Gendered Innovations: Case Studies from Africa

Call for Proposals

Closing date: 14 August 2019

Background

Gender in science, innovation, technology and engineering (SITE) is an international initiative to promote the role of gender in science, innovation, technology and engineering, and to demonstrate how applying a gender lens to SITE can provide deeper insights, more effective programmes and more sustainable outcomes in the context of development. The regional focal points are Latin America and the Caribbean, and Africa.

GenderInSITE’s Africa regional focal point is coordinated and hosted by the Academy of Science of South Africa (ASSAf).

The activities of GenderInSITE focus on:

- Policy development
- Human capital development in response to SITE
- Promotion and raising awareness of SITE
- SITE for all
- Engagement with key stakeholders.

Case Studies of Gendered Innovations in Africa

The global development challenges we face are well known: poverty, lack of institutional capacity, environmental degradation, climate change and increasingly destructive natural disasters, health threats such as HIV/AIDS and malnutrition, and gender inequality. Policy and other decision-makers need to weigh difficult trade-offs at every step, and innovation is critical to countries’ ability to adapt to changing circumstances and contribute to the global knowledge bank.

Gender equality is not just a single goal of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5), but cuts across several of the other SDGs as set out by the United Nations. Many advancements have been made towards gender equality in science, technology and innovation, in industries, private and government sector, regionally, nationally, and internationally.

The value of case studies as a tangible means to demonstrate the complex linkages between gender, innovation and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was underscored at a recent Pretoria workshop by the impressive work of Prof Londa Schiebinger of Stanford University.

In an attempt to promote the importance of gendered innovation, this project aims to identify and showcase case studies from the African continent that demonstrate either the positive impacts of gendered innovation or the negative consequences when gender is not considered. Few case studies from Africa are used in gendered innovation discussions, and this project addresses this shortcoming.

The case studies will also aid in informing policymakers, academic planners, both male and female scientists, media and civil society on the importance of gender equality to advance science, technology and innovation for development, at national, regional and global levels. The case
studies should highlight the impact of using a gender lens to bring about gender equality in society; and suggest ways of how national governments can improve their support to enhance their contribution to inclusive development.

The workshop Gender and Innovation: Implications for Sustainable Development, was held in Pretoria, South Africa, 4-6 September 2017. The workshop was funded by the Elsevier Foundation and GenderInSITE, coordinated by ASSAf, and had important local support from the Department of Science and Technology (DST) and the Technology Innovation Agency (TIA). It gathered an impressive number of international experts from both developed and developing countries. After three days of intense discussions, there was an agreement on two important follow-up actions that would be collectively implemented by a network of institutions that participates in this meeting. This proposal describes the follow-up actions and requests support from GenderInSITE to implement them in 2018 and 2019. The two proposed follow-up actions are:

1. Influencing the funders;
2. International project of case studies of gendered innovations in Africa, and later expanded to include other regions of the Global South.

Thus Africa, with the network of the academy (ASSAf), OWSD National Chapters, TWAS, ISC and others, is an excellent consideration to champion this project before expanding it further to the global South.

The objective of this proposed initiative, focusing on case studies from the African continent, is to demonstrate the value of gendered innovation by showing the positive impacts, as well as the negative consequences when gender is not considered; and to analyse the environment needed to enable gendered innovation.

A Steering Committee made up of representatives who attended the Pretoria meeting and who have agreed to be part of this initiative, as well as members of influential agencies in the different countries will oversee the project. They are: GenderInSITE; Gendered Innovations Project and ASSAf - Academy of Science of South Africa, amongst others. The role of the Steering Committee will be to establish criteria for the selection of case studies, and from presentations made by shortlisted candidates, make the final selection of one case study to be showcased from the continent. The implementation of the project will comprise two components, each of which will have well-defined outputs and outcomes.

1. Identification of relevant case studies

Each country or identified region will have a coordinator, identified from the network of institutions present at the Pretoria meeting or via, for example, the TWAS regional offices, who will be tasked with putting in place a process to identify and select two to three case studies from the region. The value of this exercise will be to establish inter-regional institutional linkages, the creation of awareness around gendered innovation and the assemblage of a valuable set of regional case study material, which potentially could be consolidated into a report. The final selection of the case study to be transformed into a short video, to be showcased will be done by the Steering Committee in a face-to-face meeting after the short-listed case studies have been presented at a workshop.

2. Production of videos of selected case study

The final case study will be transformed into a professional short video, clearly showing the central issues of the case study. The video will be used to advocate and influence policymakers and funders, international organisations and other relevant institutions involved in the implementation of
the SDGs. The video will also be made available on the GenderInSITE website. The video will be supplemented by a strong analytical component that will be focused on each specific audience. The value of this innovative part of the project will be a tangible output that will be used for advocacy and awareness creation, and the analytical work undertaken for the case study.

**Application Process**

There is a two-step application process:

1. The first step is to submit a written proposal using the attached application form. Submitted case study proposals will be reviewed by a committee, and a shortlist compiled.

2. Shortlisted applicants will be invited to a workshop to be convened most likely in South Africa to present their case studies. Thereafter the successful case study/studies will be announced, and arrangements made to showcase it/them will be made.

Applications must be submitted to elzarie@assaf.org.za by 14 August 2019

**Adjudication Process**

The adjudication of the case study proposals will be undertaken by a committee comprising various individuals affiliated to GenderInSITE. Criteria to be used will include the following:

- Proposal application form completed in full and submitted in accordance with the guidelines given.
- Nature of the innovation – clarity of purpose, context, support for the development of science, technology and innovation (STI), link to an SDG and impact.
- Understanding and significance of gender dimensions of the case study proposal.

**Eligibility**

Any individual, or institution working in, or wanting to innovate in SITE, specifically as it relates to the dimension of gender in Africa.

To download the application form, please click here.