questions

Section 1: In brief

Q1 Do you believe progress has been made towards achieving gender equality in the STEM

workplace in Scotland since 2012?

Yes

Q2 If yes, what action(s) do you believe have had the greatest impact on improving gender

equality in STEM in Scotland?

Awareness campaigns

Gender balance on recruitment/interview panels

Q3 Where you do not believe progress has been made, or could be improved upon, what do

you believe have been the key limiting factors?

More equality in the burden of caring for children/parents

Q4 Which of the recommendations made in the 2012 Tapping All Our Talents report do you

believe should be prioritised going forward? (List maximum of 3).

Q5 What further recommendations (if any) would you make to policy-makers, educators or

employers to tackle gender inequality in STEM in Scotland? (List maximum of 3).

A huge amount more capacity for fathers to take equal parental leave. I feel like there is more awareness of this in academic sector (which tends to be more liberal) but most of us are not in dual academic partnerships. There will not be gender equality until equal paternity leave is a standard option.

Section 2: In detail

Women in STEM in Scotland 2018

Q6 What lessons do you believe have been learned from initiatives undertaken since 2012

to tackle gender inequality in the STEM workforce across the public, academic and/or

industry sectors? Examples of good practice would be useful.

Athena Swan was a great initiative, however there are a few major problems with it: It tends to fall to women and minority to manage and it is a huge amount of work – which is not recognised. It rewards novelty over consistency. It is a box ticking exercise, a department can give the appearance of doing lots, without actually changing anything much.

I am currently taking part in an 'Ingenious and Enterprising Women Scotland' course – it is brilliant. It is very empowering to join up in a women's network and have the space to think about and discuss career development and life in a non-competitive inspiring environment.

Q7 In 2018's economic, political and social context, what do you consider to be the key

influencers (positive and negative) on gender equality in STEM in Scotland?

Highlighting positive role models

More open discussion about issues surrounding gender equality

Q8 To what extent to you believe that the issue of gender inequality in STEM is being recognised

as a priority and to what extent do you believe that rhetoric is being met with action?

I think it is recognised as a priority and there is a real drive currently to improve things – I think the burden of this action often falls to the most engaged people and a lot of very senior people are getting away with taking credit without engaging. If you are a minority then you are expected to be engaged and prove that you are 'doing something about it' – this puts an additional burden on minorities.

Education

Q9 What do you believe should be done to encourage more girls and young women to engage

with STEM subjects in early years, primary and secondary education?

Positive female role models in every aspect of life – young people should feel like they can do anything!

Public engagement more targeted at involving parent and children – IMO there is no point in getting kids excited about science if their parents aren't excited about it!

Far more information about the range of scientific careers – I have been a postdoc for a few years and still come across new opportunities that I had never thought about. The traditional academic career track is totally overplayed.

Q10 What innovative or impactful practice do you know of or believe should be taking place

in universities and colleges to tackle issues of gender disparities in STEM subjects?

Women's networks are so powerful and should be supported more within Universities.

More emphasis on informal mentor networks rather than formal. It is more important to have a range of perspectives.

What do you think can be done to embed STEM gender equality thinking across universities

and colleges?

Cultural Change

Q11 In what ways do you believe industry can lead by example to tackle inequality within

workplace culture?

Q12 What do you believe are the most effective ways to challenge and change deep-rooted attitudes and institutional culture in order to improve gender equality in STEM?

Q13 How do you suggest culture change can be measured in a meaningful way?