Terms of Reference - ESHackathon and ESMARConf Fellow

Summary: Fun and varied voluntary position that can expand to suit the candidate, with opportunities for paid work, mentoring with evidence synthesis experts, exposure to a network of global leaders in the field, experience running high-impact, international events, and immediate first-author publication opportunities.

Background

The Evidence Synthesis Hackathon (ESH) was established in 2017 with the aim of establishing a community and platform for sharing and collaborative working towards tools and frameworks that increase the efficiency, accessibility and reliability of evidence synthesis. The organisation was built on the principles of Open Science and focused on the use of R, since this coding language is particularly familiar to academics and lends itself well to an ethos of openness and collaboration. The ESH has held four physical hackathons and a suite of online collaborations and events, resulting in a large number of novel tools that support systematic reviewers, including citationchaser, robvis, and PRISMA2020 flow diagrams.

The Evidence Synthesis and Meta-Analysis in R Conference (ESMARConf) was established in 2021 as a conference to showcase tools in R for systematic reviews and meta-analysis. It has evolved into a popular annual conference that combines training and education with tool development and showcasing of novel frameworks and applications. It has been attended by up to 7000 people per year.

Both ESH and ESMARConf have been successful in gaining substantial sums of funding, but these organisations are largely run by a small group of volunteers. As interest in ESH and ESMARConf grows, we are looking to expand our small core team with an additional early career researcher.

Position

We are looking for a volunteer to join our core team who can help to support us in the regular activities of these two organisations. This is an exciting opportunity for someone with a keen interest in Open Science, evidence synthesis and coding to gain experience in organising events, working with global experts in evidence synthesis, and receiving one-on-one mentoring from experienced researchers working in the field.

We are looking for an energised, positive person with initiative and drive to join regular monthly meetings, support event organisation, and help with writing scientific papers related to ESH and ESMARConf. This position would take a maximum of a few hours a month, but has the opportunity to expand to suit the person - the more you put in, the more you get out! We're a fun, welcoming and supportive team, and we'd love to actively help support an early career researcher wanting experience and opportunities with some of the world's leading evidence synthesis methodologists in our wider networks.

The position directly reports to/is supported by Neal Haddaway (freelance) and Matthew Grainger (NINA).

Responsibilities

- Join a monthly call to plan and discuss the organisations' activities and funding opportunities
- Help plan specific events (one annual ESMARConf and up to 3 physical hackathons), by joining planning meetings, inviting speakers, curating abstract submissions, organising programmes, and publicising events on social media
- Help collaborative write academic manuscripts (usually commentary papers) regarding the organisations' activities and outputs
- Join hackathons and contribute to novel frameworks and tools that support evidence synthesis - this would likely include being a named author of tools and methods papers that garner huge interest in the community (the PRISMA2020 flow diagram app receives >6000 monthly users, citationchaser >1,500)
- Provide feedback on website content and design for ESH and ESMARConf to improve user experiences

- Lead and support social media plans to increase engagement with the organisations' websites and core content
- A commitment to at least 1 hour-long call per month and the ability and interest to spend more time supporting a small number of specific events

What can be expected from us
- A friendly, welcoming, and supportive environment
- Exposure to a network of leading researchers and methodologists in evidence synthesis across disciplines (but particularly social policy, healthcare, and environment)
- Experience in supporting the running of large online events (>5,000 attendees) and first-hand experience of coordinating event content across Zoom, social media, YouTube and a WordPress website
- Experience in supporting in-person hackathons with world-leading experts in evidence synthesis
- One-on-one mentoring for a career in interdisciplinary evidence synthesis methodology
- Opportunities in supporting or leading (including first author) academic manuscripts for publication in leading journals (we have more ideas than we can ever cope with!)
- Support and mentoring in efficient collaborative manuscript writing (from a team with more than 250 collective published papers in the field)
- A commitment to provide financial reimbursement for your time where funding allows (e.g. during the planning and running of a specific funded event)
- Opportunities for financial support to cover training events that are pertinent to the role and the goals of the organisation

Desired qualifications and characteristics
- A completed or in-progress PhD in any subject
- Ideally fewer than c. 25 published research papers (we want this opportunity to help increase the person's publications)
- Interest and understanding of the key principles of Open Science, evidence synthesis and R
- Experience of evidence synthesis OR coding and tool development in R (one or other is enough, but you should have an awareness of both)
- Comfortable with working remotely and under your own initiative, working to self-established deadlines
- An awareness of ESH and ESMARConf and a shared passion for supporting efficient, accessible and rigorous evidence synthesis

How to apply
To apply, please email your CV to eshackathon@gmail.com along with the following texts:
1. A 500-word statement of how you fit the role description
2. A 250-word description of your expectations from us and how we could make the experience worthwhile from your perspective

Please also include any information on how we could facilitate your accessibility during the application process and role (e.g. if you have a disability, notable neurodiversity or caregiving commitment). We will do our best to ensure a fair playing field for everyone.