

GenderBasic:

Promoting integration of sex and gender aspects in biomedical and health related research
Bringing gender expertise to life sciences research practice

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BACKGROUND

The implementation of the European Union (EU) gender equality policy for research has resulted in new guidelines – based on the recommendations of the Gender Impact Assessment Studies of Framework Programme (FP) 5¹ – for the consideration of sex and gender in FP6.

Biological (sex) and socio-cultural (gender) differences between women and men may result in different epidemiological patterns and effect modification of diagnostic, preventive and therapeutic interventions.

For many scholars in biomedical and health related research, integrating sex and gender issues in their research presents a new challenge.

OBJECTIVE

The GenderBasic project (www.genderbasic.nl) aims to provide scientists involved in biomedical and health related research (with a focus on basic and clinical research) with practical tools, relevant examples and best practices as regards paying attention to sex and gender differences in the content of their research. Incorporation in research proposals will contribute to scientific excellence in FP7.

GenderBasic is a EU FP6 Women and Science Specific Support Action.

¹ Klinge, I & M. Bosch (2001) *Gender in research. Gender impact assessment of the specific programmes of the Fifth Framework Programme – Quality of life and management of living resources. EUR 20017*

FURTHER INFORMATION

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www.genderbasic.nl

Achievements of GenderBasic

REVIEW PAPERS

International high profile experts have been invited to review:

- Methodological aspects of paying attention to sex and gender in basic, translational, clinical and public health research
- A specific health area where attention to sex and gender issues is urgently called for: anxiety disorders, asthma, metabolic syndrome, nutrigenomics, osteoporosis and work-related health

These papers will be published as a supplement of Gender Medicine

METHODOLOGICAL PAPERS:

- Integrating the dimension of sex and gender into basic life sciences research: methodological and ethical issues in research. A review of the problems and solutions in experimental studies. Anita Holdcroft
- Methodological ramifications of paying attention to sex and gender differences in clinical research. Martin H. Prins, Kim M. Smits & Luc J. Smits
- Sexually dimorphic gene expression in somatic tissues of mammals. Jörg Isensee & Patricia Ruiz Noppinger
- Methodological and ethical ramifications of paying attention to sex and gender differences in public health research. Anita Rieder & Kitty Lawrence

PAPERS ON SPECIFIC HEALTH AREA:

- Gender differences in asthma development and progression. Dirkje S. Postma
- Integrating a gender dimension in osteoporosis and fracture risk research. Piet P.M.M. Geusens & GeertJan Dinant
- Gender aspects in the role of the metabolic syndrome as risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Vera Regitz-Zagrosek, Elke Lehmkühl & Shokufeh Mahmoodzadeh
- Anxiety disorder: Sex differences in prevalence, seriousness and background, yet gender neutrally treated. Marrie H.J. Bekker & Janneke van Mens-Verhulst
- A tool for developing gender research in medicine - examples from the medical literature on working life. Anne Hammarström
- Gender, a significant player in the crosstalk between genes, environment and health. Jose M. Ordovas

EXPERT MEETING

January 26-27 2007, Maastricht, the Netherlands

Objective of the expert meeting was to provide scientists involved in health related research (with a focus on basic and clinical research) funded by the EU Framework programmes, with practical tools, relevant examples and best practices as regards paying attention to sex and gender differences in the content of their research. The meeting was aimed at reviewing the state of the art as regards specific problems and opportunities (challenges) and at proposing widely supported solutions. Ten scientists were asked to write a review paper on the integration of gender in their area of expertise. They each presented their review paper during the meeting. The papers were peer reviewed and the comments on the original papers were also presented at the meeting. The Power-Point presentations are available at www.genderbasic.nl. Following the presentations the other participants were encouraged to discuss the papers and comments. Recommendations were written based on the reviews and the discussions at the meeting.

SUCCESS STORY

GenderBasic has been selected as an excellent example of the positive impacts EU research can achieve, and will be featured in a catalogue of FP6 Success Stories. The publication will include 40 projects (September 2007).

Gender expertise: Knowledge of the relevance of sex and gender aspects as determinants of health and disease

