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# ATHENA Newsletter



27.10.23  
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CEST time

## ATHENA WEBINAR

Synergies among  
R&I organisations  
and policy makers  
for gender equality



### Webinar on “Synergies among R&I organisations and policy makers for gender equality”

On October 27th, 2023, the ATHENA webinar on “Synergies among R&I organisations and policymakers for gender equality” was held, where experts from Spain, Portugal, Italy, Bulgaria, and Slovenia convened to discuss crucial aspects of gender equality in Research & Innovation (R&I).

Throughout the discussions, speakers emphasized the significance of an intersectional

approach in Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) to ensure a more inclusive impact. They highlighted the transformative power of GEPs in reshaping the nature of knowledge, stressing the need for comprehensive education, training, and awareness campaigns.

The implementation of gender equality policies was discussed from various perspectives, including the Slovenian Ministry, where GEPs have become integral to strategies and policies in research institutions. Notably, efforts have been made to ensure equal opportunities for women researchers, including support for continuing research

projects after maternity leave.

Sister projects, MindtheGEPs and LeTSGEPs, offered broader insights into the challenges faced in research concerning gender inequality. They stressed the need for a continuous interplay between structural and cultural actions to bring about meaningful change.

In conclusion, the webinar highlighted the pivotal role of GEPs in enhancing institutional competitiveness and empowering women talent in R&I and beyond.

You can watch the webinar [here](#) and consult the minutes [here](#).

# Athena's participation in 16 days of activism against gender-based violence

ATHENA's #OrangetheWorld and joined the worldwide collective voice against gender-based violence.

The international campaign 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence, starts on November 25th (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) and runs until December 10th (Human Rights Day), serving as a powerful global initiative to advocate for the prevention and elimination of violence against women and girls.

*1 in 3 women experience physical or sexual violence at least once in their lifetime. Violence against women and girls is one of the most prevalent and pervasive human rights violations.*

Originating in 1991 at the Women's Global Leadership Institute, the campaign gained momentum as individuals and organizations worldwide united to address the critical issue of gender-based violence. In tandem with this, the United Nations Secretary-General launched the UNITE campaign in 2008, aligning its goals with the 16 Days of Activism.

This year's UNITE Campaign theme, "UNITE! Invest to prevent violence against women and girls", called on citizens to showcase their commitment by sharing actions taken to create a world free from violence



towards women. Additionally, governments worldwide were urged to demonstrate their investments in gender-based violence prevention.

*How to help prevent and end gender-based violence? Here are some ideas:*

- *Join and support feminist movements and women's rights organizations*
- *Ask your government to invest in prevention*
- *Demand data on gender - based violence.*

ATHENA's partners joined this campaign by sharing powerful messages condemning

gender-based violence in several languages to spread the word. While the campaign engaged several of our partners, from researchers to administrators, we shared impactful facts and awareness on the impact and how to end violence against women and girls.

Together, let us continue our efforts to make a lasting impact and contribute to a future where gender-based violence is eradicated.

You can find more information about the campaign in the project's [website](#).

# The ATHENA's Consortium met in Ponta Delgada, Azores!

## General Assembly Meeting



The Project's General Assembly Meeting, convened on January 15th, 2024, marked a significant milestone, bringing together partners both on-site and virtually in the picturesque setting of the Azores. The meeting provided a dynamic platform for partners to showcase their progress within each work package, fostering a collaborative environment for insightful discussions.

Partners took the opportunity to delve into the achievements of their respective tasks, offering comprehensive insights into the work accomplished, outlining the next strategic steps, and exploring potential

enhancements to maximize the project's impact. The collaborative exchange of ideas not only facilitated a comprehensive understanding of individual contributions but also ignited synergies that can further elevate the overall outcomes of the project.

In addition to the detailed discussions on the project's technical aspects, the meeting served as a valuable forum for partners to gain a holistic view of the project's implementation across different countries. This knowledge-sharing platform allowed partners to assess the project's effectiveness

and discover fruitful practices adopted by their counterparts in diverse national contexts.

The rich discussions and shared experiences during the General Assembly Meeting underscored the collaborative spirit of the project, reaffirming its commitment to fostering gender equality in research and innovation. As partners continue to build on the momentum generated during this gathering, the project is poised for continued success, driven by the collective dedication and expertise of its diverse partners.





# 3rd Mutual Learning Workshop

The 3rd Mutual Learning Workshop held on January 16th, marked a significant milestone in our journey towards gender equality. The workshop provided a platform for each partner to showcase their Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) and share valuable insights into their implementation progress.

Partners delved into the actions they successfully implemented throughout the year, faced challenges, and the reasons behind any obstacles encountered. Key lessons learned and recommendations were generously shared, fostering an environment of mutual learning and collaboration.

A notable point of discussion emerged regarding the complexity

of GEPs. Some partners emphasized the need for simplicity to enhance implementation feasibility, considering the multitude of actions involved. Concerns were raised about the potential difficulty and deadlines associated with executing numerous actions simultaneously.

A pivotal moment occurred when partners deliberated on gradually introducing gender equality measures to address potential resistance. The importance of adopting an intersectional approach was highlighted, recognizing various dimensions of discrimination, including age, minorities, disabilities, and more. This signifies Athena's evolution, expanding its scope to encompass a broader spectrum of considerations.

Michelle Parello, the project coordinator, emphasized the positive response within institutions to the introduction of gender equality measures and policies. The discussions and feedback suggest that the project is on a promising trajectory, gradually making a meaningful impact within institutions.

In conclusion, ATHENA's is well-positioned for success, with partners expressing commitment to continue implementing the plans beyond the project's lifetime. The collaborative efforts and dedication displayed by all partners affirm the gradual but impactful strides towards achieving gender equality.

# Empowering Gender Equality

## Good Practices in European Research Institutions



ATHENA's video stakeholders interview series, where we delve into the success stories and transformative initiatives on gender equality of research institutions across Europe.

These interviews play a crucial role as a source of inspiration, providing valuable insights and best practices for the replication of Gender Equality Plans (GEPs) and other impactful measures aimed at promoting gender equality. The intention is to share these experiences widely, offering

practical guidance to other EU research institutions seeking to implement similar initiatives.

By showcasing successful strategies and lessons learned, the interviews aim to contribute to the broader conversation on advancing gender equality in the research community and beyond.

Welcome to ATHENA's video stakeholders interview series, where we delve into the success stories and transformative initiatives on

gender equality of research institutions across Europe.

Join us on a journey of empowerment and inspiration as we explore the benefits and impact of implementing Gender Equality Plans and other impactful measures fostering gender equality in the field of research.

You can watch the interviews [here](#).

# Products/documents published on GE

## Endorse the Caliper Charter!

The [CALIPER](#) Charter represents a transformative initiative designed to create lasting change in organisations and ecosystems. It is a European-wide advocacy effort to consolidate and strengthen the current intersectional and intersectoral approach to gender equality in research and innovation in view of the ERA Policy Agenda from 2025 and the forthcoming Horizon Europe Work Programmes.

Signing the Charter is voluntary and non-legally binding; it can be done on an individual/personal level or on behalf of an organisation/institution. Those who endorse the Charter will act as inward and outward change agents promoting transformation toward gender equality and inclusiveness within the geographic, socio-economic, organisational contexts and cultures they operate.

You can become a part of the charter [here](#).

## Anticipating the futures of the gender dimension in research: Storying entangled practices and bodies

Durall, E., Iivari, N., Heikkinen, M., Pihkala, S., and Kinnula, M. (2023) Anticipating the futures of the gender dimension in research: Storying entangled practices and bodies, in Holmlid, S., Rodrigues, V., Westin, C., Krogh, P. G., Mäkelä, M., Svanaes, D., Wikberg-Nilsson, Å (eds.), *Nordes 2023: This Space Intentionally Left Blank*, 12-14 June, Linköping University, Norrköping, Sweden

In recent years, scholars have been increasingly urged to address a gender dimension i.e. sex and gender impact in research. In this study, we explore scholars' explicit and implicit views about the future of implementing gender impact assessment (GIA) in research. We do so by analysing a series of co-design workshops in which participants anticipated possible futures regarding the use of a GIA checklist. We conduct a narrative inquiry of participants' stories consisting of the personas and scenarios created at the workshops. Our analysis reveals silenced viewpoints and tensions for adopting GIA, while unveiling quite stereotypical bodies and practices in the academic world. Based on our findings, we claim that storytelling approaches help create a safe space in which participants can express discomfort and conflicts playfully and with humour. This study contributes to advance co-design futures-making by accommodating plurality of voices when discussing sensitive topics such as gender equality.

Find out more about this article [here](#).

## Participatory design meets gender equality at European higher education institutions

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Gender equality is among the sustainable development goals expected of higher education institutions (HEIs). This paper will explore the potential and implications of participatory design (PD) in the context of gender equality work in HEIs. We study the topic within a multi-national, multidisciplinary consortium, which is working for gender equality in HEIs, using PD as a tool and inspiration. We identify a variety of local conditions shaping PD and gender equality work, divergent discourses on gender equality work, and several sources of friction regarding PD and gender equality work. We conceptualise PD for gender equality work as being highly contested and emergent, with multiple forces shaping its trajectory. PD needs to be sensitive towards local circumstances at the national and organisational level, both politically and ideologically. It needs to navigate within national and international politics and policies and consider different timescales beyond specific projects. It also needs to acknowledge that PD for gender equality entails design, discourse, and friction.

Find out more about this article [here](#).



# Future events on Gender Equality

Conference ERA of Inclusive Gender Equality: Keeping the Momentum, Addressing Challenges through Joint Action



13 February 2024



BOSA, WTCIII building,  
30 rue Simon Bolivar, Brussels



Belgian Presidency of the Council of the EU

Find out more [here](#).

International Women's Day



March 8th, 2024

Celebrate International Women's Day 2024 and beyond by championing Inclusive Inspiration. By encouraging others to appreciate and value the inclusion of women, we contribute to the creation of a more enlightened world. When women are motivated to actively participate and feel a sense of belonging, relevance, and empowerment, the collective goal of the IWD 2024 #InspireInclusion campaign is realized—to collectively shape a more inclusive world for women.

The 2nd World Conference on Gender Equality (GECONF)



14 to 16 June 2024



Nice, France



Acavent

Find out more [here](#).

20th Gender and Education Association international conference



June 18-20, 2024



Australia



Charles Sturt University

Find out more [here](#).