Research Fellow Award

The basic requirement for eligibility to be designated a Research Fellow shall be evidence of a substantial contribution to QOL, wellbeing, happiness research.

2024 Research Fellow Award

Talita Greyling & Stephanié Rossouw
Significance of their work:

In recent years, this dynamic team established the *Gross National Happiness: Today* project and made groundbreaking advancements in the field of Well-being Economics. By harnessing the power of Big Data and Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) methodologies, they launched the first near real-time measure of happiness in 2019. Their innovative work using Twitter, which has garnered numerous awards and nominations, focuses on investigating the impact of various economic, social and political events on real-time well-being and happiness.

The GNH was adopted by Statistics New Zealand in 2021 as an experimental measure of subjective well-being and also formed part of the OECD’s 2023 working paper on "Subjective well-being measurement: current practice and new frontiers" as a paradigm for using social media data to create new subjective well-being outputs.

The significance of their innovative approach to well-being research can also be seen in their extensive contributions to the discourse on COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy. Utilising their real-time data, they developed a Vaccine Positive Attitude Index for ten countries spanning the Northern and Southern hemispheres, in which the way hesitancy increased in 2021 could be seen. Subsequently, their research directly informed policymakers, health workers, and stakeholders who communicate

Distinctions and Awards:

- Statistics NZ adopted the GNH as an experimental measure of subjective well-being.
- Received the University of Johannesburg’s Vice Chancellor’s Distinguished Award for Innovation.
- Nominated for AUT’s Vice-Chancellor’s Matariki Research Excellence Award.
- Nominated for the Human Science Research Council-Universities of South Africa Medal in Social Sciences and Humanities Award for COVID-related Research Team. Criteria: The team demonstrated a contribution to South Africa’s understanding of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Top Cited Article 2021-2022 award from Wiley for the paper on the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown on happiness.
- "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of Lockdowns during COVID-19", is in the 91st percentile and the top 10% of all research outputs tracked, according to Altmetric.
- "Happiness-lost: Did Governments Make the Right Decisions to Combat COVID-19?" was chosen as one of three highlighted Economics of Happiness papers in July 2020 by Econpapers.
- TED Talk on subjective well-being.
- > 145 news articles, podcasts and interviews (TV and radio).
- GNH is known as the “Voice of Happiness” in South Africa.
2024 Research Fellow Award: Stephanié Rossouw & Talita Greyling

Positions:

- Director of the new Centre for Well-being, AI and Social Science (C.WaLS)
- Deputy Head of the School of Social Sciences & Humanities.
- Editor and co-editor of Economics for the Journal of Happiness Studies.
- ISQOLS Vice-President Finance and co-Vice President for Membership.
- Members of the World Wellbeing Panel.
- Research Fellows at the Global Labor Organization (GLO).
- Member of numerous Scientific Committees.
- Associate editor for Pioneers in Quality of Life Theory and Research for the Journal of Applied Research in Quality of Life.

2024 Research Fellow Award: Stephanié Rossouw & Talita Greyling

Funding and collaboration:

- WISER, which includes 21 institutions across Europe and Africa.
- EHERO.
- STATEC.
- University of Canterbury, New Zealand.
- Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand.
- Al Akhawayn University, Ifrane, Morocco.
- AFSTEREO, South Africa.
- NIAADES Research Network & Zienkiewicz Institute. Swansea University, Wales, UK
- University of Kentucky.

- The GNH project has been a partner in securing in excess of € 3.5 million.
Looking forward:

Building on the success of the GNH, they have developed an innovative method to construct a comprehensive, near real-time happiness index using information-seeking query data based on emotion words extracted continuously from Google Trends™ as a constant measure of happiness. Their Google Trends™ happiness index has been successfully validated against out-of-sample data for the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, and South Africa.

They are excited to announce that the official launch of this index will take place in early 2025 at the opening of the new Centre for Well-being, AI and Social Science (C.WαIS) at the University of Johannesburg.

And remind you of the 1st Regional ISQOLS conference in Africa!