



Gender diversity in Geophysics

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As a successful female scientist with two ERC grants, first as a starter and now a consolidator, I was privileged that I personally never perceived any obstacles. At the same time, I am also aware that the statistics tell a different story when you look at the whole population. I will give an account and tell some anecdotes about what I think helped me, though it is important to be careful not to generalise my personal strategies.

My main strategy is to publish papers in international journals and obtain personal grants. This also means limiting additional responsibilities that will not benefit my publication record or potential success in grant applications. The second important factor is that I have always been surrounded by people who give me confidence and support me, such as my parents, partner and senior colleagues who have acted (mostly unofficially) as mentor. In the workplace, there is a great advantage in having a senior mentor, who needs to be a successful academic(!), and can help with any career related issues and choices. But also at home, a supportive partner who will take an equal share in childcare responsibilities, makes a great difference.

Are there any new strategies that we can implement to further overcome barriers? Not by design, but by coincidence, my research team for my ERC starting grant consisted largely of female PhD students and postdocs. The great thing was that they stimulated each other, all became very confident, and several of them now have academic jobs at prestigious universities in the US and Europe. They believe in themselves, which is the first step in overcoming any potential barriers they may encounter later in their careers.