



Going Diverse:

Innovative Answers to Future Challenges

**International Conference
on Gender and Diversity in
Science, Technology and Business**

29-30 October 2009

RWTH Aachen University

in cooperation with
Imperial College London
ETH Zürich
TU Delft

Call for Papers

Today's world is rapidly changing regarding economical, legal, social and cultural conditions. Internationalisation and globalisation, modern and individual lifestyles, demographic changes, migration and labour shortage, as well as urgent issues like climate change, shortage of resources and the collapse of the international finance markets are only a few aspects of the changes we experience. These challenges are framed by progressive political and legal decisions that have shaped the world in the last decades, including matters on equal opportunities and equal rights.

Globalisation is a challenge for working life. Today's labour markets require flexibility and mobility, yet at the same time employers, universities and companies alike, compete for skilled staff and sales markets. To be successful, they need to acknowledge the diversity of their potential students, employees and customers, and foster a creative, fruitful and respectful working environment. Both in science and business diverse teams produce more innovative solutions and perform better. Hence, it is essential to make equality, gender and diversity important elements of organisational and human resources development.

The conference will give experts a platform to discuss gender and diversity in science, technology and business. It will present studies, concepts and practical experiences from various areas, examine best practice examples and identify important fields of action. In particular, the conference will focus on the following themes:

1. Instruments of Gender and Diversity-oriented Human Resources Development

Various studies have shown that workforce diversity is an important factor for an excellent performance and work output. Today's competitive world thus requires all employers to implement a policy that supports the potential of their entire workforce, regardless of gender, age, race, ethnicity, physical ability, religion or sexual orientation, etc. In this track of the conference, we are looking for contributions of studies as well as best practice examples to discuss the potential of gender and diversity-oriented human resources development. This can include, but is not restricted to, the following questions:

- What instruments are there in HR to attract and retain a diverse workforce?
- In particular, what is the role of human resources development programmes, for example mentoring, dual career and work-life-balance concepts?
- What are the risks and constraints of gender and diversity-oriented human resources development?
- Are there differences in the day-to-day practice of human resources of universities, non-governmental organisations and the corporate world?

2. Institutionalisation of Gender and Diversity Concepts, Organisational Development and Cultural Change

Policies of equality and diversity intend to bring about changes in the institution in which they are introduced. The adoption of those strategies not only influences the work itself and the working results, but also the culture, the atmosphere, and the individual well being of the employees. This track will discuss the developments that have been observed in research institutions, universities, companies and NGOs regarding gender and diversity strategies, as well as the changes they have evoked in the organisational culture. In particular, contributions could include the following issues:

- What are the benefits of gender and diversity-oriented policies for an organisation, the staff and individuals? Are there changes in performance, motivation or employees' satisfaction after the implementation of those concepts?
- How can gender and diversity concepts be institutionalised in science, technology and business? How can they be established at all levels of decision-making?
- What is the business case for gender and diversity at academic institutions?
- How can best practice examples be identified and compared, and how can cooperation work between universities and the corporate world?

The conference is organised in the context of the project TANDEMplusIDEA that is being run between 2007 and 2010 by four universities of the IDEA League (Imperial College London, TU Delft, Imperial College London and RWTH Aachen). It aims to ensure gender equality in science as well as a better balance of sexes in the scientific fields. Between 2008 and 2009 the project implements the first international mentoring and development programme for female post docs of natural science and engineering, evaluates it and develops a model of best practice.

The conference will take place on **29-30 October 2009** at RWTH Aachen University. We expect lectures, workshops, discussions and poster presentations from national and international experts and organisations. All presentations will be collected in a publication, thus gathering the latest state of the art on gender, diversity and organisational change in business and academia.

We invite all interested experts to contribute to the conference through papers, posters or the organisation of workshops. Please submit proposals on the above mentioned topics using the **standard form** on our website, and indicate your track of choice, the title of your proposal, a summary of your presentation (max. 300 words) with important keywords and your contact data.

The deadline for submitting proposals is 28 February 2009. Accepted speakers will be informed in March 2009. Articles for the conference publication will be needed by 01 June 2009.

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The conference is organized by:

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More information can be found on our website **www.idealeague.org/tandemplus/conference**.



The conference is an event of TANDEMplusIDEA, a project implemented by four European partner universities of the IDEA League.



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