

HARBINGERS-2

A study on the pandemic-engendered challenges to ECRs' scholarly careers, communication behaviours and attitudes

**CIBER Research together with the University of Tennessee
Knoxville**

Thanks to funding from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation (<https://sloan.org/>), from the 1st November 2020 we will be embarking on an investigation that seeks to establish what the new scholarly normal is going to look like in a world of pandemic-wrought changes and to establish how the future of the scientific enterprise will unfold in these crucial and pivotal times, as seen through the lens of tomorrow's future professors and leading scientists and social scientists Building upon and extending the 4-year longitudinal *Harbingers* study of ECRs (<http://ciber-research.com/harbingers.html>) we will be studying the work lives, prospects and scholarly communication behaviours and attitudes of today's novice researchers. However, the new study - *Harbingers-2* - will do so with the express purpose of discovering how the pandemic will have impacted on the cohort that constitutes the biggest and most vulnerable generation of researchers.

Thus, the longitudinal work CIBER have conducted with ECRs in helping to determine whether their millennial beliefs are changing the face of scholarly communication will be continued over the next two years (2020 -2022) to include the monitoring of the effects of the pandemic and whether it is accelerating or hindering change, altering the nature of change or giving rise to additional and different changes. We shall also seek to establish how the challenges to the scholarly undertaking, brought about by the pandemic, affected the diverse populations among the ECRs and how they were dealt with in different countries: have the rich become richer and the poor even poorer? How do developed/developing countries fare in result? What lessons can be learnt from different national/institutional policies aimed at warding off the danger of the present-day cohort of ECRs being rendered the lost generation of the pandemic-riddled scholarly world? Where, in these circumstances, do 'best practices' lie? Towards this end, the study will feature three sets of repeat interviews, conducted periodically over two years with around 170 ECRs from the sciences and social sciences from the US, UK, China, France, Poland, Malaysia, Spain and Russia, capped by a questionnaire survey to scale up the interview findings to a larger and more international and discipline-diverse population of ECRs.

More information, including a list of all the partners, can be found on the project website (<http://www.ciber-research.com/harbingers-2/>) and from Professor Dave Nicholas (dave.nicholas@ciber-research.com).