



CEILING  
 THROUGH  
 THE GLASS  
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 CEILING

CAREER PROGRESSION PROGRAMME AND STRATEGY  
 FOR FEMALE ACADEMICS AND RESEARCHERS





**THROUGH THE GLASS CEILING WAS A  
PROGRAMME OF POSITIVE ACTION AIMED AT  
CAREER PROGRESSION FOR  
FEMALE ACADEMICS AND RESEARCHERS  
IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK  
BETWEEN 2010 AND 2012**



## FUNDER

This project is funded under the Equality for Women Measure 2010-2013, with funding from the European Social Fund (ESF) and the Irish Department of Justice and Equality.



**A review of international literature, research and gender equality action plans and strategies was completed in Phase 1 of the project.**

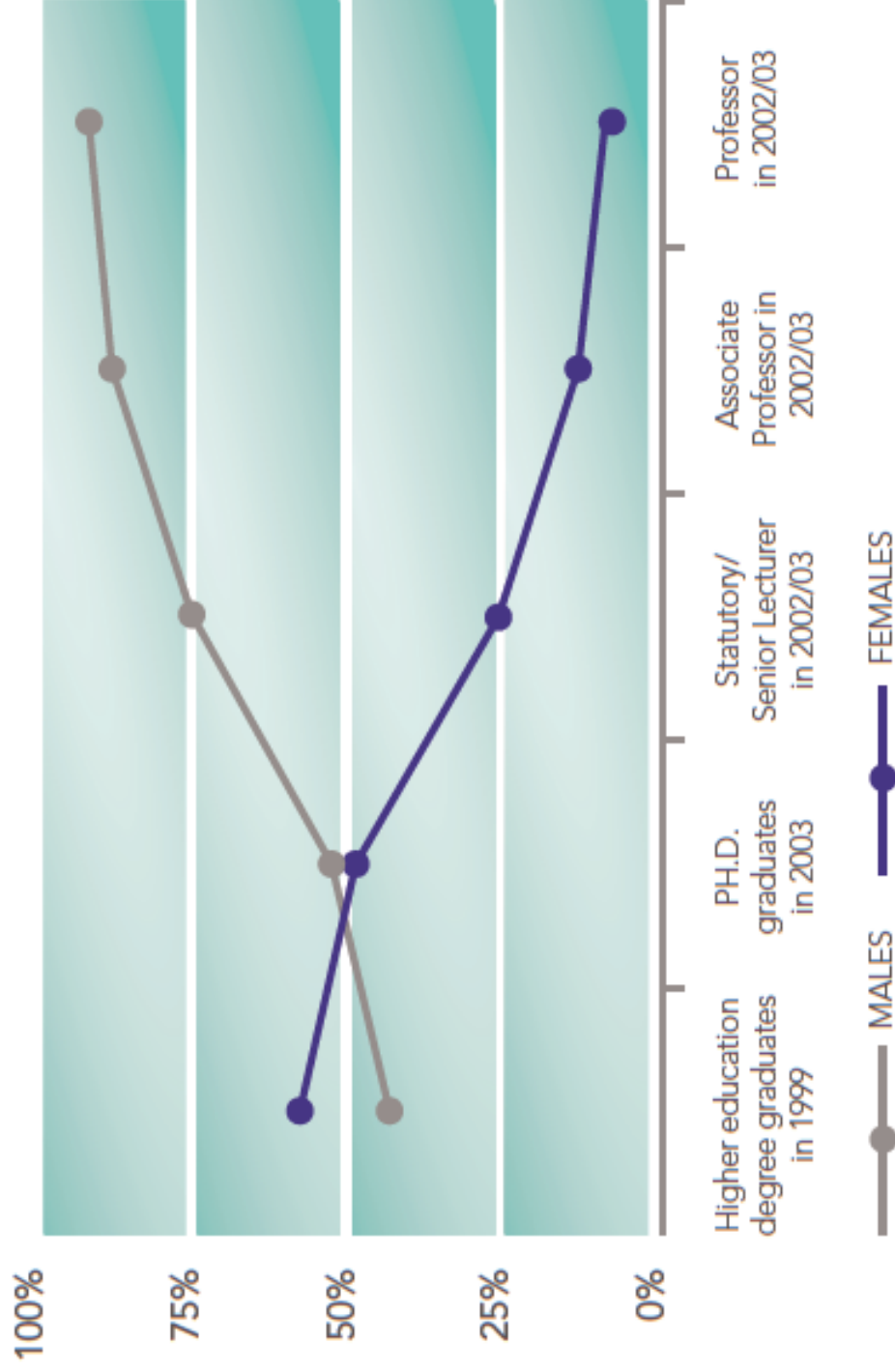


**This review directly informed the development of the mentoring scheme, the career development scheme and the drafting of Gender Equality Action Plan Recommendations.**



**IFUT**

Irish Federation of University Teachers  
Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile



Progression of women and men through tertiary education in Ireland

Source: Department of Education and Science, 2005



**In 2009, Ireland had the second highest  
Glass ceiling index for women in higher education**



**In University College Cork (UCC), females comprise**

**28 of 114 professors (25%),  
49 of 145 Senior Lecturers (34%),  
112 of 252 College Lecturers (above the bar) (44%),  
105 of 208 College Lecturers (below the bar) (50%).**

**There is clear evidence of a glass ceiling effect.**





## Aim

Develop and deliver tailored mentoring and professional development programmes aimed at the empowerment of female academics and researchers in relation to their own career paths  
and  
the promotion of gender equality in career progression



## **Aim**

Identify and implement organisational strategies that will tackle gender inequalities and horizontal and vertical segregation as well as gendered organisational cultures



## **Aim**

Raise awareness of gender inequality,  
and  
the potential of positive action initiatives to address it,  
within the university and the higher education sector in  
Ireland



# Positive action



# Empowerment in relation to career



# Structural change



# Women sharing knowledge with other women



# Leadership





**The Female Academics' Mentoring Scheme was  
established with a very particular idea of  
mentoring**



A 12-month partnership model between a senior academic mentor and a more junior female academic or researcher mentee

Goal-oriented around the goals of the mentee for the 12-month period as part of a wider career development strategy



The mentor's role is to be an objective  
'critical friend'



Participants WERE always in different departments/schools and did not already have a professional relationship.

Mentees WERE never in a direct reporting relationship with mentors, and thus could benefit from advice that is not influenced by such power relationships.



**Mentees included a range of staff categories from  
Research Assistant to College Lecturer**

**while mentors ranged from College Lecturer to  
Professor. All participants received training and a  
mentoring handbook.**



## KEY BENEFITS

**Mentees gained new perspectives, a safe space to critically reflect on goals, new perspectives on their goals and increased confidence.**



**Mentors gained satisfaction, strengthened networks,  
opportunities to reflect on shared experiences and  
improved understanding of concerns of other female  
academics.**



**Two one-day career planning workshops were developed and delivered in Phase 1:**

**Career Planning for Early Career Female Academics and Researchers**

**Career Planning for Female Academics and Researchers in Mid-to-Late Career**





**Building MY Career Plan**  
**ME and my CV**  
**Establishing MY Professional Profile**  
**Social Media and my Research**



# **the professional development programme in Phase 2**

**Five courses**



# Time Management for Extremely Busy Women



# Professional Networking for Academic Women



# Promotions and Recruitment: a Q&A Panel



# Strategic Leadership for Senior Academic Women



# Aspiring to Leadership for Academic Women



**A key aspect of the scheme was that it was underpinned  
by a gender equality agenda in its design and  
implementation.**





**Drawing on A review of international literature, research and gender equality action plans as well as the feedback from project participants, provisional Gender Equality Action Plan Recommendations were produced.**



**A total of 219 female academics and researchers in UCC, from postdoctoral to Professorial levels, participated in *Through the Glass Ceiling* during its 18-month period.**

**The evaluation indicates that the project has had a significant impact on staff morale, productivity and wellbeing.**