

# **Building and developing our staff networks: Reflecting on the successes and best practice approaches of a Women's Network**

Sally Everett, Caroline Watts, Denise Thorpe, Keziah Latham  
Anglia Ruskin University, UK

STEM Gender Equality Congress 8th - 9th June 2017 / Berlin



# Session outline

- Background to Anglia Ruskin University's Women's Network
- Establishing our (new look) Women's Network
- Reflections on events and our focus
- Our approach to Athena Swan
- Staff Inclusivity Networks
- Summary and next steps



# Background to Anglia Ruskin University's Women's Network

- A faltering Women's Network in 1990s, reinvigoration and new steering group in 2014
- Promoting equality and creating a channel for networking, mentoring and raising awareness
- Leadership in HE: the challenges and realities
- Unconscious bias and leadership



# Establishing and launching our Women' Network

- Senior leadership events by DVCs– ‘life stories’
- ‘warts and all’ talks open to ALL staff
- Canvassed over 1000 staff at ‘Campus Explore’
- Survey feedback: career development, research and mentoring.



# Reflections on events and the focus of the Women's Network

- At least one event per semester, run a mentoring scheme and an annual conference on International Women's Day
- Lunchtime sessions: workshops and research seminars
- Mentoring
- Conferences 2016 and 2017....



# Conferences

- #PledgeforParity in 2016 – networking techniques
- #Be Bold for Change in 2017 – compassionate and collaborative leadership
- The ‘crab bucket’...
- *“Try and be bolder, challenge what is seen as normal, network, be more proactive about what I want to achieve, question why”,*
- *“Be true to myself. Be authentic”,*
- *“I'm going to try to become more active in the Women's Network and try to help other women and push myself to be bold and identify what I want out of my life”*

# Our approach to Athena Swan

- Bronze Award
- Developments towards departmental awards
- Changing attitudes
- Work life balance and flexible working
- Helping staff build the confidence to apply for promotion e.g. session on the imposter phenomenon





Wednesday 21 June 2017



#beinclusive



# Staff Inclusivity Networks

- Women's Network
- Part time and Flexible Workers Forum
- LGBT Network
- BME Network
- Disabled Staff Network



# Outcomes and next steps

- Strategic institutional step change
- Career development and support
- White Ribbon Campaign and House of Commons Initiative on Domestic Violence
- Increased engagement, awareness and flexibility shown by managers
- Regional alliance for Women's Network and Part-time & Flexible Workers Forum



*“Excellent overall. Thoroughly thought-provoking, and inspiring. Wonderful mix of internationally recognised speakers and our own home grown talent. An amazing line up of sessions and speakers. Great to see it go from strength to strength”*

*“The new feel Women's Network is brilliant. Keep up the good work”.*



#beinclusive

Questions?



#beinclusive