

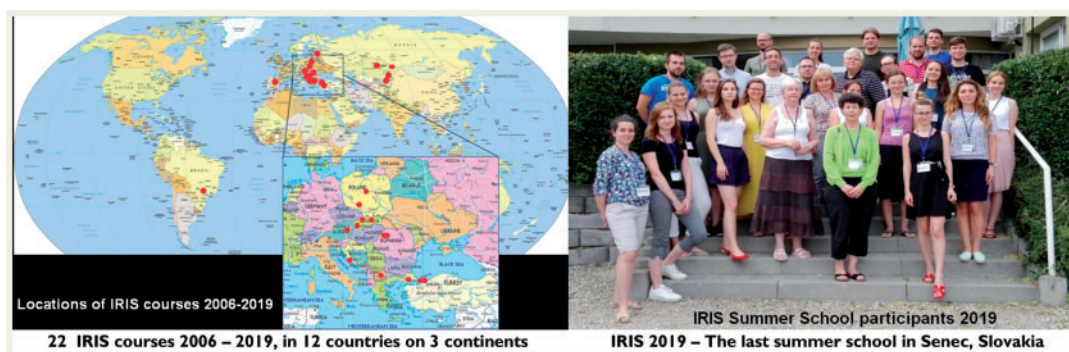
doi:10.1093/eurheartj/ehz936

IRIS courses for cardiology

IRIS courses are available in 2020 which are designed for building a research career in cardiology

The International Research Interdisciplinary School (IRIS), originally named the International Scientific Summer School (ISSS), provides an interdisciplinary international environment for training skills required for preparing research study protocols and scientific manuscripts and for international collaboration especially in the field of cardiovascular biomedicine. It is a common initiative of several scientific journals aiming to provide support for young researchers in their research career, in preparing their research projects and succeeding in publications.

Since the IRIS courses began in 2006, they have been held in various countries mainly in Central Europe, but their location has ranged from Brazil through Central Europe to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan. The total number of participants trained to date is 344 from 33 countries.¹ The IRIS experience shows that the underlying motives—the need for training young researchers, the need for understanding different cultures and building international networks—are common.



The course is based on the Research Practicum of Duke University, Durham, NC, USA.² It combines plenary and small group discussions, project development and class presentation, and discussion on publishing scientific papers with representatives of biomedical scientific journals.

The main IRIS goals are to:

- develop skills to carry out research projects, based on a practical, problem-based approach.
- increase communication skills, including the skills for discussion, negotiation, and critical appraisal.
- develop skills in international research team building and networking and establish enjoyable cross discipline/cross cultural collaboration.
- encourage researchers to publish scientific papers.

The IRIS initiative is focused on cardiovascular researchers and health care professionals, with the focus to reduce the gap in education. Healthcare professionals have a natural obligation to share their experience, to mentor and to train junior colleagues. In addition to the normal counselling by senior colleagues in everyday practice, the basis for teaching others and sharing an experience, is to undertake research and write scientific papers as a natural part of professional development. Even if biomedical professionals are not at or in research position, their professional experience is valuable and worthy to be shared.

Eligible participants are undergraduate and young postgraduate students and clinicians from research, mainly in cardiovascular medicine, physiology, biophysics, engineering, computer science, etc. The participation is also open for senior researchers and mentors who would like to share the experience of this learning method. The workshop arrangement of the courses and limited number of participants (optimum 20 participants) enable an intensive interaction between participants and faculty. The evaluation of the scientific performance of trainees for the period 2007–2013 showed that IRIS training was associated with an identifiable increase in scientific publication activity.³

Candidates for organizing IRIS courses in 2020 are Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, and Slovakia. The dates and locations will be announced in January 2020. For more details, please contact: ljuba.bacharova@ilc.sk or iris@specialists.academy.

Conflict of interest: none declared.

References

References are available as [supplementary material](#) at *European Heart Journal* online.



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