

## Information Webinar on the new UNESCO-OWSD Project

### ***Gender-Inclusive Science Institutions & Systems (GenSIS)*** ***Strengthening the Leadership of Women in Research & Higher Education***

Wednesday, 10 December 2025

Session A: 10 a.m. – 11 a.m. (CET, Paris time), [Zoom link](#)

Session B: 4 p.m. – 5 p.m. (CET, Paris time), [Zoom link](#)

### Concept Note

Within the framework of the [UNESCO Call to Action “Closing the Gender Gap in Science”](#), the [Organization for Women in Science for the Developing World \(OWSD\)](#) and the [UNESCO Gender Equality in Science team](#) have launched a new joint project, with the support of the [International Development Research Centre \(IDRC\) of Canada](#). Entitled “*Gender-Inclusive Science Institutions & Systems (GenSIS): Strengthening the Leadership of Women in Research & Higher Education*”, this initiative was recently announced during the [OWSD 7<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Bogotá, Colombia](#). The project aims to strengthen institutional support systems and policy environments where women can fully participate, lead, and thrive in science, particularly in the Global South.

To achieve this, the project will promote gender-responsive practices in science institutions and systems through two complementary approaches:

- The *OWSD Secretariat and its National Chapters* will create **leadership opportunities** for women scientists **in research** and **policymaking in higher education** through the establishment of **National Gender in Science Committees** (National GiS Committees) in up to 15 countries in the Global South.
- The *Gender Equality in Science team at UNESCO Headquarters* will collect and analyse **institutional best practices** that advance gender equality in **higher education and STI institutions** through the creation of an **International Community of Practice of Institutions Closing the Gender Gap in Science**.

Together, these two dimensions form a comprehensive approach aimed at:

- **Improved evidence and data for policy reform:** Drawing on systematic evidence gathering and national data collection, including the provision of rigorous, up-to-date, and sex-disaggregated data on the participation of women and men in national higher education and research systems, to identify the policy reforms and governance arrangements required to build more inclusive science systems.

- **Enhanced institutional capacity:** Building the capacity of higher education and STI institutions to address the previously identified gaps in policies and governance arrangements. This includes developing and implementing targeted activities that enhance women's leadership in STI, foster collaboration, translate policies into practice, thus enabling policy reforms; and
- **Strengthened knowledge, networks and partnerships:** Generating and sharing evidence, lessons learned and good practices to sustain long-term change, while reinforcing networks at national, regional and international levels. This includes establishing structured channels for information exchange, enabling women scientists to propose solutions to policy-makers based on on-the-ground challenges, and ensuring that policy-makers have access to women research leaders.

This initiative builds on the idea that advancing gender equality in science requires not only sound policies, but also strong institutions capable of implementing them effectively, coordinating across sectors, and ensuring women's voices are represented at every level of decision-making.

## Purpose of this webinar

This information webinar will introduce the project to a wide audience of potential partners and stakeholders, with the objectives to:

- Present the project's vision, approach, and expected results;
- Outline the different ways in which individuals and institutions can engage, whether as members of the *National Gender in Science Committees* or as part of the *Institutional Community of Practice*; and
- Launch the Call for Expressions of Interest for the selection of participating countries and institutions, as well as provide practical guidance on the application process, eligibility criteria and expected commitments.

The webinar is open, among others, to:

- Women scientists (including from the OWSD National Chapters, UNESCO and IDRC networks);
- Representatives of ministries, science granting councils and national research agencies;
- Students and staff members from higher education and STI institutions;
- Colleagues from UNESCO Field Offices, Permanent Delegations and National Commissions for UNESCO;
- Gender equality and STEM networks, including UNESCO Chairs; and
- National, regional and international partners promoting women in science.

## Provisional agenda

<b>10.00 a.m. – 10.20 a.m.</b> ... <b>4.00 p.m. – 4.20 p.m.</b>	<b>Welcoming remarks and introduction</b> <b>Ana Persic</b> , Programme Specialist, Science, Technology and Innovation Policy Section, UNESCO <b>Tonya Blowers</b> , Programme Coordinator, OWSD
<b>10.20 a.m. – 10.40 a.m.</b> ... <b>4.20 p.m. – 4.40 p.m.</b>	<b>Overview of the project and how to get involved</b> <b>Lora Gailly</b> , Associate Project Officer, Gender Equality in Science team, UNESCO <b>Alessandro Bello</b> , Senior Consultant, Gender Equality in STI, OWSD <b>Pukar Malla</b> , Senior Leadership Consultant, OWSD
<b>10.40 a.m. – 10.55 a.m.</b> ... <b>4.40 p.m. – 4.55 p.m.</b>	<b>Q&amp;A discussion</b>
<b>10.55 a.m. – 11.00 a.m.</b> ... <b>4.55 p.m. – 5.00 p.m.</b>	<b>Reflections and closing remarks</b> <b>Luisa Fernanda Echeverria King</b> , President, OWSD <b>Yanfen Wang</b> , Vice-President Asia Region, OWSD <b>Matilda Dipieri</b> , Knowledge Sharing Officer, IDRC