



IRISH RESEARCH COUNCIL
An Chomhairle um Thaighde in Éirinn



Irish Research Council

GENDER STRATEGY



ACTIONS





Irish Research Council

OUR MISSION

The Irish Research Council has a social responsibility to ensure that it actively works to maximise collective research intelligence, creativity and innovation, and to only fund excellent research which has maximum impact and societal benefit. To this end, the Irish Research Council is committed to promoting gender equality in order to guarantee the highest standards of rigour, transparency, and diversity of knowledge.

The Council was the first research funding agency in Ireland to publish a gender strategy, which aims:

1. To support gender equality in research careers across all disciplines.
2. To support the integration of sex and gender analysis into research content.

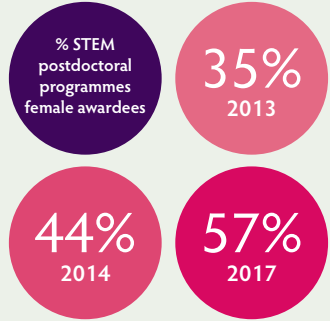
The Council Gender Strategy aims to provide equal outcomes to both men and women so that Ireland can attract and retain the most talented, creative and innovative researchers thereby maximising its collective research intelligence.

KEY FEATURES OF THE STRATEGY INCLUDE:

- ➔ Encouraging more equal gender representation in the research population.
- ➔ Increasing awareness of the need to consider whether a potential sex and/or gender dimension is relevant in a research proposal. This integration of a sex and/or gender dimension stimulates scientific excellence, hence it is an important aspect of the evaluation of proposals.
- ➔ Operating a gender-blind assessment procedure to ensure a level playing field for all applicants.
- ➔ Supporting the development of national initiatives to remove gender related structural constraints and barriers in the recruitment, advancement, retention and mobility of all researchers in the Irish research system.
- ➔ Supporting the European agenda for the promotion of gender equality in research and innovation under Horizon2020.

For more information, see the Irish Research Council's Gender Strategy and Action Plan 2013-2020 at <http://research.ie/resources/publications/>

OUR ACTIONS



Gender Blinding

Since 2014, the introduction of gender-blind assessment for the Council's calls has resulted in a significant improvement in the representation of female researchers across disciplines. The most striking changes could be seen in the results of STEM postdoctoral programmes, where the percentage of awards given to women increased significantly. When the assessment was not anonymised in 2013, women represented only 35% of awardees in comparison to 43% of applicants. After the applications were anonymised, the number of women receiving awards rose to 44% in 2014 and to 57% in 2017.

In addition to gender-blinding of applications for evaluation so as to mitigate any gender bias in assessment, the Council has introduced a gender balance requirement in assessment panels for Council awards. In 2017, 46% of experts on Council panels were female.

Integrating Sex-Gender Analysis

The Council was the first research funding agency to introduce a sex/gender dimension into applications to its funding programmes. Since 2014, applicants to our core programmes have been required to indicate if there is a sex and/or gender dimension to the research proposed and how such dimensions will be addressed in the conduct of research.

Athena SWAN

The Irish Research Council are active members of the Athena SWAN Ireland National Committee since 2015. Following the National Review of Gender Equality in Higher Education Institutions, the Council, along with Science Foundation Ireland and the Health Research Board, adopted a key recommendation of review, which will require Higher education institutions to secure the minimum Athena SWAN gender equality accreditation by the end of 2019 in order for them to continue to compete for research funding. By 2023, institutions will be required to have hold the intermediate (silver) level accreditation in order to continue to be eligible for competitive funding.

For further information on Athena SWAN Ireland, see <https://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-ireland/>



GENDER-NET Plus is dedicated to the promotion of gender equality through structural change in research institutions and the integration of sex and gender analysis in research.

GENDER-NET Plus

From 2013-2016, the Irish Research Council was a partner on GENDER-NET, a pilot transnational research policy initiative funded by the European Commission under the Science in Society work programme of FP7. GENDER-NET is the first European Research Area Network (ERA-NET) to be dedicated to:

1. Promoting gender equality through structural change in research institutions.
2. Ensuring research excellence by improving the integration of sex and gender analysis into all phases of basic and applied research.
3. Reducing fragmentation across the European Research Area (ERA) by reaching a critical mass of research organisations and universities across Europe.

This partnership featured thirteen national programme owners from across Europe and North America – i.e. ministries, national research-funding agencies or national organisations – with a shared commitment to gender equality and synergistic expertise in gender and science issues.

The Council has continued this collaboration on the follow up programme GENDER-NET PLUS ERA-NET Cofund. In December 2017, the Irish Research Council was involved in the launch and management of the GENDER-NET Plus programme, a joint call inviting research which integrated a gender dimension in addressing urgent societal challenges. GENDER-NET Plus took the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as a point of departure for this call. In particular, the call invited applications that explicitly addressed interactions and interdependencies between SDG 5 (gender equality) and one or more of the following SDGs:

SDG 3
Good health and well-being

SDG 9
Industry, innovation and infrastructure

SDG 13
Climate action

For more information, see <http://gender-net-plus.eu/>



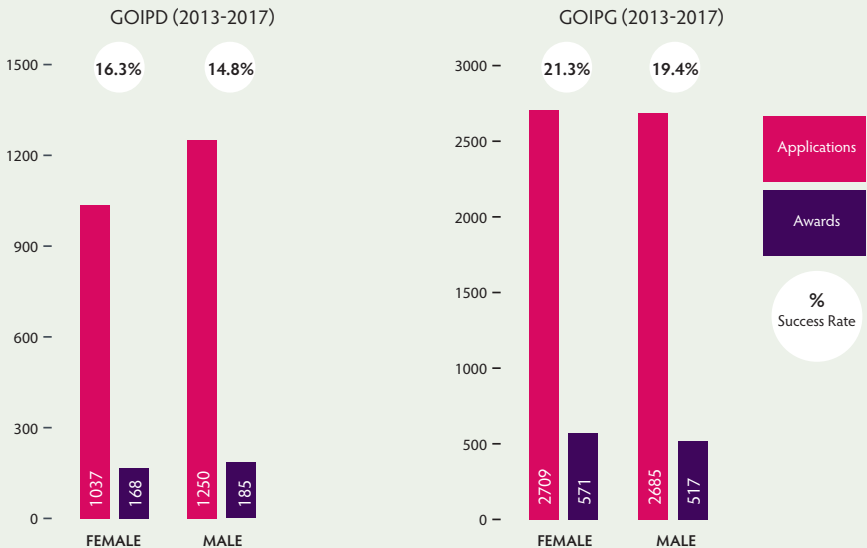
GENDER-NET Plus has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No [741874]



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Numbers of applications, awards and success rates broken down by gender for the Government of Ireland Postgraduate Scholarship (GOIPG) and Postdoctoral Fellowship (GOIPD) Programmes from 2013-2017.



The Irish Research Council is an associated agency of the Department of Education and Skills under the aegis of the Higher Education Authority.



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