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## Gender equality officers: which activities can we do to improve gender equality in STEM? Examples from MARUM women's representatives

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Many institutes have equal opportunity or gender equality officers. They are usually responsible to ensure that equal opportunity and gender equality laws are applied at their institute but also offer local support. The actions from these officers might greatly help to improve equal opportunities and gender equality.

At MARUM – Center for Marine Environmental Sciences, University of Bremen, Germany, a collective of three women was elected in January 2019 as decentralised women's representatives. Our overarching goal is to advice and support all scientists and students at MARUM, as well as the director and committees, in the implementation of the legally-fixed gender equality duty (*Bremisches Hochschulgesetz* / Higher Education Act of the State of Bremen). As such, we have implemented several actions to promote gender equality at MARUM.

With the present contribution, we would like to present the activities with which we have been engaged and discuss how successful they were, in order to help other gender equality officers in their role. We also hope to hear about other successful actions that have been implemented in order to broaden our actions. Generally, we would like to discuss ideas of useful future actions and exchange with colleagues in this field. A long-term goal is to create a repository of actions which can be taken by equal opportunity and gender equality officers.

Our actions were implemented at a range of levels: directly with the women from MARUM (e.g. network meetings, support in case of conflict, pregnancy checklist), sensibilisation (e.g. invited talk on gendered wording in job advertisement, workshop on writing letters of recommendation, screening of "Picture a Scientist"), institutional (e.g. bi-annual meeting with director, meetings with the other gender equality actors at the university), monitoring (e.g. analysis of the gender of job applicants and selected candidates).

Most actions are very beneficial and well received. We feel it is profitable to act at these different levels, to provide support directly to the women, but also to inform a wide range of actors on gender inequalities. The resources we have at MARUM allows a funding of some activities, which is particularly useful. Because we are scientists ourselves, we have a good and productive exchange with the other women on a peer level. We are greatly encouraged and supported by the fact that people in leadership positions take us seriously and carefully listen to our opinion and feedback. A

difficulty which we encounter is that, although the position of women's representative is officially recognised by the law, we are not given specific time for it. Therefore, the work that we do as gender equality officer is done in addition to our scientific work.