



*Improving gender balance in
research grant applications*

**Gender Summit 9-Europe
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Science Foundation Ireland

Gender Strategy 2016 - 2020

www.sfi.ie



Targets

- Set in 2012
 - 25% of female award holders in Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) by 2020

ACHIEVED AHEAD OF SCHEDULE IN 2015

- Set in 2016
 - 30% of female award holders in STEM by 2020

SFI Gender Strategy

- Strand 1 Targets Gender equality across SFI education and public engagement initiatives with the aim of increasing the participation and interest of girls in STEM related activities
- Strand 2 Targets Female representation within SFI funded portfolio and SFI review panels
- Strand 3 Targets Gender perspectives integrated into the research content of SFI funded research programmes

Aims

- To achieve the revised target of *30% female award holders by 2020*
- To increase the uptake of STEM subjects by female students at second and third level
- To increase the proportion of women leading major STEM research initiatives in Ireland
- To increase the proportion of women in Science Foundation Ireland peer-review process
- To ensure that the SFI peer-review process remains unbiased
- To increase excellence in research and impact by requiring Science Foundation Ireland applications to demonstrate that they have given full consideration to any potential gender dimension in their proposed research
- To increase excellence in research and impact, by continuing to fund meritorious researchers regardless of their gender, while widening the pool of potential applicants.

Incentives for research bodies (Universities)

Starting Investigator Research Grant

➤ 2013

- Cap of 6 applications per University
- 27% of applicants female
- 27% of awardees female

➤ 2015 Gender Initiative

- Cap per University raised to 12 of which a maximum of 6 can be male. NO change to the rigorous international peer review for excellence and impact
 - 47% of applicants female
 - 55% of awardees female

Other Actions

- Unconscious bias training for all SFI Staff, Board, reviewers and outreach volunteers
- Gender parity in career role models
- By 2019 SFI require all HEI's to have attained an Athena Swan Bronze institutional award to be eligible for funding and by 2023 to have attained an Athena Swan Silver institutional award to be eligible for funding
- Attention to, eligibility criteria, time flexibility, eligible costs, maternity cover, on grant application forms
- Propose specific gender disaggregated statistics and targets



Thank You