

The Gender Perspective in Research and Teaching Award



Integrating a gender perspective in research and teaching: an award promoted by the University of Santiago de Compostela

Since 2010, a gender perspective award is being organised on an annual basis by the University of Santiago de Compostela (USC). The award aims to recognise and make visible existing research projects and teaching practices that stand out for integrating a gender dimension. Six prizes are awarded annually: three for teaching achievements (excluding gender-specific courses) and three for research projects in any field (which integrate a gender dimension in hypothesis formulation, research design, methodology, research processes or the dissemination and publication of results).

The award fosters synergies with other initiatives undertaken by the university such as gender training and conferences. The award brings more visibility to gender issues in research and teaching. Furthermore, synergies were activated with other parallel initiatives (such as conferences and trainings) on which awardees have the possibility to share their research findings or how they managed to introduce a gender perspective in their teaching activity (including obstacles and resistances faced and how these were overcome).

Promoting actions towards gender equality in the university since 2006

The University of Santiago de Compostela has a strong history of promoting gender equality. The university is recognised by its pioneer initiative of creating a Gender Equality Office as early as 2006 (Oficina de Igualdade de Xénero, OIX), prior to the enactment of the Spanish Equality Law 3/2007. An Equality Commission of representatives from different groups within the university community was established in 2007, and the first Strategic Plan for Equal Opportunity between Women and Men was approved in 2009 and implemented until 2013.

An award to recognise research projects and teaching practices that integrate a gender dimension

The Gender Perspective in Research and Teaching Award (Premios a la introducción de la perspectiva de género en la docencia y la investigación) was launched in 2010. It has three-fold goal: to promote gender perspective in research and teaching, to advance gender training within the university community, and to boost and disseminate gender-sensitive research at the university.

The prize annually awards six outstanding achievements in two different modalities (each identifying the first, second, and third places):

- **Prize for teaching achievements that incorporate gender perspective:** The achievement should include the gender perspective in teaching and learning through the design of materials, application of new technologies, innovation in practices or curriculum, or mentoring or coaching initiatives, among others. Applications must present a brief assessment of the benefits conferred by the achievement. Gender-specific courses are excluded, whereas initiatives in fields of knowledge where a gender perspective has traditionally been disregarded are especially welcome.

- **Prize for research achievements that incorporate gender perspective:** The achievement may be carried out in any field of knowledge and at any stage of the research process: in hypothesis formulation, research plan design, methodology, implementation, or dissemination and publication of results.

Eligible achievements must have been carried out within the last three years by teaching and research staff of the university. Individual or groups can apply. An evaluation committee is constituted every year. Usually it is composed by the Rector or a Vice-Rector (in 2015 it was the Vice-rector of Students, Culture and Social Responsibility, who presided the committee), the director of the Institute of Education Sciences (ICE), university's teaching and research staff from different areas of knowledge (four members in 2015), and the coordinator of the Gender Equality Office (who acted as secretary of the committee in 2015).

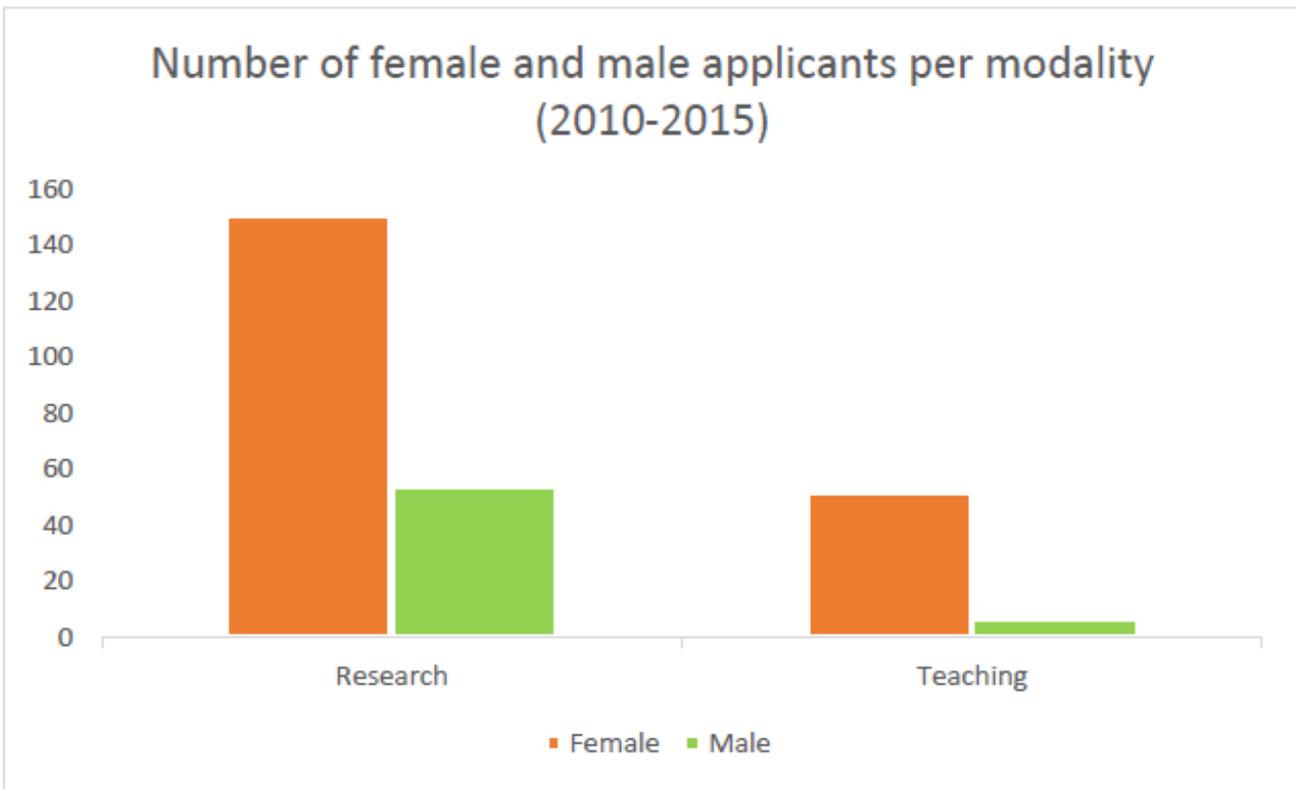
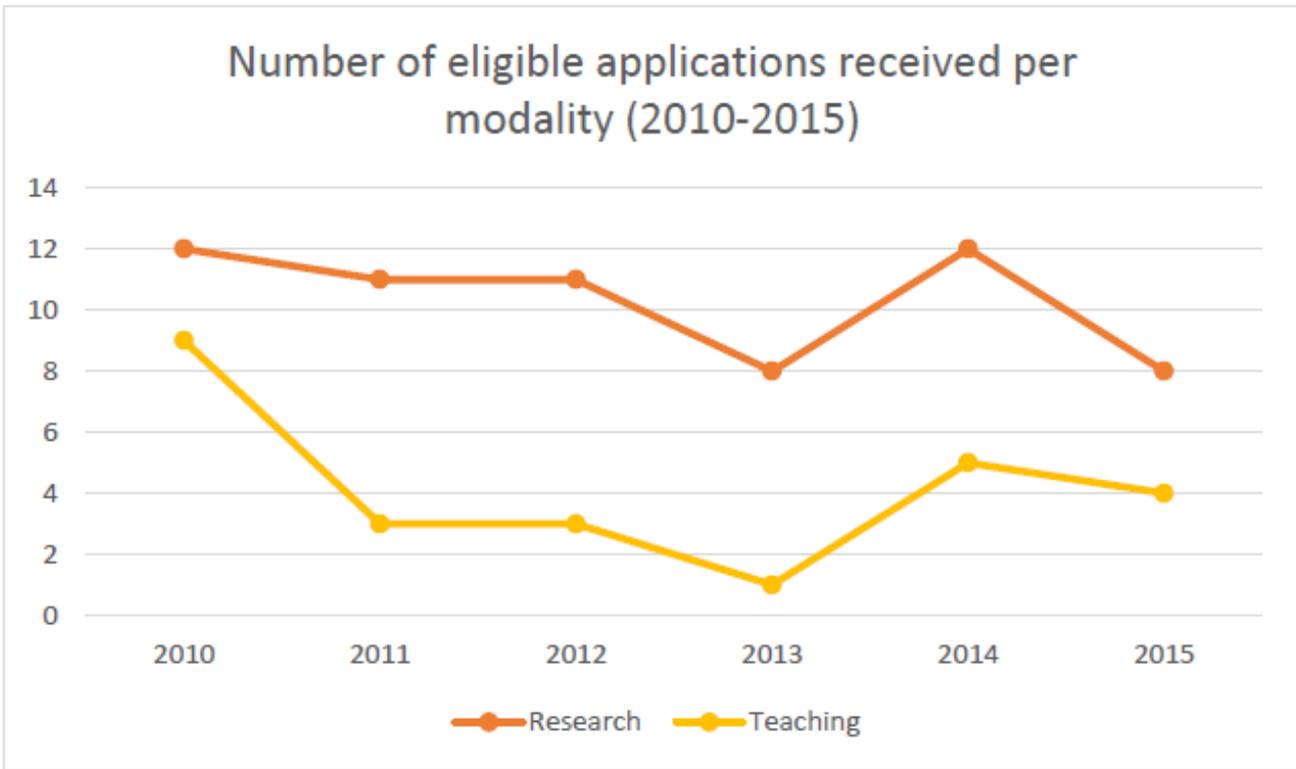
A monetary compensation is given to the awardees. The initiative was funded by the General Secretariat for Equality of Xunta de Galicia (the Galician regional government) and co-financed by the European Social Fund (ESF) between 2010 and 2013. It is currently solely funded by the university's budget. The amount given has been decreasing throughout the years. Whereas in its first edition (2010) the amount of the prize was 1,500€ for first place, 1,000€ for second, and 500€ for third, in its sixth edition (2015) the prizes amount to 750€, 500€ and 300€, respectively. The reduction of the monetary compensations is explained by the overall cuts in the budget allocated to gender policies by the different funding bodies involved.

The features of this award can be replicated in any university or research institution. Nonetheless, it is advisable to consider targeted communication actions to ensure a higher participation in the first years of implementation.

Nearly 100 achievements recognised since 2010

The prize has generated significant impact in the university's community, with over 260 applicants presenting nearly 100 total eligible achievements (primarily in the research modality) since the award was launched in 2010. Different disciplines have been awarded through the years, covering a wide range of diverse areas such as astronomy, political science, economy, medicine, communication, psychology, and geography, among others.

It is worth noting that the existence of a significant number of research groups working on gender issues and/or from a gender perspective has contributed to the success of the award. The Gender Equality Office is currently designing a directory of these groups in order to make them more visible.



An award triggering other actions

Significant synergies have been created between the award and other initiatives carried out by the university. Awardees are encouraged to participate in other gender equality initiatives and training workshops promoted by the institution.

As regards the research modality, awardees are invited to present their results at the Annual Galician University Conference on Gender (Xornada universitaria galega en xénero, XUGeX) to promote and recognise research that integrates a gender dimension.

The conference, hosted annually since 2013 by three Galician universities (University of Santiago de Compostela, University of A Coruña and University of Vigo), brings visibility to gender-sensitive research, fosters public debate on current changes in gender roles, and promotes interuniversity and interdisciplinary collaboration among researchers. The conference includes not only lectures from invited keynote speakers and roundtables on specific topics, but also poster sessions. Speeches, lectures and communications presented at the conferences were collected and published in an ISBN publication.

The teaching modality received greater exposure through the participation of awardees in a blended learning course organised by the Equality Office to introduce and strengthen gender expertise among the university's teaching staff. The training "Integration of a Gender Perspective in University Teaching" was created in 2014 as part of the Training and Innovation in Teaching Programme of the university. In particular, the training aims at providing theoretical and practical tools for teaching from a gender perspective, using participatory methods and practical examples.

Awardees from the teaching modality participate actively as trainers. They explain in detail how they succeeded in incorporating a gender perspective into specific settings and/or specific fields of knowledge. By doing so, they are further disseminating applied knowledge on how to put gender expertise into practice on a collaborative basis. Three sessions of the course, lasting between 20 and 30 hours total, depending on the session, have been held until October 2015, with a total of 61 participants (teachers).

A significant contribution towards gender-sensitive teaching

The actions of the Gender Equality Office have a clear positive impact on teaching practices. While in 2008 only nine courses in the entire university explicitly integrated a gender perspective, in 2011 this number increased to 118 courses. In 2011, 48 % of degree programmes included at least one course referring explicitly to gender. In 2008, courses featuring a gender dimension were taught in only some fields (namely, education, psychology, work science, law, political science and literature), whereas three years after, courses of this kind were taught in all five major areas of knowledge within the university (albeit with very important differences among them).

This positive evolution is considered to be related to a growing awareness of the concept of gender rather than showing a real integration of a gender perspective in academic subjects. In addition, the on-going transformation of European university degree programmes, as a consequence of the implementation of the Bologna Process, is a factor to be also taken into consideration. It entailed both a significant reorganisation of academic programmes and a review of teaching practices and contents. Therefore, the newly reinvented undergraduate degree programmes represented a great opportunity for incorporating gender perspective in teaching.

Another advantage to the major structural changes taking place at universities as a result of the Bologna Process was found in the creation and implementation of new innovation and quality strategies.

Contacts/Further Information

Contacts

Eva Aguayo (Coordinator of the Gender Equality Office)

Universidade de Compostela, Oficina de Igualdade de Xénero

Vicerreitoría de Estudantes, Cultura e Responsabilidade Social. Rúa Nova 6, 15782 Santiago de Compostela, Spain

+34 881 811 309

oix@usc.es

Further information

[First edition \(2010\)](#)



[Second edition \(2011\)](#)



[Third edition \(2012\)](#)



[Fourth edition \(2013\)](#)



[Fifth edition \(2014\)](#)



[Sixth edition \(2015\)](#)



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