

## Special Session – #EIE2021

### Mission impossible? Online development of European implementation capability

**Moderator:** Associate Professor Tone Elin Mekki (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences & head of the EISEN project) – **Norway**

**Panellists:** Professor Christine Øye (Western Norway University of Applied Sciences & leading the creation of the EISEN Master level course); Professor Nick Sevdalis (King's College London & leading the UK Implementation Science Masterclass); Assistant Professor Lauren Clack (University of Zurich, Institute for Implementation Science in Healthcare); Dr Femke van Nassau (senior researcher, Amsterdam UMC); Dr Cecilie Varsi (Vice Dean for research and entrepreneurship, University of South-Eastern Norway & Chair, European Implementation Collaborative) – **Norway / U.K. / Switzerland / Netherlands**

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#### Background

According to a recent review from the Erasmus+ funded [EISEN partnership](#), personal competencies, such as political, negotiating and leadership skills to successfully engage with stakeholders are key elements towards developing proficiency to facilitate and lead research in the implementation science field. This in addition to possessing overall knowledge and skills of theory, models and frameworks. Moreover, the value of engaging in reflective international communities of practice was highlighted. Should higher education (HE) institutions take on the challenge of developing personal skills? And if so, how could postgraduate education address these aspects in a manner that is both ecologically and economically responsible, and in line with the HE's qualification frameworks?

#### Key discussion points

The rationale behind EISEN is to join forces to co-create and run an international postgraduate education in implementation science in Europe. Findings from an initial scoping review, and from stakeholder input, identified four domains signifying proficiency in both 'doing and researching' implementation: knowledge, implementation, organisations, and the self. When matched with identified postgraduate education offered in our countries, we found a warranty of courses that focused on developing capabilities related to aspects of self, such as e.g. personal leadership and facilitation skills. The review findings align well with later years' significant development of implementation theories, models and framework.

- Why then this discrepancy between what universities knows, and do?
- Are universities the right place to develop these skills, and if so, how can education contribute?

As context matters in implementation, the EISEN partners believe in the added learning value of postgraduate students co-exploring how their different national policy and organizational context influence the way they facilitate or research implementation activities. However, organizing ecologic and economic responsible education internationally calls for online solutions – unproblematic perhaps within the knowledge domain, but what about developing the skills identified to aspects of self?

- How can Technology Enabling Learning (TEL) strategies be used to outweigh the limitations of not offering face- to- face and situated learning opportunities?
- Are there any promising practices – or not- that could be shared?

#### Highlights

This special session is for persons engaged in developing the implementation science workforce, both in education, facilitation and management positions.