FNSNF
SCHWEIZERISCHER NATIONALFONDS
ZUR FÖRDERUNG DER WISSENSCHAFTLICHEN FORSCHUNG

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Study commissioned by the Swiss National Science Foundation on Gender and Research Funding (GEFO)

In October 2006 a study was launched on the subject of gender and research funding. It has two objectives: One is the quantification and description of gender-specific losses (the so-called leaky pipeline) in the scientific careers of junior scientists. The other is the analysis of the significance of both internal and external factors in science on gender-specific loss rates. The role of the SNF's research funding policy is of special interest. The study will be used by the SNF as a factual planning basis for its gender-equality policy and equal opportunity measures in research funding.

The target group of this study is junior academics (doctorands, post-doctoral scholars, and professorial candidates of both genders). The study period is between 2002 and 2007, including a retrospective survey of gender-specific loss rates. The extent and reasons for gender-specific losses is analysed from five different basic aspects.

Aspect 1: Evaluation of Swiss University Information System (SUIS)
Using information from the Swiss University Information System (SUIS) and with career analyses based on individual data, the gender-specific loss rates will be calculated in the pre-doctoral and pre-professorial phases as well as the average time span up to conferral of a doctoral title or assistant professorship over the last two decades. In addition, it will be possible to quantify the rate at which foreign doctorands (x) are being recruited at Swiss universities.

Aspect 2: Follow-up graduate survey
University graduates from 2002 (first degree graduates and doctorands) will be assessed for a second time in Spring 2007 by the Swiss Federal Statistical Office in a survey about their careers and experiences. An additional module will be included in this questionnaire, which will elicit replies relating to topics that are of central importance in an academic career (including the academic qualification process and research activities, academic integration and support, academic performance and success, etc.). In particular, junior researchers will be asked about applications submitted to the SNF for individual fellowships and project funding and about the extent of any grants awarded to date by the SNF in support of their careers. The analysis of this data will, on the one hand, enable the quantitative description of academic careers and, on the other, provide descriptive analyses of the gender-specific loss rates and the role of the SNF in academic careers.

Aspect 3: SNF application administration system:
By means of an analysis of the SNF's application administration system, gender-specific individual and project profiles will be created for initial applications for SNF project funding (as

the main or secondary applicant). Detailed statistical analyses will highlight any gender-specific differences in the biographies of SNF applicants.

Aspect 4: Application dossiers
Selected groups of successful and unsuccessful applicants, the curricula vitae (CVs) and publication lists systematically collected in the SNF application dossiers will be collated and evaluated (quantified dossier analysis) to determine any further gender-specific differences in individual scientific profiles.

Aspect 5: Interviews
By means of follow-up interviews with junior researchers, drawn from the sample for Aspects 2 and 3, the subjective experiences, motivations and rationales of male and female academics with regard to an academic career will be collated and analyzed. A specific focus of questioning will be the interviewees' experiences of the SNF's individual awards and project funding schemes. Factors will be identified, which are critical to the success or lack of success in an academic career.

The study will be conducted by a working party consisting of the Zurich Teacher Training College (Pädagogische Hochschule Zürich -R.J. Leemann), the Office for Occupational and Social Policy Studies (BASS – H. Stutz) and the Swiss Federal Statistical Office, Graduate Studies (S. Schmidlin), and will run for a term of 21 months.

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