

## Why We Are Still Concerned about Women in Science?



**S**ixteen years for the Women in Science International League founding, interest in the question of women in science remains. Why has the Women in Science question not been resolved after years of debate and the investment of thousands of dollars in programs encouraging women and girl students to enter science? What is the evidence for discrimination in academia, when many more women now earn degrees in science and engineering compared with Sixteen years ago?

Over the past years, the overall percentage of women receiving degrees in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics—known collectively as the STEM disciplines—has increased dramatically. This growth tends to mask at least three other aspects of the demographics of the science and technology workforce.

In the United States for example and accordance to the National Science Foundation, women now earn more bachelor's and master's degrees than men. However, the aggregated data mask that despite grades and other academic accomplishments equal to or surpassing those of the men who remain in science fields, more women than men leave science soon after they begin academic employment. They do so because certain obstacles prevent them from remaining in the field or from reaching their full potential as professionals in academia. Some of these barriers are new, but that issues from thirty or forty years ago remain, appearing today in somewhat different language, behaviors, and structures.

Why do women exit the science fields' workforce? We raised this question in the year 2001, and still remains Why do women exit the science fields' workforce? The answer is almost the same in almost all countries!!

In fact the answer is not genetic nature or lack of interest. Collective studies showed that women outperform men academically, receive more awards, and have higher graduation rates and better attitudes toward education. Interviews, case studies, and statistical research consistently suggest that two primary factors stand out among the multiple forces pushing women to leave the science workforce: the need to balance career and family and a lack of professional networks.

Women's biological clocks often mean that decisions about marriage and children cannot be delayed until after their careers have been well established. Dozens of studies document the struggle to balance career and family as the most significant challenge facing their professional advancement.



Another major factor for women leaving science results from lack of networking and mentoring. Studies revealed that women scientists may have less diverse networks. In addition, women faculty report fewer referrals from collegial networks to participate in the commercial marketplace by being asked to consult, serve on science advisory boards, and interact with industry.

Attracting women to science workforce and high-tech entrepreneurship and then retaining them will require changing the culture of science to make it more family-friendly and inviting.

For Sixteen years we succeeded in attracting more women into science, for the benefit of women and science, and society in general, and will continue our this tradition of measureless services with an infinitive vision into the future.

There is a lot to be done! and only together we can a make a difference.

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