

# Sister-Matic: Gender Mainstreaming in Higher Education

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# What is Gender Mainstreaming?



- Linguistic antithesis of gender marginalisation.
- New conceptual grammar for reform.
- International phenomenon.
- Widely used tool of the policy world.
- Strategy originally informed by feminist theory.
- Long-term strategy, with different stages of development.

Rescuing gender from invisibility in:

- ✓ organisational planning
- ✓ resource allocation
- ✓ institutional practices.

# Essential Ingredients



- **Data**
- **Accountability/Evidence**
- **Policy Action/Implementation, not symbolism**
- **Strategic Planning NOT crisis or grievance management**
- **Systematic Change Interventions**
- **Professional Development**
- **Review/ Impact Evaluation**
- **Leadership**

# Challenges

- **Gender = access, disadvantage and remediation (fix the women).**
- **HE products and processes = gender neutral.**
- **Power and privilege = under-theorisation.**
- **Gender rarely intersected with other structures of inequality.**
- **Sustainability**



# What Gender Mainstreaming is Not?



- **Just Quantitative Change/Gender as a Noun**
- **Simply counting more women into existing:**
  - **Structures**
  - **Scripts**
  - **Systems**
  - **Gendered cultures**
- **Representation not the only goal for gender equality.**
- **Problem = the gendered world.**

# Gender as a Verb



**Gendered power relations:**

- **Symbolically/ materially**
- ✓ **Construct**
- ✓ **Regulate**

**women's everyday experiences.**

**Gender is:**

- **formed and reformed**

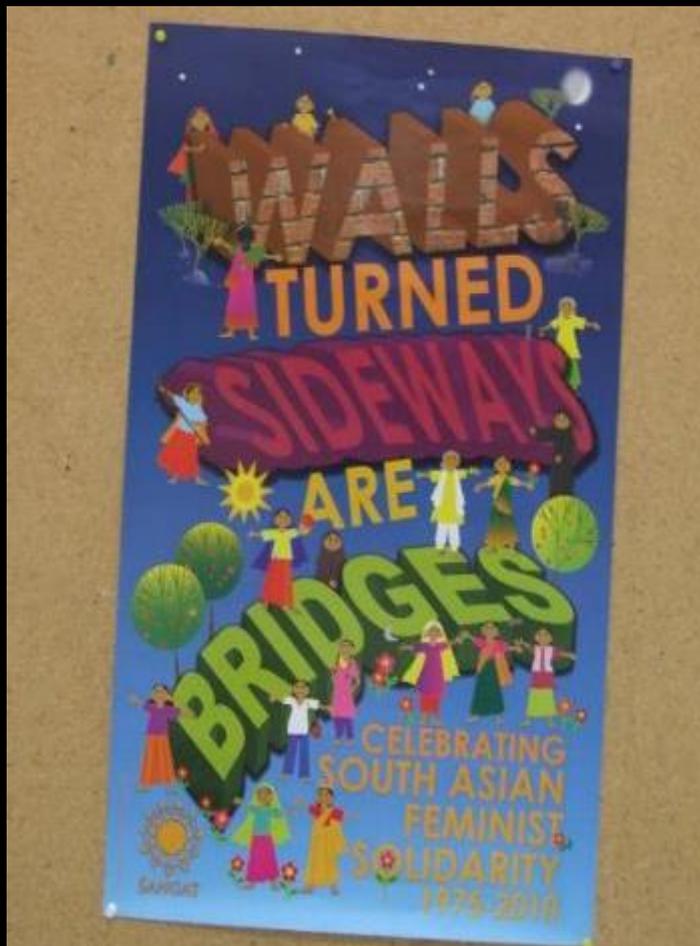
**in organisational cultures and social contexts.**

# Tools/Interventions



- **Gender audit**
- **Gender-disaggregated statistics**
- **Equality indicators**
- **Engendered budgets**
- **Gender-impact assessments**
- **Gender monitoring and evaluation**
- **Visioning**

# Change Interventions



- *Excellentia, Austria*  
(Leitner and Wroblewski, 2008)
- Gender Programme, Association of Commonwealth Universities  
(Morley *et al.*, 2006)
- Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)  
(Benediktsdotir, 2008)
- Athena Swan/ Gender Charter Marks/  
Aurora (<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/gender-charter-mark>)

# Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) Gender Mainstreaming

- Gender analysis;
- Gender policy development;
- Appointment of equality advisors;
- Committees for equality issues that report to high level management;
- The allocation of a budget for equal opportunity;
- Quotas for recruitment;
- Qualification stipends;
- Mentoring for female PhD students, Postdoctoral staff and associate professors;
- Networking;
- A start package for women in male dominated fields;
- Career planning support for women;
- Mentoring and career counselling support is offered for women entering HE management.

## Impact

- 55% increase in the numbers of women professors in 5 years (rising from 9% to 14%), and parity in the numbers of males and females recruited (Benediktsdotir, 2008).

# UK Athena SWAN/ Gender Equality Charter



- Established 2005 by UK's Equality Challenge Unit for STEMM.
- Humanities and Social Sciences in 2015.
- Methodology of self-assessment, peer-review and continuous progression.
- 3 levels of awards for institutions and individual departments: **Bronze**, Silver and **Gold**.
- Awards for increasing levels of good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women in higher education.

# Impact



- Increased job satisfaction/ visibility for gender issues
- Familiarity with promotion procedures
- Workload management
- Data Collection

([www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/evaluating-athena-swan](http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/evaluating-athena-swan))

## Contracts Compliance/ Leverage

- 2011 - Dame Sally Davies (Chief Medical Officer)
- Medical schools without a silver award would not be eligible for Department of Health research funding.

# Moving On



- **Accountability of gender in quantitative and qualitative terms.**
- **Leverage e.g. financial/ reputational**
- **Gender to be taken out of crisis mode and into proactive, resourced, strategic interventions e.g. affirmative action.**
- **Action, monitoring and impact evaluation.**
- **Ultimate Vision = organisations, societies and socio-cultural practices to be gender free.**

## Follow Up?

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