

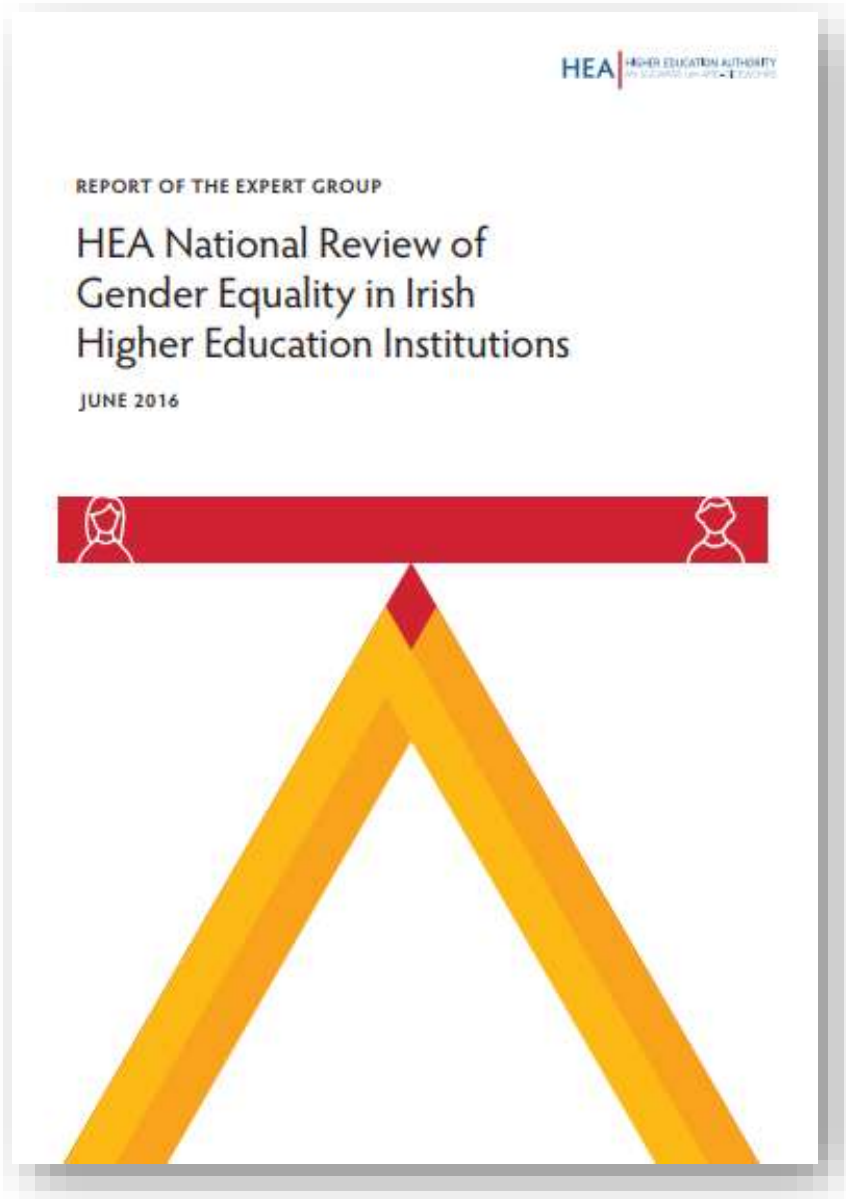


The Importance of Funding Diversity Interventions: The Irish Context

Dr Ross Woods

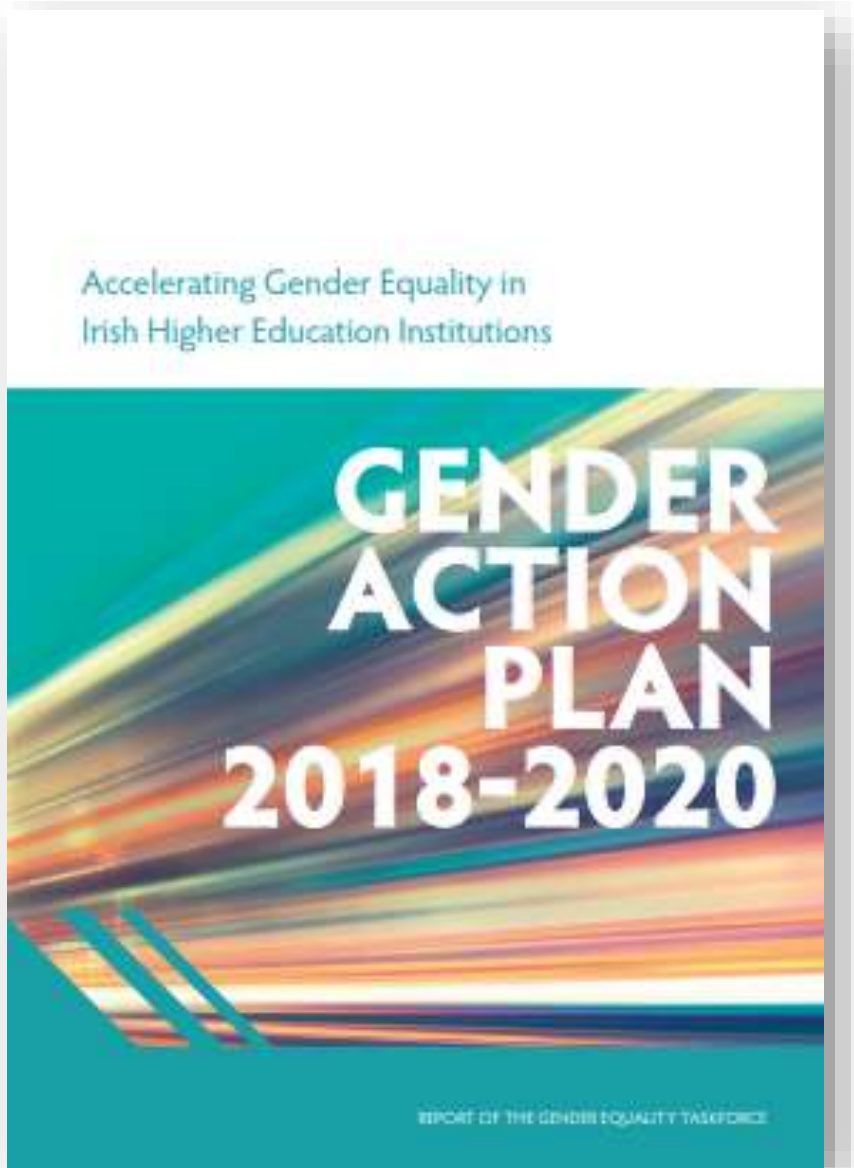
HEA Centre of Excellence for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

2016 National Review



- Important first step in highlighting the gender inequality in Irish HE
- 19% of professors female
- Recommendations for HEIs, HEA, research funding agencies and other key stakeholders
- By end 2017, progress remained slow

Gender Action Plan 2018-2020



Major actions recommended:

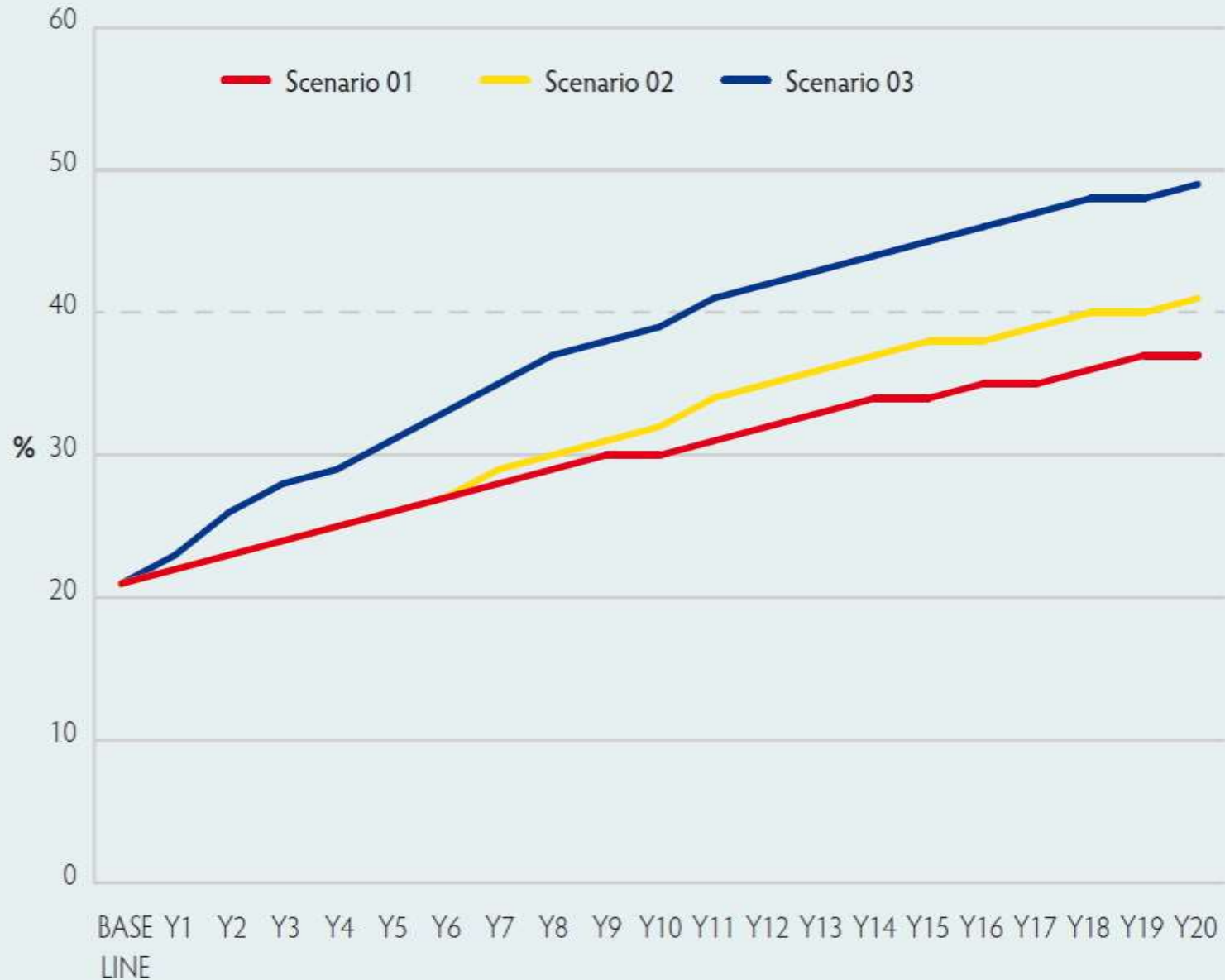
- Institutional **Gender Action Plans**
- Incentivised progress through **funding** mechanisms
- **Centre of Excellence** for Gender Equality
- **Athena SWAN** Charter in Ireland
- **Gender proofing** recruitment and promotion procedures and practices
- **Positive action** interventions

Gender Equality Work in Irish HEIs

As a result of the 2016 Review and 2018 Gender Action Plan:

- **Gender Action Plans** in place at Irish HEIs
- **Vice-Presidents/Directors EDI** appointed
- **Gender balance** on Governing Bodies, Academic Councils, Executive Management Teams
- **98 Athena SWAN** awards now held nationally

Estimated rate of change in female professors (2017 baseline)

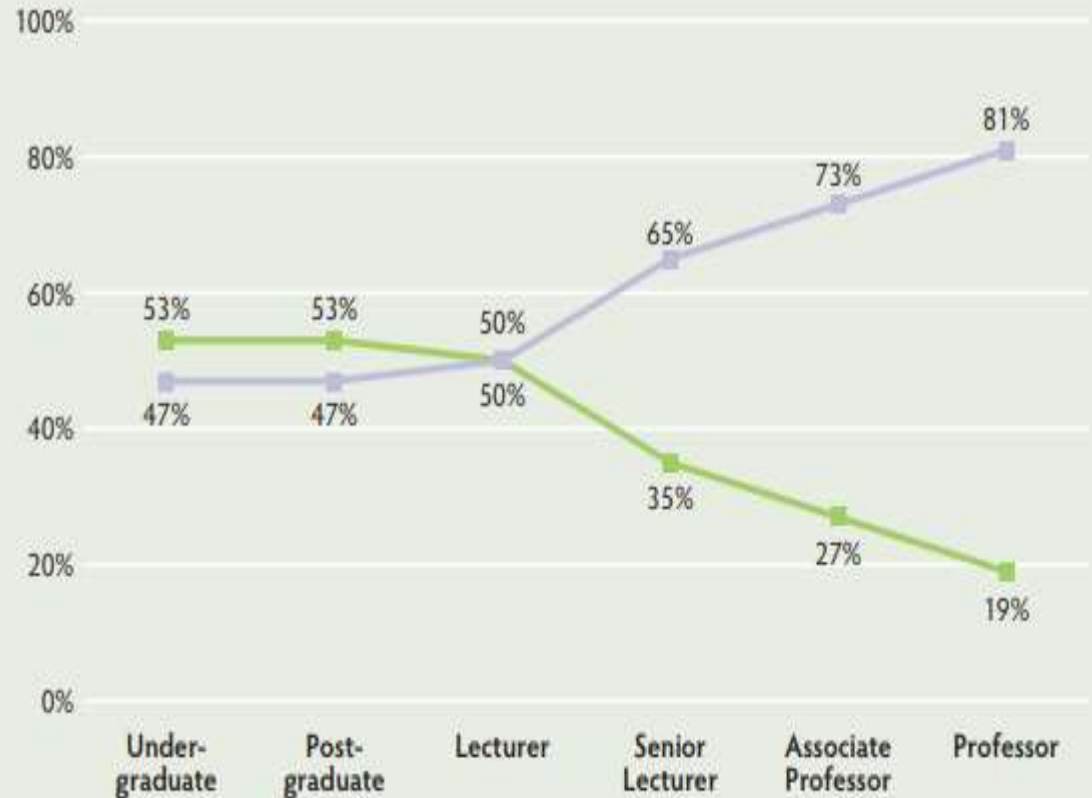


2016 Situation: University Sector Staff

Academic Core-funded Staff by Grade

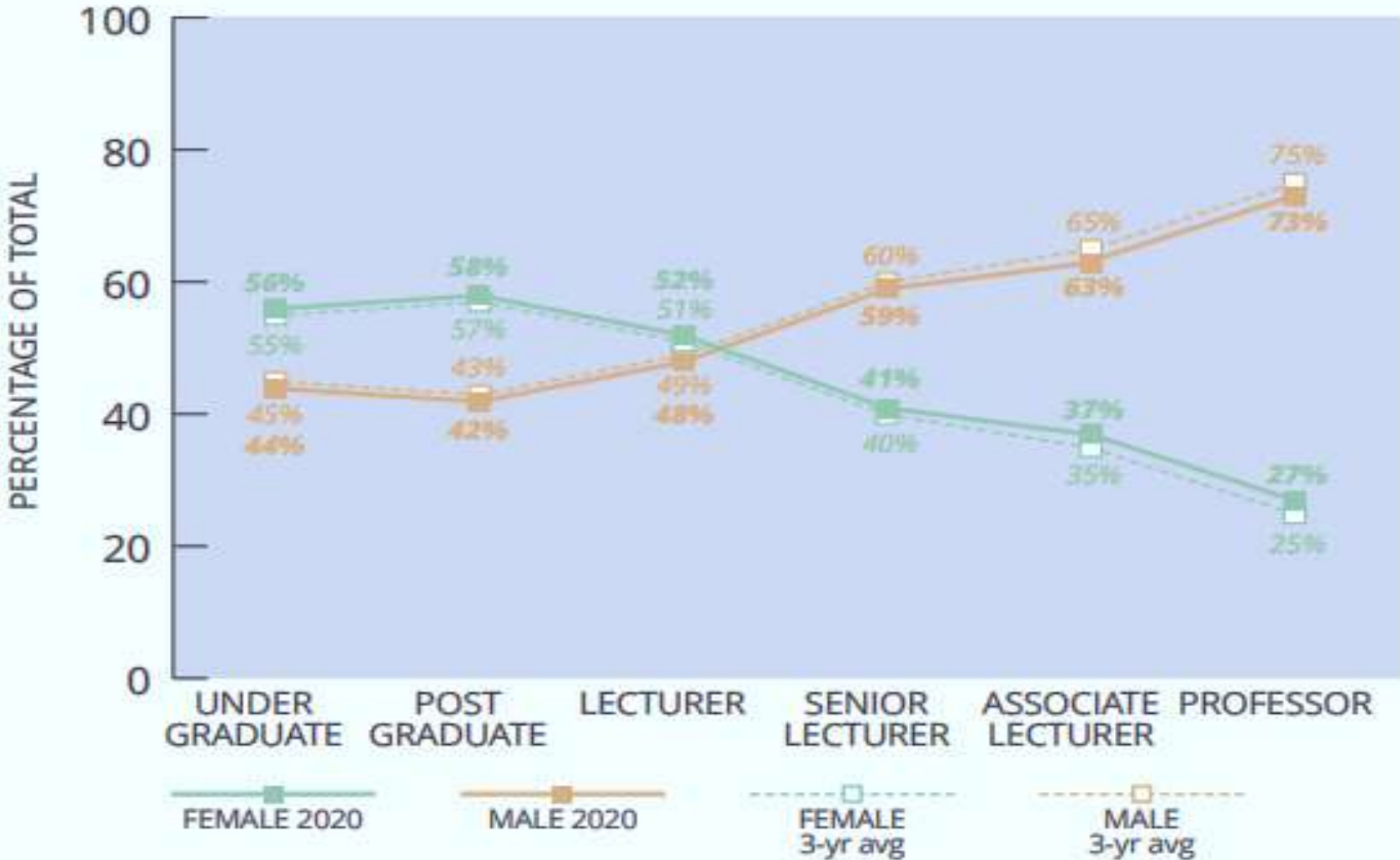
(3 year average, December 2013-2015)

Female Male



Current Situation: University Sector Staff

ACADEMIC CORE-FUNDED STAFF BY GRADE
(2020 VS 3-YEAR AVERAGE, 2017-2019)



Rate of Progress

Statistical change slow but steady

Cultural change slow and hard to measure

Need to fund **diversity interventions**

Types of Intervention

Positive action interventions:

Senior Academic Leadership Initiative

Seed funding for gender equality projects:

Gender Equality Enhancement Fund

Indirect funding with incentivisation:

Athena SWAN Ireland

Positive Action Initiative: SALI

Senior Academic Leadership Initiative (SALI)

- **45 new gender-targeted posts** to be awarded over 3 cycles
- **Complements** wider organisational & cultural initiatives
- Targeted **positive action** initiative
- New senior academic leadership posts funded in areas where:
 - there is clear evidence of **significant gender under-representation**;
 - where this appointment will have **significant impact** within the HEI and the relevant faculty/department/functional unit;
 - where they would be a proportionate and effective means to achieve **accelerated and sustainable change** within an institution.
- **New and additional** to the sector
- Same **high standard** required of applicants as for any other professorial post

Positive Action Initiative: SALI

Panel of **international experts with gender equality expertise**, as well as broad disciplinary and strategic level expertise

Key questions for panel members:

- Is HEI progressing on gender equality?
- Are HEI's appointment procedures gender-proofed? How?
- Has significant gender under-representation in the faculty/department/functional unit being put forward for new post been demonstrated?
- What impact will new post have on the departmental/functional unit? Has this been clearly demonstrated in the application?
- How does new post align with HEI strategy?

Seed Funding: GEEF

Gender Equality Enhancement Fund (GEEF)

The primary objectives of the Gender Equality Enhancement Fund are:

- to encourage **innovative approaches** to addressing gender inequality across HEIs;
- to facilitate gender equality **initiatives that respond to the recommendations** of the HEA Expert Group and/or Gender Equality Taskforce's recommended actions;
- to encourage **cross-sectoral collaboration** as a means to achieve national transformation.

Seed Funding: GEEF

Gender Equality Enhancement Fund (GEEF)

Funding is awarded in the following areas:

1. **Research** on or advancing gender equality initiatives in Ireland (€100,000)
2. **Training** programmes specifically addressing gender equality (€100,000)
3. **Athena SWAN** capacity-building activities (€50,000)

A maximum of €50,000 is awarded annually to successful applications.

Seed Funding: GEEF

To date projects have been funded across several areas including:

- Mid-career development programme for women
- Promotion of female role models in pSTEM (physical sciences, technology, engineering and mathematics)
- Development and implementation of gender identity, expression and diversity training for staff in Irish HEIs
- Establishment of **networks to support female participation** in computer science,
- Supports for the academic advancement of mid-career female staff
- Embedding equality, diversity and inclusion into the **curriculum, teaching and learning and teacher education**
- Support for the increased visibility and participation of **women economists in public discourse**
- Research into the **impact of menopause** on the careers of women in Irish higher education

Indirect Funding: Athena SWAN

- Athena SWAN Ireland is funded nationally by the Higher Education Authority for all publicly funded higher education institutions
- Recognised as key driver of Gender Equality across the HE system
- Athena SWAN accreditation linked to whole of institution eligibility for access to research funding from main public research funding bodies
- Ensures implementation of national policy recommendation that all institutions have a GEP
- 100% of public HEIs currently hold Athena SWAN awards

Thank You

Further information:

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