

RadioNet policy for improvement of the gender balance and the RadioNet visibility

The Mid Term Review was performed on October 29, 2018 in Brussels (<https://events.mpifr-bonn.mpg.de/indico/event/75/>). The review was positively closed on December 10, 2018. RadioNet received very positive feedback on its performance, but two issues were identified:

- **Gender balance:** *as small but important point, it is suggested to intensify measures to improve gender balance on any qualification and seniority level, with a special focus on the technically oriented fields. Moreover, the monitoring of the impact of these measures over the project lifetime could be helpful.*
- **RadioNet visibility:** *another field of potential improvement is the visibility of RadioNet for the general public and also the interaction with the general public. The evaluators consider that the great work done by the partners and in the name of the partner institutions should be accompanied with a visible RadioNet presence.*

The RadioNet Board has approved on March 28, 2019 a following policy for improvement of the gender balance and the RadioNet visibility.

1. Gender balance

The WP leaders of all RadioNet activities have analysed the gender issue and improved the policy across their activities. Although the scientific and training events (including ARC visits) have a good gender balance, all technical events cause difficulties. A gender issues have been also identified in the JRAs, which have the highest level of female involvement at 25% in AETHRA. The field software development and astronomy both have significant gender balance issues with regards to applicants, employee recruitment and retention. Young women are more likely to go into research and technical careers, if they see role models they can identify with. For astronomers, there is a clear gender imbalance in most RadioNet countries. The RadioNet community recognises that the gender problem is primarily due to the small proportion of female experts involved in the project, rather than disrespectful behaviour.

The following RadioNet strategy to improve gender aspects are proposed:

- The issue of diversity must be tackled in the representation on all levels of all RadioNet events, and RadioNet must set good examples for the wider community.
- The NA leaders (WP2 and WP3) will set up specific requirements for the gender composition of the SOC and of supported participants. In applying for funding, meeting organisers should explain how they would seek a good representation of women and promote diversity at all levels, including invited speakers and tutors as well as trainees and contributed talks – and in the same time keep focusing on scientific/technical excellence. This means female candidates would be given preferential treatment, only when the same suitability, ability and scientific/technical professional achievement is given.
This must be clearly specified in the RadioNet Call of support as well as in the respective webpages (e.g. Guide for Organisers, YERAC Handbook, ERIS Handbook).
- **TA** proposals are judged on the scientific base only. Nevertheless, at present 26% of the PI are female. In case the RadioNet travel funding allocation requires a selection process, and in case all the other requirements to receive support are met, the TA leaders will from now on give higher priority to female observers.
- Facilities should consider measures to ensure equality of opportunity for all prospective users, which could include randomised/surname-only lists of proposers (as ALMA will do) or ensuring that schools for prospective users are led by role-models reflecting the full community.
- It is worth notice that cost of child-care (if needed to attend a RadioNet event) is eligible for support.
- The issues of diversity must be tackled already at the RadioNet beneficiary level. **The RadioNet Board members should be aware that they could influence gender balance.** The RadioNet beneficiary institutions should have and follow a gender strategy policy for improving the future.

- The directors of the institutes have the ability to influence who is representing their institutes at meetings. Thus the RadioNet Board members should help identifying female technical staff and they should encourage women to take advantage from RadioNet opportunities: STM, TOG/GMVA, CRAF meetings, etc.
- RadioNet beneficiaries should increase their effort in the employment of female experts, which then could be involved in RadioNet activities. It is recommended to:
 - have already a good gender balance in the composition of the recruitment selection committee by each RadioNet beneficiary.
 - improve working practices, which include, for example, contract creation that affords long term planning and more family-friendly attitudes.
 - enable flexible working arrangements where needed, in both short- and long-term senses.
- It is suggested to take opportunity of e.g. 'girl days', 'open days' in order to early increase the technical interest among young female. A respective enthusiasm at the RadioNet beneficiary institutes should be a matter of course and quite natural.
- The Board should consider consulting affiliates with good diversity in order to develop guidance on good practices.
- RadioNet beneficiaries should start with the resources available on the AstroBetter webpage, especially those under 'What to do'. The materials are often aimed at PhD level and junior researchers, but the methods apply on all levels and types of profession.
- RadioNet should raise awareness of the possible gains from increasing diversity for everyone.

2. RadioNet visibility aspects

It has been recognised that the RadioNet visibility should be improved on the beneficiary level. The following RadioNet strategy for the improvement of visibility aspects is proposed.

- A metal-plaque with RadioNet & EU logos and acknowledgment will be placed at all TA/VA infrastructures. Such plaque has been produced and will be shipped to the respective beneficiaries. The inserting of the plaque will be followed by a twitter/web campaign.
- All RadioNet partners should set the RadioNet project name and the link of the RadioNet webpage among others to their webpages.
- The RadioNet poster should be placed at the beneficiary' institutes; the MGT will provide either the PDF or paper version of the official banner.
- All RadioNet partners should be reminded of the contractual obligation to set the RadioNet logo and the EU acknowledgement to all medias, such as RadioNet related talks, publications, email advertisements, twitter, newsletters, etc.