

Women In Supramolecular Chemistry

The idea: to establish a **mentoring network** to support the career progression and retention of female academics working in supramolecular chemistry.

Is this discussion only for women??

No – **everyone** is welcome!

Why should I stay?

- The issues we will talk about do not only affect women.
- We all have a role to play in supporting diversity in the chemical sciences.
- We can all benefit from better access and diversity in the workplace.
- We will also be seeking academics of all genders to act as mentors.



Why are we targeting women?

- The academic career path can be challenging for **everyone**, regardless of gender.
- Certain issues tend to affect women disproportionately compared to male colleagues.
- Women are underrepresented in the chemical sciences.
- Addressing the challenges that disproportionately affect women may help to address the imbalance, but ultimately will help **anyone** affected by these issues.



Women In Supramolecular Chemistry

The idea: to establish a **mentoring network** to support the career progression and retention of female academics working in supramolecular chemistry.

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

Why?

Discussion: what ***should*** we be focussing on?

We have some suggestions, but we're keen to hear from you!

Please also feed back ideas using this link!

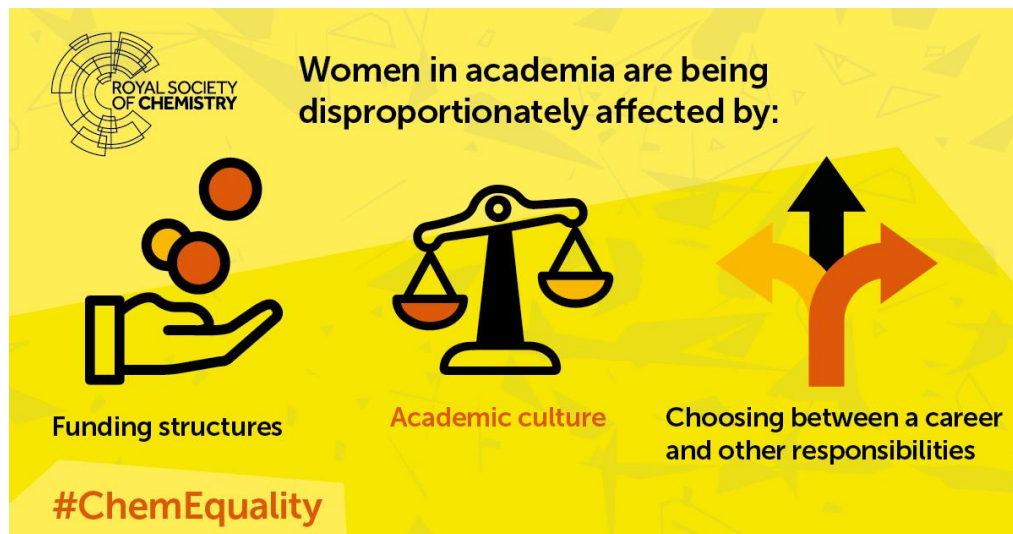
<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LCJH99Q0>



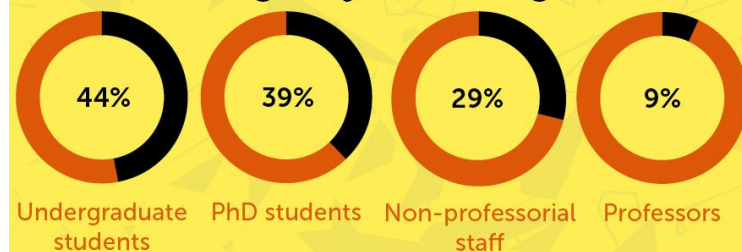
Why are we targeting women?



“**Talented women**, interested in an academic career, are **leaving the sector** before reaching their full potential. Many excellent female scientists who stay in academia are **not progressing** to senior grades in the same proportion as their male peers”.



The proportion of women falls as chemists advance through key career stages.



[rsc.li/ChemEquality](https://www.rsc.li/ChemEquality)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LCJH99Q0>



Why are we targeting women?



Balancing work with other responsibilities

Long working hours are seen as necessary for career progression and fairness and uncertainty

Lack of part-time and flexible working options makes it harder to manage caring responsibilities and no relatable role models

Provision of affordable, high-quality childcare is frequently inadequate for men

"The high demands of academia are incompatible with the time required to have a family. There is no work-life balance or how much money you've brought in."

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<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LCJH99Q0>



Representation in supramolecular chemistry



Prof. Michaela Hardie, Corday-Morgan Prize winner in 2011 and the only female member of the RSC MASC committee until 2018.



Prof. Rachel O'Reilly, the first female recipient of the Bob Hay Lectureship award in 2018.



Prof. Hanadi Sleiman, the first female recipient of the Izatt-Christensen Prize in 2016.



Prof. Mindy Levine, the first recipient of the Sessler Early Career Prize in 2017.



ISMSC 2019 in Lecce, Italy, at which 20% of the speakers were female.

Things are starting to change... what can we do to support this?



What should we be doing?



Act as a sponsor: sponsorship matters to women at all career stages and has a major contribution to progression and success. Support and sponsor women to succeed.

Nominate women scientists: prizes and awards have a positive impact on individuals' careers and role models in the community. Nominations of women and by women are still too low.

Act as a role model: demand and expect flexibility. Be proud of your achievements, at work and at home. Request sponsorship and mentoring.

What are we doing?

- Seeking out funding opportunities to support the development of this network
- Seeking out potential contributors and beneficiaries for this network.
- Figuring out how the network can best achieve the above!

[rsc.li/ChemEquality](https://www.rsc.li/ChemEquality)

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LCJH99Q0>



Who's in?



Jennifer Hiscock
(University of Kent, UK)



Cally Haynes
(UCL, UK)



Claudia Caltagirone
(Universita di Cagliari, Italy)



Anna McConnell
(University of Kiel, Germany)



Ncediwe Tsolekile
(CPUT, South Africa)



Jennifer Leigh
(University of Kent, UK)

Lecturer in HE & Academic Practice



Kate Jolliffe
(Sydney University, Australia)



Mike Watkinson
(Keele University, UK)



Jon Steed
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(University of Southampton, UK)



You?

Get in touch!

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Discussion

What should we be doing **specifically**?

Would any of the following be useful?

- Funding alerts?
- Blog posts where you can read about the career progression of other female academics?
- Panel events where you can ask established academics about their career progression?
- Being matched with a mentor in the field (but independent of your institution) to discuss career progression?
- Attending networking meetings?
- Attending training workshops? What sort of training would be useful?
- Consulting and informing future events, eg. codes of conduct for future conferences?



Quotas

Under which (if any circumstances) are quotas appropriate?

- Shortlisting?
- Hiring??..... *No such thing as equal opportunities if the playing field isn't level to begin with...*



Gendered language

Evidence That Gendered Wording in Job Advertisements Exists and Sustains Gender

Inc



<https://www.tomforth.co.uk/genderbias/>

Gender bias calculator

This calculator was inspired by this [AWIS blog](#) post on gender biases in recommendation letters. The blog post and [the scientific paper](#) it is based on also explain why this gender bias is important. I am grateful to [Dr. Karen James](#) for bringing it to my attention and leading me to examine my own written recommendations.

Try an example!

Melinda was one of the first users of my now widely-used and successful software, MetNetMaker. Her early bug reports and insightful suggestions were invaluable to making the product what it is today. I have not since worked with anyone so at ease communicating with those in other scientific fields.

Female-associated words | Male-associated words

worked

insightful

suggestions

scientific

•decision
•decisive

•superior

•gentle
•honest

<http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/>

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/LCJH99Q0>



Suggestions

Maternity leave and caring responsibilities

- How does maternity leave work with my funding?
- Late stage of achieving “permanent position” - fear of falling behind competition.
- What will happen to my research /group while I’m away?
- Limits potential for travel, networking and collaboration.
- Should conferences be offering childcare options for delegates?



<https://www.rsc.org/campaigning-outreach/campaigning/incldiv/grants-for-carers/>



Suggestions

Mobility is often seen as a measure of commitment to academia.

- Some funding sources make mobility a requirement (eg. Marie-Curie).
- Is it more commonly expected that a woman will move to accommodate her partner's career than the other way around?
- Are women more likely to prioritise family ties?
- Are ECRs undeserving of progression if they prioritise close family ties in their career planning?



Suggestions

Representation.

Are all-male speaker lineups a problem?

How far should organisers be going to ensure some diversity in their lineups?

Why does representation matter?

Are women less likely to raise their own profile? Eg. self nomination for prizes.

What can we do to support the women we work with?

