us together in our vision. We invite people who are not necessarily professional researchers but are interested in science to collaborate with scientists and other actors, contribute ideas on health research as well as develop and conduct research projects with a team of people from diverse backgrounds.

The realization of project goals will be possible thanks to the interdisciplinary cooperation of the project partners, which will result in:



Funded through the EU's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (grant agreement 101006518)





- an online platform through which residents of the cohorts' study regions and beyond will be able to engage with each other and with scientists, e.g. by asking question and providing suggestions for research topics. In addition, the platform will enable the creation of working groups made up of citizen scientists, who in collaboration with professional scientists will be able to develop their research projects. The platform will also encourage professional scientists to open up with their research ideas to the citizens of the cohort regions - we want to promote clarity of communication and increase understanding of the nature of the scientists' work;
- one Citizen Science Board per cohort region. The boards will include representatives of all groups involved in the project (e.g. residents, scientists, NGOs). The board will meet approximately monthly to make decisions about the development of citizen science, discuss projects of working groups operating on the online platform;
- events promoting citizen science in different age groups (e.g. Research Cafe, Science Festival, workshops for high school students, representatives of local government and entrepreneurs, International Scientific Conference presenting results ~~of social research of scientists~~)

CALL FOR MEMBERS !!!

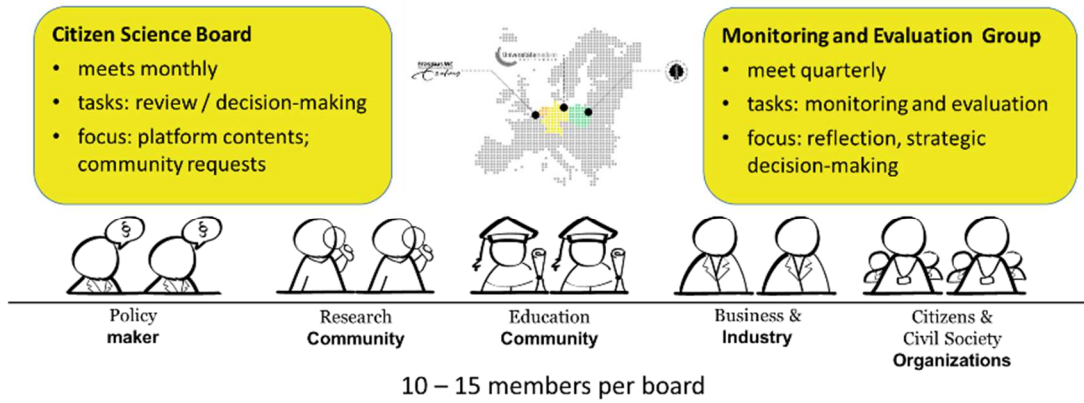
We are looking for 10 to 15 members for each, the Citizen Science Board and Monitoring and Evaluation group. Both advisory boards will be working closely with JoinUs4Health representatives of the respective cohort region. Details of both advisory boards are outlined in the respective board regulation. We want the voice of the local society to be heard when making decisions about the directions of research conducted in our regions, as well as create an environment that allows you to develop your own research interests. The JoinUs4Health project creates such an opportunity through collaborations with the largest scientific projects in these regions

Figure 1 outlines tasks of group members and frequency of meetings. In general, group members are invited to

- prior to each meeting: read circulated documents and contemplating on the raised aspects;
- during the meeting: contribution to discussions and decision-making;
- after the meeting: revision of meeting summary.



Each of the three countries establishes its own two advisory boards



If 10 members per board: 60 board members in total!
(2 boards in 3 countries with 10 board members each)

Figure 1. Overview of the two JoinUs4Health advisory boards, the Citizen Science Board and the Monitoring and Evaluation group in each of the three partner countries Germany, the Netherlands and Poland

If you are interested in JOINING US in the Citizen Science Board or Monitoring and Evaluation Group, please complete the attached form and send it to contact@joinus4health.eu.

