

Young TPI

Introduction

Transitions usually require one or two generations to take place. The transition to animal-free innovations will be no different, therefore we can expect young professionals and students of today to facilitate and accelerate this shift. It is therefore important to involve them in the transition early in their careers and to make them aware of what is possible in the field of animal-free innovations. Providing young professionals and students with the space to have an impact is important, including using their thinking and doing power in relevant ongoing initiatives and existing forms of consultation. Setting up a young network is one of the tracks within the action line *sharing stories and dialogue* of TPI.

The network

Young TPI (in some documents called Jong TPI and can also be referred to as YTPI) consists of a group of young professionals and students who are younger than 35 years old or who graduated less than 8 years ago and who are motivated and interested in working with animal-free innovations.

The basic principles of Young TPI are the same as those of the regular TPI programme. The mission of the TPI programme is to make room for animal-free model development testing and increase confidence in them. The network also thinks about a system innovation for the validation, acceptance and implementation of the innovations without laboratory animals. In this way animal testing can be made more and more superfluous. The mission of Young TPI is in line with the mission of the TPI programme.

Vision

Young TPI empowers the new scientific generation to go animal-testing-free.

Mission

Contribute to the acceleration of the transition to innovations without laboratory animals by providing open-minded input and raising awareness of animal-free options among young professionals and students.

Audience

We strive for an interdisciplinary network, which is why it is intended for people with different careers, study backgrounds and from different types of organisations from the entire development chain from 'invention' to market access and regulation. In this way the members can learn from each other and cross-pollination can take place. The connecting factor is that all members are interested in the (im)possibilities surrounding working without animal testing. The network is a young network in a broad sense, taking into account age and work experience/career.

We make a difference between collaborators (referred to organisations from the entire development chain, i.e. government, regulatory bodies, companies (pharma/biotech/chemical/food/cosmetics), NGOs) and members (individuals) (Figure 1). Members can become part of a working group and/or become ambassador if they want to take on an active role in the network.

The members are 35 years or younger or they graduated (MBO, HBO, WO)/defended their PhD within the past eight years. Students, PhD candidates, and young professionals interested and/or involved in animal research, animal-free innovations, animal ethics, medical science, social science, computer science/AI, and other fields are our primary target audience. We will begin by

focusing on individuals in the Netherlands and later extend to include young professionals from other countries.

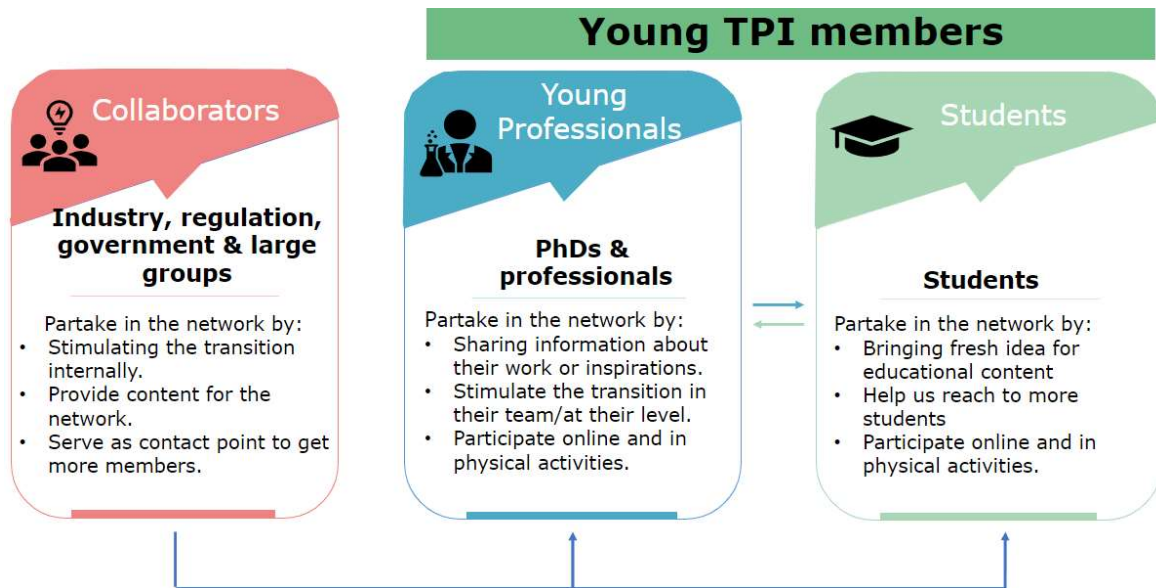


Figure 1: Young TPI audience and how they contribute to the network

The collaborators and members partake differently in the network, as explained in the part “Goals”

Goals

As representatives of young TPI, we aim to focus on translational research to find out how we as young network may advance the acceleration towards animal free innovation. We want to accomplish this through three pillars: stimulate the animal-free transition (by working with collaborators), raise awareness & show the possibilities (with lectures and courses) and create network & share experiences (with social events and interaction between members). An overview of our goals can be seen in Figure 2. Each part and the corresponding activities are further described below.

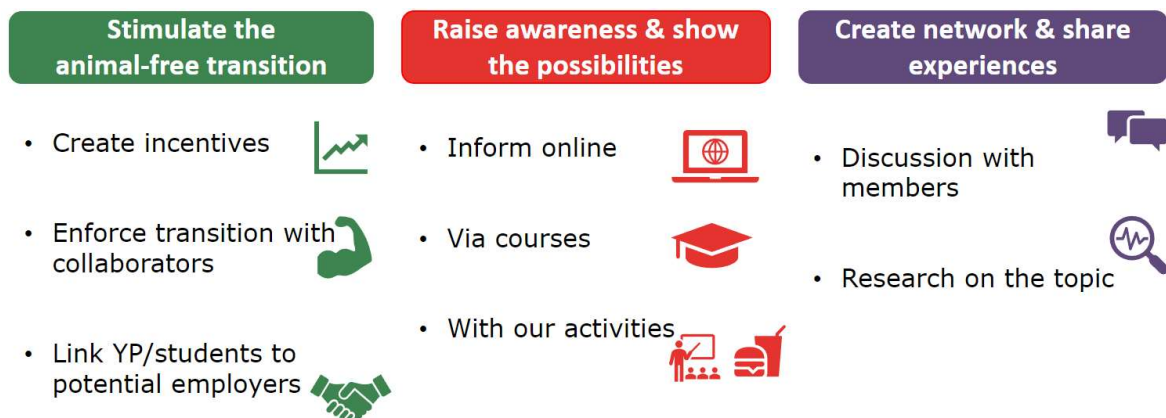


Figure 2: Young TPI Goals

Stimulate the anima-free transition

The Young TPI network aims to stimulate the transition directly via its members and collaborators, both internally (applying the transition to their own university/research group/consortium or company) and externally (serving as example and contact point to stimulate the transition further). The first impulse for internal change will be made by Young TPI ambassadors (an official position members can obtain) within their respective scenes. For encouraging external collaborators, they can partake in the network activities (e.g. visit to campus or office location) and be a promotional asset to reach more potential members or collaborators. Finally, we aim to facilitate the connection between our members and collaborators, linking motivated young people to existing research groups and companies focused on the transition through e.g. a think tank that can take on case studies.

Raise awareness & show the possibilities

By informing the Young TPI members about the transition and (im)possibilities surrounding animal-free innovations and their acceptance, we promote awareness and involvement. Moreover, one of our priorities is to familiarise them with change management and transition science and how they can apply this in their daily work. As a next step, the Young TPI members can themselves become ambassadors for the transition, as already explained in the previous goal. In this role they can inform young people who are not yet members about the transition and (im)possibilities surrounding working without animals. In this way, the transition also comes to the attention of people who may not have heard of it or do not know much about it yet. Moreover, PhDs and young professionals could provide content for the network by presenting their work, e.g. during a pitch afternoon. The network can then also show possibilities and chances for a career without the use of animals.

Create network and share experiences

Through Young TPI we create a network of young professionals, PhDs and students, to whom they can fall back on at the start of their career and can actively contribute to. Because the network is multidisciplinary, the members have access to a diverse group of people with different (career) backgrounds. For students, this network is useful to orientate, for example, what is possible and to have a contact person at different companies/industries.

In this network, members can share experiences and support each other. In addition, it is also important to stimulate the dialogue among young people, to understand what they think about the transition and what else we can do to accelerate it. It will also enable to see what input they can bring to existing 'tables' of consortia and alliances of professionals. The Young TPI board can facilitate this through networking events, newsletters and social media (spreading news from members), and potentially direct online interaction with e.g. Whatsapp groups.

Objectives

Based on the goals, we made a schematic table of how we envision our first and second year:

Year 1 young TPI (2022)	Year 2 young TPI (2023)
At least 1 online or hybrid introductory event	3-4 live events/master classes (e.g. 1 physical visit to a company/lab)
1 article in a newspaper	Extend abroad
2 live events/master classes	300 members
150 members	600 followers on LinkedIn
300 followers on LinkedIn	Set up working groups
Start setting up working groups	1 article in scientific journal

Deliverables

What does the Young TPI network offer their members? See also section below for specific activity ideas.

Events

The Young TPI network will organise at least 3 live events where members can meet each other and learn about the transition. More information on the events in the part "Activities"

Updates on the transition

Through a newsletter and/or social media, members can stay updated on news on the transition to animal free science, as well as possibilities for them in terms of jobs, internships and events.

A forum to share information and experiences

Through social media, knowledge and experiences of members can be shared in the network, e.g. by setting up Whatsapp groups.

Career Development

Members are given the opportunity to work on their professional skills and knowledge. This is mainly in the field of transition science, but also in matters such as consultancy/advice. They can then use/deploy these skills and knowledge in activities surrounding the network, such as advising TPI.

In this network, members are given a safe space to be critical so that they dare to speak out easily. This makes it easier to come up with new insights. Because they have just started their career and have not been in the system for long, they have an unbiased view of what is going on now and what the future should look like. Through this network they are given the space to give solicited and unsolicited advice to the TPI network from their uninhibited point of view and they thus function as an independent think tank within the TPI network.

Think Tank: Advising and Signalling

The Young TPI members hear from other young people what is going on in their environment. They can then share those signals within the regular TPI network. The Young TPI members are still studying, have recently graduated or have recently started their work or research. As a result, they are ideally placed to identify any barriers within education and research and to share them with the TPI network. They can also put topics on the agenda themselves, and set up collaborations in the form of Think Tanks with individual TPI partners.

Potential activities

Young TPI has the opportunity to organise an activity at least twice a year. It is possible to organise activities more often if desired, but this must fit within the budget. Activities of other organisations are also considered for possible activities. hDMT organises many activities, for example, which can help to find interesting speakers for activities of Young TPI. A non-exhaustive list of examples of potential activities is described below (there is room for your own interpretation):

Theme days and network drinks

On these theme days, a professional/expert is invited to present on a specific topic. Afterwards there is space to debate and discuss this specific topic. A topic is chosen jointly and all members can join in to debate and discuss. At the end of the theme day there is an opportunity to get to know each other and the speaker and other experts through networking event/drinks. In this way they expand their network and find out more about what career opportunities there are in the field of working without animal testing.

Lunch(hybrid) lectures

During lunch, a topic or new development is explained for an hour. This can be done by guest speakers but also by members of the network. These could for example be topics related to working without the use of animals, animal-free innovations, and transition science. People are also approached who are not necessarily related to the transition, but who are related to the topic of the lunch lecture, so that they come for the topic but also indirectly learn more about the transition. This could for example be a lunch lecture about organs-on-chip technology.

Workshops (depending on the budget)

Several workshops are offered in which the members who are interested can participate. These are both professional development courses and courses related to specific topics. An example of a course is a course in transition science. The members have a say in what they still want to learn.

Masterclasses

The members jointly organise masterclasses at universities and universities of applied science to introduce students to innovations that are free of laboratory animals at an early stage. The members use their network to create more awareness about the topic. In addition, the students in the network suggest teachers who can tell more about working without animals and prepare the masterclasses together with these teachers.

Helpathons and pitch days

The members have the opportunity to contribute to the organisation of the Helpathons of the TPI network and to help with the nomination and selection of researchers. In addition, they can also organise small Helpathons within the Young TPI network, for example specifically for students writing their thesis or PhD candidates writing their doctoral thesis. It is also possible for the members to attend a masterclass (or lecture) about systemic reviews on animal free innovations for medical purposes.

The members work together in groups on new ideas that can contribute to the transition. These ideas are then presented by the different groups on a pitch day. In this way new ideas arise and the members get a better idea of what is involved. The best idea is selected by directors of interested companies and this idea is further elaborated by Young TPI together and possibly with the director.

Working visits

To learn more about different fields of work, the Young TPI members can visit each other on a working visit. The members who work for the organisation in question organise a tour for the other members and tell them about what they are doing at the organisation. In addition, more is told about the change culture within the organisation. Finally, there is room for the organisation to submit a case study to the Young TPI members, which they can then work on together.

Finances

€10,000 per year is made available for Young TPI by the TPI programme (i.e. the ministry of LNV). This allows for the organisation of activities and other desired actions. An entrance fee may be charged for some activities and events. Members do not have to pay a membership fee to be a member of the network.

Structure and steering

In the first period of the network there is only a board. The board consists of a small group of members of the young TPI network. They make decisions about what the network will look like and about the direction the network will take in the coming future. They are therefore the executive board. They also determine which activities are organised. This board is as diverse as possible (age, career stage, educational background, nationality, gender).

The board consists of a chair, a vice-chair, a secretary, a treasurer, an activities coordinator, and a communication advisor. The term of office is 2 years and can be extended by 1 year with the unanimous consent of the other board members.

When the network grows, working groups can be set up. The members of the board can choose which working group they wish to chair or co-chair with a TPI member. Examples of working groups (this list can be supplemented later as needed):

- *Communication working group*: this working group is about communication around activities, but also about drawing attention to the network and the transition.
- *Think tank working group*: this working group is about providing advice in response to the issues provided by the Kerngroep (KG) and Transitiegroep (TG). In addition, they are also responsible for identifying what is going on among young people and advising on how to act upon this.
- *Working group activities*: this working group deals with organising activities and keeps an eye on relevant national and international activities so that participants can also participate in them.
- *Talent & development working group*: this working group is about the professional development of members and the recruitment of new members.

Where possible, members of young TPI are included in existing structures to make their voices heard. For example, by strengthening the KG and TG of the TPI programme with members from Young TPI.

Accountability

Every year, the board draws up an annual plan containing the goals and activities they want to focus on that year. An estimate of the required budget is also part of the annual plan. In the first year this could be, for example, drawing attention to the establishment of the network and recruiting members.

At the end of the year an annual report is made, which consists of an overview of what has been achieved and what costs have been incurred. In this way they can justify their actions, but they can also use this report for a self-evaluation and possible adjustments for the following year.

In these annual plans and annual reports, an inventory is also made of whether the network is still sufficiently diverse, or whether there is a need for additional representation. When new members are recruited, attention will be paid to this and will be reported on in the annual plan for the following year.

The annual plans and annual reports are submitted to the TG.

Collaboration between Young TPI and TPI

It is important that the broader TPI network, driven by the TPI programme and Young TPI, do not become two separate networks, and that they together pursue the same goals. Therefore, it is important to maintain coherence between these two networks. The board puts together its own agenda for Young TPI, because they have new insights and see what is going on among young people in the field. Young TPI can act independently from TPI regarding events, communication etc. Therefore, they will also have separate (social media) outlets. The mission and ambition of the TPI program is always taken into account in their agenda. In that light, it is important that Young TPI is given a position in the consultation structure of the TPI programme.

To create coherence, Young TPI will become a standard agenda item in the TG meetings of the TPI program. The chair of the board sits as a delegate at the TG meetings. During these meetings, for example, cases can be presented by the TG members to the Young TPI members. When the board decides that they want to work with the case and that this fits into the Young TPI agenda, the interested Young TPI members will jointly work on this case in think tank sessions and advise the TG on this. These think tank sessions are also open to case holders and other interested parties. During these TG meetings, the chair of Young TPI is also given the opportunity to ask questions and to point out what is going on among young people in the field and is relevant to TPI. Together with the TG members, it is decided which questions and signals should also be submitted to the KG. During the Young TPI agenda item, there is also room to ask the TG for advice. The TG members also get the opportunity to give unsolicited advice to Young TPI if they deem this necessary.

Apart from TPI asking Young TPI for advice on specific cases, Young TPI can also provide unsolicited advice on various subjects related to the transition. How often a think tank session occurs depends on how often issues are presented to Young TPI and how often Young TPI want to give unsolicited advice.

Another way that Young TPI can strengthen TPI is by pushing TPI partners to be really transformative instead of optimising the current system.

TPI and Young TPI can also strengthen each other by using each other's network. At first, Young TPI will mostly benefit from TPI's network. Once they are more established, they will contribute to the network of TPI, adding more young people to it.

Members recruiting

People who want to join the network can join the LinkedIn community and register through a registration form. Here they are kept informed of activities and other relevant matters. In addition, the cases are shared with the members via this LinkedIn page and they can inform the board via email whether they are interested in participating in the case.

Communication

The communication is done in coordination with the current partners of the TPI programme. The primary contact person for the TPI programme is Astrid Pater. It is recommended that the Young TPI members stay in touch with each other and receive regular updates so that the network remains alive. In addition, communication can also be used to raise awareness among non-members.

The communication is done in English and the activities are also organised in English. A Dutch summary may be added to posts/messages. This is done in order to be able to connect internationally with current events and to allow non-native speakers to participate as well, but also facilitate Dutch content to have a place.

The communication strategy is shared in the year plan.