



# Bridging the gender gap in STEM

Strengthening opportunities  
for women in research and innovation



Strengthening women's participation in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields is not only a matter of equal opportunities and social justice, but also crucial to meet pressing societal challenges like the twin green and digital transitions.

The EU is undertaking steps to foster gender equality in research and innovation at all stages across the European Research Area and European Education Area. In line with the [European Strategy for Universities](#), the European Commission is working on addressing the under-representation of women in STEM fields through a roadmap of activities, including a manifesto on gender-inclusive STE(A)M education and careers.

Targeted actions for long-term structural change include the development of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), fostering greater participation of young girls in STEM activities, improving the recruitment, retention and promotion of women in research and innovation, and supporting women entrepreneurship in the EU and beyond. This leaflet highlights eight pioneering EU-funded projects supporting the goal of gender equality and inclusiveness in STEM.

## Scientix 4

### **Inquiry-based science education in Europe, coordinated by European Schoolnet (EUN) in Belgium**

Scientix is the number one community for science education in Europe. It aims to promote and support Europe-wide collaboration among STEM teachers, education researchers, policymakers and other educational stakeholders to inspire students to pursue careers in STEM.

This Brussels-based consortium of 34 European ministries of education works to foster professional development activities, enhance community building, establish European partnerships and bring together the STEM teachers' communities. The fourth stage of this project continues work toward these goals, collecting and displaying information about European STEM projects and their results. This includes projects such as [STING](#), a teacher training programme which promotes the integration of gender awareness in STEM education.

→ [scientix.eu/home](https://scientix.eu/home)



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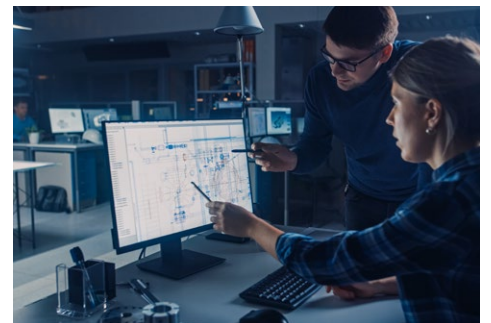
## LeTSGEPs

### **Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in research performing organisations, coordinated by the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia in Italy**

Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) offer a powerful tool for institutional change, including tackling the under-representation of women in STEM fields. Through a series of stakeholder workshops, awareness raising events and a final conference, LeTSGEPs is supporting GEPs' design and implementation in six different research-performing organisations across Europe.

GEPs that are not based on budget analysis to correct gender biases in the distribution of resources and that do not provide proper budgets for their implementation are at risk of not being sustainable. LeTSGEPs fosters the use of Gender Budgeting, showing the impact of each programme on gender equality and producing more powerful GEPs. Scheduled to run until 2024, the project has already published a [Gender Equality Training Strategy](#) for research institutions and training materials in seven languages.

→ [letsgeps.eu](https://letsgeps.eu)



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## CALIPER

### **Linking research and innovation for gender equality, coordinated by ViLabs OE in Greece**

The EU is increasingly interested in supporting programmes that empower gender equality at all levels of societal life. The CALIPER project was launched to support greater gender balance in research institutions by increasing the number of women researchers in STEM, enhancing their career prospects and adding a gender dimension to research contents.

Nine research institutions across Europe are being supported by the project to develop Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), and to engage their local Research & Innovation Hubs to transfer the gained knowledge beyond academia. Through actions such as the production of videos featuring women role models in STEM fields, CALIPER stimulates dialogue and collaboration between academia, public authorities, professionals and industry players in order to tackle gender inequalities across the research-transfer-to-market pipeline.

→ [caliper-project.eu](https://caliper-project.eu)



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## R&I PEERS

### Pilot experiences for improving gender equality in research organisations, coordinated by the University of Salerno in Italy

The R&I PEERS project was launched to create and validate pilot experiences that disrupt a gender-biased approach and unconscious rules that limit the participation and career of women in research and innovation in the Mediterranean Area, in particular in STEM fields. The project aimed to build equality by increasing the number of women in decision-making positions in research, and fostering entrepreneurship among women researchers. Success in these goals will increase the pool of European talents and offer an important competitive advantage for strengthening scientific and technological endeavour.

Over the course of 4 years, the R&I PEERS project worked to improve and implement seven Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) in research organisations, reduce the gender gap in decision-making and research-performing activities, and maximise the impact of gender content in research programmes.

→ [ripeers.eu](http://ripeers.eu)



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## Critical Making

### Studying RRI Principles in the Maker Community, coordinated by the Centre for Social Innovation (ZSI) in Austria

The Critical Making project is studying the global maker community in order to reveal its true potential for innovation and public benefit. The ultimate goal is to help implement responsible research and innovation across the global community of makers, designers and engineers, encouraging open access and inclusiveness.

The project has launched a mentoring programme to guide makers worldwide, hosted online and physical events, and collected case studies of gender inclusivity in making and technology programmes. It has also built an open library of resources to demonstrate how maker communities can offer new opportunities for young creators of all genders to contribute to an open society via critical and socially responsible innovation.

→ [criticalmaking.eu](http://criticalmaking.eu)



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## EQUALS-EU

### Europe's Regional Partnership for Gender Equality in the Digital Age, coordinated by Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet) in Norway

The EQUALS-EU project aims to create smart, sustainable and inclusive innovation ecosystems by building capacity and expanding networks for women and girls in social innovation and entrepreneurship, particularly in the information and communications technology (ICT) industry. It plans to incubate at least 20 start-ups led by women and girls through a rigorous education and professional development plan, focused on women's digital rights, transformational leadership and STEM skills.

In addition to mapping gender-inclusive innovation ecosystems, the regional partnership of 19 organisations from 15 EU Member States and Associated Countries is curating a worldwide range of events including innovation camps and hackathons, a 6-month incubator programme focused on gender-inclusive entrepreneurship, and a 1-month boot camp for future leaders in gender-inclusive innovation.

→ [equals-eu.org](http://equals-eu.org)



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## shemakes.eu

**Opportunity Ecosystems Bridging the Gender Gap, coordinated by CEDECS-TCBL in France**

Gender equality in mainstream economic sectors such as the textile and clothing industry can be achieved through the creation of an ecosystem that enhances equal opportunities for women. The EU-funded shemakes.eu project encourages and promotes women-led innovation and leadership through training, mentoring, community-building and inspiration, with a dual goal of bridging the gender gap and increasing sustainability and innovation in the textile and clothing sector.

A consortium of 10 partners across Europe are working to reshape the opportunity structures of more than 16 European Member States and Associated Countries. The project offers a blend of physical, hybrid and online events, and interviews with women role models working in the field that promote, highlight and celebrate women's empowerment in tech and textile innovation, as well as gender neutrality in the design of fashion items and production tools.

→ [shemakes.eu](https://shemakes.eu)



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## ALLINTERACT

**Widening and diversifying citizen engagement in science, coordinated by the University of Barcelona in Spain**

ALLINTERACT is a consortium of seven European project partners focusing on two UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): quality education and gender equality. The project aims to create new knowledge about how to grow citizen engagement in scientific research, including a focus on groups that have traditionally been marginalised, such as young women.

The project is facilitating a transformative dialogue with citizens, which will in turn increase the social impact of research. Project activities include an intervention study and communicative focus groups, as well as the [ScienceThon](#), an online event in which participants competed to devise innovative ways of disseminating science to marginalised audiences. One outcome is the scientific platform [Sappho](#) in which anyone can contribute evidence on science-based statements and hoaxes about gender.

→ [allinteract.eu](https://allinteract.eu)



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Learn more about gender equality in research and innovation: [europa.eu/IY6pgP4](https://europa.eu/IY6pgP4)

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