

2018: Summary report – Gender Bias project 2018

(Max. 3 A4 pages)

Deadline: January 2, 2019

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Name of project / applicant: Building platforms for Women and Girls in Science (Ashley Percy)
1. Please describe the main activities
ANSWER: We've been arranging Girls in Science events and the Women in Science Day, along with monthly 6 Degrees of Science which are an outreach extension of the Women in Science event.
2. Are the activities in accordance with the project description that was granted? If no: What has been changed?
ANSWER: Yes. We had hoped to have more, but they have been pushed into spring term given the late receipt of funds (only in October) and the number of other gender activities happening in Fall 2018. The efforts will continue beyond the life of the grant.
3. Please describe the main results
ANSWER: We were able to reach more girls in our outreach and a wider diversity. The Women in Science program is expanding with more internal support for the events. The university is gaining further recognition as an institute that promotes and support women (and girls) in science.
4. Have the project results been disseminated (research publications, lectures, conference abstracts etc.)? If yes: Please explain. If no: Do you plan to disseminate the results?
ANSWER: This project was more about action than research, so dissemination is the activity.
5. Has the project revealed barriers and/or solutions for achieving a more balanced gender representation in research?
ANSWER: For the Women initiatives, there is still a culture that these platforms are to be supported by women and less so by men. There is also a misconception about gender equity at the university and surrounding communities, that is to say, they believe they are more equal than they are. For the Girls, it is getting easier to reach more participants, but encouraging lab participation is still difficult. Those that do participate have an awesome time.
6. How can the results serve as inspiration for the next university wide action plan for a more balanced gender representation in research at Aarhus University?
ANSWER: I think the action plan will be more effective when there is a change in culture. It is hard to get people to participate in an action plan, as we saw with the last, if they do not feel there is much wrong with

the picture. What the activities we are trying to achieve represent is a forum that promotes the science- not just women. It is an important difference. Women want to be known as scientists not just women in science and men need to be just as supportive as women. There are ways to achieve this that are already in place, like the initiatives I promote. I think more exposure to this availability and encouragement to pursue these or similar activities within different departments and sections is necessary to achieve gender balance without making people feel like they might be missing out on something else (like in the hiring process). (Activities like these could be encouraged and suggested within the action plan.)

7. How do you evaluate this type of small-scale project as a tool to generate knowledge and provide inputs to a new action plan in the field of gender bias?

ANSWER:

We have spent a lot of funds writing an action plan that often goes unnoticed or unimplemented. One of the main take away messages of the projects I am doing is to just do something. To bring awareness to women working in research, particularly ST, is not a task that requires too much effort or funding. By creating a work place where women are a noticeable part of the team, or having events that require heads of departments to acknowledge women, bring a subtle awareness to the working environment and to other parts of the work force- like the hiring process. This can be a great way to approach changing a culture in order to help the action plan be implemented in all sections of the university.

8. Any other remarks

ANSWER:

I think we should continue to support activities that build platforms for women. To facilitate that (and to not overlap as we often did in this grant), the university should have a core contact for registering gender activities (and promoting them where appropriate) and to foresee implementation of the action plan. I do feel the previous iteration was not bad, just not implemented.