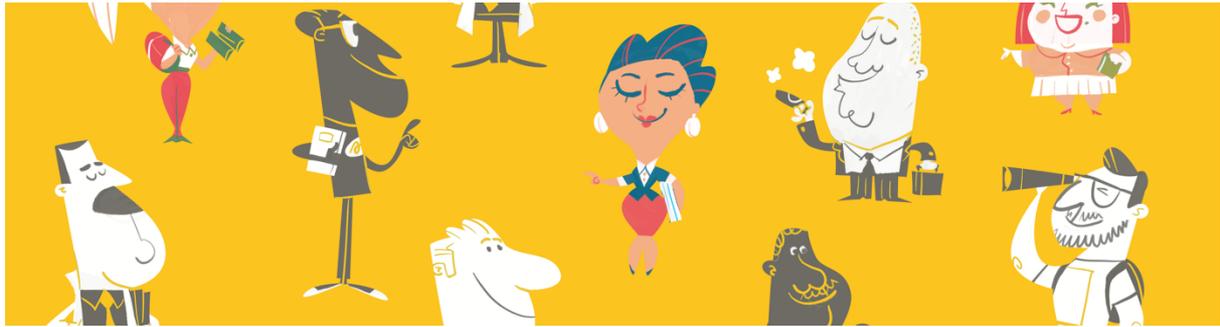


# Webinar N°5 - Let's do it! Successful measures to close the gap

within the SCNAT webinar series Achieving Gender Equality and Diversity in the Natural Sciences, held in 2021



## Summary of inputs and conclusions

by Romaine Jean

What can we do to close the gender gap in science? What measures have proven successful? The previous webinars have explored the causes of the under-representation of women in leadership positions. This webinar is about concrete measures to be taken to improve the representation of women in academies and universities.

The figures don't lie, we are still far from our goal," says Dr Christiane Löwe, who heads the Department of Equal Opportunities at the University of Zurich, where women represent 59.8% of first-year students but only 25.1% of professors.

She presents some interesting measures:

- The HIT Project and Measures (High Potential University Leaders Identity & Skills Training Program), a unique leadership promotion initiative for female professors in Switzerland. All ten cantonal universities and the two federal technical universities are partners in the program, with the University of Zurich as the lead institution. The program includes networking, coaching and leadership development within small groups.
- The Inge Strauch Program, which enables faculties to invite internationally renowned professors to the University of Zurich to serve as role models for young academics. Visiting professors are invited for a period of two to six months, during which they will be involved in research and teaching activities.

Change is a slow process, but hiring data in 2018 and 2019 at the University of Zurich Faculty of Science shows a vast improvement in the number of new women professors hired in competitive appointment processes:

2016: 33% of new hires were women (1 in 3).

2017: 0% of new hires were women (0 out of 2).

2018: 80% of new hires were women (4 out of 5).

2019: 100% women (1 in 1).

Silvie Klein-Franke, consultant and coach in human resource development and diversity management, advocates a holistic approach to gender equality issues. "A change of perspective does not change the facts, but it does change the meaning - and quickly." Deriving new selection criteria for leaders is important to meet shifting requirements instead of going on to favour established, originally male, criteria for scientific excellence (e.g. such as focusing on impact factors instead on content). It is important, she says, to rethink the recruitment process, using the following 6 principles:

1. Universal design: treat equally, responsive to differences in gender.
2. Maximize each individual's potential : Identify the best a person can and wants to offer, value teaching same as researching
3. Take a different perspective : Find out, how people see a situation, e.g. promotion (women & men)
4. Be alert, step in, willing to change structural factors : e.g. 120 % model, family time for men, meeting times.
5. Try things out : e.g. Recruiting: really searching openly or pretending that?
6. Hold people accountable : Include search committees and faculties, monitor and reward.

**Watch the video on our website**

[https://biol.scnat.ch/de/activities/uuid/i/bb482c04-a82c-59fb-a11a-7b90c9b31927-Let's\\_do\\_it\\_Successful\\_measures\\_to\\_close\\_the\\_gap](https://biol.scnat.ch/de/activities/uuid/i/bb482c04-a82c-59fb-a11a-7b90c9b31927-Let's_do_it_Successful_measures_to_close_the_gap)

**Website of webinar series**

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