

Invitation to join the 2026 edition of the emmaConnect programme

Dear emma members, colleagues, and friends,

We are very happy to invite you to participate in the 2026 edition of the initiative by the European Media Management Association: **emmaConnect**.

As you may know, the European Media Management Association (emma) is dedicated to the promotion of media management research, encouraging scientific research relevant to the field and this community. In doing so, it takes an active role in promoting communication and collaboration among association members.

emmaConnect was originally launched during the COVID-19 pandemic, when it became very difficult, if not impossible, for early-career researchers to receive advice from more senior scholars and to start building their own networks of contacts. Since then, we have organised several editions of emmaConnect, making this programme one of the regular activities of emma.

emmaConnect brings together early-career researchers with more experienced scholars in an informal and temporary set-up. This may take the form of one or multiple online conversation(s) in which the research and/or career path of the early-career researcher is discussed. This may also potentially lead to research collaboration with the more experienced scholar and their team, or, possibly, the inclusion of the early-career researcher in online meetings of other PhD or postdoctoral researchers at the experienced scholar's university. The experienced scholar and early-career researcher may also work towards developing joint publications.

We are grateful that in previous editions of emmaConnect many experienced scholars were willing to share their expertise and knowledge in the field of media management and media economics research with emma members who are less advanced in their academic careers.

The 2026 edition of emmaConnect will have a special focus on enhancing the knowledge of early-stage researchers about publishing academic work during the PhD and early postdoctoral phase. This includes how to develop a coherent publication strategy, how to select the appropriate academic journal for a manuscript, how to choose and apply suitable research designs, and how to extend the reach and impact of research output. Advice from more experienced scholars, based on their own work and experience, should help early-career researchers to further shape their strategy for academic publishing and career advancement. At the same time, emmaConnect continues to provide space for broader discussions on research development, academic networking, funding opportunities, and career trajectories.

Postdoctoral scholars who are more than five years beyond the completion of their PhD may choose either to engage in one-on-one discussions with experienced scholars or to contribute to the programme by sharing their own experiences with publishing strategies, funding applications, and career development.

How does emmaConnect work?

1. We will post a list of names of experienced scholars, including their fields of research and interests, on our emma website. This list will be visible only to emma members.
 2. From this list, early-career researchers and postdoctoral researchers who wish to connect with more experienced scholars will be able to select up to three preferred experienced academics with whom they would like to have one-on-one discussions.
 3. Early-career researchers and postdocs who wish to connect with more experienced scholars will complete a short application for emmaConnect. In addition to indicating their preferred experienced scholars, they will provide information about their research interests, as well as a brief explanation of how discussions with particular academics would contribute to their academic development.
 4. The emma Board will review the applications and facilitate the matching process, in close coordination with the experienced scholars. While every effort will be made to take into account the stated preferences of early-career researchers and participating postdocs, matches may also be proposed with other experienced scholars whose expertise aligns closely with the applicant's research interests.
 5. Once the matching process is complete, the participants can arrange the date, time, and modality of their virtual meeting(s).
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What is expected from you?

The minimum expectation is one online meeting. It is entirely up to the participants in emmaConnect to decide whether they wish to meet more frequently and/or pursue further collaboration, which may extend to other PhD or postdoctoral researchers, as well as to broader research and teaching teams.

In general, the programme is designed to accommodate busy academic schedules. The experienced scholars, in coordination with the selected early-career researcher or participating postdoctoral scholar, will determine the scope, duration, and frequency of the discussions.

Who are the participating early-career researchers?

The early-career researchers are PhD candidates and postdoctoral researchers up to five years after the completion of their PhD. Many are based in Europe, though participants may also come from other regions of the world.

Early-career researchers participating in emmaConnect must be registered emma members. Experienced scholars do not need to be emma members in order to participate in the programme.

What do you need to do to take part in emmaConnect?

Please contact Ivana Kostovska (kostovska.i@outlook.com). Ivana is the main contact person for all questions regarding emmaConnect and a member of the emma Board. Ivana will need information about your research areas and interests, as well as the number of early-career researchers you believe you can engage with.

If you are an experienced scholar — including postdoctoral scholars who are more than five years beyond the completion of their PhD — and would like to connect with early-career researchers, please send the requested information by **24 March 2026**.

If you are interested in participating as an early-career researcher, or as a postdoctoral scholar wishing to connect with an experienced scholar, please contact Ivana by **24 March 2026**. You will then be invited to submit your applications by **31 March 2026**.

When will emmaConnect start?

The matching process will take place in **early April 2026**. Meetings are expected to begin from **15 April 2026 onward**.

The timing does not fit me right now – can I join later?

If the proposed timing does not suit you, please indicate a period in 2026 that would be more convenient, and we will take this into account when coordinating with participating researchers.

We look forward to your participation in the programme. We strongly believe that your engagement will make a meaningful contribution to our community of early-career researchers and to the development of our shared scholarship.

With best wishes from the
emma Board