European Accounting Association

# Update on Doctoral Activities

*PhD Forum*

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- The EAA-ARC

- Timeline and process

- Call for interviewees

# The EAA Accounting Resources Center

- **Objectives:** Provide an online platform to stimulate research quality of emerging accounting scholars (PhDs and junior faculty) in Europe
  - Enhance quality/quantity of research output in Europe
  - Impact profession/policy-making by research-trained accounting faculty

- **Implementation:** Online platform that acts as resources repository, marketplace, event calendar and network

# Iterative process of developing EAA-ARC

- EAA-ARC as a graphical user interface (GUI)

- Best practice is to use User-Centered Design (UCD) process

- **Steps**
  - ✓ Conduct survey of potential users
  - ✓ Develop personas (from survey and other information)
  - ✓ Prioritize personas
  - ✓ Describe user needs and tasks
  4. (Write scenarios)
  5. Derive concise concept of system requirements
  6. Validate through interviews (at Glasgow and after)
     - Then: Revise personas – revise user needs/tasks – revise concept – repeat …
  7. Develop mock-up (prototype)
  8. Implement
  9. Set up maintenance and monitoring processes

# Brief summary of survey results

- Background
  - Objective: Find out if there is demand, and what kind
  - 15-minute online survey with closed and open questions
  - 602 responses out of 6.670 members = 9.0% response rate
- Key insights
  - Relatively few responses from key target group (PhD students)
  - PhD students somewhat familiar with EAA
  - Popular items an EAA-ARC could offer
    - Event calendar
    - Doctoral training resources
    - Marketplace services (especially visiting positions)
    - Job market
    - Networking/social media
    - Access to databases
  - High interest in using /registering on the EAA-ARC among respondents

# Priority 1—The doctoral student
# Marie

## BACKGROUND:
- Doctoral student at the mid-tier public school where she earned her master's
- Bright, research-interested, motivated
- Good technical accounting education/internships

## GOALS:
- Successfully complete doctoral degree
- Contribute in a meaningful way to my academic field of interest
- Get a tenured academic position, preferably in the area
- Extend her academic network
- Find internationally renowned academic mentors/co-authors
- Find visiting and training opportunities (econometrics, methods, data handling, one-day workshops, etc.)

## CHALLENGES:
- Moderate English-language skills
- School w/o structured PhD program
- Supervisor and peers not research active, or department very small
- Never presented a paper at an international conference
- School/department not plugged into international accounting research scene
- Poor database infrastructure, few research funds

## QUOTE:
- "I'd really like to interact with the people whose papers I read, and some day publish in the same journals as they do. And I am willing to invest a lot into my skills. But I am not sure what it takes, where to start, and whom to ask for guidance. Most of the people around me do not seem to know, or care. I am very dedicated to taking all necessary steps to realize my academic ambitions."

*Name:*
Marie
*Gender:*
Female
*Age*:
24
*Characteristics*:
Highly motivated. Excellent grades. Not very mobile internationally.

# Priority 2—The young faculty member
# David

## BACKGROUND:
- PhD degree from little-known school/supervisor
- Recently appointed assistant professor at regional, but ambitious business school
- Likes to teach both BSc and MSc students
- Subject to rigid tenure requirements based on international publications (5 year tenure clock)

## GOALS:
- Remain in academia and beef up research reputation
- Make a name for himself internationally

## CHALLENGES:
- Senior colleagues not research active
- No junior peers in department
- Few good doctoral students to work with
- No research workshop at school/department
- Poor database infrastructure, few research funds

## QUOTE:
- "I did well in my PhD, and I'd love to stay in academia. But I am unprepared for the publication pressure that I now face. I have never published in a peer-reviewed journal before, and I am not sure how to go about it. I wish I had a network of senior mentors, as well as co-authors who are in a position similar to mine. I doubt whether I will ever be able to publish in the renowned international journals."

*Name:*
David
*Gender:*
Male
*Age*:
28
*Characteristics*:
Already published (with supervisors) in local journals. Slightly lost on how and where to publish internationally.

# Priority 3—The Master's student
# Victor

## BACKGROUND:

- BSc from Dutch school; MSc in Finance & Accounting from top European school
- Zillions of career options (Big 4, consulting, industry)
- Got interested in research during Master's thesis supervised by a research-active faculty member
- General scientific curiosity; asks questions and shows interest in scientific topics and broader questions. Tries to take another perspective when attempting to solve issues.

## GOALS:

- Learn more before deciding about career path
- Wants to be intellectually challenged

## CHALLENGES:

- Not sure what his options are, other than join the crowd down the beaten path of long hours at consulting firm or investment bank
- Observes faculty members primarily in class room
- Little insight into what it means to live the life of being an academic in accounting.
- Met engaging faculty member in the context of MSc thesis who passionately talked about his research

## QUOTE:

- "There will be plenty of time to work in practice if you eventually want to. However, my biggest fear is being stuck in a situation or position where you are unable to learn and develop yourself. That's why I'm currently leaning towards academia – but I don't really know how the academic career works."

**Name:**
Victor
**Gender:**
Male
**Age:**
21
**Characteristics:**
Excellent grades.
Looks for challenges

# User needs and possible EAA-ARC features

| User | Needs | Features |
|---|---|---|
| **High priority**<br>*Marie*—doctoral student<br>*David*—young faculty | **Education** in research skills | ▪ Calendar of open doctoral courses<br>▪ Repository of state-of-the-art by topic and how-to papers<br>▪ Webinar-type courses and online seminars/conferences |
| | International **networking** and exposure | ▪ Calendar of conferences/workshops<br>▪ Marketplace of mentoring, exchange and visiting opportunities<br>▪ Job market (AAA experience, pre- and post-Miami)<br>▪ Young Scholar Day before Congress (similar to PhD Forum)<br>▪ Regional efforts (EAA outreach to national associations) |
| | Qualified **feedback** on own research projects | ▪ Feedback on PhD proposals initiative (*B. Osma/M. Walker*)<br>▪ Oral feedback sessions with experienced faculty (physical/Skype) |
| | | |
| **Lower priority**<br>*Victor*–master's student | **Information** on academic life in accounting | ▪ List of PhD programs<br>▪ Description of PhD process and academic career steps (by country)<br>▪ School/supervisor criteria (*M. Walker*)<br>▪ Video testimonials by successful young faculty |

- Critical step in EAA-ARC development process: Validation of our initial draft "personas" *Victor*, *Marie* and *David*
  – Are we envisioning the EAA-ARC target groups accurately?
  – Are we setting the right priorities?
  – Are we on target in identifying your needs and tasks?
  – Are we proposing EAA-ARC features that can satisfy them?
  – Are we missing anything?
- **Please help us today in assessing these questions!**
- We will run short interviews with potential EAA-ARC users
  – Physical interviews **here at the Congress venue** (about 30 min each)
  – Additional Skype interviews after the Congress ends
- Please enter your info on the **sign-up sheets** being circulated
  – Make sure you fill in all fields
  – Please write legibly