

European Consensus on Gender Dimension in Science – Three Seminar events: London (25-26 March), Berlin (29-30 April), Paris (3-4 June).

Meeting of European science leaders on the gender dimension in science
‘How can European Science benefit from taking integrated action on gender’.

10 May 2010

14 leading science leaders from around Europe will meet in Paris to continue discussion on the gender dimension in science. The meeting follows on the deliberations that have taken place at the Royal Academy of Engineering in London on 25-26th March and in Berlin on 29-30th April. Among the issues they will address is the persistent concern of how to remove gender inequalities and biases in recruitment, retention, and advancement of men and women; how to ensure fairness and prevent gender bias in assessment of scientists’ work; how to make research process sensitive to factors related to gender and sex; and how to make sure that science knowledge-making and the science value system recognises when claims to knowledge are based on wrong assumptions about the nature and role of gender and sex. These five issues form the core of the genSET project, funded through the EC Framework 7 Programme. The Consensus Seminars are organised by genSET. Each event focuses on the relationship between the place of women and men in science and in science institutions and scientific excellence. The seminars are an opportunity for a dialogue and knowledge transfer between science and gender research communities. The result will be a set of recommendations in the form of a Consensus Report, which will provide a focus and a rationale for actions taken by 100 science institutions in Europe to mainstream gender in science.

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Notes to Journalists

Reporters must register with the Portia Press Office. Please contact Emily Crane if you wish to receive more information about the events and about the members of the Science Leaders Consensus Panel

genSET, www.genderinscience.org, is a project funded through European Commission’s FP7 Science in Society programme.

1. The goal of the genSET project is to develop and implement over the next 2 years a series of practical knowledge transfer actions enabling science institutions in Europe to address more effectively the gender dimension in science.

2. The key element in this plan is to establish a consensus view of science leaders on the role of the gender dimension in science, and on the priorities for action on mainstreaming gender in science. These recommendations, in the form of the Consensus Report, will provide the rationale and a focus for the supporting actions to be undertaken under genSET.

3. The practical applications of the Report within genSET are as follows:

3.1. Its recommendations will guide the involvement of gender experts in advising 100 stakeholder science institutions on developing, revising, and improving gender action plans, in order that best practice can be embedded within organisational structures and mechanisms.

Three capacity building workshop will be convened (Greece, Austria, Sweden) for this purpose covering the areas of: recruitment & employment; assessment of abilities and work; and in research process and science excellence.

3.2. The Report will be used also as a tool to shape a strategic debate on the role of social institutions in

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removing gender inequalities and biases. Two valorisation workshops will be convened for this, one in Poland (October 2010) and one in Ireland, each one focusing on that country's special social circumstances.

3.3 The involvement of science leaders and the recommendations in the Consensus Report form focal point of genSET dissemination strategy, as the most appropriate instruments for persuading the wider science community that addressing the gender dimension is timely, necessary and beneficial.

3.4 The processes developed as part of the Consensus Seminars will be used as a model for future involvement of science institutions in a dialogue on the gender dimension in science, and for promoting interdisciplinary discussion on areas where science and social values interact.

3.5 The aim of genSET is to co-operate, collaborate and communicate with as many current initiatives and FP7 projects as is possible to help maximise impact in the area.

Portia is a non-for-profit organization set up in 1997 at the initiative of the former Department of Trade and Industry to promote science and in particular to women and girls. More information about Portia and its projects can be found on www.portiaweb.org.uk