

BREAKING OCCUPATIONAL SEGREGATION BENEFITS WOMEN AND EMPLOYERS

The JIVE Development Partnership (DP) in the United Kingdom is creating a network of regional "Desegregation Hubs" to open up career paths for women in male domains of the labour market and to support employers in establishing a more diverse workforce.

NEW INFRASTRUCTURE WITH MAINSTREAMING POTENTIAL

Hubs are defined as focal points, headquarters, competence centres or physical/virtual structures that develop and disseminate innovation. The four regional hubs created by the [JIVE](#) DP fulfil all



of these functions. Women-only providers that specialise in training for traditional male occupations, manage all of these hubs. Women's Education in Building (WEB) that hosts the London Hub is the largest provider in Europe of construction training for women. The Yorkshire and Humberside Hub, coordinated by the Let's Twist Initiative (Let's Train Women In Science and Technology) based at both Bradford College and Sheffield Hallam University has long-standing experience of training women in science, engineering and technology and of raising the awareness of careers counsellors, teachers and trainers

of new vocational opportunities for women. The Women's Workshop (TWW) that is in charge of the Welsh National Hub and the Oxford Women's Training Scheme (OWTS) that runs the South East Hub have devoted considerable time to training different female target groups in information and communication technologies.

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH INVOLVING ALL KEY PLAYERS

Led by the Let's Twist Initiative, JIVE brings together women's training centres, employers organisations from the most segregated sectors of the labour market, mainstream training and educational institutions, careers services and the National Equal Opportunities Commission. All of these partners cooperate actively in the DP's activities at both regional and national levels. Each regional hub is offering a package of interrelated measures which consists of the following elements:

- **Gender equality courses for managers, lecturers, trainers and support staff of further and higher educational institutions and work based training providers**, enabling them to meet the learning needs of women who are training for employment in male-dominated sectors. These courses provide accredited training in gender equality practice, follow-up advisory services and ongoing support for the development of gender equality action plans in the participants' organisations. JIVE partners are aware that most lecturers and trainers in engineering, construction and technology subjects are used to dealing with large groups of male students and often feel ill equipped to address the issues, which arise when women enter such a learning environment. The training is very practical and draws on the experiences of current or former women students to help participants understand the need for gender inclusive learning and to acquire skills to encourage, support and coach female students.
- **Modular training for careers guidance professionals and careers teachers** which aims to assist them to become "change agents" who can overcome stereotyping and encourage girls and women to consider work in the engineering, construction or technology sectors as a potential career path.
- **Support to companies** in the use of a gender audit tool developed by JIVE, to help analyse any recruitment and retention issues that companies may be experiencing. This is followed by a second phase of support and guidance to assist employers in making diversity a reality in everyday working life

- **Encouragement to women and girls who are working and/or training in male-dominated sectors** within the four regions. This mentoring programme offers professional and personal support during the early stages of training and career development. It operates across schools, learning providers and enterprises and its basic philosophy is to create a "learning partnership" between the mentor and the mentee. Each mentor is selected on the basis of her capacity to act as a role model for a less experienced woman. Rather than transferring her knowledge, she is required to facilitate the learning process by creating the optimal learning environments for her mentee. The DP has also created the position of "super mentors" who are women who build and coordinate the regional mentoring networks and provide supervision for the other mentors. The regional networks include initiatives specifically designed and run by women from black and minority ethnic communities and the networks also work with lone parents.

All of the hubs have numerical targets and take account of the policy priorities and specific skills shortages in their areas. For example, the Welsh National Hub and the South East Hub are running a pilot scheme to train women as tutors in ICT. They are also offering a vendor (Microsoft/CISCO) technical skills training to a group of employed women, plus support and advice to enable them to progress in their careers. In Wales, this programme leads to the Microsoft Certified Systems Engineer qualification.

A STRATEGY FOR NATIONAL OUTREACH

Some of JIVE's activities also operate at national level and involve relevant employers' organisations. Given alarming projections in skills gaps, the Engineering Construction Industry Training Board (ECITB) is seeking to integrate gender equality and diversity into its largest training programme, the National Apprenticeship Scheme for Engineering Construction. The scheme is part of the Advanced Modern Apprenticeship Programme, which is a priority aspect of the UK Government's agenda for vocational training, and leads young people to a National/Scottish Vocational Qualification level 3 in either a craft or technician specialisation. JIVE is supporting the ECITB's endeavours to attract and recruit more young women and ethnic minorities into its sector. Similar support is provided to the Property Services National Training Organisation (PSNTO) which will shortly experience difficulties in terms of the size of its workforce because a large number of surveyors are in their mid 50's and are due to retire in the next few years. The DP is auditing recruitment processes, training environments and also helping companies to review their working practices so that they can develop policies to make them more women friendly. Such reviews cover issues such as flexible working arrangements, telework and banked hours that could be introduced to benefit women returners.

The two employers' organisations mentioned above are well placed to pass on examples of good practice to their members. In addition, they will disseminate the positive results of the DP to other Industrial Training Boards, which have to comply with national workforce development targets covering aspects such as gender and diversity. Let's Twist, as the "mother organisation" of JIVE and also increasingly the regional hubs, are experiencing a growing demand for gender and diversity training, particularly from work-based training providers. The involvement of the National Equal Opportunities Commission ensures that JIVE achievements can contribute to relevant UK policy priorities. These priorities include the elimination of the gender pay gap and of labour market segregation, as three-quarters of women are to be found in just five occupational sectors in which the pay is significantly lower than in those sectors dominated by men.

ENHANCED GOOD PRACTICE THROUGH TRANSNATIONAL COOPERATION

JIVE is participating in two Transnational Partnerships (TPs). Both of these TPs are addressing desegregation and developing strategies for cultural change. "Breaking the barriers - Cultural change and support for women in Technology" (735), with partners in Germany and France, is primarily focusing on gender equality in the information and knowledge society. The main thrust of the "Gender and Technology" TP (3018), with partners in Finland and Denmark, is geared to widening vocational choices at the earliest possible stage. It is targeting both the primary and secondary school level and also young women and men on the threshold of tertiary education and training. In this TP, JIVE is benefiting from its Nordic partners' experience of cooperating with companies. Diversity training and gender equality audits which are being developed by the German and the French partners in the first partnership, are being used to enrich the DP's own

products. In turn, JIVE is exporting its awareness raising and training models for careers teachers and counsellors, its gender equality scheme for enterprises and the methodology and materials from its Mentoring Scheme.

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