

# Building Collective Resilience Among Early Career Female Academics

## Call for participants

We invite self-identifying female early career researchers in the humanities and social sciences to join us in a four-session Workshop aimed at opening conversations and developing skills about what it means to build resilience in these times in our contexts. The aim of this project is to increase research leadership and build digital capacity that explores possibilities for online research and teaching in the humanities and social sciences, as well as to foster an interdisciplinary research community among U21 self-identifying female early career researchers to perform successfully in the post pandemic scenario.

The three conveners to this workshop call themselves the “Shanghai Tea Community”. We met in 2018 in Shanghai at a U21 early career workshop concerned with sustainable futures, at topic which was discussed extensively by U21 attendees”. But the soul of our tiny community appeared over tea and long walks around the city after the actual workshop. We discussed our career paths, with our ups and downs, and decided to stay in touch and celebrate our achievements, big or small. We have managed to sustain this sisterhood and would like to share the benefits of supportive academic peers with a larger community. We believe in the power of the collective (to overcome the pandemic, to build a better future, to transform our present...), and would like to invite more peers to be part of the good things that universities, in their broadest definition, can offer. We acknowledge the struggle of time and energy that we all have been through (as female and self-identified female early careers in the humanities and social sciences) in times of COVID-19 and before, and we want to offer something that beyond the mundane daily tasks, that re-ignites our excitement for research and teaching. A supportive network that lives on beyond the Workshop.

### We welcome applications from persons who meet the following criteria:

- Early career humanities and social science researchers within 8 years after their PhD (career interruptions are accepted)
- Self-identifying as female<sup>1</sup>
- From a U21 affiliated university (check this link [U21 Members](#) to make sure your university is a member of U21)
- Available to participate in four two-hour online sessions over the course of February - March 2021.
- Willing to devote time to offline tasks and group work in between the online sessions (approx. three hours per week in between sessions)
- Invested in developing a long term career in academia and contributing to teaching and/or research

1. We use the term “self-identifying female” to be inclusive of non-binary genders, recognising that experiences of gender inequality may also be an issue for non-conforming early-career researchers.

**The goals of the Workshop** are to build research and teaching digital capacity as a community that will enable participants individually and collectively to:

1. Explore and discuss available tools for innovating in the ways to engage in online research and teaching that continue to focus on the human connection.
2. Name and share the barriers and opportunities female researchers face in their early careers, especially in the context of a pandemic, and identify specific ways to address them.
3. Host meaningful conversations among participants and explore possible ways to stay connected after the workshop and continue building a supportive and empowering community.

The Workshop will consist of four two-hour sessions that will take place between February and March of 2021. Topics covered in the sessions will include: online teaching and facilitation tools; strategies and methods for conducting digital research; needs, barriers and opportunities that have arisen for social science researchers in the context of the pandemic; strategies for building an ongoing support and practice community of female-identified early career academics. The workshops will be conducted in an experiential and participatory way; therefore everyone's input will be key for shaping the topics covered as well as the outcomes of the process.

The facilitator will be Andrea Parra, a Colombian feminist activist with extensive experience in an experiential training and facilitation methodology called Direct Education.<sup>2</sup>

The online research methods/leadership coaching Workshop will focus on acknowledging the challenges and opportunities of the current and post pandemic scenario where research and teaching work increasingly takes place in virtual spaces, the strengths and weaknesses of our specific community in terms of career development and attainment of leadership positions, as well as the individual skills and expertise of each participant. Thus, the actively participatory and collaborative experience of online web-coaching sessions will be, at the same time, exploring and modelling digital research possibilities. That is, conveners together with participants will be observers and observed, as well as learners and teachers.

### **Time Commitment to the Workshop**

Each participant will be required to commit to active participation in four (2 hr) online sessions; plus time working alone (no more than 3 hr between sessions) and time with other participant(s) (no more than 2 hr between sessions). The total time commitment is thus 28 hours at a minimum in order to create a space that is co-owned and developed by all the participants. Attendance at all synchronous sessions is required as well as a commitment to work on the offline, non-synchronous tasks. Synchronous sessions will take place on Zoom. Non-synchronous sessions will be using the platform Totara through the Universitas 21 platform.

2. Andrea Parra is a queer Colombian human rights lawyer, activist, professor, trainer and translator, who has worked for almost 20 years on issues related to sexuality and rights, gender-based violence, disability justice and immigrant rights. She has conducted numerous trainings to activists, public officials, attorneys, survivors, students and academics, among others. She has trained in several countries and various cities in Colombia and the US. She's been a core trainer with Training for Change since 2014 and has worked with feminist and human rights organizations in Colombia and South Asia. She has also translated several texts related to feminism and social justice issues

## **Application Procedure**

As the programme has a limited capacity of approximately 20-25 participants, we will be selecting candidates based on their written submission provided via the linked below.

Applications will be received through: Sept. 30 - Oct 15, 2020. Selection process will be carried through Oct. 16 - Nov. 15; notice will be given between Nov. 16 - Dec 6.

**Please submit your application by completing the form ([click here for form](#))**

Confidentiality is an important foundation of this Workshop and both your application and any discussions from the Workshop will be treated with confidentiality and protected through general data protection regulations.

If you have further question, please contact us at [U21buildingresilience@gmail.com](mailto:U21buildingresilience@gmail.com)

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