

The Scottish Women's Convention

WOMEN IN STEM SURVEY

2023

Alongside our 'STEMinism: What Needs to Change to Keep Women in STEM?' Conference, we ran an online survey which asked women to give their experiences of STEM workplaces and academia. We were disheartened to hear accounts of clear discrimination and misogyny across the sectors, which were at times the direct cause of women leaving their job roles. In addition to misogyny, women also faced poor maternity options and a lack of flexibility. This pushed many mothers away from these sectors towards alternative employment. Women from minority groups also recounted experiencing further levels of disadvantage when it came to promotions and general working environments.

Respondents suggested that more had to be done from an early age to encourage more women into STEM subjects. They also felt that it was key for employers to enforce training for employees around misogyny, and improve maternity offerings.

THE SCOTTISH WOMEN'S CONVENTION (SWC)

The SWC is funded to engage with women across Scotland to ensure that their views are represented in policy and decision-making processes. The SWC uses the views of women to respond to a variety of parliamentary, governmental, and organisational consultation papers at Scottish, UK and international levels.

The SWC gathers information using different methods, including roadshows, thematic conferences, surveys, and both in-person and online roundtable events. Working together with many other equalities organisations and community groups, we use our broad network to ensure that women from a range of backgrounds are heard and acknowledged. We are continually reviewing innovative ways of engaging with women and developing our trauma-informed and culturally sensitive practice to support vital contributions from as many women as possible.



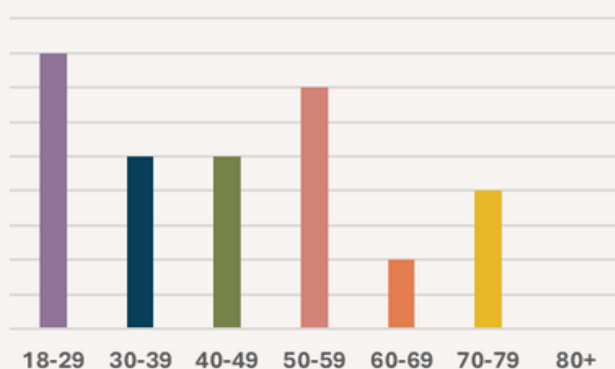
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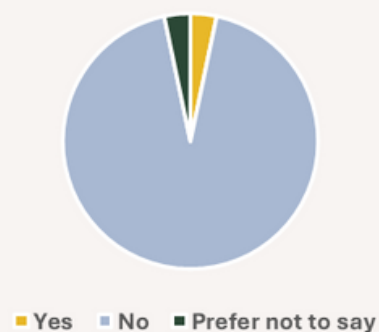
2023

DEMOGRAPHICS

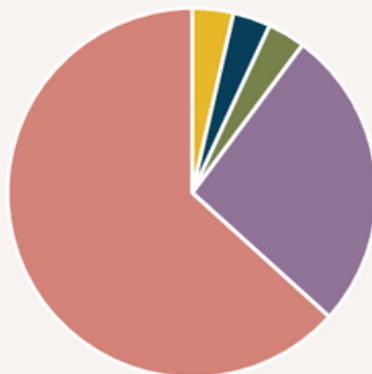
What is your age?



Do you consider yourself to be trans or have a trans history?



What is your ethnicity?



- African, African Scottish or African British
- Indian, Indian Scottish or Indian British
- Mixed or Multiple Ethnic
- White: Other
- White: Scottish

Do you have any physical or mental health conditions or illnesses lasting or expecting to last 12 months or more?



■ Yes ■ No ■ Prefer not to say

64.5% of respondents currently work in the STEM sector.

83.9% of respondents stated that their highest level of education was in a STEM subject area.

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WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES...

“Assumption of a lack of knowledge. More junior men having their views listened to before me. Having to justify my existence...added pressure to be perfect.”

“I experienced open bigotry towards bisexual people in my last STEM workplace, I didn't feel safe to be out because of it.”

“I have noticed some men don't like having to answer to women who are in a position of seniority...In a previous career I felt that a colleague was hampered...due to being a woman, and from an ethnic minority background”

“...lecturers better on the two girls on the course failing, another sent me out of the room whilst he told the 'lads' dirty jokes.”

40%
**FELT 'VERY VALUED' BY
THEIR EMPLOYER**

“I left the scientific community because of it's failure to support me.”

WOMEN'S SOLUTIONS...

“They should provide examples of everyday women working in STEM, not only examples of women in STEM winning awards.”

“Primary and secondary schools need to change their approach...Emphasis on the usefulness of STEM”

“Take it seriously when women complain about the culture. Put more women in senior roles, have more roles with reduced hours, have home working.”

“Many women want to have children, and this will inevitably lead to career breaks...Some STEM areas can evolve rapidly...and leaving the workforce for a few years can result in not keeping up...Maybe mentoring or training schemes that can help those planning to return to work.”

“STEM's seeming unwillingness to understand the social context of science will always be a problem until all STEM education includes social and humanities courses too”

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THANK YOU!

Thank you to all of the women who provided their invaluable insight into the world of STEM. We are forever grateful for the sustained engagement women give to our organisation, and we will continue to utilise the information given to inform Scottish policy-making practice.

SWC Contact Details

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