

# Is there a need for a Fellowship-Advisor for doctors and researchers? Analysis of 906 surveys from myfellowship.com, a Swiss Online Platform

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## Introduction:

Fellowships are common in many countries, whereas other countries do not offer special training after residency. Therefore many doctors seek for a fellowship after completing their residency. Fellowships became an essential part of professional medical training. Finding a suitable fellowship is essential. Physicians and institutions may have different expectations regarding fellowships, which can lead to frustration and wasted resources for both. One obstacle for doctors is finding reliable feedback from previous fellows regarding a specific fellowship and being able to contact that person for further advice. In addition, for both doctors and institutions alike, financing a fellowship can also prove a challenge.

## Methods:

A website and an online survey were created. The project was initiated during an international Orthopaedic and Trauma meeting in Switzerland in December 2018. Moreover, the website was posted frequently on LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and a newsletter explaining the project was sent to 1749 doctors worldwide per e-mail.

## Results:

5 months after the project initiation there were 8918 visits (7435 new users) to the website from 129 countries, mainly USA (26.6%), Switzerland (20.8%), Egypt (5.2%) and India (4.5%). 906 surveys from participants from 85 countries were completed: Switzerland (19.5%), Egypt (8.2%), India (7.6%) as well as United Kingdom (6.1%), United States (4.4%), Germany (4.2%) and Brazil (3.6%).

The main specialties were Orthopaedic & Traumatology (58.8%), General Surgery (10.1%) and Internal Medicine (3.9%). Most of the participants were potential fellows (36.2%), previous fellows (32.1%) or individuals and/or institutions who would like to offer a fellowship (17.1%). The participants were mainly interested in a fellowship database (69.3%), connecting to other fellows (62.4%), giving/receiving feedback about a fellowship (48.8%) or receiving financial support (36.3%).

## Conclusion:

The results of our surveys suggest that there is an interest in an online fellowship-advisor including a database for fellowships worldwide, a platform for fellows to connect to each other with the ability to give and receive feedback about a fellowship. Accordingly an IT company built the platform according to the results and the platform was launched on May 6, 2019. Financing a fellowship remains a challenge for many participants.