

CIT ATHENA SWAN SUBMISSION

NOVEMBER 2018



Athena SWAN in CIT

CIT proposes to apply for an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award in November 2018. This will be a requirement from 2019 for any institution to remain eligible to apply for research grants from Science Foundation Ireland, the Irish Research Council, and the Health Research Board. In 2016, the HEA published its Report on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions, highlighting the low numbers of women in senior positions right across the entire higher education sector in Ireland. The impetus to achieve an Athena Swan badge is being supported by the HEA and is intended to foster a more inclusive and female-friendly culture in our higher education institutions.

Equality Challenge Unit/Advance HE

The ECU (now Advance HE) is a **UK-funded registered charity**, established in 2001, which works to support equality and diversity for staff and students in HEIs in the UK. It **uses research to identify and change practices** that unfairly exclude or disadvantage people, supporting institutions to remove barriers to progression and success for all staff and students.

The ECU's **equality charters** enable organisations to apply for awards recognising their commitment to, and progress on, equality and diversity.

The ECU's Athena SWAN charter evolved from work between the Athena project and the Scientific Women's Academic Network (SWAN), to advance the representation of women in science, technology, engineering, medicine and mathematics (STEMM).

Athena SWAN Principles

The original 6 Athena SWAN principles are as follows:

1. To address gender inequalities requires **COMMITMENT AND ACTION** from everyone at all levels of the organisation;
2. To tackle the unequal representation of women in science requires **CHANGING CULTURES AND ATTITUDES** across the organisation;
3. The **ABSENCE OF DIVERSITY at management and policy-making levels** has broad implications which the organisation will examine;

4. The **HIGH LOSS RATE OF WOMEN IN SCIENCE** is an urgent concern which the organisation will address;
5. The system of **SHORT-TERM CONTRACTS** has particularly negative consequences for the retention and progression of women in science, which the organisation recognises;
6. There are both personal and structural obstacles to women making the **TRANSITION** from PhD **INTO A SUSTAINABLE ACADEMIC CAREER IN SCIENCE**, which requires the active consideration of the organisation.

After 2015, an expanded set of principles replaced these, including all categories of staff from all disciplines.

Applying for an Athena SWAN Institutional Award

To apply for an institutional award, a higher education institution must establish a self-assessment team to drive the process of self-reflection and identification of actions. Support and commitment at the most senior level in the organisation is essential. Consultation with the wider body of staff is also important.

The Athena SWAN process commenced in CIT in January 2017 following the publication of the HEA Report on Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions (2016)¹. CIT adopted the Athena SWAN expanded principles in 2017 and became an Athena SWAN member organisation, eligible to apply for an Athena SWAN bronze institutional award. At institutional level, a bronze award means that the Institute has identified gender-related issues and barriers to women's progress, has put in place an action plan to address the issues, and is basing the plan on a solid foundation. The development of an inclusive culture is an essential part of the process. Once an institution achieves a bronze award, individual departments can then apply for departmental awards.

The CIT Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team (SAT) was then established by the President in August 2017, and the following factors contributed to initial membership of the SAT:

Diversity

- Gender
- Nature of Role in CIT
- Academic Discipline
- Early Career to Senior Management Team

Leadership Roles in STEMM Disciplines

Potential Involvement in Athena SWAN Departmental Submissions

Subject Expertise (HR, Research, Teaching & Learning)

Size of Team

Relevant External Links

The first meeting took place in September 2017, followed by the formation of four Work Groups:

- Data group
- Organisational Culture Group
- Career Development, Leave & Flexible Working Group
- Transitions from Recruitment to Promotion

¹ http://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/04/hea_review_of_gender_equality_in_irish_higher_education.pdf

A full log of all meetings and events has been made available to all staff in CIT throughout the process through the CIT Staff Gateway document repository². This log records the type of meeting/event, the main attendees, the purpose of the meeting/event, and the agreed actions.

There are 20 members of the SAT:

Ms	Deirdre Casey	Head of Human Resources
Mr	Donogh Coleman	Lecturer, Department of Civil, Structural & Environmental Engineering
Ms	Maria Cullinane	Lecturer, Department of Process, Energy & Transport Engineering
Dr	Orla Flynn	Vice President for External Affairs
Dr	Joe Harrington	Head of School of Building & Civil Engineering
Ms	Katherine Keane	Head of Department of Architecture
Mr	Michael Loftus	Head of Faculty of Engineering & Science
Dr	AnnMarie McCarthy	Researcher, CAPP, on maternity leave
Dr	Áine Ní Shé	Head of Department of Mathematics, Registrar & Vice President for Academic Affairs (Acting)
Dr	Eileen M. O'Leary	Lecturer, Department of Physical Sciences and Teaching & Learning Unit
Dr	Donagh O'Mahony	Head of Department of Physical Sciences
Ms	Chris O'Sullivan	Senior Technical Officer, IT Services
Prof.	Dirk Pesch	Head of Nimbus Research Centre
Dr	Susan Rea	Senior Research Fellow, Nimbus Research Centre
Prof.	Roy Sleator	Lecturer, Department of Biological Science and Senior Scientist at BioExplore Research Centre
Dr	Niall Smith	Head of Research
Ms	Norma Welch	Administrator, Faculty of Engineering & Science
Dr	Ramona Marfievici	Researcher, cover on SAT for Dr AnnMarie McCarthy
Mr	Sam Dawson/Aaron Buckley	Students Union President
Ms	Stephanie Kelly	Students Union Vice President for Education
Ms	Jennifer O'Leary	PhD Student, Department of Biological Sciences

Additional support is provided to the SAT from:

Ms Nicola Griffin, Office of External Affairs

² Need a web reference for this, or ideally this will be in the documents list..

The SAT itself met 12 times:

- September 2017
- November 2017
- January 2018
- February 2018
- March 2018
- April 2018
- May 2018
- June 2018
- September 2018 (x2)
- October 2018
- November 2018

Typical meeting agendas included:

- Follow-up on actions from previous meetings
- Update from National Committee
- Update from four SAT Groups
- Update on resourcing
- Review of successful submissions from other HEI's
- Discussion on data/submission document/future of SAT
- Discussion on emerging actions
- Focus on SAT actions for the next meeting.



Figure 1: Member of CIT SAT

Staff Survey and Focus Groups

A staff survey was issued to all staff in CIT by email in October 2017, with 1505 individual tokens issued, and questions included on:

- The working environment in CIT
 - Work-life Balance
 - Workplace meetings and social activities
 - Workload
 - Flexible working possibilities and arrangements
 - Family Leave arrangements
 - Performance review
- Professional Development plans for researchers
 - Academic Progression and Promotion in CIT
 - Experience of CIT as a new staff member (induction, orientation)
 - Gender Balance in the organisation of conferences/seminars/outreach activities
 - Awareness of Athena SWAN initiatives

From the 1505 tokens issued, there were 404 complete and partially complete anonymous responses (27% response rate).

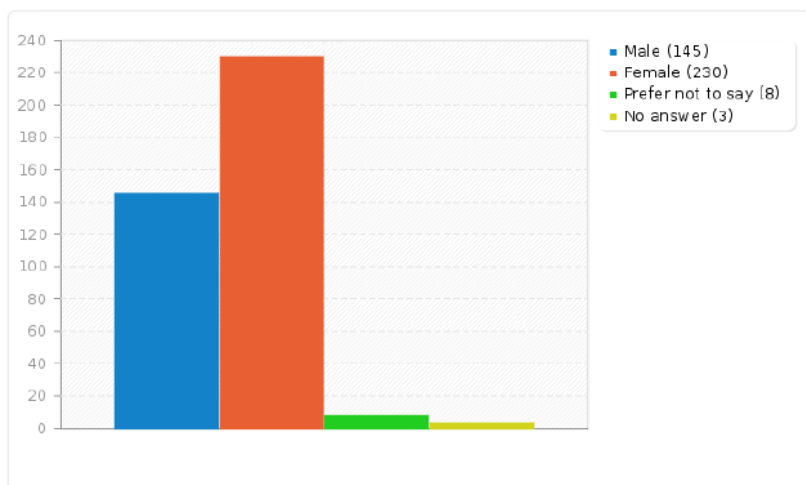


Figure 2: Survey Responses by Gender

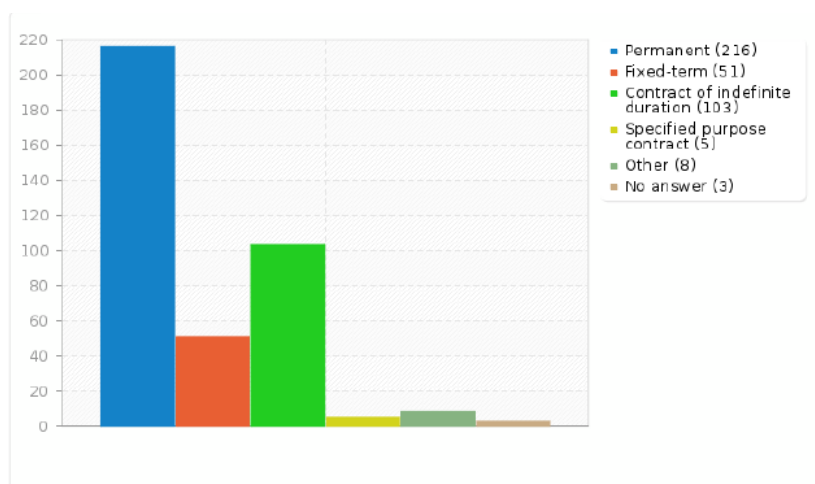


Figure 3: Survey Responses by Staff Category

Existing Initiatives in CIT to Support Female Participation in STEMM



Figure 4: FES Initiatives to increase the pipeline of females in STEM

Relating to the working environment in CIT:

"I experienced difficulties around securing additional teaching hours because I went on maternity leave."

"While policies and procedures are present in CIT they are fairly unwieldy and toothless. The general treatment of staff who do make a complaint about the manner in which they or a colleague has been treated is appalling ...Complaints only receive attention when industrial or legal action seems likely."

"Before joining CIT I was part of another higher education institution which was awarded Athena SWAN bronze. At the time I was there I did not see why they got it as there was no single women lecturer in the whole school of engineering. In my opinion, as a woman and a foreigner, CIT is a great place to work, which is open to diversities."

Other relevant documentation includes (need web links):

HEA Gender Key Facts and Figures (2018)

HEA Higher Educational Institution Staff Profiles by Gender (July 2018)

HEA Institutional Staff Profiles by Gender (2017)

Key Facts Figures Higher Education Data by Gender (2017)

Briefing Document for Athena Swan Panellists (July 2018)