



The Evidence-Based
Research Network

The Strategic Plan for EBRNetwork

Version 1, October 2022

This is a preliminary strategic plan. The steering group elected at the first AGM will implement a formal process for developing a strategic plan.

This preliminary strategic plan was developed by the *inaugural steering group*.

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The Evidence-Based Research Network aims to promote:

- No new research studies without prior systematic review of existing evidence
- Efficient production, updating, and accessibility of systematic reviews

To undertake research without systematically considering what has been done before is unethical, unscientific, and wasteful. The questions and methods of new studies should be informed by systematic reviews. Results from new studies should be placed in context by explicit consideration of prior evidence, ideally by incorporating the new results in a systematic review. To raise awareness of this, we define “Evidence-Based Research” (EBR) as the use of prior research in a systematic and transparent way to inform a new study so that it is answering questions that matter in a valid, efficient and accessible manner.

Vision

A world in which the cultural norm and expectation is that decisions about research are based on transparent and systematic use of evidence.

Mission

Transparent and systematic use of evidence to inform decisions about research

Strategies/Goals

Goal 1 - to make evidence-based research a fundamental part of the research culture in all scientific disciplines

Goal 2 - to identify and advocate for changes in the organizational structures and processes of the research environment to facilitate evidence-based research

Goal 3 - to identify and conduct research projects to inform the methodology and implementation of evidence-based research

Goal 4- to develop and disseminate scientific products about evidence-based research

Research environment includes all organizations that contribute to research including funding agencies, academic institutions, for-profit and non-profit organizations, publishers, and ethics committees.

Core Values:

Interdisciplinary	Accountability
Cross-cultural	Responsive and efficient
International/ Global	Respect of diversity
Inclusive	Compassion
Minimizing bias, conflict of interest and prejudice	Fairness
Integrity	

Shorter-term

[to be defined by incoming Steering Group, preliminary drafts included for information]

Objectives and Action Plans

Goal 1 - to make evidence-based research a fundamental part of the research culture in all scientific disciplines

Objective 1 - changing the incentivization of researchers and academics to make them more aligned with an evidence-based research culture

Action plan 1 - a working group will review current incentivization strategies used in academic and recommend new approaches and an evaluation plan for it)

Action plan2 - to introduce new awards and prizes and acknowledge milestone achievements in evidence-based research

Action plan 3 - develop a branding system for peer-reviewed journals to be evaluated and branded as “compliant with evidence-based research” to help researchers identify good practices and supporting them

Objective 2 - facilitating conversations and discussions around the research culture to identify barriers and facilitators towards achieving a culture that embraces evidence-based research

Action plan 1 - identifying and building partnerships with different stakeholders that need to be part of this conversation.

Action plan 2 - organizing targeted events to bring together these stakeholders to facilitate the discussions on how to change the research culture

Action 3 - Advocating for research funders to invest in underlying research around research culture to support action 1 and 2

Objective 3 - developing new capacity building programs and resources to support the change in the research culture

Action plan 1 - designing education resources and programs tailored to different stakeholder group that both influence or are influenced by the research culture

Goal 2 - to identify and advocate for changes in the organizational structures and processes of the research environment to facilitate evidence-based research

Objective 1 - identifying and reviewing current organizational structures and processes in the research environment on their ability to facilitate or discourage evidence-based research

Action plan 1 - to do a survey and review of current organizational structure in the research environment and identify key examples of success or failures of evidence-based research to develop new recommendations

Action plan 2 - develop an evaluation framework how organizations (funders, ethic review boards, academic institutions, etc.) can internally monitor their ability to adhere to evidence based research

Action plan 3 - organize external groups (either temporary or permanent) and develop an evaluation framework that external organizations or groups can evaluate and/or compare research organizations based on how well they adhere to evidence-based research

Action 4 - to organize joint working groups with the EVIR funders forum to develop recommendation how research environment can be re-structured and organized

Action 5 - to advocate that research funders should introduce pathways that require new research is only funded if it is based on a gap identified in a current synthesis of evidence through providing practice examples of funding agencies that are already doing this

Action 6 - to work with leaderships of universities to integrate in the ethics and approval process a requirement that new research is only allowed to go forward if it is appropriately based on a gap of previous research and is not a wasteful duplication

Action 7 - to work with research organizations to ensure that researchers have access to training or expertise and skill required to conduct the evidence synthesis to be able to identify gaps for future research

Action plan 8 - to advocate that each research organization has an organizational structure in place that can be a research unit, a research center or working group that employs (part time or full time) people with the appropriate expertise to provide methodological support in conducting systematic reviews. This can include skills in searching literature, appraising evidence, statistical or qualitative synthesis and machine learning. The unit should also choose software applications or programmes that can help, harmonize, and facilitate the unit.

Action 9 - to provide targeted recommendations for different stakeholders in the research environments how they can introduce more efficient approaches in their evidence synthesis process.

Objective 2 - developing new capacity building programs and resources the restructuring and re-organization of the system

Action 4 - to organize joint working groups with the EVIR funders forum to develop guidance, manuals, and training material on how research environments can be re-structured and re-organized. This would include both current established organizations but also new and developing ones.

Goal 3 - to identify and conduct research projects to inform the methodology and implementation of evidence-based research

Objective 1 - to advocate to research funders, charities, industry, and other organization that provide research funding to include methodological research as part of their portfolio

Action plan 1 - building partnerships with research funders (or forums of research funders) to draft research calls on methodological research and provide support by providing expert input

Objective 2 - setting standards for methodological research that is appropriate to inform decisions around evidence-based research

Objective 3 - developing new capacity building programs and resources on how to conduct high quality methodological studies in evidence-based research

Objective 4 - to conduct a priority setting exercise to identify the most important questions for new methodological research to achieve our evidence-based research goals

Objective 5 - to conduct methodological research projects focused on efficient use of existing evidence

Action plan - to collaborate with ICASR to develop and promote methods for efficient production of systematic reviews

Action plan - to develop and promote a data-sharing culture and technology interoperability to facilitate data sharing from studies and systematic reviews

Goal 4- to develop and disseminate scientific products about evidence-based research

Objective 1 - developing new capacity building programs and resources on how to develop high-quality scientific products

Objective 2 - to work with journals to provide specific opportunities in form of special issues or call for articles to increase the publications of scientific products in evidence-based research