Support of Young Talent in the GMDS

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Abstract. The German Association for Medical Informatics, Biometry and Epidemiology (GMDS) aims to develop subject-specific methods, which are then to be applied in collaboration with various medical domains. Furthermore, the support of young scientists is an essential field of activity of the GMDS, since the need for junior staff has increased due to the acceleration in medical digitization. A specially established Presidential Commission strives to promote young talents and scientists in the above-mentioned disciplines. For this purpose, various strategies and concepts are elaborated in regular meetings and finally implemented. These include online formats such as a lecture series on research-related topics, as well as events such as summer schools and PhD symposia.

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1. Introduction

With currently about 2000 members, the GMDS 2 is the only scientific society that jointly represents the four disciplines of Medical Informatics, Biometry, Epidemiology and Medical Bioinformatics and aims to develop subject-specific methods that will then be applied in collaboration with various medical domains.

One of the mission statements is the support of young scientists of the GMDS. In recent years, the need for junior staff has increased due to the acceleration in medical digitization. To address this, the GMDS has established the Presidential Commission (PC) for the Support of Young Scientists, which seeks to inspire young talents, including the nearly 10% undergraduate GMDS members, within the above-mentioned disciplines.

2. Activities for the promotion of young professionals

The target group for which strategies are to be developed within the scope of the PC includes pupils, students, doctoral candidates, as well as postdocs. Accordingly, the following actions, among others, were developed and realized.

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As general support GMDS offers young members low-threshold access to its community. In principle, young talents can become members of GMDS free of charge or reduced fee. In addition, the association provides financial support for students and young scientists to attend the annual meeting of the association. Outstanding theses are honored with sponsorship awards and young members with contributions at the annual meeting have the chance to win the Best Paper Award. As a point of contact, the PK operates a website and a Twitter channel so that questions or suggestions can be addressed at any time.

A very successful format is the series of lectures offered on topics relevant to research. These take place online once a month during the semester and have a duration of 45 minutes plus 15 minutes of discussion. The content includes basic topics such as abstract writing and predatory journals, but also advanced topics such as clean coding or reproducibility of numerical experiments. In addition to lecturers from the GMDS community or from industry, foreign lecturers have also been recruited. The presentations, with a regular audience of 20 – 60 viewers, are also usually recorded and made available to GMDS members, establishing a sustainable knowledge base for current and subsequent members.

Face-to-face events take a particular place in networking. These include the doctoral symposia and the summer schools. The former is aimed at doctoral students in the first half of the doctoral phase. The event is composed of several parts. First, participants present their doctoral thesis, which they can then discuss with the other doctoral students. Another part serves for the acquisition of competences relevant to the doctoral thesis within the framework of workshops. Last but not least, social events are used to exchange experiences in a relaxed atmosphere.

The Summer Schools are on the other hand open to all interested parties, but are primarily aimed at students. Here, the focus is more on networking and integration into the GMDS community. With presentations from the respective disciplines, the fields of activity and possible areas of work are to be conveyed to the participants.

3. Outlook

A recent GMDS member survey [1] showed that the junior talent work is perceived, but could and should definitely be strengthened. Especially in the area of meetup formats. A special focus will be placed here when planning future activities. In addition, the PC seeks to connect with other young promotion groups on European level to provide a better promotion for junior scientists [2,3].

References

