

# wiser

women in  
science  
education  
research



**European Festival 4 & 5 October 2007**  
**Ceramique district Maastricht The Netherlands**  
**Free entry [www.wiserineurope.eu](http://www.wiserineurope.eu)**

## Get WISER. Get more Women In Science, Education and Research!

There are more than enough qualified women to take on key positions in science, education and research. If only those women and the academic and research institutions would recognise the opportunities for female talent. It is time to get WISER.

WISER is a two-day European festival for scientists, students, decision and policy makers, politicians, HR professionals and gender specialists. WISER is lectures, workshops, HR tools, training sessions, games and an accompanying art and culture programme.

On October 4 and 5, over fifty female researchers from all over Europe will meet at the Ceramique district in Maastricht for the WISER festival. WISER will be officially opened by Ronald Plasterk, the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science.

WISER is a joint initiative of partners in the ESF/EQUAL project Priority for Participation.

## 4 & 5 October

Block off your agenda on October 4 and 5. Entrance to the festival is free. Space is limited, so sign up quickly at [www.wiserineurope.eu](http://www.wiserineurope.eu)

And one more WISER thing to do: pass this information on to colleagues and friends that should be there!





## **European Festival** | October 4 & 5, 2007

Ceramique district, Maastricht, The Netherlands

There are enough qualified women to take on key positions in academia - if only those women and the academic institutions would recognise the opportunities for female talent in science, education and research.

With W.I.S.E.R., a two-day European festival, we want to celebrate this female talent, put female scientists in the spotlight and prime female academics to aim for the highest.

W.I.S.E.R. offers **inspiring keynotes** and interviews with female scientists from all over Europe, **debates** on gender and scientific excellence; **media training** for female talent; **HRM tools for change**; mentoring and coaching; **application training** for professorships in Europe; **workshops** on aspects such as salary negotiations; and a **research funding lab** where experts give advice on how to write winning proposals. An accompanying **art and culture track** will provide a different perspective on the issue.

W.I.S.E.R. creates the opportunity for scientists and students, politicians and policy makers, HR professionals and gender specialists to meet in a setting that is challenging and informal. A two-day arena for refreshing and confronting debates on the meaning and the implications of making science truly inclusive. The festival will be opened by the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science, Ronald Plasterk (to be confirmed).

**Join in, get W.I.S.E.R! Block off October 4 and 5 in your agenda.**



**For more information visit [www.participatiealsprioriteit.nl](http://www.participatiealsprioriteit.nl) (look under W.I.S.E.R. festival)**

W.I.S.E.R. is a joint initiative of partners in the EQUAL project Priority for Participation.

W.I.S.E.R. is organized by the Centre for Gender and Diversity, Maastricht University in cooperation with SoFoKleS and Cultuurfabriek.

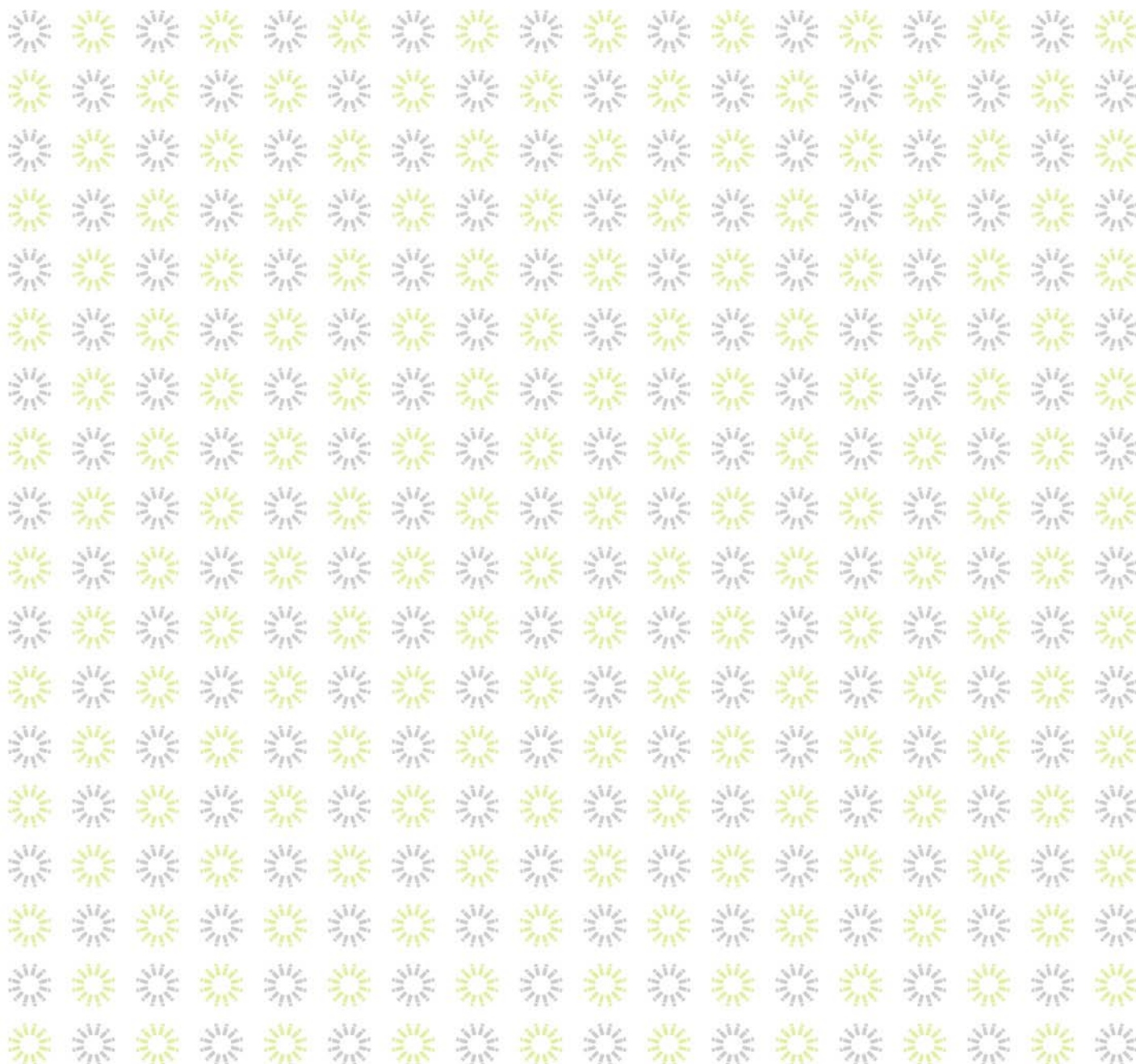


W.I.S.E.R. is made possible by generous financial contributions from ESF/EQUAL, Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and SoFoKleS.



## European Festival | October 4 & 5, 2007 | Project plan

Ceramique district, Maastricht, The Netherlands



ESF/EQUAL project Priority for Participation

Centre for Gender and Diversity

Maastricht University

[www.participatiealsprioriteit.nl/wiser](http://www.participatiealsprioriteit.nl/wiser)





Universities and scientific institutes are continually on the lookout for talent. The quality of academic research can only be maintained by constantly ensuring that new talent is attracted, trained and provided with opportunities to develop. The search for talent is sometimes carried out further than necessary, 'overlooking' the talent close at hand. A significant source of highly trained academic talent is available: female scientists.

Women and girls worldwide perform very well at every level of education. In most European countries more than half of the university graduates are women. Often they graduate faster and with better results than their male peers. These numbers are not reflected in the workforce at universities and scientific institutions, especially at the top-level. Across the EU as a whole only 29% of researchers are women. In business and enterprise the percentage of female researchers is even smaller. On average only 15% of professors in the EU is female. The Netherlands is - with 9% female professors - in the lowest ranks in the EU. This means an incredible waste of talent.

There are enough women that can take up a position as professor or associate professor or other key position in academia, based on the expertise and experience they have. Not only would this benefit the women in question, but it would also benefit the sciences. The science, technology, and innovation capacities will be strengthened through the greater participation of women in all aspects of science, engineering, and medicine. The quality and diversity of the sciences will improve as full use is made of a wide range of perspectives. What's more, this would constitute a return on investment with regard to the time, energy and money that has been spent on educating and training these female

academics.

We're already on the right track. In recent years, science and engineering organizations, business enterprises, governments, and civil society institutions have increasingly recognized the global need for a larger science and technology workforce in general and for women's full presence in it in particular. There have been numerous activities aimed at increasing the participation of women in academia. The success of these activities is reflected in the fact that the number of women in academia is increasing. Nonetheless, there is still room for improvement. Piecemeal measures and initiatives developed in isolation will not make the change needed.

It is time to create a platform for the many actors involved: (female) scientists, policy - and decision makers in science and academia, HR professionals and gender specialists from all over Europe. Only by working together on the advancement of women in science, a change can be made. We need to empower female scientists and create awareness, to renew HR-policies and discuss leadership practices. There are many good examples. They need to be brought together. Only by learning from different approaches, debating urgent issues, meeting various experiences, and confronting dilemmas, will science and scientific institutions become truly inclusive.

During a two-day festival on October 4 & 5 2007 - held in Maastricht, the Netherlands - we want to put female scientists in the spotlight and create a meeting place for debate and confrontation for all actors dealing with issues on gender and science. A shared space for the exchange of experiences and information on best practices in what

universities already undertake and what they can do more to make sure that female talent stays within the universities.

### Why a festival?

The various actors involved in the issue of gender and science - female scientists, politics, decision and policy makers, HR professionals and gender specialists - often operate in splendid isolation. The festival creates the opportunity for all of them to meet each other in a setting that is challenging and informal. By making use of various settings and different formats for discussion and learning - workshops, films, master classes, interviews, debates - it will be easier for people to 'think out of the box' and to view old issues in a new light. Last but not least, we believe that people are more open for true discussion and learning when they are having fun.

### Target groups

W.I.S.E.R. is aimed at women working in science, research and academia; policy and decision makers at different levels; professionals and scholars in the fields of gender, career development and human resources; unions of faculty and students, and politicians from all over Europe. Parts of the program will be addressing female academics that do not work within scientific institutions, but in private companies.

The focus on one of the two days will be more (but not exclusively) on female scientists, the focus on the other day will be more aimed at policy makers and HR managers. We aim at 200 to 300 participants per day.

Since the issue of the under representation of women in science needs constant attention the festival is also explicitly aimed at attracting the (scientific) media.

### About the ESF/EQUAL project Priority for Participation

W.I.S.E.R. is an initiative of the Dutch ESF/EQUAL project Priority for Participation. This

project is lead by the Centre for Gender and Diversity of Maastricht University. It brings together universities, organisations that play a role in determining policy in science and research, and representatives of the target group – female scientists. Together, they work on increasing the promotion of women in academia. By systematically sharing their diverse knowledge and experience, widely-supported ideas and solutions are introduced. The project is a joint initiative working to develop, test and implement strategies, tools and new approaches that will lead to more talented women being promoted more quickly than is currently the case. The project runs from September 2005 to December 2007.

### Transnational partnership

Priority for Participation collaborates with three other European projects related to gender and the sciences in the transnational Equality by Degree programme. Our joint objective is to eliminate gender bias in academia.

Transnational partners are:

- \* Equal Opportunities Guide, VLIR, Belgium
- \* JIVE partnership, Bradford College, UK
- \* Profession@I, University of Valencia, Spain

W.I.S.E.R is the closure of both the Dutch project and the transnational partnership.



### To celebrate:

There are enough women that can take up a position as professor or associate professor or other key position in academia, based on the expertise and experience they have. The festival wants to celebrate the female talent that is there and put female scientists in the spotlights.

### To empower:

The career paths of women and men are not always the same and female academics are often less visible than their male peers. Especially in higher positions women are under represented. There is a lot that women themselves can do to make further steps in their career and many of them have the ambition to do so. During the festival female academics will be encouraged and prepared to aim for the highest.

### To meet:

The various actors involved in the issue of gender and science - female scientists, politics, decision and policy makers, HR professionals and gender specialists - often operate in splendid isolation. Only by working together on the advancement of women in science, a true change can be made. The festival creates the opportunity for all of them to meet each other in a setting that is challenging and informal. National and transnational partners of the EQUAL project Priority for Participation, as well as sister organizations are invited to fill in specific parts of the program.

### To learn:

Over the last decade there have been numerous activities initiated and measures developed in Europe, aimed at increasing the participation of women in academia. But piecemeal measures and initiatives developed in isolation will not make the change needed.

The festival wants to be a shared space for best practices in Europe, where policy- and decision makers and HR managers can learn from each others experiences and take home new ideas.

### To discuss:

The full participation of women and other groups that are under represented in scientific institutions and scientific debates is needed and just. Not only will this benefit the groups in question, but it will also benefit the sciences. It is our conviction that the quality and diversity of the sciences will improve as full use is made of a wide range of perspectives. The festival wants to be an arena for refreshing and confronting debates on the meaning and the implications of making science truly inclusive.



W.I.S.E.R. offers a varied program aimed at the different target groups. Next to a few inspiring key-notes, the days will be filled with workshops, debates, interviews, films, etc. Experimenting with new forms and interactivity are central elements of the different sessions planned. Since the creation of a platform for organizations working on issues on gender and science is one of the aims of the festival, national and transnational partners of the EQUAL project Priority for Participation, as well as sister organizations have been asked to fill in specific parts of the program.

An important part of the program is a central space where best practices are presented and where people from different professions and backgrounds can meet to exchange and develop ideas in an informal setting.

The program is organized around eight themes.

### Themes

#### Inclusive Science

The full participation of women and other under represented groups within science and research is necessary if we want to make sure that academia and scientific institutions are truly inclusive. But what does this participation mean for research questions posed, in scientific debates, and for the meaning and criteria of what constitutes scientific excellence? How to make sure that the European dream of 'science by, for, and about women' becomes reality?

#### Empowerment F/m

Half of the university graduates are female. They graduate faster and with better results than their male peers. Still they are often overlooked in the search for talent. The empowerment of women in academia is necessary. We talk business here: women

have the talent and the ambition. No trainings in assertiveness, or in time management therefore. Interactive media-trainings, coaching on receiving research funding and taking steps to become full professor are some of the things needed. And not only by women.

#### Leadership rules!

Women rarely have top positions in scientific institutions. The influence of women in universities and in scientific debates is therefore very small. Female talent is available but not always visible. By encouragement and training women, more women will take up leadership positions. At the same time male board members and other male decision makers have to be sensitive and equipped to address gender and science issues within their own organisation. Academic leadership practices need to be critically discussed.

#### Managing careers

The under representation of women in science is often addressed as the result of specific individual career choices. The careers of men and women are not similar and there are certainly dilemmas, for example concerning work-life balance. But careers can be managed. By individuals, who know their competences, are willing to learn and communicate about their ambitions. By organisations, which make sure that everybody gets a fair chance and which encourage and help their employees to reach their goals.

#### HRM - Tools for change

HR-professionals should play a more central in the core business of universities and scientific institutions. Good Human Resource Management is the vehicle for addressing urgent issues concerning women in science

and for changing the organisation to a gender sensitive one. Many tools and best practices are available. It is important to know which tools are effective.

### Crossing borders

Although the myth of the ivory tower is often used to describe the academic world, scientific research is carried out in a globalising context, international networks and worldwide debates. What is the implication of this internationalisation for the careers of scientists? And what are the gender aspects? On the other hand, the influx from international staff and students asks for open and flexible institutions. Intercultural competences are key in every modern organisation.

### Money makes the world go round

Scientists have to dedicate more and more time to fundraising. Who decides which research gets funded and how gendered are the criteria, are questions that should be addressed. Effective fundraising can be learned. Another aspect of this theme is the still existing pay-gap between men and women worldwide. Knowing the rules of the game of salary negotiations is a first step.

### Mainstreaming gender and diversity

To attract female talent in starting a scientific career is one thing, but to keep them in the organisation is another. Sustainable organisational change means the mainstreaming of policies and practices that work. Not only when it comes to gender issues. To create a truly diverse workforce, organisations have to be aware of questions concerning ethnicity, age, sexual preference, class, colour - in all their various combinations.

## Program activities

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### Speakers

During the two days of the festival several key-notes will be held by important female scientists and top women and men from scientific institutions and business enterprises. Among them Christine van Broekhoven top scientist on Alzheimer and winner of the Unesco-L'oreal award, and Rein Willems, president-director of Shell Netherlands. The ministers of the four partner countries as well as the EU commissioner for Science and Research have been invited. The festival will be opened by Ronald Plasterk, Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science and Jo Ritzen, chair of Maastricht University and former minister of education in the Netherlands. Other speakers will be interviewed on their research or career, and/or will take part in panel debates.

### Debates

Several plenary debates are planned during the festival.

- \* A political debate between the ministers of education of the transnational partners (Netherlands, Belgium, Spain and the UK) as well as an European official.
- \* A debate on urgent issues regarding gender and scientific excellence. Excellence is a central topic in academia and research policy. Key, but rarely defined explicitly. In cooperation with the European Platform for Women Scientists.
- \* A debate on strengthening the science, technology, and innovation capacities of scientific institutions and business enterprises through the greater participation of women in all aspects of science, engineering, and medicine. (In cooperation with the Dutch Network of Women Professors)



### Workshops etc

- \* How to address the media. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) organises media-training session for female talent. An all-day program full of interaction, in which female scientists can present their research in a short lecture for an audience of scientific journalists. With eye-openers, useful tips and personal feedback.

- \* Encouragement to Advance. An international application and career training seminar aimed to prepare highly qualified women scientists for appointment and application procedures for professorships in several European countries. The whole application procedure is taken into account. Developed and organized by the Centre of Excellence Gender and Science (CEWS) in Bonn, Germany.

- \* Research funding lab. Funding agencies and experts on writing research proposals are available to give advice on where to look for funding and how to write winning proposals. Researchers can bring their own proposals for individual coaching throughout the festival.

- \* Tools for change. Several HRM tools will be presented and discussed in interactive workshop settings. Among others: mentoring and coaching, gender analyses tools, statistics and indicators.

- \* Female leadership on screen. A workshop for female and male leaders on leadership styles inspired by examples from TV and film. From West Wing to Sex and the City, from Amélie to Pocahontas.

### Others:

- \* A TV-studio will be set up, where scientists can practice their presentation skills under experienced guidance.

- \* Learn to negotiate your salary from a confrontation between professional negotiators of academic employers and labour organizations.

- \* Watch out for the gender watch team, available to give advice and comments - whether asked for or not - on policy plans, organizational structures and everything else

that seems relevant.

- \* Writers writing on academic culture reflect on gender issues.

### Meanwhile in the boardroom

University board members and other decision makers in science from all over Europe are invited to take turns in a fictional meeting, in which they are presented with questions and dilemmas concerning women in science to be resolved. Under the guidance of experienced chairs and in a real board room in the Centre Ceramique, one of the locations of the festival. Other participants of the festival can follow the board room activity on a big screen and give input.

### Master classes

Maastricht University is cooperating in the festival, by organising a specific part of the program, aimed at young female scientists at the start of their career and students of different ethnic backgrounds. Several master classes are developed that focus on pursuing a career in science, in private companies and career management in general. There will be the opportunity for young talent to meet directly with experienced scholars and captains of industry.

### Meeting plaza

A central space where best practices are presented by organizations, scientific institutions and individuals working on issues in gender and science. Presentations will have the forms of posters. This is also the space where people from different professions and backgrounds can meet – one on one, or in small groups - to exchange and develop ideas in an informal setting.

### Cultural program

As a side program to the festival there will be a cultural program with films, installations and performances.

W.I.S.E.R. will be closed with a closing party with bands, dj's and vj's.

## Organisation and practical details



### Dates and locations

W.I.S.E.R. takes place at October 4 & 5 2007.

The festival is held in **Maastricht, the Netherlands** in several inspiring locations close together in the new Maastricht area 'Ceramique', near the center of the city and easy to reach by train and car.

The heart of the festival is **Museumcafe Ipanema** - part of the Bonnefanten Museum, where other parts of the program take place. The **Bonnefanten Museum** is the foremost museum for old master's and contemporary fine art in the province of Limburg. The museum is housed in a building designed by the Italian architect Aldo Rossi. In the newly build multifunctional building called **Centre Ceramique** - landmark of the new Maastricht area - there is space for workshops and training sessions. The **Derlon Theater** - cultural heart of this part of the city - is used for large plenary debates, films and performances.

### Coordination and organization

The initiative of W.I.S.E.R. is taken by the EFS/EQUAL project Priority for Participation. The project is lead by the Center for Gender and Diversity, Maastricht University, that is responsible for the program and coordination of the festival.

A conference bureau is hired for the production and practical organization of the event, most probably this will be the Cultuurfabriek.

An executive committee is formed by the project leaders of Priority for Participation and one person from the conference bureau.

### Participants: registration and fees

The festival aims to attract 200 to 300 participants per day, from all over Europe. Participants do not have to pay a fee for the

festival (EQUAL-funded activities have to be free of charge).

Participants do have to pay for their own travel and hotel arrangements, as well as for the catering. We will not offer standard catering for everybody, but we will invite companies to sell food and drinks during the festival. Hotel options in Maastricht will be available on the festival website.

Tickets will be sold for the closing party. Childcare facilities will be arranged. Participants have to register through the festival website.

### Promotion

A part of the Priority for Participation - project website will be set up specifically for this event, with practical information, program updates, etc ([www.participatiealsprioriteit/wiser](http://www.participatiealsprioriteit/wiser)).

Attendants have to register through this website as well. Next to the website a flyer will be made once there is more information on the program. Regular email announcements will be sent. Both the flyer and the email announcements will be widely distributed, with help of the national and transnational partners, as well as with the help of sister organisations.

A communication plan will be written, in which press coverage right before and during the event is included.

### Finances and fundraising

W.I.S.E.R. is made possible by generous financial contributions from ESF/EQUAL, Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, and SoFoKleS.

Parts of the program are covered by contributions of sister organisations.

All Dutch universities have been requested to contribute a small sum to cover additional costs.

Several funding agencies have been

addressed to fund specific program sessions. A strategy for sponsorships is being developed with help of Maastricht University.

## Partners

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W.I.S.E.R. is organized by the Centre for Gender and Diversity, Maastricht University in cooperation with SoFoKleS and Cultuurfabriek.

### Centre for Gender and Diversity (CGD) Maastricht University

The Center for Gender and Diversity (CGD), based at Maastricht University is project leader of the EQUALproject Priority for Participation and coordinator of W.I.S.E.R. The position of women in science (in a European context) is one of the major fields of research and expertise in the CGD. The CGD was responsible for several advice and evaluation studies on the topic and was project leader of a former EQUALproject on Gender Mainstreaming in universities.

### National partners

W.I.S.E.R. is a joint initiative of the national partners working together in Priority for Participation, which includes the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science (OCW), Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU), Erasmus University Rotterdam (EUR), Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam (VU), Technical University Delft (TUDelft), International Information Centre and Archives for the Women's Movement (IIAV), Dutch Network of Women Professors (LNVH) and GAIA - Dutch Network of Women in the Earth Sciences.

Ten private companies - cooperating in the Ambassadors Network of Gaia - are also participating in the festival.

### European partners

The EQUALproject Priority for Participation is cooperating with three other EQUALprojects related to gender and science in various

European countries. These European partners also cooperate in the festival. Partner projects are:

- \* Equal Opportunities Guide, led by the Flemish Interuniversity Council (VLIR), Belgium
- \* JIVE - Joining policy, joining practice - led by the UK Resource Center on Women in SET, Bradford College, UK
- \* Profession@I, based at the University of Valencia, Spain.

All partners in the project - both national and transnational - contribute to the festival by organising parts of the program and will present their results at the poster presentation and information market.

### Sister organisations

Cooperation is sought with other Dutch and European organisations that are dedicated to issues on women and science. These organisations are invited to share their expertise during the festival, by taking care of specific parts of the program. Among others the European Platform of Women Scientists (EPWS), the German Centre of Excellence Women in Science (CEWS) and Stichting de Beauvoir.

SOFOKLES, the Dutch fund for the knowledge sector has been invited to become a cooperating partner in W.I.S.E.R., by integrating their yearly conference on HRM-issues in universities in the festival.