

Call for abstracts: Workshop “Gender equality in STEM worldwide – innovative approaches to make STEM inclusive”

The generally lower numbers of women in STEM education and professions have been a concern for a long time, and numerous studies in various disciplines inform policies aimed at increasing them worldwide, change is slow.

Is it possible that we all overlook essential factors that keep women out of STEM? This is the key question a series of workshops in several countries worldwide aims to address, by bringing together researchers on topics related to gender and STEM, as well as people working in STEM, both in industry and academia.



The third workshop of the series will take place in **Santiago de Chile on March 31 to April 1, 2026**. The inaugural workshop took place in Heidelberg on October 8 and 9, 2025, followed by the second workshop in Kyoto on November 28 and 29, 2025, will follow the first workshop. The final workshop will take place in Delhi, in summer 2026.

Some of the topics we intend to discuss during the workshops include the fundamental narratives surrounding women and STEM: Is it clear that women would unambiguously benefit from entering STEM, and thus behave irrationally if they refrain from doing so? Is the focus on women and on how they differ from the “male default” the best way to reach inclusive environments? Can setting a focus on structures rather than on individual choices help to understand what makes STEM less attractive for women than for men? The prevalence of sexism and sexual harassment, social identity issues, workplace and societal norms that negatively affect women in STEM are examples of (structural) aspects that have gained less attention than female characteristics and women’s preferences so far. And what about men? How can men be encouraged to enter non-STEM fields? What structural or individual factors make non-STEM fields less appealing to men than to women? How do men react when women enter STEM fields in larger numbers and their entry is strongly promoted?

Beyond fostering exchange among and between researchers and practitioners, the series of workshops has a second, concrete structural aim: The formation of a network of researchers to collaborate in the development of a large-scale, global panel study including, among other methods, survey experiments to test some of the ideas developed during the workshops in a variety of countries and cultures.

The workshop is organized as a mixture of research presentations and work phases in small groups of researchers and STEM “practitioners” (from academia and the private sector). These work phases serve the aim of developing concrete ideas for the larger panel study. To allow for productive collaboration, a maximum of 25 participants from all relevant fields will be accepted for the workshop.

We invite researchers from all fields who work on topics of relevance for the main theme of the workshop to send an abstract of a maximum of 350 words to Christiane.schwieren@awi.uni-heidelberg.de before February 1, 2026. Information about acceptance will be sent out by February 15, 2026.

Important information:

Dates for all workshops, as known at the moment:

Workshop	Date	Venue
Inaugural workshop	8 th of October – 9 th of October, 2025	Heidelberg - Germany
2 nd Workshop	27 th of November – 29 th of November, 2025	Kyoto - Japan
3 rd Workshop	30 th of March – 1 st of April 2026	Santiago - Chile
Follow-up Workshop	Summer 2026	Delhi - India

Target audience: Researchers from all fields who work on topics related to STEM and gender & researchers & practitioners in STEM fields with an interest in the topic.

- **Deadline for submission of abstracts:** 1st of February, 2026
- **Date for acceptance of abstracts:** 15th of February, 2026
- **Workshop dates Santiago:** March 30 (evening) until April 1 (afternoon), 2026
- **Location:** Heidelberg Center Latin America, Santiago de Chile (<https://www.hcla.uni-heidelberg.de/en>)