

EDI CONFERENCE ATHENS – FESTA STREAM

Can Gender Transform Organisations? : Experiences from the FESTA Project.

Female Empowerment in Science and Technology Academia (FESTA) is concerned with creating gendered change in organisations, to facilitate women's career advancement in the traditionally male dominated areas of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. Using relevant theories of change and theories of gender the aim is to create an insight into the process of and response to gendered change in male dominated structures.

In a series of participatory workshops, FESTA explores ways to transform organisations through gender. In workshops, FESTA partners elaborate the way theory informs practice in tasks concerned with raising awareness at individual and organisational level. Workshops explore ways to overcome resistance, raise awareness, and transform organisations so that new organisation cultures emerge.

Best-practice examples of universities who have successfully implemented gender initiatives and transformed organisation cultures are presented, and key elements for successfully implementing change and cultural transformation are identified.

[Each workshop lasts 2 hours, and we propose one workshop per day, over each of the three days]

Workshop 1 Making Gendered Realities Visible: Sparking Everyday Revolutions (led by SDU, Eva Sophia Myers and Liv Baisner).

Case Study Presentation

A case study presenting FESTA Work Package 3: Task 3.2 : Awareness Raising at Organizational Level. The presentation will cover the project's build-up of debate material based on extensive statistical data collection and analysis as well as the planning, training and facilitation of debates in scientific units – the objective if which is to raise organizational awareness and thereby to spark new insights as well as reasons and motivations for organizations and their constituent people to actively include and engage a diverse workforce.

Key points in the presentation include

- Objectives, intentions and ambitions for the debates
- Design considerations and strategic objectives: bottom up vs top-down and implications?
- Worries and hopes, obstacles and/or resistance

Panel Discussion

The case study will be discussed by a panel of Scientific Advisory Group Members, who will make recommendations /observations based on their experience in relation to the theoretical framework, data collection, analysis and implementation of action plans.

Facilitated Workshop

Open discussion between participants, panel and Scientific Advisory Group particularly focusing on experiences of creating awareness of gender change at organizational level and how to address resistance.

Outcome

Reflections on how to foster organizational awareness and through this to creating gender change and overcoming resistance in implementing task 3.2.

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Workshop 2 Rhetoric and Reality: Clearing a Path through the Maze (led by UL, Pat O'Connor and Clare O'Hagen)

Case Study Presentation: Rhetoric and Reality

We will present a case study of FESTA Work Package 3: Task 3.1 which will include the research design: theoretical framework, data collection and analysis. We will also discuss the most and least useful sites of intervention and the most and least legitimate drivers of gendered change.

Key points in the presentation will include:

- Rhetoric vs Reality; Macro vs Micro Politics; Resistance vs Acceptance;
- Organisation Culture vs Organisation Structure; Structure vs Agency.
- Comparative Analyses of findings between Men and Women in same university
- Comparative Findings between partner universities.

Panel Discussion

The case study will be discussed by a panel of Scientific Advisory Group Members, who will make recommendations /observations based on their experience in relation to the theoretical framework, data collection, analysis and implementation of action plans.

Facilitated Workshop

Open discussion between participants, panel and Scientific Advisory Group, to discuss

- creating awareness
- overcoming resistance
- transforming culture

Outcome

Clearing a path through the maze – the way forward.

Workshop 3 Change is Possible – Good Practice at European Universities (led by RWTH, Andrea Wolfram and Manuela Aye).

Case Study Presentations

Universities in Europe present case studies on how they successfully implemented gender change strategies and achieved a commitment to gender change among the university members.

- Women, research and universities: excellence without gender bias –Experiences from LERU (Prof. Simone Buitendijk);
- Tromsø University, Norway, winner of National Gender Equality Prize (Prof. Curt Rice).
- RWTH Aachen University, Germany – evaluated as highly successful in implementing gender equality through the German Research Foundation (Dr. Andrea Wolfram);

Panel Discussion

The case study will be discussed by a panel of Scientific Advisory Group Members, who will make recommendations /observations based on their experience in relation to the theoretical framework, data collection, analysis and implementation of action plans.

Facilitated Workshop

Open discussion between participants, panel and Scientific Advisory Group, to discuss

- What were the reasons for initiating change?
- Can change only happen when the business case is addressed? Has the justice case become an obsolete concept?
- How can an effective knowledge transfer be achieved that considers the variety among European universities with regard to structures, cultures and practices?

Outcome

These different approaches will provoke lively debate in the workshop as well as providing best practice examples of ways to create and implement gender change.