CEPAR Summer Scholarship Project Nomination Form 2021/22

Project Code: CEPARSP2021_07

Project title

Provide a short descriptive title of no more than 20 words.

Social environment and biomarkers of ageing in different ageing cohorts

Supervisor (s)

Name: Saman Khalatbari-Soltani	Location: The University of Sydney School of Public Health	Email: saman.khalatbarisotlani@sydney.edu.au

Project summary

The world's population is ageing as a result of both longer life expectancy and declining fertility rates. Today, 8.5% of people worldwide are aged 65 and over. Population ageing is a powerful and transforming demographic force with impacts at national and global levels which poses enormous challenges to the social welfare state. Thus, maximizing healthspan, the time period that an individual spends in a state of health, is a major public health challenge. To address this, many health and ageing cohort studies have been established around a word over the last two decades. Additionally, some efforts at integrating data from multiple cohort studies have been conducted with the aim of understanding ageing in different populations. Integrating data from existing ageing cohort studies increases sample size and statistical power for better understanding of ageing and its determinants. Yet, there is a need to explore how comparable are these aging cohorts regarding ageing-related variables.

The Focus of this project will be on the WHO definition of healthy ageing: "an ongoing process of developing and maintaining the functional ability that enables well-being in older age". Functional ability is determined by an individual's 'intrinsic capacity', the environment in which they live and the interaction between individual and environment. Pivotal domains for capturing individuals' intrinsic capacity comprise cognition, psychological factors, vitality, sensory functioning, and locomotion. Thus, the aim of this project is to explore and compare sociodemographic, social environment, and ageing biomarkers measured in different ageing cohorts and the ascertainment method used.

The output from this project will help us understand the common ageing-related measures and methods in cohort studies of health and ageing, as well as the heterogeneity between cohorts.

Role of the scholarship holder(s) in the project

The scholarship holder will summarize methods used to measure biomarkers of healthy ageing domains as well as sociodemographic and social environment variables from ageing cohort studies (about 200 cohorts). The deliverable will be a report that covers the methods and findings, and an Excel spreadsheet containing the relevant data obtained from different cohorts.

Required knowledge, skills and/or training

Good English reading and writing skills as this project involves lots of reading and summarizing existing information.

Experience using Excel

Good time management skills

Quantitative aptitude

Preference

WAM ≥ 70% and be able to undertake and write up a report. To be able to run search and find relevant information. The scholarship holder should already possess the knowledge and skills to be able to work independently and engage in self-directed learning.

Work period

The work period may be broken into two parts as students will not be expected to work during any university shutdown period over Christmas/New Year. You may either specify dates the student must be available to work over the summer period (i.e., to fit in with any leave you may have planned) or leave the exact dates open to negotiation with the successful applicant.

Total work weeks:	Please tick one box
☐ 4 weeks	☒ Exact dates will be decided in consultation with the successful applicant
☐ 5 weeks	OR
☒ 6 weeks	☐ The project must be conducted during the following period:
	--/--/-- to --/--/--