# FEMINIST LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE

TOWARDS EQUAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

**HANDBOOK**

# 1

## INTRODUCTION

GEARING-Roles is a EU funded project which aims to implement 6 gender equality plans in 6 organizations (5 Universities and 1 Research Funding Organization) applying the criteria established and tested by GEAR-tool.

## The participating organizations are:

• University of Deusto
• University of Lisbon
• University of Ljubljana
• University of Sabanci
• Oxford Brookes University
• Estonian Research Council

One of the gender interventions to be implemented as part of the gender equality plans is the mentoring programme FELISE (FEminist Leadership In SciencE). There are two strands to FELISE. First, a mentoring scheme in which early postdoctoral women researchers from these organizations will be mentees matched with a senior (preferably) woman researcher from their institution acting as mentors. Second, these mentors will be requested to act as career sponsors for one of the mentees in another organization.

The Fundación Española para la Ciencia y la Tecnología (FECYT) in its role as EURAXESS Spain national coordinator will be facilitating the programme that should allow participants to:

1. Identify and critically discuss gendered norms and practices in academia to allow them to tackle gender inequalities at both individual and structural level.
2. Review the narrative within the institution and others to challenge gender-neutrality assumptions.
3. Experiment new work practices that will enable sustainable and meaningful careers.
4. Establish a network of peers supporting institutional change for gender equality.
5. Improve knowledge on academic career options and strengthen professional networks.

## FELISE mentoring

Mentors and mentees are expected to focus their meetings around the topics of self-awareness, gender equality in research, barriers for women to develop a successful and satisfactory career, ideas on how to foster gender equality in research and teaching within the institution and how the mentor can support the mentee in navigating the institutional culture and practices. Meetings take place face-to-

face, where possible, but can also be conducted virtually via video-conferencing.

# FELISE sponsoring

The sponsoring element of the programme is expected to complement the mentoring programme and to bring other perspectives to the programme. The sponsor will support the mentee's reflection on her career perspectives and options, and help step up efforts to build up an international network of professionals that can support her career (for example by informing her of job opportunities, introducing her to potential collaborators, etc.).

In summary, each senior woman researcher participating in FELISE will act in a double capacity: as a mentor to a woman post-doc in her institution, and as a sponsor of a woman post-doc from another institution.

FELISE will also include a number of virtual meetings and trainings for both mentees and mentors/sponsors which are expected to further extend the impact of the programme, as well as a physical group mentoring exercise for mentees within the framework of the GEARING-Roles Annual Conference in November 2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemics, this meeting may be cancelled or postponed.

Participants will be duly informed of the project decision.

Finally, the network of mentors/sponsors (5 in each institution) will also be fundamental in bringing up their experiences and findings to the management of the institution and to support the institutional change towards gender equality (with due respect to the confidentiality of their mentees). Mentees will also be invited to participate in these high level meetings but it will not be compulsory (they may want to keep their participation in the programme as a private exercise).

With this mixed approach, FELISE wants to contribute to the following goals in each of the implementing organizations:

• Raising awareness among women researchers of the **current gender imbalances in research**, as well as of the European, national and institutional **policy trends** in promoting gender equality in research.

• Fostering safe spaces where women researchers in their earlier postdoctoral stages can reflect on their career options and **career challenges as women in academia**.

• Contributing to the **collective reflection** on the current situation and existing policies in their institutions regarding gender equality.

• Creating a **network of women researchers** among different institutions that allows for an exchange of experiences and good practices.

• Fast-tracking career paths by providing access to **new professional networks** and reinforcing **transferable skills**.

Mentor/sponsor

Mentee

Mentoring (5 meetings)

Sponsoring (2 meetings)

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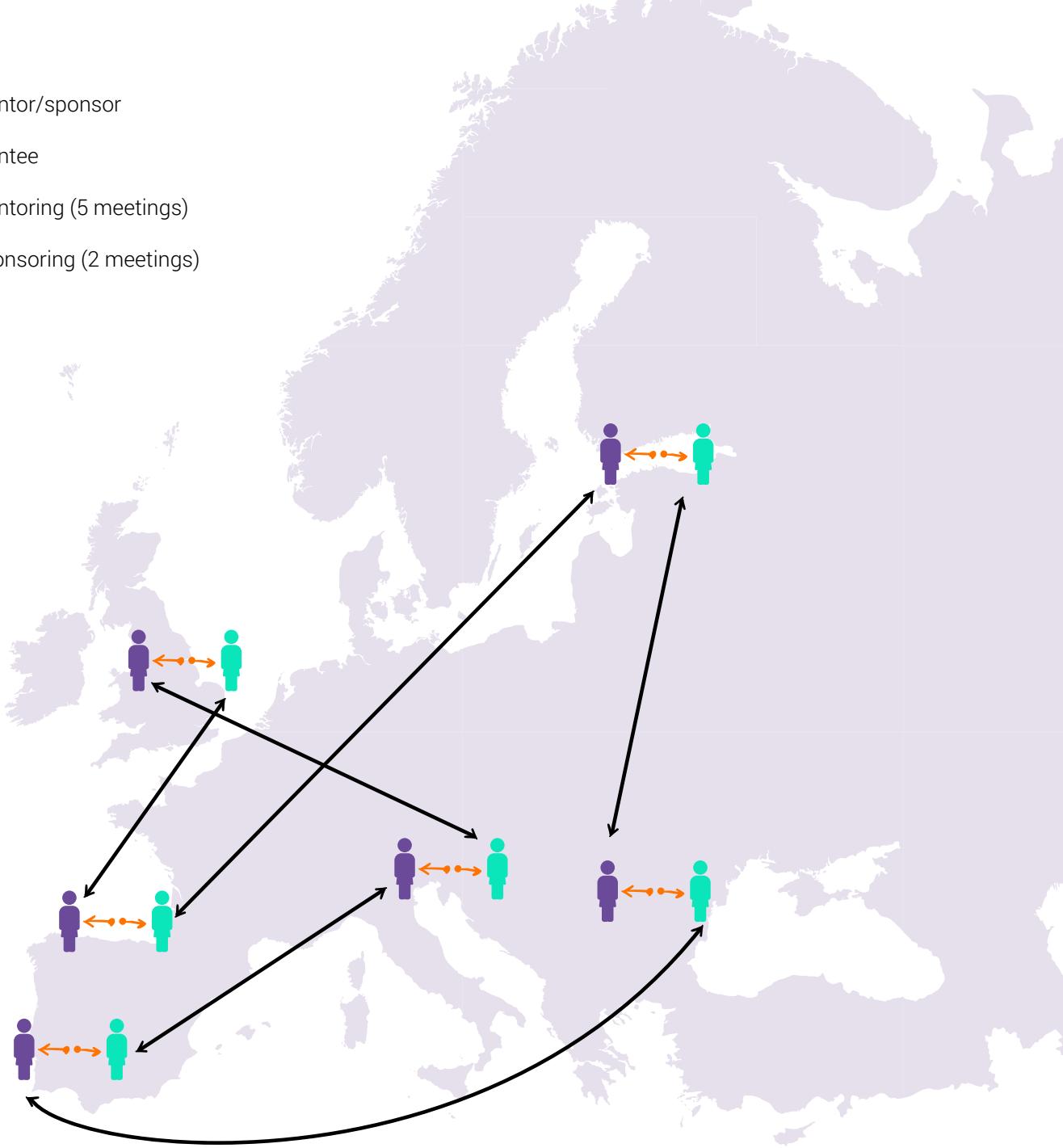
# 2

## FELISE
## HANDBOOK

This handbook is meant as a guide to help facilitate the meetings and discussions between the programme participants (mentors and mentees), and not a booklet of instructions that should be followed strictly. Thus, mentoring/sponsoring pairs are welcome to use it as an inspiration for their discussions.

Should you have any feedback, requests, concerns or recommendations to share with us do not hesitate to contact the FELISE management team: euraxess-spain@fecyt.es

There are also contacts at your institution supporting the implementation of FELISE who can help you out during the programme:

✉ **University of Deusto** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **University of Lisbon** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **University of Ljubljana** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **University of Sabanci** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **Oxford Brookes University** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **Estonian Research Council** - Information for FELISE participants only

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**3**

FELISE starts with a webinar for all the mentors / sponsors, and a webinar for all mentees. These will be scheduled on two different dates each (further alternatives can be provided, if needed) so that all share the same starting point. See sections 8 and 9 for more details.

Every mentor-mentee pair will meet in person or virtually **5 times within 7 months** (between June and December 2020). It is a responsibility of the mentee to approach the mentor to agree on the most suitable time for each meeting.

Every sponsor-mentee pair will meet in person or virtually **2 times within 7 months** (between June and December 2020). It is the responsibility of the mentee to approach the sponsor to agree on the most suitable time for each meeting.

Mentees are requested to fill in a simple form after each of the meetings (5 with mentors, 2 with sponsors) to allow the FELISE management team to have a confirmation that the meetings are taking place within the period established. See section 12.

Mentors, sponsors and mentees will be asked to fill an anonymous satisfaction and evaluation survey at the end of the programme. Meanwhile they may feel absolute confident to contact the organizers at GEARING-Roles to provide them with any feedback, suggestions or concerns.

Also, mentees will be invited to participate in the GEARING-Roles Annual Conference in Istanbul in November 2020. A group mentoring exercise will be organized.

As this programme has an international and interinstitutional approach, the working language will be English.

## Participants and roles

Mentees: 5 postdoctoral women researchers aiming at an academic career, recruited for FELISE by each of the 6 participating organizations (30 mentees in total).

Mentors - Sponsors: 5 senior feminist researchers with awareness on gender inequalities in the academic career, recruited for FELISE by each of the 6 participating organizations (30 mentors/sponsors in total). For the role of mentor they will be matched with one mentee from within their institution to focus on personal and professional growth taking into account the policies and culture of their professional environment, regardless of the area of knowledge. For the role of sponsor they will matched with a mentee from another institution with a similar research background to facilitate support in career advancement issues.

# Mentor - Mentee Commitments

**Mentorship is a bidirectional relationship:** both parts must be committed and listen to each other and can learn from the process.

**Mentorship is about sharing experiences, know-how and advising:** the mentee is not a pupil, but also a professional, and the mentor is not a head-hunter, although can provide support towards career advancement.

**Mentorship is a guided self-understanding/self-awareness/self-knowledge path** where mentees analyse their strengths and weaknesses and achieve personal and professional growth. Mentors guide and accompany mentees in this process, which is likely to also contribute to the mentor's growth, but they are not professional career coaches nor psychotherapists.  As for the FELISE programme, both mentors and mentees are asked to reflect beyond personal strengths and weakness of the mentees and to try to identify current cultural and legal barriers and drivers of career progression of women in research. **This programme is not only about personal growth but about institutional and cultural change promoted from a bottom up approach.**

**Open and continued dialogue** within the pair is the main tool in mentorship.

FELISE  aims at helping the mentees **open their career horizons** and to **reflect about the challenges** of being a woman researcher, but it is not designed to find you a job.

**Confidentiality** and **respect** towards each other's comments and time are cornerstones of mentoring

## Sponsor - Mentee Commitments

**Sponsorship** is a strategy to support researchers in career development through engagement with peers and professional leaders in their respective fields to obtain individual guidance and critical feedback.

The same principles of **respect, mutual learning, and confidentiality** as for the mentors/mentees apply to the sponsor/mentee relationships.

FELISE sponsor should support their mentee in the best possible way with her **career development in academia** by suggesting **career paths**, actions to **advance in her research careers** and by supporting the mentee in building a strong **professional network**.

# 4

## PAIRING
## PROCESS

FELISE aims at connecting early post doc women researchers with senior women researchers in academia, both, in their institutions (mentors) and outside their institutions (sponsors) in order to make them more self-aware of their challenges as women in academia, to provide them with the necessary tools to make the best of their careers, and to make them aware of the role of institutions and funders in fostering gender equality in research.

All mentors/sponsors are expected to be feminist senior researchers with significant level of awareness on the gender inequalities of research careers.

For the mentor-mentee pairs, a common research background will not be essential.  Although each domain and discipline has its own characteristics regarding gender equality, there are also commonalities that can be addressed with women researchers coming from any discipline.

Nevertheless, for the assignment of a sponsor, a match within at least common research domains (Physical Sciences & Engineering, Life Sciences and Social Sciences and Humanities) will be attempted in order to maximise the potential impact of the relationship.

# 5

## SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR THE MENTOR - MENTEE MEETINGS

In order to support the 5 meetings between mentors and mentees, we propose several discussion topics including background material and key questions for inspiration. These are just suggestions: we encourage each pair to agree the agenda according to the interest and expertise of the mentor and the mentee (always within a gender equality in research framework).

### 1. Organizational norms and practices:
Discussing the gender equality policy of the institution.

**2. Narratives:** Reflecting on the academic career and existing gender inequalities.

**3. Transferable skills:** Analyzing the transferable skills acquired along a research career and identifying areas for improvement, particularly linked to take the role of "agent of change".

**4. Self-awareness:** Reflecting on career management issues, such as strengths and weaknesses or celebrating achievements.

**5. Integrating gender perspective in teaching and research.** Discussing how to avoid gender biases in teaching and research.

**6. Experimenting new practices:** Taking stock and translating insights into new professional behaviors.

**7. COVID-19 and gender equality in research and teaching:** Analyse the gendered impacts of COVID-19 and reflect about the possible implications for academic careers.

In order to make each session more valuable for both, mentors and mentees are recommended to do some previous thinking, try to address previously agreed specific questions during the session, and pursue a predefined, measurable and reachable goal. Bear in mind that the post-meeting online forms are designed to facilitate the process and need to be filled by the mentee after each meeting.

Although mentors might not be experts in some of the suggested topics, discussing them together will still be a healthy and useful exercise that can also contribute to the mentor's growth. Furthermore, if mentors want to learn more about any of the topics, they could maybe contact more experienced colleagues, friends, etc., and share the findings with the mentee.

# 6

## SUGGESTED TOPICS FOR THE SPONSOR - MENTEE MEETINGS

Again, these are some topics and questions we suggest to discuss between the sponsor and the mentee. We expect the sponsor to be a connection with international professional networks.

### 1. My career goals

• What is my desired career path?

• What are my strengths and weaknesses in order to achieve that goal?

• How could I better prepare myself towards that goal?

• How could my sponsor support me with my goal?

### 2. My professional network

•Which steps should I take to build a network of international professionals that know my work and would be willing to support me professionally if needed?

• How can I try to connect with those professionals I admire so I can share my work with them?

• How can my sponsor give me a hand with my professional network?

# 7

## GENERAL TIPS FOR THE MEETINGS

The following tips are **recommendations** particularly for the mentees that can help making the meetings more fluent and efficient. Participants of FELISE are encouraged to **apply them to best of their possibilities**:

• Mentoring meetings should take place approximately once a month, while sponsoring meetings should be once every term. If this is not possible, other approaches that suit both members of the pair best will be equally fine.

• In order to optimize time investment in FELISE, we would recommend that calendar invitations are set up for the meetings from the beginning. These could be rescheduled in mutual agreement, if needed.

It will be the responsibility of the mentee to contact the mentor and the sponsor, and confirm every meeting.

• Take some time to build up a space of trust and connection among you: **introduce yourself to each other, agree on some basic items that will define your mentoring relationship**. Try to answer the following questions as a guidance in this step:

*In what ways do you believe your experience and knowledge could be beneficial for each other?*

*What are your expectations of each other's (mentee/mentor)?*

*What is the best way you can communicate your concerns/ suggestions to each other?*

• Try doing some **preparatory work for each meeting** like some reading around the topic to address or compiling personal experiences about situations, attitudes and behaviours related to the topic to be addressed. Some ideas are provided below for each of the suggested topics under "Previous thinking and reading".

• In order to make meetings more efficient and support the reflective process, you can also **share in advance items and documents** to address in the next mentoring or sponsoring session.

• In order to take the most of this experience, experts suggest keeping notes of each meeting that takes place: recalling key points discussed and agreed or disagreed can be very useful after a few sessions. See section 10 for the possibility of working on a Personal Career Plan for this.

• To share experiences, articulate conversation around:

Stories of your professional life (your own, or from colleagues and relatives).

Specific situations: how did you face them, what could you have done differently, etc.

Self-awareness: see yourself as others view you.

Skill-building: review skills you had or needed at that moment. How did you develop them? How were they useful?

# 8

## ADDITIONAL TRAINING and MEETINGS for MENTORS - SPONSORS

Mentors/sponsors will be contacted along June 2020 for one initial training. Two possible dates and times will be offered to facilitate participation. The objective of this training will be to explain the basics of mentorship and of this programme in particular. **It is compulsory to join this webinar**.

Mentors and sponsors will be invited to share their experiences throughout the programme with the other mentors through an online networking meeting in the middle of the programme (ca. September 2020). This meeting will be useful to exchange both successful and unsuccessful practices and to advice and support each other. **Participation is voluntary but highly encouraged**.

Also, mentors and sponsors of each institutions will be invited by the GEARING-Roles representatives to share their experiences and findings at the end of the programme. **Participation is voluntary but highly encouraged.**

Mentors will be invited to share their professional experiences with other mentees (not only the one they have been assigned to) through online meetings. **Participation is voluntary**.

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## ADDITIONAL TRAINING and MEETINGS for MENTEES

Mentees will be contacted along June 2020 for one initial training. Two possible dates and times will be offered to facilitate participation. The objective of this training will be to explain the basics of mentorship and of this programme in particular. **It is compulsory to join this webinar**.

Mentees will be invited to participate in the GEARING-Roles Annual Conference in Istanbul planned for November 2020. This meeting will be organized as a group mentoring exercise where mentees will further explore and share personal challenges with their peers in safe space. Apart from reinforcing the mentoring experience, the aim of this session will also be building inter-institutional community.

Mentees will be invited to share their experiences throughout the programme with the other mentees through online meetings. This meeting (or meetings if mentees are willing to participate in more than one) will be useful to exchange both successful and unsuccessful practices and to advice and support each other.

During the programme we suggest you use FELISE career development plan template as a summary of your conversations with your mentor and sponsor. This template also has a special space for you to come up with policy suggestions to support gender equality in research. At the end of the programme, you will be invited to share these ideas with the rest of FELISE participants of your institution

and the GEARING-Roles representatives. **The participation in this meeting is voluntary**.

Mentees will receive at least two online sessions that will focus on tackling gender inequalities in research. Topics and dates will be confirmed but are expected to cover career development, leadership and/or personal branding.

**10**

CONSIDER
WORKING ON
A PERSONAL
DEVELOPMENT
PLAN

Participating in a mentoring programme can be a great opportunity, not only for the mentees but also for the mentors. To make the most out of this experience we suggest working towards a personal development plan at the beginning of the process using it to guide the meetings with your mentors and sponsors.

This plan can be the map that should take you to the goal you want to reach: you will need to define where you want to go, what you need to get there, and how you are going to do it. As part of the FELISE programme documentation we include a template where mentees can record their main findings throughout the programme, as well as the key input received by their mentor and sponsor.

Furthermore, the template we proposed includes a special tab (INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE) which encourages the mentee to identify those barriers that somehow hamper their career advancement. This can facilitate coming up with some suggestions or recommendations for the organizations that could contribute to overcoming those barriers, as well as reflections about how to confront the challenges at a personal level.

This is important because the FELISE programme aims at reflecting on how institutions and current policies could support gender equality in teaching and research and your ideas are most valuable. Likewise, we also want FELISE to give you the necessary tools to

try to overcome these barriers on a personal level.  At the end of the programme, you could share these ideas with your mentor so she can present them to the GEARING-Roles representatives in your institution or, if you feel like it, even present them yourself.

We suggest the mentees fill in this template and update the file along the following meetings as needed. This is not mandatory, but it is a good way to summarise and keep track of the findings,  as well as to save all the useful feedback you get from your mentor and sponsor.

# 11

## WHAT TO DO IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT OF UNSUCCESFUL PAIRING

All the participants in this programme have been selected by their willingness to participate, their sensitivity towards gender equality in research and their CV. We expect all mentoring and sponsoring relationships to be successful and gratifying. However, mentoring relies very much on a good connection among two people and we expect different degrees of satisfaction in the programme that we will consider normal and that we will analyse to see how to improve. However, if for any reason, any mentor, sponsor or mentee feels uncomfortable or uneasy with their partner in a way that exceeds these different levels of connection, we ask you to get in touch with us immediately so we can decide together on how to proceed. Feel free to contact FELISE coordinators or the FELISE contact point at your institution.

FELISE coordinators: euraxess-spain@fecyt.es

There is also a contact at your institution that can help you out during the programme:

✉ **University of Deusto** -  Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **University of Lisbon** -  Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **University of Ljubljana** -  Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **University of Sabanci** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ **Oxford Brookes University** - Information for FELISE participants only

✉ E**stonian Research Council** - Information for FELISE participants only

We will stay close to the pairs throughout the process to inform you about upcoming online meetings, to check how you are doing with the sessions, see if you need any logistic support, etc.

# 12

## SUPPORT THROUGHOUT THE PROCESS
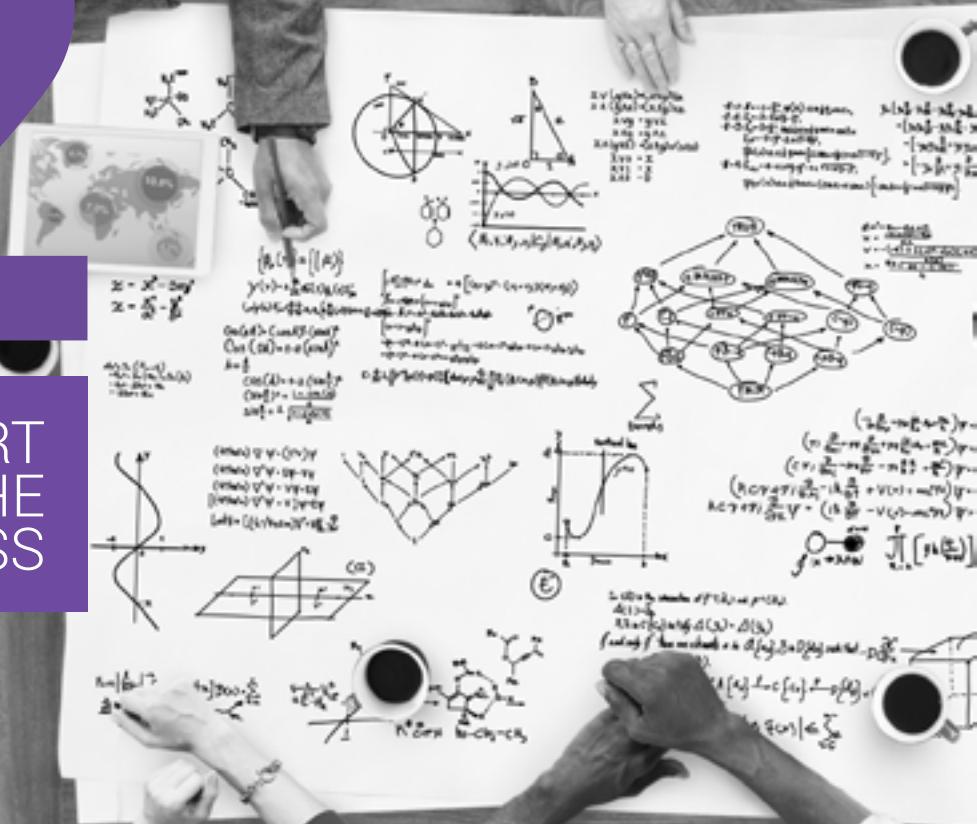
We have set 6 post mentor/mentee -meeting forms which mentees are requested to fill in:

> • **Mentoring Meeting 1:** Information for FELISE participants only
>
> • **Mentoring Meeting 2:** Information for FELISE participants only
>
> • **Mentoring Meeting 3:** Information for FELISE participants only
>
> • **Menoring Meeting 4:** Information for FELISE participants only
>
> • **Mentoring Meeting 5:** Information for FELISE participants only

We have set 2 post sponsor/mentee- meeting forms which mentees are requested to fill in:

> • **Sponsoring Meeting 1:** Information for FELISE participants only
>
> • **Sponsoring Meeting 2:** Information for FELISE participants only

Please note that these forms are meant to help us check that the meetings are taking place and to identify possible needs and improvements to the mentoring programme. **No details from the meeting itself are requested as these are highly confidential.**

# 13

SUGGESTED
MENTORS
- MENTEE
SESSIONS
CONTENT

In this section we try to help FELISE participants with some guidelines on how to approach each session. We have structured it in different sections: previous thinking and reading, goal of the session, and some topics to discuss during the session.

This is only a guide with recommendations. Each mentor-mentee pair should feel free to adjust the design and content of their mentoring meetings depending on the needs they have to best address gender equality in research.

# 1. Organizational Norms and Practices

## Previous thinking and reading

There is plenty of scientific literature addressing gender equality in research and teaching. We have chosen a few readings for you. They are just some suggestions that can give you a flavour of some of the issues we would like to tackle in this module: what is the work context in science for women and men, what policies are in place to correct imbalances and how you, as a FELISE participant, can be more self-aware of this context, can be an agent of change and can better face your own professional career by better understanding that context:

• Have you ever taken a look at the [She Figures report of the European](#) Commission where a range of indicators on gender equality in research and innovation at pan European level is shown?  And at your country level?

• Watch "Understanding unconscious bias":
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dVp9Z5k0dEE

• Nature special issue: Women in science: women´s work (2013)
https://www.nature.com/news/women-in-science-women-s-work-1.12547

• Beeler et al. "Institutional Report Cards for Gender Equality Results of a 4-Year Pilot to Encourage Benchmarking for Women in STEM" Cell Stem Cell (2019). https://www.cell.com/cell-stem-cell/fulltext/S1934-5909(19)30345-5

• Meta analysis of gender and science research (European Commission,2012)
https://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_gender_equality/meta-analysis-of-gender-and-science-research-synthesis-report.pdf

## Goal

• Identify norms and practices at my institution that i) hinder career advancement of women at my institution and ii) foster gender equality at my institution.

• Have a conscious reflection about my academic context so that I can better manage my scientific career.

### Some topics to deal with during the session

• What is your work history?

• Is your discipline gender balanced? What is the gender composition of doctoral graduates in your discipline in the EU, compared to senior positions? (you can use the She Figures report)

• Does your institution have data of information on the share of women at different management and academic levels? Is there any gender unit or contact point available?

• Have you faced any professional situations in which gender has had a clear influence?

• What moments would you identify as critical to achieve or not gender balance in research (i.e., selection of university studies, recruitment, research evaluation, career progression, use of soft skills, etc.). How do you think these critical points could be safeguarded from gender inequalities?

• What norms at your institution (both formal and informal) can somehow preclude the recruitment and career advancement of women?

• Which measures does your institution implement to guarantee gender equality? Could more be done?

• If you want to raise a gender issue in your institution, do you know where to go?

# 2. Narratives

## Previous thinking and reading

In this section we would like to reflect on the current narratives in the scientific careers, how they translate into the evaluation of scientific research and the scientific culture in general, and how they may be contributing to gender inequality in research.

Again, we propose some readings before your meeting. We suggest you reflect on them and discuss your impressions during the session

• How gender stereotypes can influence children's interest: https://science.sciencemag.org/content/355/6323/389

• An analysis confirming that gender imbalances persist in research output worldwide: https://www.nature.com/news/bibliometrics-global-gender-disparities-in-science-1.14321

• Example of how gender has effect over publication patterns: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5079651/

• Assessing unconscious gender bias in research evaluations: https://www.pnas.org/content/112/43/13201

• Testing the concept of academic housework:
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/
abs/10.1177/1474904116668884?journalCode=eera&

• Analysing the "ideal academic" concept:
https://aaltodoc.aalto.fi/handle/123456789/17846
https://research.vu.nl/en/publications/othering-women-fluid-
images-of-the-ideal-academic

## Goal

• Reflect on the concept of "successful researcher" and its potential gender bias.

### Some topics to deal with during the session

• Do you consider yourself to be a "successful researcher"? Why? What is missing? Are there any values that are ignored when successful researchers are pictured?

 • What does the "ideal academic" profile imply?

• What is your opinion on the current way of evaluating/assessing researchers? Do you think gender may have an impact in the current evaluation systems?

• What are the main responsibilities of a researcher? Are they all acknowledged in the evaluations? How would your ideal evaluation for researchers be?

• How much do you think men and women are aware of gender imbalances in research? Which differences do you see within the group of men? And within the group of women? How do you think they could be more involved?

# 3. Transferable Skills

## Previous thinking and reading

There is general agreement that transferable skills are essential in academic careers and beyond. In this section, we propose you reflect on what your transferable skills are, which ones you would like to develop further. Also, we would like to reflect on the gender dimension of transferable skills. As in the previous sections, we propose some previous readings that may inspire your conversations during the session.

• Marc J Lerchenmueller, Olav Sorenson, Anupam B Jena. "Gender differences in how scientists present the importance of their research: observational study". BMJ (2019)
https://www.bmj.com/content/367/bmj.l6573

• Zhou, Charlie D.et al. A systematic analysis of UK cancer research funding by gender of primary investigator. BMJ Open,(2018) . DOI: 10.1136/ bmjopen-2017-018625
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5931297/

• Academic ecosystems must evolve to support a sustainable postdoc workforce
https://www.nature.com/articles/s41559-020-1178-6

## Goal

• Reflect on your transferable skills and identify areas in which you would like to improve particularly linked to the role of being an agent of change.

**Some topics to deal with during the session:**

• Was there ever a role you applied for and landed, but were not 100% qualified to do? What happened?

• Have you ever had a difficult boss or colleague? How do you deal with this?

• How do you deal with new responsibilities or subordinates?

• How do you try to Re-energize when you are overloaded, unsatisfied or frustrated?

• How much time do you devote to "housekeeping activities" in your lab/department? Would you say these activities (not recognized in the CV) have a gender bias?

• Which are, in your opinion, the main transferable skills a good scientist should have? Is there enough training to develop them?

• Do you think you have a good work/life balance? Is your institution putting the necessary measures to facilitate this balance? What else could be done?

• Have you consciously stepped down from career progression opportunities in order to safeguard your personal life? Do you think gender has had an influence in this decision?Would you say there is a gender bias in these type of decisions?

• Are you confident when presenting your work and performance?

# 4. Self-Awareness

## Previous thinking and reading

Self-awareness is essential for the management of your career options. There is evidence that this awareness also has a gender bias. We propose some readings about this issue that may help you think about your own self-awareness and that can be food for thought in your session.

• The positive bias: Gender gap in overestimating Math Performance. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11199-015-0486-9

• Imposter syndrome: women's silent career killer. https://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/women-entrepreneurs/imposter-syndrome-women-careers/

• Imposter Syndrome and Diverse Groups: Impact and Implications in Career Development. https://www.ncda.org/aws/NCDA/pt/sd/news_article/245005/_PARENT/CC_layout_details/false

## Goal

• Get to know you better and to identify those biases towards your own perception as a scientist and own behaviour so that you can achieve a more accurate awareness of yourself.

**Some topics to deal with during the session:**

• Have you ever felt the impostor syndrome? What would you need to tackle it?

• What are your successes and what can you do to communicate them appropriately?

• Is it possible to transform weaknesses into strengths? How?

• What measures could be taken to help you to be more accurate when assessing your own capacities? (i.e. mentoring, networking with other women, better understand the reasons behind this potential underestimation)

• Have you ever decided not to apply for a job because you felt you were not qualified? Do you think this kind of decisions may have a gender bias?

• Please try to compare your self-knowledge with what your colleagues think about you? You can ask 5 colleagues to give you input about your strengths and weakness. It will be a good exercise to compare those opinions with yours.

# 5. Integrating Gender Analysis into Research and Teaching

## Previous thinking and reading

The way scientific knowledge is generated, applied and translated into society is also affected by gender bias. Gender-blind and gender-biased research both produce biased scientific results and miss opportunities. This is usually due to gender stereotypes and the use of male/men as a generic model for all human beings.

Integrating gender analysis into research aims at raising awareness of these gender biases so that researchers, funders, and society in general foster the integrating of the gender dimension into research On the other hand, gender-sensitive teaching pays attention to gender differences both in creating syllabus and in class conduct. It means introducing students to gender dimension of the presented contents, including publications that take gender-sensitive approach into the courses readings, and giving homework assignments that demand from students to think about gender dimension of the subject

• Not for the session, but this online course can help you better understand integrating gender analysis into research in theory and practice: https://scidevnet.teachable.com/

• This book may also be of your interest: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inferior_(book)

• Status of women in cardiovascular trials: https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/full/10.1161/atvbaha.108.179796

• Inclusion of minorities and women in cancer clinical trials, a decade later: Have we improved? https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/23674318

• Do you know the sex of your cells? https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24196532

## Goal

• Increase awareness of the importance of integrating gender analysis into my research to avoid gender biased results and to offer gender sensitive teaching to students.

### Some topics to deal with during the session

• What training is available on how to integrate gender into my research and my teaching?

• How are different disciplines sensible to gender bias?

• What kind of policies may foster the mainstreaming of integrating gender into research and teaching?

• How could intersectionality affect into this integration? Am I trained enough to properly address these challenges?

# 6. Experimenting New Practices

## Previous thinking

This is proposed as the wrap up session of the programme. We would like you to try to summarize your learnings and your new goals and critically assess your own professional behaviours. As we have constantly expressed during the programme, FELISE aims at making participants more aware and resourceful when it comes to gender imbalances in academia. We strongly believe that the main responsibility when it comes to addressing gender equality comes from the policy-making and the institutions management. However, we want FELISE participants to feel more aware and empowered to i) deal better with the context and ii) be contributors of change.

## Goal

• Have a final reflection about the lessons learnt during your mentor-mentee sessions and plan actions to be implemented in your professional behaviour.

### Some topics to deal during the session

• Have your opinions about gender equality changed during the programme?

• Own professional behaviours contributing to the sustainability of gendered practices

• Strategies to foster small organizations changes (e.g., no meetings in the afternoon to improve life/work balance, reacting verbally to sexist work practices, etc.)

• Would you be willing to present your findings to the senior management of your institution?

• How would you act as a mentor in the future? (vs traditional individualistic and competitive behaviour in academia)

• What is the main take of the programme for me?

# 7. COVID-19 and gender equality in research and teaching

## Previous thinking and reading

The COVID-19 is having an impact on the daily lives of millions of people which are obliged to combine working from home, productivity and efficiency, with care obligations, school at home and all usual the domestic work. These circumstances are favouring very stressful situations in households across Europe, many of which have a strong gender dimension. The research career is no exception and a number of publications are already highlighting how this exceptional situation may be also contributing to increasing the gender gap in scientific careers.

For an overview of general gendered impacts of COVID-19 in Europe, you can check: [https://eige.europa.eu/covid-19-and-gender-equality/frontline-workers](https://eige.europa.eu/covid-19-and-gender-equality/frontline-workers)

A preliminary study about how the quarantine measures are affecting daily lives concludes that the situation tends to be more stressful for women than men: [https://press.vub.ac.be/quarantine-reinforces-gender-inequality#](https://press.vub.ac.be/quarantine-reinforces-gender-inequality#)

A reflection about how COVID-19 and caring obligations could impact scientific careers on the long-term: https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01135-9

Several sources highlighting that women academics seem to be publishing less during the pandemic:

https://www.thelily.com/women-academics-seem-to-be-submitting-fewer-papers-during-coronavirus-never-seen-anything-like-it-says-one-editor/

https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/04/21/early-journal-submission-data-suggest-covid-19-tanking-womens-research-productivity

https://arxiv.org/abs/2005.06303

https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01294-9

## Goal

• Identify how the pandemic has affected my own research and teaching performance
• Discuss ways in which gendered impacts of the pandemic could be addressed to in order to avoid increasing the gender gap in academic careers

**Some topics to deal with during the session**

• What are the positive aspects of being able to regularly work from home? And the negative?

• How did you organize your professional obligations during the quarantine?

• Have you been able to plan and fulfil a work schedule for this period? Compared to other colleagues in your research group, do you feel you have faced any differentiating situation during the pandemic?

• How do you expect that your research productivity during the pandemic can affect your professional career on the medium and long term?

• How could job, funding or promotion opportunities take into account the circumstances of the COVID-19 pandemic during the evaluation of candidates in the future?

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SUGGESTED
SPONSOR
- MENTEE
SESSIONS
CONTENT

Sponsorship is defined as a more influential and specific professional relationship. FELISE will attempt to include sponsorship from the point of view of the participants' research activity. While the mentor-mentee relationships will be focused on self-awareness and exchange of experiences, sponsor-mentee relationships should foster the implementation of specific actions to advance in the professional career of the mentees.

Only two topics are proposed for these meetings with the intention of getting mentees to plan particular actions to move their research career forward. Facilitating professional contacts, identifying funding opportunities and suggesting key scenarios in which the mentee can showcase her research results, are some of the expected outputs from these meetings.

Please take into consideration that the matching between mentees and their sponsor will based on the pool of available mentors. This match will refer to the scientific domain (Physical Sciences & Engineering, Life Sciences and Social Sciences and Humanities) and where possible, research discipline. Depending on the level of match, the effect of this sponsorship can vary, so address the questions proposed below to the best of the pairs' capacity.

# 1. My Career Goals

## Previous thinking

• Which are my career goals and how can I define them as concrete as possible?

• Which would be my desired permanent position?

• Which are the main challenges for fulfilling your career goal?

• Which would be the key milestones for reaching your career goal?

## Goal

• Have a clear view of the actions needed to advance towards your career goal.

## Some topics to deal during the session

• What is my desired career path?

    - Which should be my professional positions to fulfil that career goal?

- Boosters and barriers you currently face?
- Key milestones achieved during your professional career

• What are my strengths and weaknesses in order to achieve that goal?

- In my current situation, what can help me advance towards my career goal?
- In my current situation, what do I still need to do to continue advancing towards my career goal?

• How can I better prepare myself towards that goal?

- Instruments / actions that can help you reach your career goal (e.g., research outputs needed, publications, funding programmes, etc.)
- What key barriers you perceive to be able to fulfil career goals?

• How could a sponsor support me to advance towards that goal?

- Does anybody provide you with sponsorship support now? What does this person do?
- In what can your FELISE sponsor help you?

# 2. My Professional Network

## Previous thinking

The literature suggests that women professional networks are often less powerful and effective than men's in terms of exchanged benefits, nevertheless, the reasons for this remain unclear. In this section we want the mentee to discuss with her sponsor how their professional networks are set and how could they be further improved.

Significance of research networking for enhancing collaboration and research productivity
https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4049205/

Five Tips about Effective Networking for Researchers
https://www.enago.com/academy/five-tips-about-effective-networking-for-researchers/
How do men and women differ in collaboration?
https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0048733311001296

## Goal

• Define specific milestones to increase the mentees professional network.

### Some topics to deal during the session

• Who are my role models and why?

    - Do I currently have contact with a role model?
    - What can I do to identify other role models?

• Am I building a network of international professionals that know my work and would be willing to support me professionally, if needed?

    - Who are my current peers?
    - How do I currently network?
    - How to behave at networking events?

• Am I trying to connect with those professionals I admire so I can share my work with them?

    - Which are the top teams in my research field?
    - What channels can I use to share my research work?

• How could a sponsor support me to strengthen my professional network?

**15**

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# FEMINIST LEADERSHIP IN SCIENCE

TOWARDS EQUAL CAREER DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

## HANDBOOK