



ISBNPA

Participatory Research
in Health Promotion



ISBNPA Participatory Research SIG Newsletter

SIG presence at the conference

During this year's conference, our Special Interest Group team will be present at the poster sessions on Thursday 28 May and Friday 29 May. You'll find us near the posters on participatory research, where we'll be chatting with presenters and attendees. Feel free to stop by and say hello, we would love to connect!



Participatory Research SIG best Presentation Awards

And the award for best presentation within our SIG goes to... (drumroll!)

Alice, Gideon, or Hannah! These three speakers are nominated for the award and will present their work on Wednesday 27 May, between 3:30 and 4:45 pm. To give you a head start, we introduce them already in this newsletter by asking each of them three questions. Hope you will all join the session and get inspired by their work!

Alice Bellicha (Bobigny, France) Co-creation of Nutrition Interventions in Higher Education: Proposals from a Student Citizens' Assembly



What excites you most about participatory research?

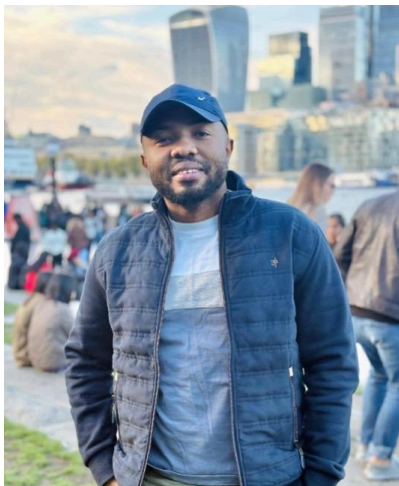
What excites me most about participatory research is precisely the uncertainty that comes with it. As a researcher, you have to accept that even if you may have a clear sense of where you want to go, you don't always know how you'll get there. It can be challenging, of course, but it forces you to let go of control and truly share the research process with your partners.

What is one challenge in participatory research that we still need to tackle?

One key challenge in participatory research is ensuring truly equitable participation. In health promotion, we aim to design interventions that reach those who need them most, and participatory approaches are essential to understand their lived experiences, needs, and expectations. However, participation requires time and resources, which may be particularly challenging for vulnerable individuals. Finding ways to design participatory processes that genuinely include and support their involvement remains a critical issue.

What are you most looking forward to at the conference?

I had to miss ISBNPA two years ago due to illness, so I'm especially excited about the 2026 conference. I'm looking forward to reconnecting with colleagues, discovering innovative research, and presenting our work. I'm also really glad to see several sessions on young adults' dietary habits and the co-creation of interventions in university settings already in the program, as these are at the heart of my current research. And I'm certainly looking forward to the Spanish sun and sea as well!



Gideon Amevinya (Montpellier, France): Co-Designing a Multi-component Intervention to Promote Healthy Diet and Physical Activity among Adolescents in Urban Ghana and Kenya: The Generation H Study

What excites you most about participatory research? What excites me most about participatory research is its ability to shift power by bringing communities from the margins into the center of knowledge production not just as participants, but as partners. It challenges the idea that researchers hold all the answer and instead creates space for lived experience to shape solutions in ways that are more relevant, context-

sensitive, and sustainable. It's those moments of shared understanding, where knowledge is co-created that make the work feel meaningful to me. I'm particularly inspired by how it fosters mutual learning and builds trust, turning research into a collaborative process rather than a one-sided exercise.

What is one challenge in participatory research that we still need to tackle?

For me, one ongoing challenge is navigating the gap between good intentions and real practice. It can be difficult to ensure that participation is truly inclusive and not shaped by existing power dynamics or practical constraints. I often find myself reflecting on whose voices are being heard, whose are missing, and how we can do better. Making participation more genuine and equitable is something I think we all need to keep working on.

What are you most looking forward to at the conference?

I'm really looking forward to the conversations, both formal and informal. I always find it energizing to hear how others are approaching participatory work in different settings, and to share experiences openly. I'm also excited about meeting new

people, reconnecting with colleagues, and coming away with fresh perspectives that I can carry into my own work.

**Hannah Goss (Dublin, Ireland): LifeLab Dublin:
Co-creating a Health Literacy Intervention with
and for Young People**



What excites you most about participatory research? The shift from doing research on people to doing research with them. There is an incredible energy when you bring together "academic experts" and "experts by experience". When we involve the community, whether it's children in schools or patients in a clinical setting, the questions we ask become more relevant and the solutions we design actually work in the real world. Seeing a participant realise that their voice is the catalyst for change is incredibly powerful. It turns the traditional power dynamic on its head, ensuring that the research is grounded in equity and authenticity.




What is one challenge in participatory research that we still need to tackle? The biggest hurdle is meaningful sustainability. It is relatively easy to engage a group for a one-off workshop, but it is much harder to maintain that partnership over the long term without it becoming tokenistic. We often operate on rigid academic or funding cycles that don't always respect the pace of community life, and we often struggle to close the loop so individuals aren't just participants and data points, but are informed of the outcomes and see the impact of their contribution.

What are you most looking forward to at the conference? While conferences are obviously a fantastic place to hear formal research presentations, for me, they are truly about the opportunity to meet and connect with people. These conversations are where we can share the "messy" side of research (I love hearing the honest stories of what didn't work so well!). So, if you see me over the course of the week please feel free to say hello.

JOIN OUR PARTICIPATORY RESEARCH EXPERTISE MAP

Are you curious about who else is doing participatory research? We are creating an expertise map to connect SIG members like you.

What's included in the map:

-  Your name and institution
-  Your research topic
-  Your level of expertise in participatory research

Why join? This map becomes a shared resource—helping members find collaborators, learn from peers, and discover expertise across our network.

Ready to participate? Fill out this quick [Google form](#) to add your details.

Webinars and Coffee Break Series

SIG Participatory Research in Health Promotion Coffee Break Series
Final session: 18 June, 09:00–09:30 CEST
Theme: Navigating mismatches in Participatory Research

Join us for the third and final session in our SIG Coffee Break Series! In this 30-minute exchange, we'll explore a common challenge in participatory research: *mismatches*, especially when working with funders and within multi-stakeholder collaborations.

Participatory approaches emphasize inclusive involvement, flexibility, and shared ownership, but what happens when this clashes with expectations from funders or other partners? For example:

- When funders value participation, but don't support compensating co-researchers
- When proposals require fixed research plans, while participatory research processes evolve over time
- When working with one group (e.g., adolescents), but other key partners are not (yet) sufficiently involved

We'll start with a short introduction to set the scene, followed by an open, informal discussion where participants can share experiences, questions, and strategies.

💬 A chance to reflect together on real-world tensions in participatory research and learn how others navigate them

👉 Connect with fellow researchers in a supportive and informal setting

☕ Bring your coffee (or tea) and join the conversation!

📝 Registration required—feel free to share your experiences or questions in advance to help shape the discussion.

Paper Highlight



International Journal of Qualitative Methods
Volume 25, 2026
© The Author(s) 2026, [Article Reuse Guidelines](#)
<https://doi.org/10.1177/16094069261435583>

Sage Journals

Special Issue: Applications of Qualitative Methods in Health Policy-Making



MapStakes-PH: A Methodological Framework for Co-Creation in Preventive Public Health

Kleio Koutra ¹, Haridimos Kondylakis², Vassilis Kilintzis², Barbara Guerra ³, Andreas Triantafyllidis⁴, Chariklia Tziraki¹, and Emmanouil Tsiknakis⁵

[Koutra, K., Kondylakis, H., Kilintzis, V., Guerra, B., Triantafyllidis, A., Tziraki, C., & Tsiknakis, E. \(2026\). MapStakes-PH: A Methodological Framework for Co-Creation in Preventive Public Health. International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 25.](#)

MapStakes-PH: A Practical Framework for Co-Creation in Public Health

Co-creation has become a major focus in public health research, with increasing recognition that interventions are more likely to succeed when communities, practitioners, educators, policymakers, and researchers work together throughout the design and implementation process.

A recent paper by Koutra et al. introduces MapStakes-PH, a practical framework designed to help researchers and practitioners structure co-creation in preventive public health settings.

Using a multi-country adolescent cancer prevention initiative across eight European nations as an example, the authors outline a five-step roadmap for organising stakeholder involvement:

1. Defining system boundaries
2. Identifying stakeholders
3. Mapping stakeholder influence and representation
4. Involving stakeholders appropriately

5. Monitoring engagement over time

One of the strengths of the framework is its balance between structure and flexibility. Rather than treating co-creation as a vague concept, the paper provides practical guidance on managing participation, balancing power dynamics, and adapting engagement strategies to different contexts and resource constraints.

The framework also emphasises the importance of:

- including underrepresented voices
- recognising lived experience alongside professional expertise
- maintaining transparent decision-making
- using ongoing feedback to refine interventions

Importantly, the authors acknowledge that meaningful co-creation can be resource intensive and that participation approaches may need to be scaled depending on the setting.

Overall, this paper provides a useful methodological contribution for researchers and practitioners involved in:

- school-based health promotion
- participatory research
- implementation science
- community health interventions
- public health policy development

Rather than focusing on outcomes, the paper focuses on how to operationalise co-creation in real-world settings, which is arguably one of the biggest current challenges in public health implementation research.

[Be updated of all ISBNPA news](#)



International Society of Behavioral Nutrition and Physical Activity | www.isbnpa.org 1300 S. 2nd St Suite 300 | Minneapolis, MN 55454 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!