



European Platform of Women Scientists NEWSLETTER, Issue 7, December 2006

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Editorial

Dear Readers,

Time travels fast, the end of the year 2006 is approaching, and we take this opportunity in the December newsletter to share a look back on the first nine months of EPWS activities in Brussels and beyond.

With an eye on the present and the future, I would like to more specifically draw your attention to four selected items in this newsletter:

In view of the first EPWS General Assembly in Brussels on 27-28 April 2007, EPWS is contacting all networks and individuals in its database with the EPWS membership application form and more detailed information on the documents required for application. Please get in touch with us if you wish to directly receive this information but did not do so far. (p. 3)

EPWS is further developing its interactive electronic platform and has started the pilot phase of its members-only area. Until the first EPWS General Assembly on 27-28 April 2007, potential future member networks having attended the EPWS Network Event on 20 October 2006 may use the first facilities of the restricted area of the EPWS electronic platform: common calendar, workgroups and the forum (p. 3).

Excellence is key in academia and research policy, but rarely defined. EPWS is interested in your view and started a discussion on excellence on the Platform's website. (p. 3) What is excellence and what are the indicators of excellence in science and research? Join the debate and give us your view!

With respect to the up-coming Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), another important way to give your view is to join the pool of independent experts for the programme. The European Commission is currently establishing a database of

prospective independent experts to assist the Commission's services in connection with FP7 and calls for applications (p. 4). We strongly encourage qualified individual women scientists to apply as independent experts. You may apply directly and at your own initiative! We also strongly encourage organisations to include qualified women scientists on their lists. Enter the expertise of women scientists into the FP7 evaluation, monitoring and assessment process! Respond to the call.

FP7 is due to start in 2007 with first calls expected by 22 December 2006. The programme and the participation of women scientists and gender researchers in FP7 will be one of our major topics next year.

Before we take up the challenge in 2007, however, the EPWS Executive Committee and the team in Brussels would like to thank you very much for your openness and support throughout the initial stage of the Platform. We wish you all the best for the Season and a good start into the New Year and are looking forward to continue our cooperation.

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EPWS in 2006: From print to people and policy

When the EPWS Secretariat started its work in spring 2006, all we had as contacts to the community of networks of women scientists and those promoting women scientists was a print-out of the European Commission 2003 Directory of Networks of Women Scientists ("Network Guide") and our personal contacts.

On this basis, EPWS reached out to the community and started to up-date information and to get to know you better via the EPWS Mini Survey and the EPWS Network Questionnaire. People transgressed the written paper. Soon, women scientists from all over Europe followed our invitation and visited us at the EPWS office in Brussels. At the same time, we went out to meet you.

Members of the EPWS Board of Administration as well of the EPWS Secretariat attended conferences from Poland to Belgium and from Italy to Finland, presenting the Platform and networking. Our increasing number of contacts expanded our knowledge about the situation of women scientists in different member states and different disciplines, on open questions, good practices and common challenges.

Since the launch of the Platform to the Brussels community on 28 March 2006, EPWS has addressed current topics in EU research policy such as the latest developments of the Seventh Framework Programme, the European Institute of Technology, Strategy Notes of the European Research Council as well as the overall discussion of innovation and excellence in the context of the Lisbon Strategy. This active participation resulted in regular contacts with the European Commission's Research Directorate General, Members of the European Parliament, representatives of regional and national scientific offices and other members of the Brussels community.

Apart from partaking in the research policy process, the European Platform of Women Scientists has continued to reach out to the community of women scientists and those promoting women scientists in EU Member States and beyond, meeting strong and ever-increasing interest. The EPWS newsletter, communicating information from and to Brussels, by now is reaching more than 1000 subscribers and the Platform's database comprises more than 150 organisations.

Delegates from more than 80 networks of a wide range of scientific disciplines from 28 countries met for the first EPWS Network Event in Brussels on 20 October 2006, giving a face to the names behind the printed letters of

faxes, e-mails and directories. All together, more than 120 people attended the event and enjoined the opportunity to meet, discuss and network.

The participants spontaneously supported the latest Statement of the EPWS Board of Administration on Gender Action Plans in FP7, adopted the day before. Thereby, this demonstrates the strong interest of the research community in the work of EPWS as well as the willingness to make the Platform a strong voice for the promotion of women scientists and the integration of the gender dimension in EU research policy-making.

For this goal to be achieved, the European Platform of Women Scientists needs a strong membership base. The first EPWS General Assembly in Brussels on 27-28 April 2007, therefore, is a decisive next step, giving networks of women scientists and networks promoting women scientists the chance to get involved in the highest authority of the Platform, join their expertise and together make an impact on research policy in Europe.

EPWS membership application form

In view of the first EPWS General Assembly in Brussels on 27-28 April 2007, EPWS is contacting all the networks in its database with the EPWS membership application form and more detailed information on the documents required for application. If you have filled in our Mini-Survey and/or the Network Questionnaire in the course of 2006 and have not been contacted yet, please let us know.

The EPWS membership application form as well as detailed information on the documents required for your application can be also found online. Please visit www.epws.org and read the Membership section for further information.

Contact: Marianne Schwarz da Silva
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Join EPWS discussion on excellence

Excellence is a central topic in academia and research policy. Key, but rarely defined.

In order to adequately address research policy-makers, EPWS is interested in your view. To this end, the Platform started a discussion on excellence on the Platform's website beginning of December 2006.

We kindly invite you to join the debate and let us know (a) what, in your view, is excellence in science and research, and (b) what, in your view, are the indicators of excellence in science and research.

You can either send us an e-mail with your opinion or fill in our questionnaire online.

Contact: Irina Michalowitz
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Start of pilot phase for members-only area of EPWS electronic platform

EPWS has invited potential future member networks having attended the EPWS Network Event on the 20th of October 2006 to log in the restricted area of the EPWS electronic platform and use its first facilities:

- a *common calendar*, where users can see and post events of interest to the women and science community in different fields and all over Europe
- discussion in one of the five *workgroups* (Gender Dimension in Science, Information, Structural Reinforcement, Promotion of Scientists, Policy Debate)
- the *forum* to publish and read calls for proposals, search for partners and to post comments and suggestions

The pilot phase is running until the first EPWS General Assembly on the 27th of April 2007.

FP7 finally approved

On 30 November 2006, after 19 months of negotiations and 2000 amendments – 700 of which were put to a vote – the European Parliament (EP) gave its final approval to the EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (FP7) for 2007-2013.

The 7th Framework Programme is organised around four Specific Programmes:

Co-operation: a programme to support cooperation between universities, industry, research centres and public authorities, and between the EU and third countries.

Ideas: a programme to create an autonomous European Research Council to support investigator-driven “frontier research”.

People: a programme to support training and career development of researchers.

Capacities: a programme focusing on the coordination and development of research infrastructure, support for regional research clusters, SMEs, closer ties between science and society and international cooperation. In addition, Specific Programmes will be set up for the Joint Research Centre (non-nuclear activities) and Euratom nuclear research and training activities.

Separately, the Euratom Framework Programme (which also has a Specific Programme) covers two areas: fusion energy research and nuclear fission and radiation protection.

On 18 December 2006, the Council of Ministers, in which Europe's governments deliberate, formally approved by. But after intense informal discussions between the two bodies in the past few months, the version now adopted by the Parliament is certain to be approved without further discussion by the Council in a meeting in December. The Commission expects to launch its first calls for proposals for FP7 on 22 December.

More information on FP7:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/home_en.html

Independent experts wanted for FP7

The European Commission is establishing a database of prospective independent experts to assist the Commission's services in connection with the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). On 14 December 2006, the Commission published two calls for proposals, inviting organisations and individuals to propose prospective independent experts

– to assist in the evaluation of proposals in line with the various scientific, technological and socioeconomic aims of FP7. Evaluation work includes making recommendations on ways to gear research towards optimum achievement of the aims of the specific programme concerned;

– to assist in the monitoring of projects selected and funded by the Community, including, where necessary and as appropriate, the monitoring of projects funded by the Community under previous research framework programmes;

– for other purposes where specific expertise might be required (e.g. monitoring of the implementation, evaluation and assessment of impacts of RTD programmes and policies).

The Call for individuals:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/c_305/c_30520061214en00520053.pdf

The Call for organisations:

http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/c_305/c_30520061214en00540055.pdf

For further information on the appointments:

http://cordis.europa.eu/fp7/who_en.html#appointment

EPWS strongly encourages qualified individual women scientists to apply as independent experts. It is possible apply directly and at *your own* initiative; no invitation is needed. The Platform also strongly encourages organisations to include qualified women scientists on their lists so that the expertise of women scientists may enter into the FP7 evaluation, monitoring and assessment process.

Institut Émilie du Châtelet

A dozen higher education and research institutions in France officially launched the Institut Émilie du Châtelet in Paris on 28 November 2006. The Institute aims at “ensuring the development and dissemination of researches on women, sex and gender” in Ile-de-France, the region of Paris.

The Institute gathers MNHN (Muséum national d'histoire naturelle – National Museum of Natural History), three universities (Paris-VII, Paris-X and Paris-XI), CNRS (Centre national de la recherche scientifique – National Centre for Scientific Research), INED (Institut national d'études démographiques – National Institute for Demographic Studies), EHESS (École des hautes études en sciences sociales – Higher School of Social Sciences), CNAM (Conservatoire national des arts et métiers – National Academy for Arts and Crafts), FNSP (Fondation nationale des sciences politiques – National Foundation of Political Sciences) and the group HEC (Business School).

Further information on the event: <http://www.fabula.org/actualites/article16086.php>

France to boost number of women scientists

On 11 December 2006, the French ministerial committee for professional gender equality in higher education and research, set up in January 2006, published its first report.

In this document, the Committee makes a number of recommendations to encourage young girls to opt for science and technology, to ease women's access to senior positions in research and to help women conciliate motherhood with a scientific career.

François Goulard, the French Minister for Education and Research, announced that €500,000 has been earmarked for a call for proposals for projects aiming to promote scientific careers for women.

Despite a gradual increase over the last 10 years, the number of female researchers remains low in France. In 2004, only 28% of researchers were female, many of which were working in the public sector. The figures for higher education would appear to be more promising, with more than half of research posts held by women. However on closer inspection, only 27% of those working in basic and applied sciences, and 25% in engineering schools, were women.

To download the Report (in French):

http://www.recherche.gouv.fr/rapport/rapepfhes_r.pdf

Encouragement to Advance – Training Seminars for Women Scientists

The Center of Excellence Women and Science CEWS offers Training Seminars for Women Scientists who wish to work in Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany or the Czech Republic as a professor.

“Encouragement to Advance – Training Seminars for Women Scientists” intends to empower women scientists within the European Research Area (ERA) offering training on appointment procedures for professorships. Trainings encourage mobility and supranational careers in research and higher education and give insight into European Research Policy. An overall of 16 Seminars, of 14 participants each, are held in Brussels from April 2007 until January 2008.

Seminars are accessible for women scientists from all disciplines who do not yet hold a tenure position as a professor, coming from countries participating in the 7th European RTD framework programme. Participants must hold a PhD and have an understanding of the general landscape of academia in one of the named countries.

Deadline for applications: 26 January 2007
For detailed information on application procedures please visit Center of Excellence Women and Science CEWS at <http://www.cews.org>

Call for papers: Second EPNOE-workshop of PhD students

On 2-4 April 2007, the Institute of Biopolymers and Chemical Fibres, member of the European Polysaccharide Network of Excellence (EPNOE) will organise the "Second EPNOE-workshop of PhD students" at the University of Jena, Germany. This workshop will be combined with the Gender Equality meeting. During the first two days, EPNOE PhD students and seniors will deliver papers and posters on their research activity. The last day will be devoted to the presentations of invited specialists on gender equality and working conditions.

Further details: ibwch@ibwch.lodz.pl

Networking for Southeast Europe: Pilot Joint Call for Research Proposals

On 30 November 2006, fourteen European countries including all Western Balkan countries jointly published a new call for proposals.

This SEE-ERA.NET Joint Call is a pilot case for the cooperation of the participating countries in the field of research funding. The design of the call is based on research on the priorities and needs of the Western Balkan countries with a view to their better integration into the European Research Area.

The main theme of the call is networking of scientists, who can only jointly apply for multilateral research projects, network projects or summer schools. Funding will be provided in the thematic areas "Environment", "Information and Communication Technologies", and "Food, Agriculture and Biotechnology".

Participating countries are: Albania, Austria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Romania, Serbia and Slovenia.

This initiative is part of the Southeast European Era-Net (SEE-ERA.NET), a project financed by the European Commission. The main objective

of this project is to explore and exploit synergies among bilateral Science & Technology agreements of the partner countries.

Deadline for the call is: 31 March 2007.

More information:

<http://www.see-era.net/pic>

Online-survey on women in Nano-Sciences

Female Nano-Scientists are invited to participate in an online-survey devised within the project "Strengthening the Role of Women Scientists in Nanoscience (WomenInNano)", which aims at mapping the competences of women in Nano-Sciences.

The survey will contribute to identifying obstacles and empowering factors for the careers of women in Nano-Sciences. It will be an important basis for the project for developing policy proposals in relation to the promotion of women's careers in Nano-Sciences.

The project, funded by the European Commission, brings together 11 teams from European Universities and research institutions from Germany, Romania, Sweden, Spain, Slovenia, UK, Bulgaria, Italy and France.

For further information on the project: <http://www.womeninnano.de/>

For access to the survey:

http://ww3.unipark.de/uc/hh_fak2_schuettpelz/db0a/?code=2878ca3c71443661

Fellowships in Sustainability Science, Harvard University

The Sustainability Science Program at Harvard University's Center for International Development offers doctoral, post-doctoral and practitioner fellowships in Sustainability Science. The fellowships are tenable at the Center for International Development for Harvard's academic year beginning in September 2007.

For more information:

http://www.cid.harvard.edu/sustsci/grants/fellowships/07_fellows_RFP.htm

Marie Curie fellowships in Gender Studies

The Marie Curie Fellowships for Early Stage Training in the field of Gender and Women's Studies allows early stage researchers access to a training programme offered by a network of seven universities in different European countries. The partner institutions, with proven record of high expertise in gender research and education, will jointly train and exchange junior PhD students.

The Marie Curie Early Stage Training Scheme is designed to encourage international mobility

and therefore carries an enhanced salary/stipend package.

For more information:

<http://www.gendergraduates.org/>

PhD Studentships in Physics, University of Edinburgh

The University of Edinburgh is currently seeking prospective applicants for PhD studentships in experimental particle physics starting in September 2007.

For further information:

<http://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/particle/Exp/group/studentships.html>

Upcoming events

1. *Köln 2007: Information Day on European ICT Research & Development. FP7 – ICT Proposers Day*, Cologne (Germany), 1 February 2007

Officials announced: Viviane Reding, European Commissioner for Information Society and Media; Annette Schavan, German Federal Minister of Education and Research

http://ec.europa.eu/information_society/events/koln_2007/index_en.htm

2. *FemStart – Fostering the Public Debate on University Support of Female Scientists to Start a Business*, Stuttgart (Germany), 14-15 February 2007

<http://www.femstart.eu/>

3. *The 4th European Gender and ICT Symposium: Gender, Images and Global Contexts*, Helsinki (Finland), 8-10 March 2007

<http://www.helsinki.fi/kristiina-instituutti/conference/index.htm>

4. *4th EUA Convention of Higher Education Institutions*, Lisbon (Portugal), 29-31 March 2007
Registration opens December 2006

<http://www.eua.be/eua/en/Lisbon.jsp>

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References

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