

**WOMEN'S ORGANISATIONS WORKING IN SET:
Their Role and Contribution in the Implementation of the Government's new
Strategy for Women in SET**

14 November 2003

Portia

Introduction

This document was prepared to assist all those who are or will be involved in the implementation of the Government's new Strategy for Women in SET identify and make contact with key women's organisation that have been working in the area for some time, and have strong interest in and the ability to help ensure the successful delivery of the objectives set out in the Strategy.

The idea for this document came about as a result of a meeting of like minded groups organised by Women's Engineering Society on 15 September, to discuss issues and plans relating to the new Resource Centre for Women in SET. The main objective was simple: to say who we are, what we do, and how we can contribute to the success of this important enterprise undertaken by the Government.

This document does not include all the relevant groups with interest in the Centre's objectives and what it may deliver for them. There simply was not enough time to assemble a complete list.

The key aspect of this document is that it is intended to help those involved in setting up and managing the new Centre, or overseeing its implementation, to reach out to women in SET through existing women's organisation, as well as draw on the considerable body of experience that these organisations have.

In particular, Portia, in its dual role as a community of women and women's organisations in SET and their representative body, has been chosen by the participants of the WES meeting to provide a unifying point of contact and communication. In this way, it is hoped, an effective link will be created between all the stakeholders in this important project.

Those wishing to take advantage of this opportunity to contact and involve women and women's organisations in SET in the delivery of their plans for the Centre, should in the first instance send an email to SET@portiaweb.org.uk

Elizabeth Pollitzer
Portia
14 November 2003

List of Organisations

Portia

WES: Women's Engineering Society

WITEC: European Association for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology

Daphne Jackson Trust

The BCS Women Specialist Group (British Computer Society)

Women in Physics Group (Institute of Physics)

Science Next Wave

ResNET

GASAT: Gender And Science And Technology Association

GenEd: Gender Awareness in Education

Portia and the New Strategy for Women in SET

1. Introduction

Portia is a web-based community of and for organisations and individuals concerned with SET, with the following objectives:

- delivering services to Partners and sharing resources, experiences and ideas, particularly those associated with women and SET
- engaging in research and development projects concerned with the problems of women's under-representation in the world of SET, including underlying educational issues
- providing centralised access to high quality research information and other relevant sources on women and SET
- providing effective representation and becoming the major proponent of women's perspectives on issues involving SET
- providing centralised and concerted input to discussions on policy and practice in SET
- providing opportunities for women taking SET subjects in schools, colleges and universities to become involved in and contribute to the wider world of SET
- providing opportunities for professional SET women to market their knowledge and expertise.

Portia welcomes the New Strategy for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology and the opportunities that it promises for organisations working towards greater participation and involvement of women in SET.

2. Portia and the New Resource Centre

Portia is already carrying out the following tasks and hopes to continue to deliver them on behalf of the Resource Centre:

1. disseminating and sharing information
2. raising the profile of women in SET
3. the sharing of good employment practices for women in SET

Our position as the umbrella organisation identified with women across all of SET makes us the logical people to carry out:

4. co-ordinating the work of women in science organisations.

We have experience of the following areas and believe we would bring valuable resources to any teams working on them:

1. recognition for good SET employers
2. setting up an maintaining an expert women's database (we have a good working relationship

with Inova, who manage the current WiTEC database)

3. maintaining and disseminating statistics

We expect to continue to be involved in the efforts to:

1. support initiatives such as mentoring and networking
2. supporting returners

3. Portia's Achievements

Portia has already made progress, through its own website, the Equalitec project and other initiatives on a number of these issues.

Portia's own website, www.portiaweb.org, was set up five years ago as a gateway into SET for all women, which has subsequently been also used by organisations to access women working in SET.

The Equalitec project delivered a website, www.equalitec.org.uk, directed at companies, educational institutions and women in Information Technology, Electronics and Communication Industries. The site has been designed to provide information resources related to recruitment and retention problems, in particular examples of good employment practice, extensive coverage of mentoring and job placements for women. The Equalitec Resource Database includes a wide variety of relevant information which is continuously extended.

Portia has initiated a scheme for its website called Leaders in Diversity. This scheme is designed to promote employer organisations who have put in place gender diversity programmes, with the aim of bringing change to the working conditions and work place culture aimed at increasing the recruitment and retention of women.

Currently, Portia is competing for and preparing new projects in the area of gender issues and SET.

Portia has demonstrated that it can deliver projects on time, to budget, and requirements. The success of the Equalitec project can be attributed in a large part to the fact that its implementation and ownership were in the same hands, and all those involved had both the required expertise and total commitment to its success. This is the essence of Portia's approach to projects.

4. Examples of how Others Perceive Portia

Recently, Portia and Equalitec have been approached by a number of organisations and individuals with questions, suggestions and ideas, which seem directly relevant to the objectives set out for the Centre.

For instance, a prospective Engineering student at Southampton asked for advice on sources of funding to enable her to undertake a chosen Engineering course. Whilst there are some charitable organisations that specifically provide scholarships to females, making such information more widely available, and encouraging the provision of such funding would benefit many women wishing to improve their career prospects.

Portia was asked by Brookes University to help promote their Women in Computing Mentoring project. The huge amount of information relating to mentoring that can be found on the Equalitec website is of great practical help when setting up such schemes. They in turn will contribute their experience in this area thus enabling Equalitec to share important information and knowledge and to extend this service further.

As part of their preparations of a programme on career breaks, the BBC approached Portia to find women whose experience may be relevant and included in the programme. Through its knowledge and involvement with many women's organisations in SET, Portia was able to advise on organisations working for women returners, specifically the Daphne Jackson Trust.

Portia was asked to distribute a research questionnaire for a study on the choices that drive women's career decisions, directed specifically at women in male dominated industries. Portia was able to pass this request to a number of women's organisations and to women's networks. Portia was approached by Women Connect and other organisations to publicise their events and conferences. It was asked to display course information on Women into Management scheme on the Equalitec and Portiaweb sites.

The UK Centre for Economic and Environmental Development (UK CEED) approached Equalitec in relation to their on-line discussion forum on the role of ICT in creating economic and social values, to encourage contributions from a wider audience.

Channel 4 came looking for participants for the Scrapheap Challenge programme and the Women in Engineering group at Loughbrough came looking for help in finding suitable speakers for their events.

Equalitec was approached by ScotPR Ltd who are organising 'A' Star Awards for the UK's top female computing students with a view of co-operating to publicise the event and the awards. The 'A' Star Awards is the first competition to recognise and reward the UK's top female computing students and help tackle the industry's gender imbalance.

A request was also received from an all male industrial product design group on how to find suitable female engineers/designers. The company felt that their designs would greatly benefit from having female input to the design process.

These examples display Portia's role as a gateway, the importance of having a gateway, and the wide ranging needs and concerns that organisations and individuals have regarding women and SET.

Within the aim of the Strategy, Portia, through its web-based and community approach, can help deliver a variety of products and services needed, in particular those that will require more interactive, dynamic or collaborative responses.

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What the Women's Engineering Society has to offer as Contributions to the Government's Strategy for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology

Background

1. The Women's Engineering Society (WES) is an educational charity whose primary aim is to promote the study and practice of engineering amongst women. It has around 700 individual members (mostly women engineers, applied scientists or technologists) and about 15 corporate members (mostly engineering or high-technology Companies).
2. WES is the only membership organisation dedicated to the promotion of women in engineering in the UK. The Society is managed by a Council of Trustees / Directors, all of whom are volunteers. The small staff (approximately one full time equivalent) is dedicated to administering and developing the society, and hence all projects and activities are managed by volunteer members and funded by direct sponsorship. We pride ourselves on our open governance and efficient administration.
3. WES is a current and founder member of the WISE¹ National Co-ordinating Committee and WES members work with this campaign and others² at grass roots level to promote engineering as a career.
4. WES provides bursaries, grants and awards to support women engineers and students, funded by direct sponsorship from a number of individuals and corporate bodies.
5. WES is the lead partner in a consortium with AWiSE³ to manage the Government- and industry- sponsored MentorSET project, providing personal mentors for women scientists and engineers independent of their employment or institution. The large strong network of WES members is a valuable asset for this project.
6. WES members represent women engineers on influential groups and committees. For example, a significant number of WES members contributed to the work of Professor Susan Greenfield in producing her report "SET Fair" for Patricia Hewitt, to which the Government's Strategy is the response.
7. WES works closely with the engineering and scientific Institutions, the Engineering Employers Federation (EEF) and the Sector Skills Council for Science, Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (SEMTEA). It contributed to the report of the ETB to Lord Sainsbury, "Complementing SET Fair", in which the WES proposed "workplace culture" project (see below) was recommended.

¹ Women into Science and Engineering, a national promotional campaign funded by SEMTEA, EEF and DTI.

² Campaign to promote engineering (CPE now under the ETB), Science and Engineering Ambassadors Scheme (SEAS), local SETPOINTS, Engineering Employment Scheme (EES), Year in Industry (YinI), etc.

³ Association for Women in Science and Engineering, whose membership is largely in academia / research fields.

Potential Contributions to the Strategy for Women in SET

The New Resource Centre for Women in SET

The overarching aim of the new centre will be to improve the participation and position of women in SET employment, across academia, industry and public service in the United Kingdom. Its main mode of working will be to provide information, advice and support to the SET community, and to develop and share best practice amongst SET employers to help achieve this aim. Specifically within the engineering field, WES is uniquely placed to assist in this overarching aim by virtue of the experience of its members in employment.

1. WES can contribute in the following ways to the specific tasks identified for the Resource Centre.
 - 1.1. Recognition scheme for “good SET employers”, and sharing of best employment practices: A first step in these tasks is to identify what constitutes good practice, and particularly the factors which encourage women to continue in or return to SET employment within a particular organisation. The Greenfield report “SET Fair”, the ETB complementary report and the Government’s response all identify “workplace culture” as a significant barrier for women even where there is no overt discrimination and family friendly policies are in place. However, good and bad cultures are poorly defined. WES has developed a project which will research this topic and develop a “toolkit” for employers on how to ensure a “women friendly” climate⁴. The idea for this project is supported by the ETB and a draft project description⁵ has received interest from a number of potential partners (both Institutions and Companies). WES will be seeking support from the Resource Centre for the project, and considers it an essential part of meeting this task.
 - 1.2. Sharing Information: WES could offer to share its information, advice and experience with the Resource Centre, for onward transmission more widely. WES has built up an invaluable body of knowledge during its 84 years of existence. And for an up-to-the-minute response, we have an effective method of gathering instant feedback from our members, who hold a variety of positions of all seniorities throughout all types of engineering. WES members are also key contributors to Daphnet, the mailing list for women in science, engineering and technology. (The list manager of this independent project is a WES officer.)
 - 1.3. Database of expert women: WES could offer the details of those of its members who are willing to be added the database.
 - 1.4. Raising the profile of women in SET: WES members already do this both at grass roots level (through the wide range of activities with schools, for example) and at national level (through the giving of awards and lectures, for example). The WISE campaign produces “role model” leaflets for use in schools etc. These activities are not widely reported in the media, however, and WES would be willing to help the Resource Centre in achieving a wider “general public” image for women engineers. For example, we have developed a project to encourage and assist women engineers to participate in big public events (such as the Royal Bath & West Show), but have not yet succeeded in obtaining the necessary funds.

⁴ “Climate” is used to encompass both “culture” and “social environment”.

⁵ Copies freely available from

- 1.5. Pump-priming initiatives: We have a list of new innovations which might be developed. WES would also welcome support from the Resource Centre to take some of our existing schemes to whole new levels -- schemes for bursaries, awards, the MentorSET programme and our networking. The limit to what WES can currently do is our relatively low “core” funding which currently comes from member subscriptions only. Whilst the availability of our volunteer membership to initiate projects and ideas is a strength (and unique selling point) of the Society, our lack of staff to drive through implementation does limit the number of projects we can take on. However, we have a very good track record for the effectiveness of those projects we have undertaken, such as MentorSET, and it would be an efficient use of resources for the Resource Centre to help WES find ways to increase its capacity.
- 1.6. SET Returners: Women returning from career breaks have long been a concern of WES. The MentorSET programme is already encouraging some women to return to engineering and science work after a career break and we hope the scheme will be supported beyond its current pilot phase. WES members give generously of their time to the Daphne Jackson Fellowship Trust and we would be keen to support an extension of the Fellowships into wider industrial employment.
- 1.7. Co-ordination: WES is very willing to have its activities co-ordinated with those of other women in SET organisations and indeed, as indicated above, already works closely with most of them.

Strategy Implementation Group

The Strategy proposes “A new independent implementation group to oversee the strategy's progress and impact during the next two years.” WES considers it important that we are part of this Group, to ensure a grass roots input to the oversight of progress and impact.

WiTEC

European Association for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology

Background

WiTEC-the European Association for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) was formed as a network in 1988 and after more than ten years of networking and project activities related to women and SET, established itself as a non-profit European association under German Law in May 2001.

Aims

WiTEC has the following aims at European level:

- to increase the number of girls and women studying SET subjects and to help them progress to related careers
- to develop women's technical and entrepreneurial skills through training initiatives and projects
- to create information exchanges and networking opportunities for women in SET
- to promote and support research into areas relating to women in SET
- to support initiatives to promote the Gender Mainstreaming Policy
- to promote regional, national and international awareness and interest in this field.

Currently there are **14** WiTEC national network co-ordinators based in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the UK.

New Resource Centre

WiTEC welcomes the opportunity of collaborating with the New Resource Centre by sharing its 15 years of experience regarding the promotion of women in SET on a European and national level.

I. Database of Women Experts

WiTEC developed in 1997 a Database of Women Experts in SET (<http://www.setwomenexperts.org.uk>) with funding from the European Commission. The UK database was later further developed with funding from the DTI. The European Database of Women Experts in SET was the first database in the EU and the UK of its kind. It has proved to be extremely successful in attracting experts and to raise awareness of their skills and knowledge. In addition to this, the database has been an important tool for the media and for governmental bodies such as the European Commission and the DTI to identify experts for public and private appointments. The Experts Database second phase was launched at the DTI in 2000. During this event the database received excellent reviews, including a statement from the Prime Minister: *“It (the database) is a valuable resource for anyone trying to identify suitable women to take part in panels and committees, to speak at conferences or to link up as role models for girls at schools”*
Tony Blair, 22 September 2000

Some indicators which reflect the database past successes are the following:

- The Equal Opportunities Commission UK uses it as a consultancy tool
- *THE TIMES* referred to it as an excellent tool to restore the balance of female and male in SET (2000)
- Department for Education and Employment- UK has used the database for providing information of women experts to ministers
- European Commission conference: Women in Science Brussels, April 98 DGXII The database was used as a useful tool for inviting experts to participate as speakers and consultants
- BBC- radio 4 Women's Hour and Science Programmes have used the database to invite experts to radio programmes
- Women experts have been appointed to committees e.g.: Fifth framework, European Commission *“We were helped very much in that by one of the extremely useful networks “WiTEC” who came along, sent an expert who is actually sitting here today”* McNally, Eryl Margaret- MEP socialist Co-ordinator of the Committee on Research, Technological Development

and Energy

- Experts have found the database extremely useful for networking
- The EAIE (European Association for International Education) uses the database as a tool for the dissemination of the conferences and for networking
- Article in Cordis issue no.92
- Experts contacted by TV- Riverside Studios to appear in programmes or assisting in collation of information for documentaries
- NASA, USA visited the site
- UNESCO- World Conference on Science. WiTEC was approached to obtain experts contact details- June 99.
- The Experts Database was used for Athena Mentoring programmes in order to identify Mentors and Speakers.

As the DTI funding came to an end in 2002, WITEC being a non-profit organisation has had difficulties in updating the database and improving its design and structure. We welcome the opportunity of collaborating with the New Resource Centre in order to update and maintain this valuable resource.

II. Sharing Information and best practice.

Throughout its 15 years of experience WiTEC has developed and managed a variety of initiatives, many of which have been highlighted by the European Commission as examples of best practice. WiTEC has a wealth of experience in:

- **Mobility programmes** for female students in SET
- **Training Modules** for career advisors, women returners and employers
- Development of innovative programmes addressing **Entrepreneurship** for women in SET both at HE and professional level.
- Development of **on-line portals** for a variety of programmes addressing gender and SET (e.g. Virtual Exchange www.virtualxchange.org.uk, Improve programme, Experts database)
- Founder of the first **Mentoring Programme** for women in SET on a EU level (e.g. Mellow)
- **Mainstreaming** activities- EU and National level

Based on the above WiTEC, being a European Association, is ideally placed to work with the centre in order to share best practice from Europe and to enable international networks to come together and share experiences.

Contact details

WiTEC UK: Marina Larios witec@inovaconsult.com tel + 00 114 220 71 27 <http://www.witec.net>

Daphne Jackson Trust

Returning engineers and scientists to work after career breaks

Introduction

Daphne Jackson was Britain's first women professor of physics. Professor Jackson devised a Fellowship scheme to help trained scientists and engineers to return to an appropriate job after a family-related career break. The Daphne Jackson Trust was established in 1991, after Professor Jackson's untimely death. By its 10th anniversary, the Trust helped some 100 individuals to make a successful and profitable return.

Fellowships

The Trust's proven formula normally provides two year half-time Fellowship for women and men. With their dual elements of retraining plus new research or development project, the Fellowships have been overwhelmingly successful in re-establishing careers in academia and industry. The Trust arranges Fellowships throughout the United Kingdom in university and industrial laboratories. Fellows are selected on their potential to make a successful return to their professions and once again benefit the economy.

Host Institutions

For the duration of the Fellowship, Fellows become employees of the host organisation. The Host benefits from having a new and highly committed member of staff. The Fellow benefits by gaining access to resources, expertise and networks of individuals working in their chosen areas.

Fellows

- Applicants must have taken a break of at least three years from science or engineering careers
- Must take leading role and responsibility for arranging their Fellowship programme, however, the Trust does offer considerable help and advice, especially in the early stages
- Must demonstrate a commitment to return to an appropriate science or engineering related career on completion of their Fellowship
- Must have at least a first degree in engineering, science or information technology
- Are normally resident in the United Kingdom
- Undertake projects relevant to present day needs in industry and academia combined with a retraining programme, which together will ensure improved employment opportunities.

Sponsors

The Fellowships are funded through sponsorship and donations. Sponsors are able to earmark Fellowships in selected general area of expertise.

Contact

Mrs. J. Woolley, Director

Daphne Jackson Trust, Department of Physics, University of Surrey, Guildford, GU2 7XH
www.daphnejackson.org

British Computer Society The BCSWomen Specialist Group

Who we are

The BCSWomen Specialist Group of BCS is dedicated to women working in IT world-wide. From its initial inception, this group has been web-based as a hosted eGroup on Yahoo and later supported by pages on the BCS official web site as well. This initiative was set-up by Sue Black. Sue, who is one of the many women balancing home and professional life with three children of her own, had for a long time felt a strong need to encourage women and girls to consider a career in IT and Information Systems (IS). She also wanted to provide some sort of support network for women working in IT/IS. Women working in IT/IS can often miss female contact in their work place. She hoped that the networking opportunities provided by this eGroup would help to fill this gap.

Aims

The aims of the group are to:

- Provide an opportunity for networking,
- Provide support for women working in IT/IS,
- Support and encourage women and girls entering IT/IS careers,
- Provide a central contact for media channels of issues relating to women in IT/IS, and
- Assist women in IT/IS to find and become mentors for other women.

Activities

Since the inception of BCSWomen, a whole new meaning to the notion of personal networking has evolved as membership has risen and new group activities have developed. Women from around the globe – all members of the BCS – have discovered they have a medium for communicating with like-minded women. On average 150 messages a month are posted to the forum.

One long-standing discussion point has been *curriculum vitae* and interview techniques. A development from this is the web-based CV reviewing service offered by members for members. As the group has become more established, it has been able to provide a very extensive support network particularly with respect to helping members in their search for employment, and a mentoring service is also offered for longer term career advice. A typical case might be a recent young graduate in IT or a newly qualified woman returner posting to the group about their lack of employment opportunities. One issue that commonly arises is the need to encourage such women to value their skills and present them positively.

One of the fun activities (with serious undertones) of the BCSWomen has been encouraging members to take part in the RaceForLife. This is a unique series of 100 events across the UK. Race for Life takes place annually and is a chance for every woman to walk, run or jog 5km to raise money for Cancer Research UK. Pictures of runners were uploaded onto the BCSWomen website giving the unique story of members taking part. Members were inspired to take part from the stories of other members posted to the group. Many members met up and ran together after linking up on-line via the group's email forum. The "running " total reported on the group's web site is currently 180Km.

Inspired by all these running ladies: one of the younger committee members, Zoe Baxter, Software Developer with HP, forged ahead to organise BCSWomen tee-shirts and caps that they could wear when they run. The response to this initiative has been fantastic. The slogan on the back was

“**BCSWomen – Setting the Pace**”. The extra money raised on these sales also went to Cancer Research. Thus, the web-based group’s impact has extended into the wider community of women at large addressing a serious illness, and members through the group’s forum told movingly of their personal experiences with cancer.

Looking to the future, the group has given consideration to some initiatives set-up to encourage young girls into IT. The first one being the school-wide initiative; members of BCSWomen in groups of 2-3, have been organising visits to present to their old schools or those close to where they now live, the exciting world of IT with an emphasis on opportunities for women. The group has considered prizes to encourage more young women studying Computing. Our research on this topic uncovered a number of established prizes in this area already, so these are now publicised on the group’s web site.

Maintaining momentum within the group is important. Face-to-face meetings have supplemented the on-line meetings of the group although it is interesting to note that the majority of meetings remain on-line. The ease with which the group can arrange simple polls on-line has allowed the group as a whole to decide issues quickly without much administrative overhead.

The group has been further extended by joint activities with other international professional groups for women in Computing such as ACM-W, and local groups have also joined forces with BCSWomen, for example, [Women@CL](#) at the University of Cambridge.

Future Work and Directions

There is an increased awareness of the need to encourage women into IT to address the skills shortage in the UK and world wide. The growth in initiatives is encouraging, although it is necessary to ensure that there will not be the situation of initiative-overload. The use of the Web to provide information both for Careers advisers, teachers, women returners, girls in schools, and young women in colleges, is to be applauded.

Science's Next Wave

An online careers Web site for Young Scientists

Committed to Empowering Women in Science

Who We Are

Next Wave is a career development magazine, updated weekly on the Web, that has been published since 1995 by the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the research journal *Science*. The aim of our international staff in the UK, Europe and North America is to provide the early-career scientist with the tools, insight, and advice they need to discover the vast range of careers open to them, decide which path they want to pursue, and follow it.

What We Do

We are striving to cover all of the issues that affect young scientists, be these related to their training or career development, in academia, industry or elsewhere, and to their personal life. Next Wave's role models, expert columnists, writers and editors all aim to support young scientists by giving them valuable insight in each of the following topics:

- [Job Market News](#). What does today's job market offer scientists interested in making their next move? Next Wave investigates employment trends, how to make oneself eligible for today's positions, and national and international opportunities.
- [Career Transitions](#). In this section Next Wave describes the career moves that researchers have successfully made--the paths they've taken and the opportunities they've uncovered. From leaving the bench to get an MBA to applying research skills to work with the police as a forensic scientist, Next Wave has the information young scientists need, much of it in multi-article features!
- [Career and Job Hunting Advice](#). Whether they want to stay in academic research, go into industry, or leave the bench far behind, they've got to find a job. How do you go about getting it? They'll find the practical advice they need on Next Wave.
- [Diversity and Work Life](#). Carving out a career is tough work for anyone, but juggling work with your family responsibilities can be even more challenging! Women and minority scientists face special issues, and Next Wave has articles especially tailored to their needs (see below).
- [Postdoc and Faculty Issues](#). For those who want to pursue an academic career, Next Wave addresses their concerns and reviews the current landscape.
- [For Grad Students](#). Getting to the end of your Ph.D. can be a tough slog, but Next Wave can help. In this section, young scientists will find advice on dealing with supervisors, progress reports, writing up your thesis, and much else.
- [Science Policy](#). The politics and policies of scientific research define how science is performed and how it affects the job market for scientists. Next Wave help them keep up with the latest news.

Advice Tailored to Women

Next Wave is committed to support the career of every scientist, regardless of their gender, race and personal circumstances. Next Wave has a long tradition of empowering women in science by giving them the tools they need for a successful career and healthy work/life balance. In each of the sections above many articles are dedicated to:

- Help female scientists to grasp the special issues they face. Too often women feel isolated and do not realise that they simply shouldn't have to put up with the discomfort or even discrimination they experience. Next Wave delivers the latest reports and surveys to give them a constant update of the situation.
- Encourage them to take their career into their own hands. No matter the number of surveys, the situation is not going to change if women do not do it for themselves. Next Wave aims to empower them with career advice and lets them know about the schemes, training and funding opportunities that are there to help them.
- Helping them getting the balance right. One of the obvious reasons for women not having the same chances in a career in science is their strong commitment to their family. It is even more crucial, albeit difficult, for them to strike the right balance between work and their personal life. Next Wave offers numerous articles that acknowledge the difficulties and offer real life advice.
- Inspiring them. In spite of all the difficulties, there are many women out there who made it, and most often they are only too happy to help the sisterhood. The stories of how they got to where they now are, of how they pulled through the rough patches, of their victories and sometimes even failures all show there is a way women can make things work for them.
- Directing them towards other sources of information, women's associations and networks for more support.

Institute of Physics
Women in Physics Group

We are a Professional Group of the Institute of Physics

- We encourage the participation of our members in all activities of the Institute.
- We provide support to members in progressing their careers by encouraging their professional development.
- Our committee aims to reflect the varied careers of women physicists in industry, commerce, academia, teaching and research.
- The Group organises meetings with discussions of topical interest.
- A regularly produced newsletter keeps members informed.
- We act as a pressure group reflecting members needs and concerns within the Institute
- We work closely with the Institute's Women in Physics Policy Committee

Our current concerns include:

- education at primary, secondary and tertiary level with particular emphasis on encouraging girls to take physics
- women in research and academia -especially those on short term contracts
- career breaks
- career management
- networking in the UK and Europe
- role models and raising the profile of women physicists

Our current activities include:

- encouraging physicists to visit primary schools
- personal development workshops
- WIPG has joined MentorSET
- a WOMEN_IN_PHYSICS email discussion group
- involvement with Institute's Site Visits to investigate the situation for women in universities
- a research laboratory site visit
- developing links with other organisations working for women in science
- working with Institute Branches to increase the participation of women physicists
- following up the recommendations of the IUPAP 2002 Paris Conference on Women in Physics

Report

‘Women Physicists Speak’ launched September 2002.

Women are currently underrepresented in every area of physics, world wide. This report presents, in a UK context, the resolutions and recommendations from the first IUPAP international conference on Women in Physics. <http://groups.iop.org/WP/H2.html> (copies available)

Contact: Ann Marks

Honorary Secretary, Women in Physics Group

Institute of Physics, 76 Portland Place, London, W1B 1NT.

Resnet

A network for women research staff working at the Norwich Research Park in the Science Schools at UEA, the Institute of Food Research and the John Innes Centre, with the aim of encouraging and promoting career development.

A network is defined as a voluntary meeting that brings together people with common interests for mutual help, support and contact.

ResNet has delivered the following:

- A network for women contract research staff, academic staff and postgraduate students in the sciences at UEA and NRP.
- A programme of activity to support the development of knowledge, attitudes and skills, consisting of workshops and local and visiting speakers and role models.
- An email link and website enhancing and encouraging communication, exchange of ideas and contact among network members.

The benefits include:

- Raising individual awareness of the current situation of women scientists.
- Providing a forum where common concerns and issues can be explored and discussed.
- Empowering women to improve their outlook on their career in science.
- Providing a source of data on women research staff at UEA and the NRP.
- Increasing the visibility of women in science at UEA and the NRP.
- Feeding into policy-making to improve the gender balance.
- ResNet 2000 was supported by an Athena Project Development Grant.

The Athena Project receives its core funding from the UK Higher Education Funding Councils, the DTI and CVCP.

Athena is now part of the Equality Challenge Unit, and aims to increase the number of women employed as postgraduates, research staff, lecturers through to professors, in science and technology, and to facilitate initiatives which ensure women's retention and progress in the sector.

ResNet members attend external events and are frequently invited to speak. Their influence is contributing to policy making on employment matters for women scientists. The work of ResNet is commended in the 2002 Athena Guide to Good Practice.

ResNet received a special Pearson Prize in the 2002 Royal Society Athena Awards, to help with the continuation of this work.

Details of events for 2003-2004 will be sent directly to members and published on the ResNet website at www.uea.ac.uk/csed/resnet .

For more information on ResNet contact Julia Marcantonio (X 2951, email j.marcantonio@uea.ac.uk) or Katy Savage (X3849, email Katy.savage@uea.ac.uk).

GASAT

The International Gender And Science And Technology Association

Objectives

The objectives of the Association are:

1. To encourage research into all aspects of gender differentiation in science and technology education and employment
2. To foster gender equity in science and technology, in education and in the workplace
3. To facilitate the entry of women into employment in the fields of science and technology, and their progress within such employment
4. To foster socially responsible and gender-inclusive science and technology
5. To provide a forum for dissemination and discussion of research findings and experiences of those working in the field
6. To provide a support network for those working towards the objectives outlined above

Potential contribution of the GASAT Association to "Women in SET"

The GASAT Association has held international conferences every two years since 1981. Although not formally published, collections of papers contributed to these conferences are available. They form a valuable resource for those concerned about interactions between gender and science and technology. The Association is currently attempting to place many of these papers on the Internet.

Members of the GASAT Association, and participants at GASAT Conferences, are generally carrying out projects relating to the objectives, or are actively involved in research in the field. The network of members across the world has resulted in some excellent collaborative research and development.

The organisations represented at the meeting in September at the Institute of Physics should find links to the GASAT Association valuable.

It is possible that the GASAT 12 Conference will be held in London in July, 2005

GenEd: Gender Awareness in Education

1. GenEd: Aims

- i. to monitor educational developments and policies and their effects in all sectors of education, with particular reference to:
 - employees of the service
 - users of the service
 - those who exercise power within the service
- ii. to review research and comment on gender aspects of education and training
- iii. and to lobby and comment as appropriate

2. GenEd: Origins and present position

The group existed for some 25 years working within the Fawcett Society as a special interest group. The core group currently remains members of Fawcett and one of our members serves on the Executive. We will continue to alert the Fawcett Society to issues relating to gender and education as they arise.

However, the group now acts independently and wishes to widen its membership and, as a result, strengthen its expertise.

The group has Partnership status with the Women's National Commission.

3. GenEd: Ways to participate

- i. Through attendance at meetings of the core group, which undertakes to meet regularly (bimonthly), and which reviews developments and decides on action.
- ii. As a corresponding member through E-mail, receiving information, responding as appropriate, monitoring the field and making pro-active input to the group's discussions.
- iii. Representatives of other organisations with similar interests are welcome.

4. GenEd: Co-ordinating member:

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