

Session K: ***Career pathways, and impediments to advancement***

Title of the panel ***“Mentoring programmes - a part of cultural and institutional change in academia and research”***

Formal mentoring programmes organized by research institutions historically target women and/or other underrepresented groups in academia in order to provide them with resources they have less smooth access to (informal support, sponsorship, tacit knowledge) than members of the dominant group. Although mentoring programmes represent quite successful measure on individual level, they must be accompanied with structural measures to dismantle causes of current inequalities. However, this panel would like to show that even if mentoring programmes are primarily individual measure, they could nevertheless contribute to a wider change on structural level if they are designed with respect to this goal. Three presentations show recommendations for this purpose.

Katerina Cidlinska will focus on the impact of female mentees' gender sensitivity on their career ambition and the role of disciplinary differences in the development of this sensitivity. Her analysis is based on data collected (2015-17) in mentoring programme for PhD candidates and postdocs attended by 162 mentees from 12 Czech research institutions from all research fields. The data contains: notes from initial workshops; final evaluations (72 questionnaires, 3 focus groups); 15 interviews. The analysis shows that frequent gender insensitivity of mentees from natural and technical sciences stimulate their feelings of scientific insufficiency which lower their career ambition and lead to consider drop out rather than to require structural changes. Because their often expressed disagreement with proposals for such changes hinders their adoption, it seems important to increase their gender sensitivity. Interdisciplinary programmes where mentees from natural and technical sciences and social sciences and humanities meet seem to be a promising tool.

Ekaterina Masetkina will introduce mentoring programmes as a space for intergenerational exchange among researchers. Experienced mentors support the development of the early career researchers by sharing their experiences and describing their paths to their careers. The findings are based on two data sets: a survey (2016) of 310 former mentees from mentoring programme at one German university and 31 expert interviews, in which the respondents expressed their individual goals and personal as well as institutional benefits through the mentoring programme. The results show how fruitful are the mentoring programmes for creating an open-minded social atmosphere which is an indispensable prerequisite not only for conducting a purposeful research but also for critical approach to institutional settings and their potential changes.

Dagmar Höppel will concentrate on the role of mentors in the 'project' of cultural and institutional change and on the importance to pay attention to suitable work with mentors on the coordinators' side. The analysis is based on data from the *Aufwind mit Mentoring* project (2010-12) and *MuT – Mentoring und Training* programme for women researchers (still running): online survey (2011; 332 mentees, 248 mentors from 9 mentoring programmes), 84 interviews. The results show the importance of coordinators as 'gender agents' who can stimulate various levels of mentors' reflection about gender issues and increase mentors' potential as 'change agents'. Tools have been developed to train coordinators.