



Gender Action Plan

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1 INTRODUCTION

The European Commission (EC) undertakes to promote equal opportunities and achieve well-balanced gender distribution within the European-funded research projects. Since the sixth Framework Programme (FP6), all projects are required to incorporate a Gender Action Plan (GAP), the aim of which is to promote participation by women in scientific research. Furthermore, by integrating concept of gender mainstreaming into EU projects, the Commission aims to ensure that gender aspects are taken into consideration during the whole research project, from its inception to delivery, and to ensure that the scientific research addresses women's needs, as much as men's needs, in order to eliminate gender discrimination.

To monitor the career progress of women scientists' participation in Framework Programmes, the European Commission collects statistics on gender distribution, showing whether or not the situation is improving, and how it differs across scientific disciplines and countries.

Further information with respect to EC activities and policies to promote gender equality in science is available at

http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/science-society/women-science/womenscience_en.html

2 GENDER WITHIN ICE2SEA

As required, the Ice2sea proposal and Description of Work include a "Consideration of Gender Aspects". That document was built around an initial diagnosis of the current state of women's participation in the science disciplines represented by the ice2sea consortium, and included discussion of several actions that would be undertaken within ice2sea to improve the current state. This Gender Action Plan expands on that document, and develops the initiatives suggested in it.

The ice2sea programme and its participating institutes fully support the European initiative to eliminate gender inequalities and promote gender equality throughout the European Community in accordance with Articles 2 and 3 of the EC Treaty (gender mainstreaming) as well as Article 141 (equality between women and men in matters of employment and occupation) and Article 13 (sex discrimination within and outside work place).

Despite the conclusion of the Commission report "Gender In Research" on the 5th Framework Programme (Environment and Sustainable Development sub-programme, Annex 1, Page 18), that "the natural science oriented climate research turns out to be more or less gender neutral", within the scientific disciplines represented by the ice2sea consortium, women are generally under-represented. Ice2sea has from the outset benefitted from the involvement of female researchers, but still females and other minority groups are clearly under-represented. This is especially true for senior roles, and participation falls well below the Helsinki Group's target of 40% for participation in FP science.

For this reason the "ice2sea gender action plan" will have a strong role to play in ensuring that fairness and equality of opportunity exist within, and are promoted by, the ice2sea programme. This plan is designed around the advice to FP7 partners on gender issues¹ and incorporates actions designed to:

- increase women's participation at all levels,
- explore a better understanding of the gender dimension of ice2sea research,
- to raise gender-issues awareness,
- o highlight the responsibilities within the partners as to implementation of gender-mainstreaming policies.

To ensure delivery, specific responsibility for oversight of gender issues, and implementation of the plan will be assigned to one member of the steering committee (SC) in the role of gender / equal

¹ DG RTD Unit C-5: Women & Science, 2003. VADEMECUM: Gender Mainstreaming in the 6th Framework Programme – Reference Guide for Scientific Officers/Project Officers. <ftp://ftp.cordis.europa.eu/pub/science-society/docs/gendervademecum.pdf>.

opportunities coordinator. If necessary, this responsibility will be taken by an ex-officio member co-opted from among the project partners.

3 PARTICIPATION ACTIONS

Whilst operating within the spirit and letter of the sex-equality / equal-opportunity legislation within in each nation and within the EU, ice2sea will address the current gender-bias in participation in this area of science through several specific actions:

1. From the outset the ice2sea project will strongly discourage the use of inappropriate language or discussion with an implied stereotyping or gender-bias.
2. The selection of staff to be employed in ice2sea posts is an area where equality of opportunity must be delivered. Recruitment of staff will be undertaken by individual institutions under their normal national employment practices. General advice on recruitment can be provided by the ice2sea Programme Office (e.g., wording of advertisements, composition of interview and selection panels). It is desirable that all staff involved in interview and selection processes receive equal opportunities training.
3. The ice2sea Programme Office will undertake to collate the statistics on some case studies in new ice2sea appointments, noting gender distribution of applications, short-lists and final appointments and supply these to the EC and make them available through the website.
4. A Gender / Equal-Opportunities coordinator will be nominated, chosen from the members of the Steering Committee. This individual will be responsible for making contact with colleagues with similar roles in other FP7 programmes, for the purposes of sharing best practice. The GE-O coordinator will then be expected to disseminate such examples of best practice within the programme, as determined by the Steering Committee.
5. Where appropriate, and where it is compatible with delivery of science outputs within the time-constraints of the grant, ice2sea will encourage its partners to offer the opportunity for flexible working hours, home-working, job-sharing and other family-friendly employment practices to all staff.
6. Delivery of best practice in regard to gender-issues will be a standing item on the Agenda of the ice2sea Steering Committee meetings.
7. The ice2sea policy of having an early-career scientist involved the Steering Committee for a period of two years, provides an opportunity for two early-career scientists. This is one area in which ice2sea has discretion to ensure an equitable gender ratio.
8. The proportion of female researchers in the field is low, and this may be able to be improved by ice2sea by training of students and early career scientists. Ice2sea contributes to funding the Karthaus student training summer school each year, so to assist in improvements in the gender bias, ice2sea will ensure that 40% of ice2sea funded places go to female students, in line with the Helsinki Group's target.

4 GENDER DIMENSIONS OF ICE2SEA RESEARCH

Since global sea-level rise is an issue that affects all sectors, strata, and socio-economic groups within society, the deliverables of ice2sea research may be considered as generally gender-neutral. However, exactly how ice2sea decides to deliver its results; the methods of delivery, the techniques used to articulate changing risk, and the chosen target audiences could be considered to be gender-biased.

Ice2sea will consider these issues in formulating its communications plan, and in producing material for non-scientific audiences.