Nomination for the 1ˢᵗ Minerva Informatics Equality Award

Prof.dr. Herman Geuvers, research-director
Dr. Bernadette Smelik, managing director

Institute for Computing and Information Sciences
Radboud University
Mercator 1
6525 EC Nijmegen
The Netherlands

Brief Summary

The Institute for Computing and Information Sciences of the Radboud University in Nijmegen has the policy to appoint female candidates where possible and to stimulate their careers and promote them to a more senior position. Stakeholders within the institute received a Gender Awareness Training in 2014, which resulted in promotions for some female members and the creation of the 'Women in CS group'. A full professor of iCIS was appointed as chairman of the Working Group Gender Policy. The report of this group was implemented as Gender Policy 2016-2020 in the Faculty of Science.

Description of the initiative

The Institute for Computing and Information Sciences has the explicit policy to appoint good female staff since 2001, when the institute was allowed to expand its staff. The first six years, however, have been disappointing. The only female assistant professor who was offered a job, left within two years. Computing Science was not the only institute to have difficulties in attracting female staff and keeping them afterwards. So the Faculty of Science decided to aim for one female member in each advisory appointment committee. Since then, iCIS explicitly decided to appoint in those committees *at least* one female *staff* member equal or senior to the position advertised. The staff of the institute explicitly asks female candidates to apply to such a position and actively seeks for female candidates that may be interested. At the beginning of this policy, the institute had to depend on female staff from other institutes and other universities. This is symbolic for iCIS' strategy: aim higher and further then general university policy dictates.

Although iCIS was blessed with the coming of a number of very talented female staff members, there was always the idea that it was not yet enough. Searching for ideas and 'best practices' to boost the recruitment of women, iCIS opted for Group Model Building sessions. Senior staff members, male and female, together with female junior staff, had two sessions with the EGERA-team of the Institute for Management Research (Radboud University) in the September 2014. EGERA stands for Effective Gender Equality in Research and Academia, a EU FP7 project, that 'intends to promote a full set of measures to achieve gender equality and fight gender-based stereotypes in research and the academia' (http://www.egera.eu/). The result of these sessions was the Workbook Gender Awareness Training (see Reference List).

The recommendations in this Workbook are the following:
- International recruitment
- Active recruitment of female researchers (as a first step towards assistant professorships)
- Multidisciplinary recruitment
- Reserve staff position especially for talented females
- Active support of female staff/researchers by their managers
- Explicit guidelines for promotion to senior positions
- Mentoring of women

iCIS already actively stimulated all female staff to participate in the university's mentoring program for women, both in the roles of mentors as in those of mentees. Also, male senior staff is active in this mentoring program as mentors. The reserving of staff positions for women, was not something iCIS was allowed to do at this point. But the Institute has incorporated all other recommendations in its recruitment policy that same fall 2014.

Also in 2014, the Women in Computing Science Group was founded by the female staff (http://women.cs.ru.nl/). Every woman working at iCIS is invited to take part in (informal) lunches, meetings and discussions. This Group is supported financially by the Institute, so at least one meeting per month is possible. The group is very successful. PhD students and post-docs mix in an informal way with female staff at all levels and see that it is possible for women to have a successful academic career.

At Faculty level, the Group Model Building sessions have been held at every research institute and a Workgroup on gender was created under the supervision of a full professor from iCIS, Frits Vaandrager. This workgroup has presented its report last autumn. Recommendations include amongst others, specific instructions for job postings. The report has been implemented as Gender Policy 2016-2020 in the whole Faculty of Science only early this year, so no results can be given as yet.

Every five years, the Faculty plan for chairs ('hooglerarenplan') is updated. In the updated plan of the fall of 2015, iCIS has presented a number of professorships especially for talented females, including an associate professor from iCIS, but also one for an associate professor of another university. Although the executive board of the university still has to give its blessing to this plan, iCIS is confident that it can proceed to appoint these female researchers.

In April 2016, a new chair in Multimedia Retrieval has started as a 50-50 cooperation between iCIS and the Faculty of Arts. We have attracted a very talented female researcher for this chair.

In May 2016 iCIS decided to opt for one new position for a female assistant professor in the Christine Mohrmann scheme of the university. After five years of initial financial support, this position will be a structural one in the institute.

Also in May 2016 iCIS' position with respect to the gender targets of the Faculty of Science has been made clear by the faculty board. Of the 15 full professors aimed at in 2020, 5 will be at iCIS. In this respect iCIS is leading within the Faculty of Science in its gender awareness and in achieving its targets towards gender equality.

Impact

Since the decision to appoint a female in the advisory appointment committee, four female staff members have started at iCIS:
1 full professor (part-time)
1 associate professor (fulltime)
2 assistant professors (fulltime)

After the implementations of the recommendations in the Workbook Gender Awareness Training:
1 associate professor has been promoted to full professor
1 assistant professor has been promoted to associate professor and will become full professor as soon as the executive board of the university has agreed with the 'full professors plan' of the faculty.
2 new assistant professors and 1 full professor have started at iCIS.

<u>Women mentoring program</u>
All female staff members up to now have participated in the university's program as mentors and as mentees. One female iCIS post-doc received tenure at another faculty because of this program. Several male full professors also act as mentors in this program.

iCIS has <u>the largest number female professors</u>, especially when compared to the rest of the faculty, cf. 'Gender targets leerstoelenplan'.

Reference list

-Workboek Gender Awareness Training (in Dutch: 20141120 GMB at ICIS Eindrapport.pdf)
-Report Workgroup Gender (http://www.ru.nl/fnwi/faculteit/profiel/gender-diversiteitsbeleid/
: towards_gender_equality_in_the_faculty_of_science, on the right hand side of the screen)
-Christine Mohrmann scheme (in Dutch only: http://www.ru.nl/werken/waarom-werken-radboud-universiteit/aandacht-diversiteit/)
-Gender targets leerstoelenplan (ODO 76.4 Gender targets leerstoelenplan.pdf)
- Radboud Women of Computer Science (http://women.cs.ru.nl/)
- for information about the faculty, please go to http://www.ru.nl/science/