

Joined Press Release of the IHI Project IMPROVE and Utrecht University

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Research meets sightseeing: reviewing thousands of papers in Utrecht's historical gems

More than 25 researchers of ten different countries will join Utrecht's first Screenathon, taking place from May 14th to May 17th. In several beautiful, historical places of Utrecht's city centre, European researchers together will screen more than 10,000 publications to get insights into the research activities all over the world relevant to the IMPROVE project, which seeks to improve how healthcare utilizes patient-generated health data.

The EU's digital healthcare systems struggle with data exchange due to lack of standards and inefficient workflows. This hinders decision-making, patient care, and increases costs. The IMPROVE consortium, a research and innovation team with experts from various healthcare sectors, aims to tackle inefficiency in digital healthcare by improving the collection and exchange of patient-generated health data.

The project starts with a review of relevant activities of other research teams. However, the number of academic publications all over the world is very large. To efficiently sift through existing research, the AI-aided Knowledge Discovery Lab at Utrecht University developed artificial intelligence-based software, ASReview, which enables fast, open, and transparent systematic reviews. During the Screenathon, researchers will train the AI-models to identify relevant publications. For this, they need to screen as many publications as possible to give feedback to the software. "Typically the screening is an individual effort sitting behind your laptop for weeks", says Professor Rens van de Schoot, organizer of the event. "We developed the concept of the Screenathon to increase the motivation of screening many thousands of papers." Equipped with laptops and tablets, researchers will participate in a carefully curated tour through iconic landmarks like the St. Martin's Cathedral and transform them into temporary research hubs. Van de Schoot: "Picture yourself screening abstracts overlooking the city from the top of the Dom Tower, stargazing from an astronomical observatory, or immersed in a tropical forest at the botanic gardens." This approach turns hard research work into an attractive cultural event.

The ultimate goal of the IMPROVE consortium is to develop a platform where certain concepts of gathering and exchanging patient-generated health data will be developed and tested in hospitals and different health areas. This platform should ultimately improve efficiency and potentially reduce costs.

More information on the IMPROVE project

The consortium consists of 26 partners from ten European countries. It consists of experts from academia, economy and politics. Four partners are from the Netherlands, which are Philips Medical System Nederland BV, Tilburg University, the Netherlands Cancer Institute, and Utrecht University. The coordinating partner of the IMPROVE project is Universidad Politecnica de Madrid in Spain.

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