



Equality Challenge Unit



**Tracking your gender records and statistics:
Demonstrating success through Athena SWAN
STEM Gender Equality Congress, Berlin, June 2017**

David Ruebain

CEO, Equality Challenge Unit

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History and development of the Athena SWAN Charter

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- = Advances E&D for staff and students in colleges, universities and research institutes
- = Evidence-based approach, built on qualitative and quantitative research.
- = Not for profit.
- = Focusing on teaching, learning, research and knowledge exchange.



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How we support the sector

- = Qualitative and quantitative research
- = Information, advice and guidance
- = Sharing good practice
- = Events, conferences, seminars and networks
- = Advice line
- = E-newsletter (Equalitylink, Memberlink)
- = Training, consultancy and bespoke services
- = Equality charters – Athena SWAN and Race Equality



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Athena SWAN Charter



= Recognition scheme of excellence in women's employment in STEMM

= **2005:** 10 UK members

= **2017:** 143 UK members

= Now in Australia and Ireland



STEMM = Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths, Medicine

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Athena SWAN: key changes

- = Covers AHSSBL
- = Inclusion of professional and support staff
- = Inclusion of trans staff and students*
- = Consideration of intersectionality*

**Institutional level only*



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UK transition period (NOW COMPLETED):

From April 2017, all applicants must use

Post-May 2015 process

Athena SWAN: award levels



Bronze

- 🏠 self-assessment and analysis
- 🏠 identify issues and challenges
- 🏠 plan activities on a solid foundation

Silver

- 🏠 additional to Bronze
- 🏠 evidence of impact and achievement

Gold

- 🏠 significant record of activity and impact
- 🏠 beacons for gender equality and good practice



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Athena SWAN awards

688 award holders in total (as of May 2017):

Bronze

- 81 Bronze universities
- 13 Bronze research institutes
- 378 Bronze departments

Silver

- 13 Silver universities
- 3 Silver research institutes
- 172 Silver departments

Gold

- 8 Gold departments
- Uni criteria released in July 2015**



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325 applications in 2016
Success rate \approx 67%

Nov 2016 round:
= 167 submissions
= 114 awards
= 68% success rate

- 67% Pre-5/15
- 70% Post-5/15

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Benefits and impact of Athena SWAN

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How does it work?



= Athena SWAN framework requires you to:

1. **Collect** data (quantitative and qualitative)
2. Critically **analyse** data
3. **Identify** reasons for exclusion and under-representation
4. Develop a 4 year **action** plan to address these
5. Show **progress** over time



= individualised approach; not a box-ticking exercise

Data → Analysis → Action

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How does it work?

- = Athena SWAN provides a framework for continuous action
- = This is recognised through the conferring of awards that recognise steps on the journey
- = It is necessary for the whole unit to pull together to deliver sustainable change



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Why does it work?

- = Set up by and for the academic and research community
- = Led and championed by senior academics: buy-in from the top
- = Requires thorough self-assessment and reflection to understand individual data and challenges
- = Peer review process
- = Promotes staff consultation and engagement
- = Awards are only valid for 4 years

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What is Athena SWAN all about?

- = Commitment to removing barriers that contribute to underrepresentation
- = Taking a targeted approach to issues that may be of internal or external origin
- = Good practice and honesty

- ≠ Hiring or promoting people because they are underrepresented
- ≠ Producing reports and winning awards
- ≠ Planning to “suggest”
- ≠ Operating a deficit model

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The benefits of Athena SWAN



- = Highlights areas to make positive changes
- = Provides a focal point for existing informal good practices
- = Increases awareness of career progression issues
- = Encourages increased transparency
- = Demonstrates good working environment to job applicants
- = Flexible to context - subject, country, size, type of university



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Athena SWAN Evaluation Report 2014



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- = Application process and awards provide credibility and impetus for gender work already underway
- = Evidence of sustainable change, and positive differences in departments with awards
- = Institutions that had applied for an award still report their motivation as **because it was the 'right thing to do'**

Independent research by University of Loughborough

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Benefits: Evaluation report (2014)



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- = Evidence of **sustainable** change
- = Women – improved visibility, increased self-**confidence**, enhanced **leadership** skills
- = All staff – positive differences in career **satisfaction, development** opportunities
- = Administrative and technical staff report a greater sense of **belonging**

“[Athena SWAN is] the most effective lever for change I have come across in 12 years of equality work.”

– Institutional champion

The benefits of Athena SWAN

= Equality work delivers benefits to research

“We began a program of change in our practices and culture to enhance our position as a world-leading, research-led Chemistry Department. The Athena SWAN process has been immensely helpful in this... Our increased collaborative working has led to our Research Volume increasing from £8M in 2007-8 to £13M this year.”

**Department of Chemistry,
Imperial College London**



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Recognition of impact



= 2011 - NIHR funding and Athena SWAN silver

- = Biomedical Research Centres (\leq £110M per centre)
- = Biomedical Research Units (\leq £10M per unit)
- = Patient Safety Care Centres (\leq £10M per centre)



= 2012 - Welsh National Institute for Social Care and Health Research (NISCHR) funding and Athena SWAN silver

- = NISCHR Centres and Units

= 2016 - HEA National Review of gender equality

- = HEIs should achieve an Athena SWAN award within 3 years
- = The HEA should establish Athena SWAN in Ireland on a permanent basis
- = Research-funding agencies should require HEIs to have attained a bronze Athena SWAN award within 3 years and a silver award within 7 years in order to be eligible for funding

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Recognition of impact



- = Royal Society of Edinburgh report
 - = 3 of 6 key recommendations mention Athena SWAN
- = SFC outcome agreements ask about AS activity



“It is estimated that a doubling of women’s high-level skill contribution to the economy would be worth as much as **£170M/yr** to Scotland’s national income.”

- = Nuffield Council on Bioethics report
 - = Investigated culture of scientific research in UK
 - = Recommends for all HEIs to commit to Athena SWAN

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Efficacy in other jurisdictions

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GENDER-NET: creating a framework



= ECU was involved in a European Commission FP7 funded project: **GENDER-NET** - aimed to address challenges facing research institutions in achieving gender equality in research and innovation



- = 12 partners to the project, which was led by CNRS in France; 2 non-European partners in Canada and US
- = Part of the project explored Athena SWAN methodology & other schemes. Athena SWAN was the only scheme to be assessed as both **successful and transferable** -
Next steps: GENDER-NET will draft a framework for a **transnational award**

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Athena SWAN: Republic of Ireland



- = Cross-sector initiative, supported by the Higher Education Authority (HEA)
- = Committee established to advise and act as conduit between ECU and HE sector
- = STEMM focused
- = Reviewed and tailored processes, delivered regional workshops
- = Since April 2015, five universities and six departments have been successful in gaining Bronze awards



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Athena SWAN: Australia



- = STEMM focused pilot includes 40 institutions: universities, medical research institutes and publicly-funded research agencies
- = Adapted to Australian culture and context e.g. inclusion of indigenous Australians
- = Pilot launched in Sept 2015, will run until Sept 2018
- = ECU is supporting SAGE a programme in the Australian Academy of Sciences who is managing the pilot, including delivering regional training and workshops





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What next?

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Gold university awards



- = Launched in Summer 2015
- = Majority of departments must hold Silver awards, with at least 1 Gold
- = Recognises:
 - = significant & sustained record of achievement
 - = addressing challenges across the institution
 - = promoting gender equality internally & externally
- = Addresses diversity in curriculum & pedagogy



Where next?



- = Japan
- = USA
- = International Advisory Group

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ASSET 2016



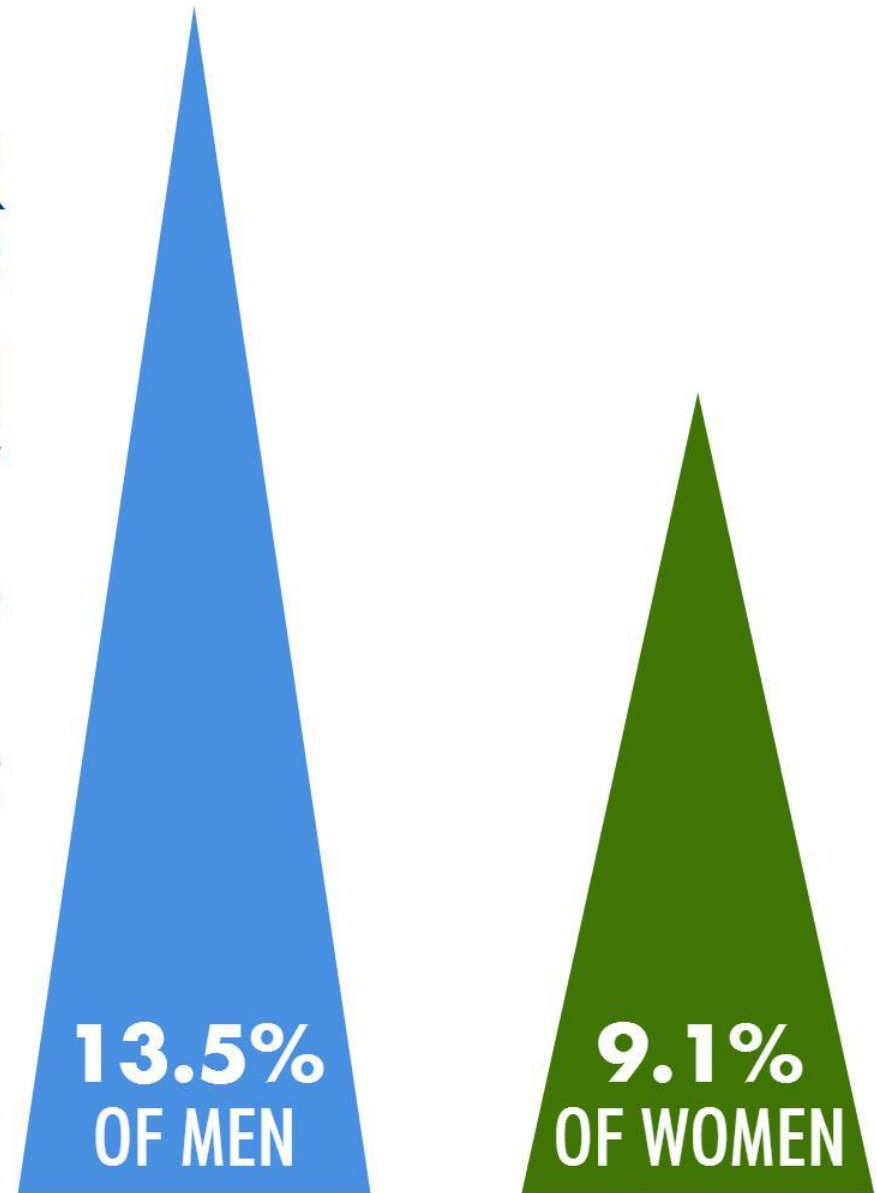
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= The Athena Survey of Science, Engineering and Technology (ASSET) 2016 assessed the current experiences, expectations and perceptions of gender equality in STEMM (science, technology, engineering, mathematics, and medicine) academia and the intersections with ethnicity, sexual orientation and age.

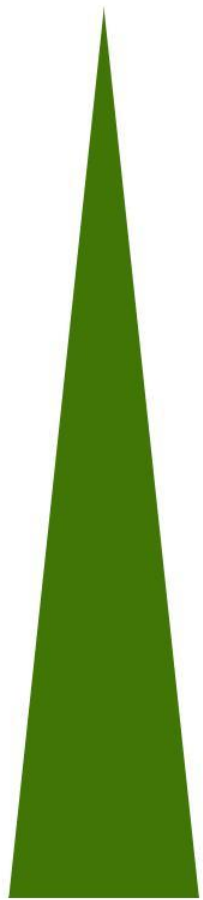


= <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/asset-2016/>

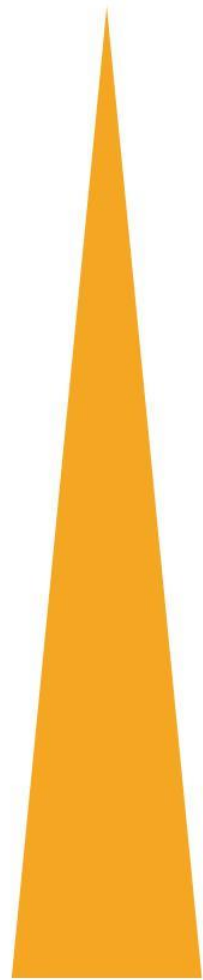
**A HIGHER
PROPORTION OF
MEN HAD BEEN
FORMALLY
PROMOTED
TO THEIR
CURRENT POST
THAN WOMEN**



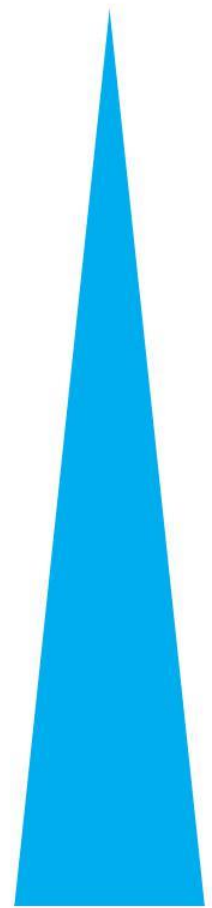
Influential
Not at all influential



Childcare facilities



Athena SWAN award



Staff networks

WOMEN RATED HOLDING AN ATHENA SWAN AWARD AS THE TOP EQUALITY ITEM TO CONSIDER WHEN DECIDING TO TAKE A POST



#AthenaSTEMM16

Data from ASSET 2016: experiences of gender equality in STEMM academia and their intersections with ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability and age



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Thank you

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Further information available



Website

www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charter-marks/athena-swan/



Athena SWAN handbook

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/equality-charters/athena-swan/athena-swan-resources/>

Email

athenaswan@ecu.ac.uk

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