



034115

PHOSPHORUS

Lambda User Controlled Infrastructure for European Research

Integrated Project

Strategic objective:
Research Networking Testbeds

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Report on the Gender Issue Plan

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Abstract

This document outlines the plan of the Phosphorus project to promote and encourage gender equality in the project, in collaboration with all participants.

This is the first version of deliverable that will be updated during the project lifetime to reflect the results already obtained and the new ideas emerging during project execution.

In month 12 coordinator and contractors will complete on-line questionnaire as required in document "Projects Reporting in FP6". The final report on the Gender Issue, presented in month 30 of the project, will summarise and analyse the result of the implementation of the Gender Issue Plan in Phosphorus.

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1. Introduction

The Phosphorus project comprises 20 partners allocated in 12 countries, two continents. The project brings together over 110 people, working in 8 different workpackages (including management). This offers a diverse pool for analysis of the position of women in computing science and the exploration of ways to improve the balance.

All Phosphorus partners, involved in many other initiatives, programmes and projects, fully support the European policy of equal opportunities between women and men set out in the Treaty on European Union. The equality between women and men is transversal objective affecting all Community programs, also Sixth Framework Programme. The Treaty seeks not only to eliminate inequalities, but also to promote equality. That is why as part of its activities to achieve gender mainstreaming goals and increase women's participation in science, the European Commission has requested that Integrated Projects in the 6. Framework Programme produce an action plan for the promotion of gender equality within their project.

Phosphorus and other FP6 projects carrying out Gender Action activities will bring concrete support to this action by raising awareness in participating partner institutes and giving them clear measures and activities to ensure their policies are in line with the roadmap set by the EC.

2. Gender issues in ICT sector

The gender balance in ICT sector is still far from being achieved. The huge majority of researchers and developers are men. This is first of all due to the overrepresentation of men in technical studies especially in engineering. Further, women are underrepresented in the private sector and government bodies which control the ICT arena, meaning they still have relatively little influence over decision-making processes involved in the development ICT sector.

The partners in the Phosphorus project are aware that, marginalisation of women in the research arena of ICT, is largely due to traditional perceptions of women's roles, which are seen to be incompatible with the field of science and engineering. Changing this perception is a vital part of the gender equality action plan.

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3. Gender actions in Phosphorus

The gender issues in the project may be considered at two levels:

1. the employment of women scientists within the project,
2. the gender-specific effects of the technology which the project produces.

3.1. The employment of women within the project

Phosphorus is expected to contribute in the promotion of gender equality in the field of the project through the following means:

- **Encouraging women’s participation in the project both as researchers and within the project’s management bodies.**

Women have played an active role in the creation of the proposal and will continue to contribute to the project. The presence of women in Phosphorus is already good (3 of the leading researchers: Prof. Dimitra Simeonidou, Prof. Anna Tzanakaki, Dr Gigi Karmous Edwards, also financial coordinator) in comparison with other projects in the same technical area, but particular attention will be given to its increase and to the women active involvement.

Contractors are to encourage women to study computer science and afterwards to apply for research positions, especially decision-making positions, and ensure that equal opportunities are promoted in recruitment procedure at all levels. Advertisements and notices shall state clearly that female applicants are encouraged to apply.

Partners will also perform regular statistical monitoring in the equal opportunities field, should make their institution an attractive employer for women and support them in their management careers.

Increasing women’s participation in the male-dominated sectors also depends on pro-active family policies.

If possible in particular institution, partners should consider the alternative working arrangements (i.e., working time flexibility, part-time work, working from home), ensure that the working environment of the project is compatible with both women and men’s familial responsibilities. It includes making it possible to participate in meetings via videoconferencing when it is not possible for them to travel to the meeting. The project coordinator will also ensure that meetings are organised at times of the day that are compatible with individuals’ child-care arrangements.

Our project will strongly encourage the recruitment of scientists who restart their career after a breaktime spent on their family which mostly affects women.

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- **Strengthening collaboration ties to the prominent female scientists in optical networking, Grid and e-science research.**

Collaboration is most critical to the project. Phosphorus participants will have responsibility for developing and helping in the gender-awareness mission beyond their institutional agenda.

- **Creating a network of women researchers within the project.**

This will mainly provide a mentoring environment for young female researchers through sharing experience and information with more established researchers in the field. In addition, links with other international networks of women scientists, such as WES, WIT, AWiSE and WiTEC, will be promoted.

- **Organizing visiting research collaborations with special emphasis on gender awareness.**
- **Promoting women speakers to represent the project in major conferences in Europe and overseas.**

Recruitment, conferences, other opportunities will be announced in places and ways (including by word of mouth and via established networks) that reach the largest numbers of women. In order to encourage young women to take an interest in computer science and engineering, and perhaps consider studying a related subject at a higher education college or university, the project partners will be organising a series of workshops.

- **Registering female participants in the European Database of Women Experts** in SET-Science, Engineering and Technology- (www.setwomenexperts.org.uk). This will raise awareness of the skills and knowledge of women in the field.

Coordinator of the Phosphorus project will nominate a person which will monitor the gender issues. This person will establish links to the partner organisations in order to exchange experiences in gender issues and to report on them. One of means for monitoring this issue are detailed timesheets sent to coordinator every quarter. This should enable more accurate statistics to be produced for the project: per partner, per workpackage with regard to a job role. Coordinator will also monitor attendance at project events by looking at the list of registered participants. Although this data will be collected on irregular basis, it will also be published and included in reports sent to the Project Officer.

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3.2. The gender-specific effects of the project

The Phosphorus technology itself is not aimed at any specific gender, however the final project may impact the destination user groups, including GRID users. Such groups will be observed with additional care in order to assure gender balance and improved involvement of female representatives. The most opportunities are envisaged in the research areas of bio-chemistry, bio-technologies, medicines, or pharmacy, where amount of female researchers are significant or continuously improving.

As Phosphorus project results will be quite novel to both research and business market, an additional effort during liaison activities will be placed to interest female audience. This also applies to universities and technical schools, where it is possible to attract the attention of future female representatives of engineer groups. As the project will be heading to final phase, Phosphorus participants hope to have a huge number of researchers, industrial partners, or students to be aware of GMPLS advantages for networking and GRID computations. A noticeable part of this community should be female users and engineers, so that the gender balance will be more and more improving according to EU strategy.

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4. Phosphorus gender data and statistics

Overall, there are 110 people involved in Phosphorus, of which 11 female and 99 man. General Assembly, a decision making body within the consortium consist of 2 female and 18 male.

Further analyses follow, showing how female employees (involved: funded and unfunded) are distributed across the project according to activity, whether this same gender balance is reflected in different workpackages and project events.

Gender distribution in Phosphorus Workpackages:

WORKPACKAGE		MALE	FEMALE	%FEMALE
WP0	Project Management	30	9	23,08%
WP1	Network Resource Provisioning Systems (NRPS) for Grid Network Services (GNS)	41	3	6,82%
WP2	Adaptation of the GMPLS Control Plane for Grid Network Services (GNS)	46	4	8,00%
WP3	Applications and Middleware	40	2	4,76%
WP4	Authentication Authorization and Accounting	35	2	5,41%
WP5	Supporting Studies	39	3	7,14%
WP6	Test-bed and Demonstration Activities	43	4	8,51%
WP7	Dissemination, Contribution to standards,Liaisons	31	4	11,43%

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Below table includes number and percentage of women in Phosphorus teams of 15 partners.

Partner	Men	Women	%Women
PSNC	3	1	25%
CESNET	3	1	25%
NXW	4	1	20%
FHG	5	0	0%
I2CAT	7	0	0%
FZJ	3	1	25%
HEL	6	2	25%
IBBT	1	0	0%
CTI	4	0	0%
AIT	5	3	38%
SURFnet	2	0	0%
UniiBonn	2	0	0%
UvA	4	1	20%
UESSEX	4	2	33%
UWS	1	1	50%

Despite the positive efforts of this Gender Action Plan, it seems that much more needs to change in order to realize the goals set forth by the EU.

Increasing women's participation in the male-dominated ICT sector will be supported by Phosphorus partners. The result of this efforts may be evaluated by the EC on the basis of the on-line questionnaire filled in by all Phosphorus partners in month 12 of the project.

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