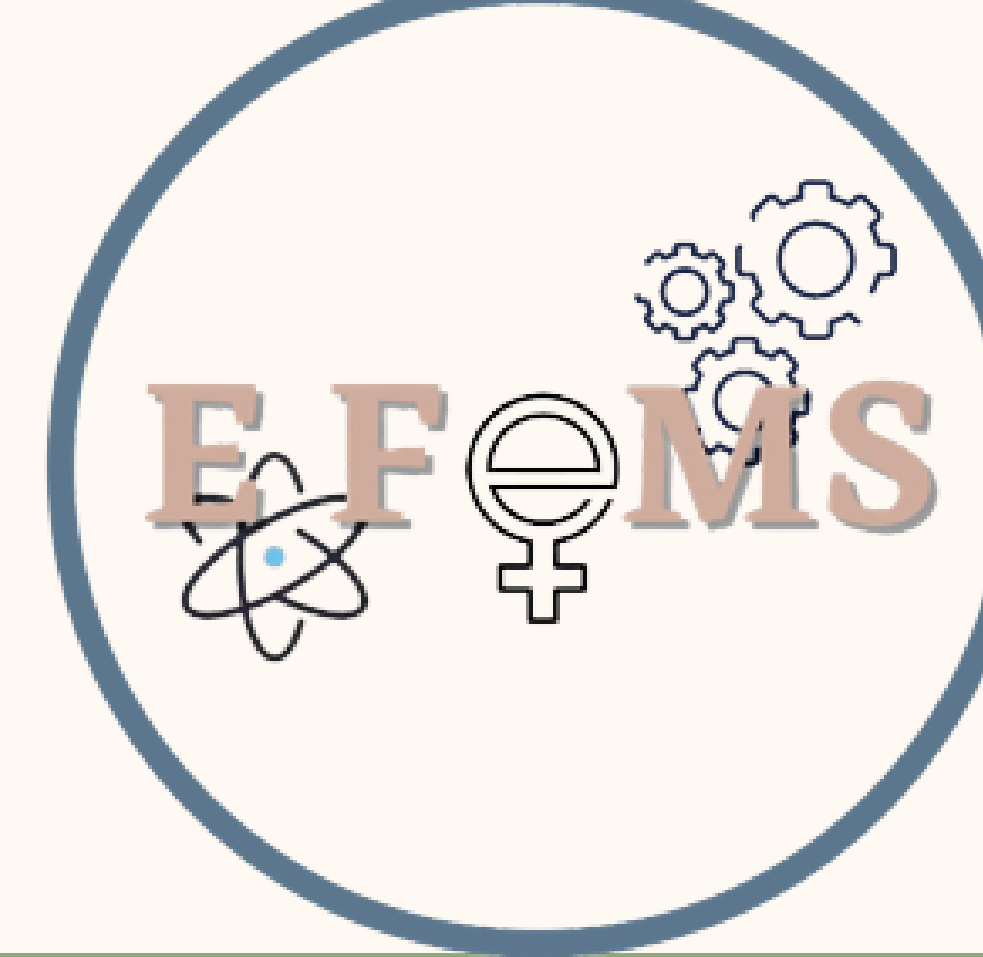




in  
collaboration  
with



Supporting  
Black  
women in  
chemistry

# The EFeMS-WISC Ambassador Program



**In Ghanaian universities only one out of three students are women.(1) Traditional beliefs that science-related courses are for boys, perceived gender roles and stereotypes projected on Ghanaian women, and the lack of Black female STEM role models are prominent factors contributing to only 40% of women undergraduates choosing to study STEM.(2) Our target audience is Black women who are already within the Higher Education system, and who are looking to progress their careers in chemistry and science.**

Science communication and stories about science have the possibility of reaching millions of people. For example, 30 science related pages on Facebook reached 44 million social media users in 2017.(3) However, there is a gender gap and a lack of diversity in science channels on platforms such as YouTube. Of the top 50 most subscribed YouTube science channels only two had a female presence.(4) In addition, where women were present in a channel they received, to a statistically significant degree, more comments on their appearance, more critiques and negative comments, and more negative and sexual comments than men. If YouTube is a participatory culture (5) then the absence of women and Black women can be viewed as an indication of how society perceives and engages with women who are doing science, and a reflection on the barriers they face.

WISC's website [www.womeninsuprachem.com](http://www.womeninsuprachem.com) has details of events, our mentoring programme, community clusters, and lots of resources and links.

EFeMS' website [www.empoweringfems.com](http://www.empoweringfems.com) has details of events and scholarship programmes.

**This project is aiming to increase participation in STEM for Black women in Africa and internationally. It is imperative to create spaces where they can explore the challenges and barriers they may face, learn different skills to facilitate their success in higher STEM education and STEM careers, and be facilitated to act as role models and ambassadors for other Black women in science.**

## Project Aims

- To support Black women to continue with postgraduate study in chemistry and science in the UK and in Africa, through building kinship and community networks.
- To work with Black women in Africa to support them to gain the general skills needed to progress in a successful scientific career, and the specific skills needed to progress within the field of supramolecular chemistry.
- To raise the visibility and profile of Black women in chemistry and STEM by providing opportunities for them to contribute to an ongoing international Public Engagement programme.

## References:

- 1 F. Boateng and J. Gaulee, *Underrepresented Minor. Prog.*, 2019, 3, 67–86.
- 2 A. Acheampong, *Inequality of Gender Participation of Females in STEM Disciplines in Higher Education, A case study of KNUST: Ghana.*, 2014.
- 3 P. Hitlin and K. Olmstead, *Pew Res. Center, Sci. Soc.*, 2018.
- 4 I. Amarasekara and W. Grant, *Public Underst. Sci.*, 2018, 28, 68–84.
- 5 C. Chau, *Dir. Youth Dev.*, 2010, 128, 65–74.

**The EFeMS-WISC Ambassador Program is a great opportunity for an African woman who is either in a chemistry or biochemistry science program at the undergraduate or graduate level or who is interested in science communication. Two ambassadors will be fully funded to visit the UK for 10 days in order to spend time in chemistry research labs led by women PIs, and create content for science communication and public engagement channels. Potential ambassadors must be enrolled in an African-accredited university, must display academic excellence, and must have the willingness to participate in research activities. Applications closed 30 November 2021.**

For more information please contact WISC at [info@wisc.network](mailto:info@wisc.network)



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