

Dear Colleague

**Re: GET into GEAR  
Gender Equality Action Research  
Dates: October 2009– June 2010**

We are seeking partners to become involved in this unique opportunity for West Yorkshire Colleges and Universities to work together to showcase achievement and build best practice in gender equality through action research.

The UK Resource Centre for Women in Science Engineering and Technology has secured funding through the West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network to run this exciting action research project in West Yorkshire which will be widely disseminated regionally and nationally.

Engineering, Technology and Construction have traditionally attracted and retained relatively few females in comparison to the number of males. Evidence suggests that some women in this environment can experience being in a minority as alienating and isolating, others feel that they have to become 'one of the lads' in order to fit in.

The project has two key elements i.e. to develop and evaluate a CPD model for addressing gender inclusion through action research and to engage partner organisations to carry out action research within their institution and explore practical ways of creating an environment which is conducive to both males and females.

This will be broken down into the following areas of interest;

- teaching styles and methods
- visibility of female role models within course/ industry
- content of course
- student support and pastoral care

**Benefits to Partners:**

- Develop practical ways to enhance current gender equality practice within your institution
- Your college/ university practice will be showcased regionally and nationally by being a part of this high profile project.
- You will have evidence for OFSTED on addressing equality and diversity within practice.
- Fulfil the quality assurance requirements to demonstrate scholarly activity in FE and HE.
- Provide staff development hours to fulfil requirements for 30 hours per year.

## Commitment

- carry out action research in the classroom
- participate in three stage meetings throughout the project
- produce research report
- attend dissemination event
- have/give departmental support for research

Most of the research will be carried out as action within the classroom although there will be a need for some preparation, this will vary depending upon the subject of the research. 15-30 hours across the project.

The UK Resource Centre for Women in Science, Engineering and Technology will:

- plan and run the events
- facilitate communication between project participants
- provide 15-30 hours support to each institution
- produce final report and dissemination materials
- disseminate findings through events, national networks and website
- Evaluate the project's value as a form of staff development

The first event will be on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 at the UK Resource Centre for Women in SET.

If you are interested in becoming involved please contact Helen Collier or Gill Rooker on the numbers below

Yours faithfully

Helen Collier  
Regional Innovation Manager

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## Milestones and processes

	October	November meeting	Research activity	February meeting	Research activity	April meeting	Research activity	June meeting
Face to face meetings		Background Information and scene setting  Preparing for research		First progress meeting		How to complete and write up research		Celebration of completed research. Dissemination
Participants' activities			Produce outline plan and share with others for comment		Short report on progress so far- data, any issues to be resolved – share with others		Final report completed and circulated May	Possible opportunity for short presentations of completed projects
UKRC activities	Meeting with Colleges involved identify any training needs	Assembling resources .  Organising + running event. Example of successful practitioner action research	Facilitators and system for dealing with questions, also possible seeding of discussions Assistance with research	Structure meeting to share progress and issues in a supportive fashion. Maybe input	Continue to support. Design system for dealing with early writing, and also expert commenting by organisers	Example of successful research report, perhaps presentation by someone. Design activities to help people with their writing	Continue to support. Design system for dealing with final report and expert commenting	Structure the day to help people see what they might do next. Also possibility of inviting interested others to hear about research.

