

20 years of Dutch initiatives to promote gender equality in physics

Wim van Saarloos



OR: yes you can make a difference

February 10 1917: inaugural address Johanna Westerdijk

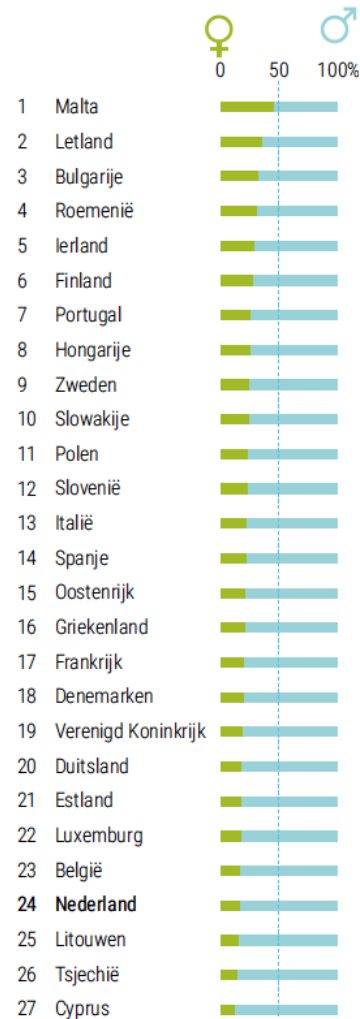


First female professor in the Netherlands

In 1919 women acquired voting rights in the Netherlands

The Netherlands ranks low today.....

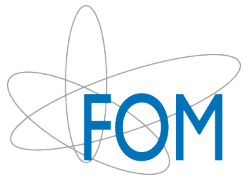
Percentage of female professors in all disciplines



17%

13 Italy
17 France
18 Denmark
19 UK
20 Germany
24 Netherlands

My own motivation dating back to 1997



Alieke

1983

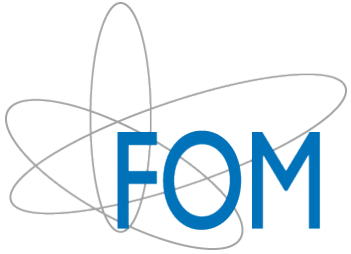
Simone

1990

Paulian

1986

1998: start Fom/v programme

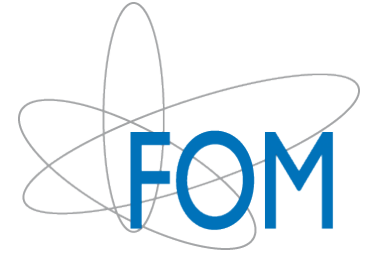


- Flexible programme aimed at increasing the number of women in physics
- Over 13-fold more female professors since 1998!
- Simple start.....

A bright yellow, multi-pointed starburst or explosion-like shape with a slight drop shadow, containing red italicized text.

*Gradually more
initiatives*

Start 1998



- Aid to universities in attracting women
'rooftile constructions'; FOM sometimes 'broker'
- Special postdoc positions
- Minerva prize for the best publication by a women




Gradually expanded into... (1)

- Two-yearly women physics days
- Create awareness about implicit ne *evening for group leaders with act*
- Workshop '*are you really chosing*'
- Mentoring programme for women
- Stiff targets for our own organisa also for support positions
- Stimulate scouting
e.g '*my most wanted women*' lis
- Avoid hidden '*innate ability*' signals



Gradually expanded into... (2)

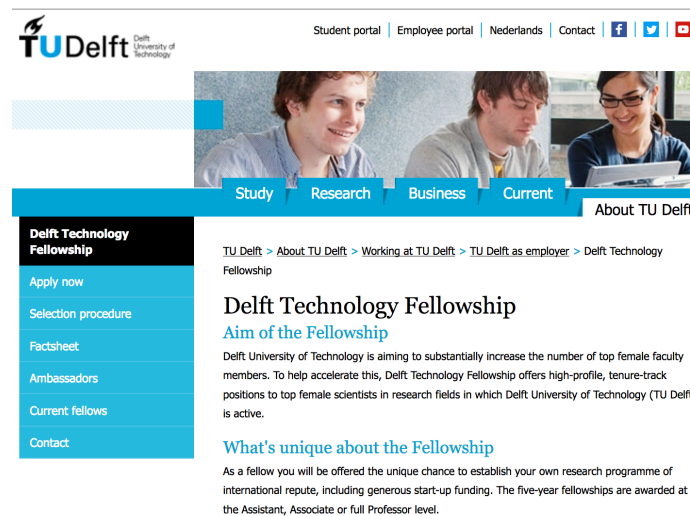
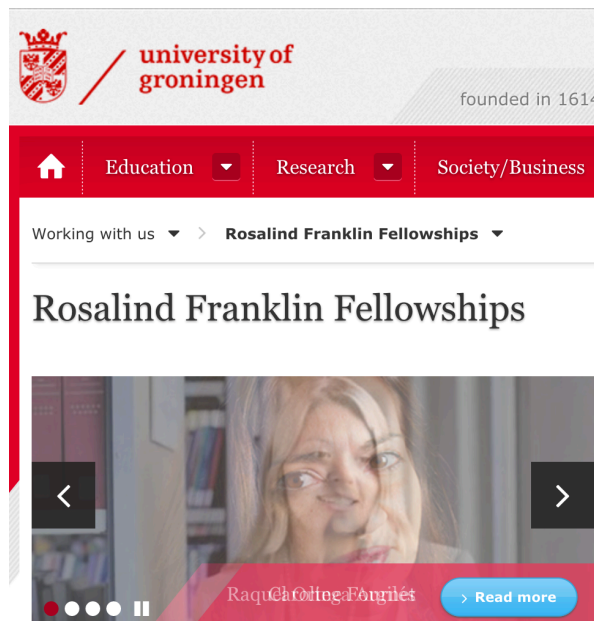
-  *Women in Science Excel* programme
to attract female researchers at national institutes
- Daycare at the national physics conference
- Doublecheck female-friendliness of job-ads
- Pay attention to composition of committees
- In preparation: start selection committees with short video and discussion to raise gender-awareness and make members aware of possible hidden bias
- Physics-ladies days do help!
- Critical look at your open days - hire 'women spies'



**There is no single cause
So there is no single solution**

‘spray-gun approach’

Special hiring programmes for women *do* make a difference!



- ✓ No preselected fields (important!)
- ✓ Often over 100 applicants for a few positions
- ✓ Based on tenure track model (promotion to professor after evaluation)
- ✓ Challenged in court for discrimination but upheld at EU level

A nice message about early hidden negative signals

Movie around women's day 2016



Yes we can!



Small initiatives do help!

You can make a difference!

It's like physics: you start an experiment and optimize while going