



Steps towards equal gender representation: TANDEMplusIDEA - an international mentoring and personal development scheme for female scientists

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TANDEMplusIDEA was a European mentoring programme conducted by the technical universities RWTH Aachen, Imperial College London, ETH Zurich and TU Delft between 2007 and 2010 to achieve more gender equality in science. Given the continuing underrepresentation of women in science and technology and the well-known structural and systematic disadvantages in male-dominated scientific cultures, the main goal of this programme was to promote excellent female scientists through a high-level professional and personal development programme.

Based on the mentoring concept of the RWTH Aachen, TANDEMplusIDEA was the first mentoring programme for female scientists realized in international cooperation. As a pilot scheme funded by the 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission, the scientific evaluation was an essential part of the programme, in particular in view of the development of a best practice model for international mentoring.

The participants of this programme were female scientists at an early stage of their academic career (postdoc or assistant professor) covering a wide range of science disciplines, including geosciences. This transdisciplinarity as well as the international dimension of the programme have been identified by the participants as one of the keys of success of the programme. In particular, the peer-mentoring across discipline borders proved to have been an invaluable component of the development programme.

This presentation will highlight some of the main findings of the scientific evaluation of the programme and focus on some additional personal insights from the participants.