



 Maastricht University

# Female Empowerment Maastricht **YEAR REPORT**

December 2022



## Foreword and reading guide

The **Female Empowerment Maastricht University** network – otherwise known as **FEM** – is a network of academic and administrative staff representing the faculties and offices of Maastricht University. Our network was established in 2018 through a Diversity and Inclusivity grant, awarded by the UM Diversity and Inclusivity Advisory Council. After a successful pilot year, FEM has since become a key part of UM's Diversity and Inclusivity Office, contributing to the overall efforts of the University to minimise gender disparities and promote a diverse, fair, and equitable work environment for all.

In this report, we provide an overview of our activities and accomplishments from the past year and lay out some of our plans for the future. The report is structured in **three parts**. First, we provide an introduction of FEM, who we are, what we do, and how our work benefits the UM community. Then, we present some highlights of our accomplishments and activities from the past year. The third part of this report is dedicated to the future plans of the FEM team, on the lessons learned since our establishment in 2018, and on the ways forward for our network within the UM community.

Lastly, FEM would like to express their gratitude, and **thank the university and faculties** for helping financing these projects.

Kind Regards,  
the FEM Executive Board

*Aurélie Carlier (Chair)*  
*Alexx Allen-de Rijk*  
*Danai Petropoulou Ionescu*  
*Chris Pawley*  
*Christina Peristeridou*  
*Constance Sommerey*  
*Julie Goodfellow*  
*Katrien Bernaerts*  
*Luana Russo*  
*Teresa Schuhmann*  
*Nicolette Engelen*



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## FEM: About Us

### Our Mission

Through our work, we aim to promote equity and equality at Maastricht University, and specifically highlight the important role of women in academia. To achieve this goal, we have set **seven goals** that we actively work towards through a number of activities organised in **five thematic pillars**.

Specifically, **FEM's goals** are to:

- Raise awareness on the problems of gender equality and equity within the UM community;
- Encourage an open discussion and welcome all viewpoints on gender equality in terms of career and work life within UM;
- Identify current issues and problematic areas of gender equality and equity requiring attention and contribute to shape policies that tackle them;
- Facilitate collaborative interaction between junior and senior staff members at UM, staff from different faculties, and staff holding different faculty positions (e.g. administrative and academic);
- Increase the visibility of women in academia;
- Highlight and promote female leaders at UM;
- Cooperate with other platforms within and outside the Netherlands (e.g. Landelijk Netwerk Vrouwelijke Hoogleraren, European Women in Mathematics, Athena's Angels) who share a similar vision.

To realise the goals described above, FEM has delineated five thematic pillars which have been the basis of our activities since 2018:

- **Training**  
FEM organises tailored workshops that: (i) build academic skills and leadership qualities; (ii) strengthen communication and promotion (e.g. negotiation skills) and (iii) raise awareness of behaviour-related topics, e.g. implicit bias, bystander intervention techniques.
- **Mentoring**  
Having gained expertise through our FEM Mentorship Pilot programme, held in 2018-2019, FEM aims to set up and host regular mentorship programs.
- **Informing**  
Through different platforms – the UM and D&I websites, our social media platforms, and the UM-wide newsletters – we maintain a steady stream of communication between FEM and the general UM community and beyond. There, we focus on information transfer, for instance by sharing information on relevant events, grant competitions and other career opportunities, books and other sources relating to gender issues in academia.
- **Networking**  
We provide the fora for various networking events: a yearly symposium, keynote events, and lunches on various topics where participants can discuss and reflect on relevant topics of the UM policy or general academic politics on gender issues, e.g. tenure track policy, family friendly work conditions, book clubs.
- **Policy**  
Since 2020, FEM is aiming to become more involved in policy shaping. In particular, we are in contact with funding agencies at the national and international level. Moreover, we aim to write policy texts with recommendations to improve gender equality and equity within the UM community. Since 2021, the fifth *policy* pillar has been added to the FEM agenda.

## The FEM Team

### How we organise ourselves

The FEM board is structured in four teams:

- The **Organisation and Management team** which coordinates the external relations of FEM, the FEM budget and is responsible for an active communication and interaction among the teams;
- The **Events team** which advertises, plans and organises FEM activities which can range from lunches to annual events;
- The **Policy and Publications team** which takes policy initiatives where needed and is responsible for FEM policy work, policy statements, and general publications;
- The **Professional Development team** which plans and organises trainings and will set-up a mentoring program.

The FEM board is composed of 11 members of academic and administrative staff of all UM faculties. On a monthly basis all FEM board members come together to discuss the general matters relating to the activities and goals of FEM. The FEM board is further supported by the assistance of a student assistant (Federica Broggi) as well as a body of volunteer Ambassadors which help promote and set-up FEM activities.

FEM is an entirely bottom-up community-based institution and all FEM Board members consider their role as service work and part of academic citizenship, and as such contribute on a voluntary basis. Moving forward, we hope that more members of the UM staff community will join our work, regardless of their gender, position, or background. In this way, the aim of FEM is to internally reflect the same values of diversity and inclusivity that the organisation actively promotes. Our activities developed organically based on the needs of women staff in academia and currently we are focusing on consolidating these activities and professionalising our organisational structure.

### The FEM Board

Name	Role	Faculty & unit	Start FEM Board
Alexx Allen-de Rijk	Member Events team	SBE   SBEAO	2020
Katrien Bernaerts	Chair Professional Development team	FSE   AMIBM	2021
Aurélie Carlier	Member Organization and management team	FHML   MERLN	2018
Nicolette Engelen	Member Policy and Publications team	MUO   Academic Affairs	2020
Christina Peristeridou	Member Organization and management team	FdR   Criminal Law	2018
Luana Russo	Member Policy and Publications team	FASoS   Politics	2018
Teresa Schuhmann	Chair Policy and Publications team	FPN   Cognitive Neuroscience	2020
Constance Sommerey	Member Organization and management team	BU   D&I Office	2018

Julie Goodfellow	Chair Events team	SBE   Administration Office	2022
Danai Petropoulou Ionescu	Member Organization and management team	FdR  Public Law	2018
Chris Pawley	Chair Events team	FSE   Coordinator Academic Advising	2022
Federica Broggi	Student Assistant	FdR & D&I Office	2022

### The FEM Ambassador Team

Name	Faculty or Unit
Sharon Anyango	FASoS
Fèlix Ruiz Cabré	Campus Brussels
Julia Sewall	FSE
Katherine Bassil	FHML
Judith Cosemans	BIOCH
Lisa Bruggen	SBE
Carla Haelermans	SBE
Marlies Gijs	FHML
Klara Scupakova	FHML
Berta Cillero Pastor	FHML
Saskia Ludwig	MERLN
Esra Güben Kaçmaz	MERLN

Former members of the FEM Executive Board are listed in the Table below.

Name	Faculty or Unit	Start FEM Board	End FEM Board
Jessica Alleva	FPN	2018	2019
Aida Abiad Monge	SBE	2018	2019
Alie de Boer	FSE (UCV)	2018	2019
Christel van Gool	FHML	2018	2019
Sophie Kells	MUO	2019	2019
Rianne Fijten	FHML	2019	2021

## Highlights of FEM 2021-2022: accomplishments & activities

Since the [launch of FEM in 2018](#), we have worked hard to provide interesting and engaging activities for the UM community. On the basis of the five thematic pillars of FEM, here we present the highlights of our accomplishments and activities through the past three years.

### Training

FEM members are regularly asked to give trainings and workshops on the topic of gender equity and inclusivity for students and PhD candidates. In this respect, we have collaborated with various groups and faculties as DKE, FHML, FASoS and the Global Citizenship Education Initiative.

More specifically, in response to requests from the UM community to introduce professional trainings focusing on FEM topics, FEM has organised a number of training sessions. Specifically, in collaboration with the UM Staff Career Centre, we currently offer the following trainings to UM staff (both academic as well as admin). To further support the UM community, FEM covers 25-50% of the participation fees for each participant.

### Negotiation

Negotiation happens every day as soon as two (groups of) individuals have different wishes. At Maastricht University, negotiation is vital to advance in your career, whether it's about authorship, research time, or salary scale. In order to become a good negotiator, you need some theory on the different types of negotiation, each with their own dynamics. Participants practice two types of negotiation, the distributive and the shadow negotiation. We delve into the moves and turns and the persuasion tactics you may be confronted with during a negotiation. Knowing, and dealing with, your sensitivities that may trigger you in ineffective responses is also part of this workshop. This workshop is a mix of theory, negotiation exercises, video fragments and exchanging experiences and strategies.

Due to the success of the training programme held from 2019, in 2021 FEM held 3 more sessions of the training "Negotiation skills for women in academia" in collaboration with the UM Staff Career Centre. These online sessions were sold-out within a day, highlighting their success and the high demand.



### Bridging the communication gap

Within Maastricht University you are expected to work with people from all over the globe. In collaboration cultural differences play a considerable role, as does gendered communication. Oftentimes we're hardly aware of our and other people's perspective. This 1 day workshop highlights the dynamics of cultural and gendered differences in communication and offers tools to bridge gaps in your interactions. The training offers an introduction to theory about effective and inclusive communications and invites participants to exchange experiences and practice your specific situation.

The bridging the communication gap training was organised in total 3 times (including the pilot) during 2022. This 1 day on site workshop highlights the dynamics of cultural and gendered differences in communication and offers tools to bridge gaps in your interactions. At the end of 2022, a new negotiation course was organised, this time given by Topvrouw.nl. The October session was such a success that there was a waiting list and a new session was immediately scheduled for December.

## Active Bystander Training (together with Maastricht Young Academy)

The active bystander training was organised one time in 2021 (pilot) and 3 times in 2022 (2 times online, one time onsite) by the Staff Career Centre, FEM and MYA. Imagine witnessing unacceptable behaviours. Think of for example bullying, (sexual) harassment, belittling, discrimination etc. It's pretty hard to be the one to speak up. You might be afraid or you don't want to be the first to speak up, or maybe others may say you are overreacting ... Yet, you know that matters like this can very well contribute to a toxic culture in the workplace and lead to socially unsafe work circumstances. How to challenge inappropriate behaviours? How to become an active bystander? In this training people learn how to challenge inappropriate behaviours. Based on the feedback of the participants, an extension of this training was introduced twice at the end of 2022 in order to be able to cover more personal cases.

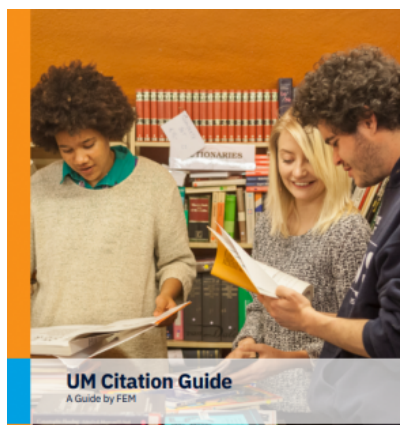
## Informing

An important pillar of the FEM activities is **providing and summarising information** that can be used by UM community members to educate themselves and their peers about gender disparities in academia and potential solutions to close the gender gap. Thus far, information relating to FEM can be found on our [official website](#) or the new [UMployee page](#). Other places you can find information are:

- Internal and external FEM & [diversity events](#)
- Information on confidential advisors
- Our own [publications and resources](#)
- External links to [websites of women's societies](#)
- Information on rights and procedures, in particular [maternity leave and parental care](#)
- Inspirational blogs, video's, websites and books
- Resources for self-education and inspiration

We are also active on [Twitter](#) and [LinkedIn](#), and [Instagram](#). With these social media accounts we aim to advertise our events but also to bring more attention to topics of gender equity and lastly to connect with other similar organisations in the Netherlands and the world. As such we facilitate the worldwide image of the UM as a university where initiatives such as FEM are welcomed and supported and where issues of gender equity are taken seriously. It is worth mentioning that our accounts are followed by several influential individuals and academic organisations and that this can also increase the visibility and good reputation of the UM.

With the goal of further informing the UM community of - often forgotten - issues that relate to gender equity and equality, FEM actively works on creating accessible publications for all staff members that aim to inform and promote action.



For instance, in 2021, inspired by various publications on citational justice and the very well-attended launch by Prof. Wyatt (see below), Hang Nguyen, Lidwien Hollanders, Nicole Basaraba, Sharon Anyango and Aurélie Carlier (on behalf of FEM) compiled the [FEM citation guide](#). The goal of the citation guide is to open up the discussion around citation practices within academia and research at the university level. Research has shown that women and other marginalised groups are systematically under-cited, and this guide highlights different ways citation practices can be used to make more visible the contributions of women and other underrepresented groups in the production of knowledge. The citation guide received a lot of social media attention and the authors were invited to write a piece on the LSE blog called « Aspirational metrics – A guide for



working towards citational justice". In addition Prof. Wyatt and Dr. Carlier were invited to give a lecture at the Centre for Science and Technology Studies, Leiden University on the guide which resulted in a very inspiring discussion and was very well-received. Currently, Sharon Anyango, Aurélie Carlier (on behalf of FEM) and Hang Nguyen turning the suggested practices in the citation guide into an educational toolkit, funded by a 2022 D&I grant.

## Networking

Throughout the academic year, FEM organises frequent thematic events that highlight issues relating to the overall mission of the organisation, and that provide the opportunity for members of the UM community to meet, exchange, and reflect together. While FEM participates (e.g. as guests or co-organisers) in several events, our own events usually follow the following formats: lunches, keynotes, annual events, and the women researchers' festival.

## FEM Lunch Series

Between November 2021 and November 2022 FEM organised 11 **lunches** with 20-40 participants on various topics. Here we present the titles and speakers of the lunches in chronological order.

Theme of the lunch	Speaker
UM Cares: Financial support for carers	Natasja Reslow
Holding ourselves accountable: Overcoming bias in citation practices	Sally Wyatt
The Matilda Effect: The erasure of female scientific role models	Berta Cillero Pastor
Peer Reviewing and the Use of Neutral Language	Michael Erard
Lady Mary Wortley Montagu – Why Women's Voices Matter	Cassy Juhasz
Where do we put Trans Femmes in feminism?	Mathilde Kennis
Empathy in Teaching	Robyn Ausmeier
FEM and men	Chris Pawley & Christoph Rausch Félix Ruiz Cabré
Emotions for Effective Science communication	Sueli Brodin



To better understand and discuss topics that are specifically relevant for administrative members of staff (e.g. sustainable employment, career opportunities, talent development) as well as provide a networking opportunity for admin staff, we organised two **Meet & Greet sessions for admin staff at UM!** Both meetings were very much appreciated, including thoughtful conversations and providing the FEM board with very useful information to further improve their admin staff support.

## FEM Keynote Series

In addition to the lunches, FEM organised three keynote series in which FEM invited high profile speakers to inspire the UM community. These FEM keynote series were very well attended with over 100 (online) participants.

FEM keynote series	Speaker
<p><b><i>Fighting the Myth of Female Inferiority</i></b> The talk covered the topics of misogyny in academia and how we might build a better science of sex, gender, and human variation in the future. In her own words, « since the birth of the European scientific establishment, women have been excluded because of pseudoscientific myths about female intellectual inferiority. How has this damaged our understanding of human difference through the centuries, and allowed sexism to perpetuate? ».</p>	<p><i>Angela Saini</i> presents science programmes on the BBC, and her writing has appeared in New Scientist, The Sunday Times, National Geographic, and Wired. Her latest book, <i>Superior: The Return of Race Science</i>, was a finalist for the LA Times Book Prize and named a book of the year by The Telegraph, Nature and Financial Times. Her previous book, <i>Inferior: How Science Got Women Wrong</i>, has been translated into fourteen languages. She has a master's in engineering from the University of Oxford and was a Fellow at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. In 2020 she was named one of the world's top 50 thinkers by Prospect magazine.</p>
<p><b><i>Breaking the Stigma of the Impostor Syndrome</i></b> Do you secretly worry about not being as intelligent or as capable as others might think you are? Let's discuss a way out of this self-disruptive behavior! "You can't expect other people to value your work if you don't"</p>	<p><i>Dr. Valerie Young</i> – internationally-known expert on impostor syndrome and writer of the book "The Secret Thoughts of Successful Women: Why Capable People Suffer from the Impostor Syndrome and How to Thrive in Spite of It"</p>
<p><b><i>How to be the best version of yourself in an ever-changing context</i></b> You can't always control environmental factors, but you can learn to keep your balance in an ever-changing world. More than ever, we are facing fundamental changes and challenges. Get to know Elke, her social mission, and how she pursues that mission! With her career and initiatives, Elke Van Hoof keeps her finger on the pulse of the academic world, the professional field and psychology, enabling her to incorporate unique insights into work-related clinical psychology.</p>	<p><i>Prof. Dr. Elke Van Hoof</i> is a researcher, expert, author, manager and public speaker. Embodying a unique combination of business expertise, psychology and academic research, Elke is a pioneer as she not only focuses on what needs to be done, but also on how this should be done. In order to change the predominant paradigm on stress and help more people flourish in changing contexts, she founded Ally Institute (2020) and Huis voor Veerkracht (2013). <a href="http://www.elkevanhoof.com">www.elkevanhoof.com</a> Elke van Hoof</p>
<p><b><i>FEM Book Launch: The No Club</i></b> <i>The No Club: Putting a Stop to Women's Dead-End Work</i> discusses how women are</p>	<p><i>Prof. Lise Vesterlund</i> is the Andrew W. Mellon Professor of</p>

often disproportionately asked and expected to take on unrewarded and non-promotable tasks which leave them overcommitted, while companies forfeit revenue. This book launch event will address issues relating to the gendered dimension of structural service work.

the Department of Economics at the University of Pittsburgh. She is also a Research Associate with the National Bureau of Economic Research. She works in two distinct research areas: charitable giving and gender differences in the labour market. Her work on charitable giving aims to determine why we give to charity, and on how solicitation strategies influence donations to organisations. Her research on gender sheds light on why men continue to be more successful than women in climbing the corporate ladder.

## FEM Annual Event 2022

The topic for the **FEM Annual Event 2022** was focused on **“helpers” and “doers” and the role of service workers in Academia** and took place at the Bonnefanten museum. The topic was introduced by two guest speakers – Rector Magnificus Pamela Habibović and Dr. Luana Russo – followed by a panel discussion welcoming different actors having a role to play in Service Work at Maastricht University. In particular, dr. Luana Russo (FEM board member) presented the results of the study **“helpers and doers” project**, funded by a Diversity and Inclusivity grant, conducted by Luana Russo, Danai Petropoulou Ionescu (FEM board member), and Annika Nubold (FPN). The project focused on the questions about who, why, and under which circumstances academics at UM engage in citizenship behaviours and how this affects their well-being, personal development and academic success. The inspiring afternoon ended with a reception, where there was ample opportunity to network with fellow colleagues, amid nice drinks and bites.



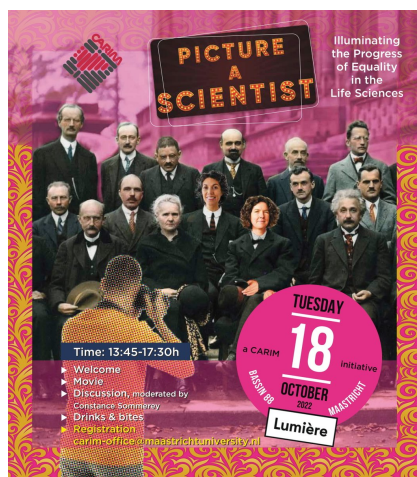
## Women Researchers' Festival 2022



To celebrate **International Women's Day 2022**, FEM hosted the **Women Researchers' Festival!** This event was hosted online on Monday 7 March 2022, between 10.00 and 15.30. The goal of the Women Researchers' festival is to promote the innovative spirit of women researchers of all faculties of UM and all ranks (both students and staff), and to foster possible collaborations amongst them. This year we had three inspiring sessions with 24 speakers that highlighted the exciting research conducted at all UM faculties.

## External Events

On 8 March 2022, Aurélie Carlier, on behalf of FEM, moderated the [Women in Data Science \(WIDS\) 2022](#) Career panel session in which dr. Stankova, dr. Zinger and dr. Pijlman shared their career paths, tips and tricks to keep a healthy work-life balance and what it is like to be a woman in the data science field.



On 18 October 2022, CARIM hosted the “[Picture a Scientist](#)” movie event at Lumière Cinema, where they invited the CARIM members to discuss questions like “When looking at portrayals of scientists – do you recognise yourself in these? How do you picture a scientist within CARIM? Is there a ‘standard’ and what does that mean for those that deviate from that standard?” The discussion was moderated by Constance Sommerey and Aurélie Carlier (on behalf of FEM). The event was also the kick-off of CARIM’s working group on Diversity, Inclusivity and Social Safety.

## Policy

Within UM, FEM is aiming to become more involved in policy shaping and policy implementation. Through our work, which includes writing policy texts with recommendations and participating in several advisory bodies at UM (e.g. Recognition & Rewards), we work to improve the general gender equality and equity within the UM community.

### COVID-19 pandemic related policy work

When the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020, it became quickly clear that the academic response to COVID-19 might not immediately take the gendered dimension of the pandemic into account. As both formal and informal care structures such as child care, elderly care and housework seem to fall apart, the work-life balance of scholars and university staff with caring responsibilities suffered. As, typically, care tasks as such still fall on the shoulders of women, the gender dimension of the pandemic measures became very evident. Editors saw a significant drop in submissions from women academics and many young researchers were and are worried how these changes in productivity would affect their careers in the long run. Considering that staff members with care responsibilities have been severely negatively impacted by the measures against the pandemic due to the lack of care facilities in combination with the continuation of administrative, teaching, and research activities within UM, FEM drafted a [white paper on mitigating the negative effects of covid-19](#) on caregivers at Maastricht University. With this position paper, FEM urges the UM to take an array of concrete **post-covid measures** to counterbalance the negative impact on the output of its **employees** (irrespective of gender or position) **with care responsibilities** (irrespective of the type of responsibility). The suggestions of the FEM white paper have been discussed in a working group (of which two FEM board members, i.e. Dr. Luana Russo and Dr. Aurélie Carlier took part) and a concrete plan was provided to the UM Executive board.

## General gender diversity policy work

Next to pandemic related policy advice, FEM and the D&I Office have also been collaborating on doing targeted research into and offering policy advice in relation to gender equality for CARIM. This collaboration has been very fruitful and led to clear policy recommendations co-developed with CARIM's strategic board. We plan to extend such individualised services to address (gender) equality in the future. Together with [Mothers in Science](#), FEM is also developing a policy toolkit, a global call to action for funding agencies to support mothers in science as well as examples of good practice.

As from January 2022, the EU Commission requires every research or higher education institution to have a gender equality plan in place, in order to be eligible for funding from the Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027. This is part of the Commission's broader aim to strengthen and support gender equality work in the areas of research, innovation and technology. FEM was consulted and provided input to the [UM Gender Equality Plan \(GEP\)](#) which provides a good overview on what the UM has been doing and offers areas of interest by which it can deepen its work.

## Support for academics at risk

In response to the conflict in Ukraine, and keeping in mind that minorities and women tend to be affected disproportionately in conflict situations, FEM worked to establish a fellowship for Ukrainian academics to find safety within the UM community - the *Soteria Fellowship*. In early 2022, this issue was brought by FEM to the attention of the UM Executive Board, the Academic Affairs office of UM and all UM faculties. FEM also supported faculty-level initiatives through funding and administrative capacity. Specifically, FEM donated **6.000 EUR** to the crowdfunding call of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FASoS) to fund an extended research stay for a Ukrainian scholar. The scholar has been working at the Department of Arts and Literature since September 2022.

## Future FEM Plans

What's in store for FEM in the future? With four years of experience, we now are ready to take the next step as an organisation and broaden our reach. Reflecting the feedback we have gathered from the UM community, we will continue to expand our existing projects and also make room for more FEM activities that aim to further our overall mission of promoting gender equity and equality in the UM community.

## Current Projects and New Ideas

As we saw earlier, the activities of FEM are organised on the basis of five thematic pillars: **training, mentoring, networking, informing** and **policy advising**. Below, we elaborate on the existing activities that we would like to further expand as well as new projects that we believe will benefit the UM community. In addition to activities, at FEM we wish to **establish a closer and more regular communication with all faculty boards**. We strongly believe that both parties can benefit from each other's perspectives, and we are motivated to work together and promote gender equity at UM.

### Training

#### What's already there?

So far, FEM has offered the following trainings: "Negotiation", "Bridging the communication gap" and "Active bystander". For all trainings we cover 25-50% of the participation fees for each participant.

#### What's coming?

We are currently exploring offering more trainings to the UM community, for example a training on unconscious bias. We are in contact with the developers of select programmes, such as: "*I*" *Lead Women's*

*Development Programmes, Everywoman of Influence in Tech Programme, and Sustainable engagement of your female workforce*, to see whether we can collaborate and offer these to the FEM community via the Staff Career Centre. Following our approach with the existing trainings, FEM aims to cover the costs of the development along with 25% of the participation fee for each participant. In addition, we will help to professionalise inclusivity competencies in various training settings in cooperation with the D&I Office.

## Mentoring

### What's already there?

During the first year of the FEM network, we set up a one-to-one mentorship pilot programme, coordinated by Alie de Boer and Christel van Gool. While we received positive feedback from both the mentors and the mentees involved in the pilot programme, we were not able to continue with the setting up of a mentorship programme.

### What's coming?

In 2023 we hope to be able to resume the coordination of the mentorship programme. At present, we are considering to facilitate setting up group-based mentoring and topic-based mentoring in order to increase the coverage of the programme, and provide this much requested service to as many UM community members as possible. For this we are discussing with various groups within UM, including the Maastricht Young Academy, interested staff at SBE, etc. We also aim to provide funding and support to faculties when organising events for high schools with a particular focus on providing scientific role models for students (in STEM).

## Informing

### What's already there?

As presented earlier on in this report, FEM engages in various activities that aim to share information about gender equality and equity in the workplace with the UM community. In 2022 FEM has increased their audience, exemplified by the invitations for the LSE blog and an invited lecture at Leiden University based on the FEM citation guide. In the future, we aim to maintain the platforms of communication which have been established so far and extend towards new UM platforms (UMemployee).

### What's coming?

Following the example of the LNVH, who publish a yearly LNVH Monitor to report on the ratio of men to women in academia and an overview of the current percentages of male and female professors and in management positions at Dutch academic organisations, university medical centres and other academic organisations, FEM aims to create a **FEM Monitor** for Maastricht University. The FEM Monitor will be an annual publication that reports, among others, on the general gender distribution in different UM functions and the pay gap. The FEM Monitor will be created in consultation with the UM Human Resources department and the D&I Office.

## Networking

### What's already there?

Since its establishment in 2018, FEM has organised multiple events that bring UM community members together and help them build a wider network. For instance, we organise an annual thematic event and thematic lunches, where our community members can come together and discuss important topics related to gender equity and equality. With this in mind, in light of the popularity of our lunch events – which gather on average approximately 40 participants – we aim to increase the frequency of the events and organise them on a monthly basis. In addition, FEM has introduced the “FEM keynote series”: a series of timely-distributed events where renowned academics, experts or researchers are invited as speakers to give a keynote speech about pre-selected topics. The most recent one, “Breaking the Stigma of the Impostor Syndrome” gathered an audience of almost 120 participants to discuss the challenges of this

syndrome which can reduce individuals' productivity and self-confidence within the workplace and was very well received.

#### **What's coming?**

To consolidate and professionalise our activities, FEM is planning to create a **yearly calendar**, to be released at the beginning of the academic year. The aim of this is to ensure that UM staff can plan attending FEM events well in advance as well as to coordinate with other events organised by UM organisations (e.g. Maastricht Young Academy and Platform Rei). Lastly, we want to **collaborate with other organisations** that share the same vision as FEM. Specifically, we aim to get in touch with all University organisations whose work is dedicated to promoting gender equality and build a healthy and steady communication with for example the Maastricht Young Academy or the PhD Platform. At the national level, this would include organisations such as the LNVH or the Athena's Angels at the University of Leiden.

### Policy

#### **What's already there?**

Next to pandemic related policy advice with the FEM white paper and FEM taking part of the working group, FEM was consulted and provided input the [UM Gender Equality Plan \(GEP\)](#) which provides a good overview on what the UM has been doing and offers areas of interest by which it can deepen its work. FEM and the D&I Office have also been successfully collaborating on doing targeted research into and offering policy advice in relation to gender equality for CARIM.

#### **What's coming?**

In the future, we are open to discuss the possibility of conducting targeted faculty-level or institute-level studies that are meant to take stock of the gender status quo, and provide specific recommendations to promote and support activities that will improve the gender equity and equality efforts at the unit level. In addition, FEM is happy to sit at the table and take part as discussion partner to the dialogue on the concrete implementation of policy, such as for example the R&R framework and the Starters and Incentive Grants. Finally, FEM is happy to contribute to future policy making regarding the social and workplace safety.

## Contact

FEM would be happy to discuss any of the issues raised in our report in more detail. Any questions or suggestions for any of our activities should be directed to [fem@maastrichtuniversity.nl](mailto:fem@maastrichtuniversity.nl). For more information regarding our activities please visit the [FEM website](#) and the FEM social media accounts.

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