



Promoting frontier Earth system research and female role models using dedicated geoscience symposiums

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The geoscience research community is currently composed of a relatively lower proportion of women compared to other science and mathematics fields (Holmes, OConnell & Dutt, 2015). Despite growing support for the concept of gender parity and an increase in the number of STEM PhDs awarded to female researchers, the demographics of STEM institutions have changed very little over the past decades. Because of this relatively lower representation of women in the geosciences, there are far fewer women available to provide relevant geoscience role models, an important feature thought to promote the retention of women in STEM careers.

Over the past 11 years the European Research Council has been funding frontier research in Earth system science (Panel 10). Within this discipline more than 70 excellent female researchers and their ideas have been recognised by the ERC. From within this growing pool of awardees there are diverse and relevant role models for young researchers who want to build their careers in the geosciences. In 2018, a group of twelve female ERC grantees decided to come together to showcase the research being conducted across European laboratories on climate change in the form of a symposium titled "From the deep past to the Anthropocene: coupling Earth System function to climatic change" held in Bordeaux during the 8-9th March 2018 <https://symposium.inra.fr/earth-system-climate-change/>. Time within the symposium was also dedicated to the discussion of gender balance within the geosciences. In this presentation I will share my motivation, strategy and experience of organising this event in the hope that fellow geoscientists will be inspired to organise similar stimulating events combining frontier science and outreach alongside the promotion of equality within the geosciences research community.

Holmes, M.A., OConnell, S & Dutt, K. Women in the geosciences: Practical, positive, practices toward parity, special publications 70. 2015 American Geophysical Union and John Wiley & Son, Inc.