

Theme: Gendered careers and disciplinary cultures in science and technology

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Investigating gender-neutral and gender-sensitive academic recruiting strategies

Women in European science careers disappear at specific interfaces of a “leaky-pipeline”. On the level of professorships, the asymmetry of gender is pronounced and varies strongly concerning the different disciplines. Despite an increase during the last years the average of female professorships in EU-27 countries reaches only about 20%ⁱ.

The (re)staffing of professorships involves a strategic challenge for universities with possibilities and challenges to support the appointment of women and thereby heightening the percentage of female professors.

The aim of the research project “Genderation BeSt” was to develop gender-sensitive and -neutral methods for appointment procedures and recruitment at German universities and therefore provide a sustainable input to raise the percentage of female professors.

By triangulating qualitative and quantitative empirical methods individual, structural, social and cultural factors were analysed which contribute to the gender-specific underrepresentation. Appointment procedures and acquisition of external funds were in our focus. Resulting recommendations concern: the underrepresentation of women in appointment committees, biases and informal communication of reviewers, comparability of reviews, structural disadvantages of the equal opportunity commissions, improvement of calls for applications.

ⁱ European Commission (2013): She Figures 2012. Brussels: 90.

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