



BeWiSe

Belgian Women in Science

Enjoy the benefits of our mentoring programme covering all scientific institutions, regions and language communities in Belgium



Dynamic

FLEXIBLE



Tania Van Loon, President of BeWiSe - 2020



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Why

- Built on BeWiSe's past mentoring programme (since 2010)
- Format also inspired by other mentoring experiences
- Complementary to existing programmes at universities
- Concrete aim : **support women scientists at crucial moments in their career**

Typically: completing thesis/begin post-doc to help with career choices (can also start earlier)

- Global objective: contribute to achieving more gender balance in Belgium



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Some Belgian figures

Source: EC She figures 2015

We are still looking for gender equality

- BE has 44% women PhD graduates and 33.5% women researchers
- 14.7% women researchers in higher education have precarious contract vs. 9.5% men
- Amongst the R&D personnel in higher education:
men have 82% researchers/12% technicians/6% other staff women have 65% researchers/20% technicians/15% other staff
- Gender pay gap average 16.6% AND widens with age
- “Scissor” proportion of women academic staff
Grade C 35.8%, Grade B 31.0%, Grade A 15.6%
(improved vs. 9 years before: C 33.1%, B 20.7%, A 9%)



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Benefits

Mentor

- Get new insights into your current way of working
- Contribute to someone's else professional growth, "give back" to the profession
- Pass on knoweldge & experience
- Help to prioritize (things that DO matter for the future)

Mentee

- Increase career satisfaction (impact of work, learn soft skills, attitudes, habits)
 - Discuss questions that matter to you (that you would normally not dare to ask)
 - Learn how to set priorities in the professional environment
- Learn new things about yourself
 - Expand your personal network



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Be committed

Mentor

- Help minimize the barriers that hinder young women scientists
- Identify the goals for the relationship
- Consider personal work style
- Gratefully pass on knowledge
- Be prepared to disengage if realise cannot help enough

Mentee

- Be prepared and clarify own values, preferences in personality and important work attitudes
- Consider how to fit work style with mentoring approach
- Set clear goals and objectives

+ BeWiSe selection committee as matchmaking body and mediator



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Matching concept

- 1 mentor (>10 years experience after doctoral degree)
+ 1 mentee (advanced stage doctoral work or post-doc)
No hierarchical relationship – different fields of research
Across institutions, regions and language communities
Preferably 1 mentor has only 1 mentee at one time
Male mentees may apply, priority given to women mentees
- **Voluntary basis, common interests, mutual commitment**
- Proposed matching based on availability, declared objectives
& compatible work styles – to be confirmed by the pair





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Programme

Typically **12 months of personalized, informal support**

- Exchange regularly by phone, e-mail & face-to-face
- Meet & exchange in a broader circle: **focused lunches**
- Share key findings with BeWiSe at the end

Examples of Lunch & Learn topics

- *Expanding my scientific network*
- *Work-life balance*
- *How to go abroad*
- *How to write good publications*
- *Considering gender aspects of research*



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Application process

- Call for mentors and for mentees continuously open
Submit your application to info@bewise.be
Form + letter (and for mentees CV + synthesis of thesis & advancement stage)
- *Become BeWiSe member (yearly fee 25 eur) www.bewise.be/membership/*
- BeWiSe selection committee suggests potential mentor
- Mentee and mentor discuss, agree on their relation, fill in their joint mentoring pair form (shared objectives + start date)
- Mentee/mentor contacts BeWiSe without delay if mismatch or in case of difficulty hindering the mentoring
- Mentor and mentee submit their joint feedback form within 1 month after end of mentoring
- Mentor and mentee submit their reimbursement forms and all original pieces of evidence to treasurer@bewise.be (<1 month after spending)