

Shaping a New Culture of Research & Innovation in Europe: Public Consultation Future of Gender and Innovation launched by genSET

Knowledge and innovation are accepted as the key drivers for sustainable growth and prosperity in a future Europe. Politics, industry and research are therefore trying to find joint answers on how to transform the EU into an 'Innovation Union.' But have we been asking the right questions? genSET invites all European innovation stakeholders to give their view on the correlation between gender and innovation.

genSET and its partners are launching a public consultation on the future of research, innovation and gender. This consultation aims to complement the discussion on the EC Green Paper "From Challenges to Opportunities: Towards a Common Strategic Framework for EU Research and Innovation Funding". Expanding on the question of strengthening women's role addressed in the EC Green Paper, this consultation will contribute to a better understanding of how Europe can enhance its research and innovation systems by addressing gender issues. The consultation contains 29 questions, focusing on the three key dimensions of this debate: (1) Research cultures and scientific quality, (2) Innovation cultures and creativity and (3) Structural change and social responsibility.

The results of the consultation will be published and discussed at the European Gender Summit on 8-9 November 2011 in Brussels. Together with the onsite discussions, the consultation responses will feed into the policy manifesto on "Integrated Action on the Gender Dimension in Research," to be presented to the European Commission and other key policy actors in December 2011.

Why Gender and Innovation?

To remain both innovative and competitive, Europe needs to fully engage the knowledge and potential of all its citizens. As Professor Marja Makarow, ESF Chief Executive puts it: *"Research and innovation need the best and brightest to come up with new findings, perspectives and discoveries that improve our lives and strengthen our societies. We need to engage all talented individuals to benefit from their skills, expertise, and creativity. This goal is unlikely to be met if we let gender prejudices or societal barriers keep in the shadow almost half of the research community."*

Lifting these barriers and using the full potential of talented Europeans will require a shift in European research and innovation systems towards a more open, non-discriminatory culture of innovation. *"This is the place to kick start a much-needed structural change that would allow us to keep up with other social spheres and marketplaces,"* says Dr Ángeles Rodríguez-Peña, President of the COST Committee of Senior Officials. Extensive research has demonstrated that effective mainstreaming of the gender dimension would be a significant first step in changing the European innovation and research systems. *"It is important that knowledge of the effects of gender balance is publicized and integrated into discussions about gender mainstreaming within scientific institutions, on European and national levels, and crossing cultural and linguistic barriers, in order to promote structural change"* according to Professor Rolf Tarrach, President, University of Luxembourg.

Who is behind this Consultation?

The Consultation is organised by genSET - Gender in Science – representing a network of leading European and pan-European science institutions. The Consultation feeds into the European Gender Summit on 8-9 November 2011 in Brussels. Organised by genSET - Gender in Science, ESF and COST, the Summit will be held under the auspices of the Polish Presidency of the Council of the European Union. The event is supported by the European Parliament (STOA) and the European Commission through the Science and Society Programme (FP7).

Further Information:

- Public Consultation on the Future of Gender and Innovation in Europe: <http://bit.ly/genderinnovation>
- European Gender Summit: <http://www.gender-summit.eu/>
- genSET – Gender in Science: <http://www.genderinscience.org/>
- European Science Foundation: <http://www.esf.org>

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