

GEDII – Gender Diversity Impact. Improving Research and Innovation through Gender Diversity.

About the GEDII Project

The central question of the GEDII project is simple: *what makes great (research) teams?* The literature on what makes (research) teams effective is huge. GEDII will look more specifically at the relationship between gender diversity in research teams and their research performance. How do the proportion of men and women and their associated gender stereotypes affect the quality and quantity of research outputs? We hope to generate new insights how gender diversity helps to build great teams.

The project receives funding by the European Commission within the framework of the Horizon 2020 program and involves partners from Sweden, Germany, Spain and the UK. It will run for three years from 2015 until 2018. GEDII makes use of a variety of research methods, including a cross country survey, bibliometric analysis and case studies while concentrating specifically on medical engineering- and mobility research sectors. In what follows we describe the *case studies* in more detail, for which we are currently recruiting potential participants. Overall, we are looking for

- a more or less gender balanced research team with 8 – 20 members.
- 5 interviews spanning research managers and team leaders/members
- a majority of team members willing to wear during one week sociometric badges.

Case Study Objectives

Through the case studies we aim to *understand better the ways in which team dynamics affect the sharing of information and production of new ideas*. This includes on the one hand to map how researchers and (science) managers conceive research performance, including research quality, quantity and innovation in the first place. What constitutes “good”, “useful”, “excellent” research is highly contested and usually differs across institutions, disciplines but also individuals and teams. On the other hand we aim at developing a method for studying team information sharing from a gender perspective using “sociometric badges”.

Innovative Case Study Design



GEDII aims at breaking new ground by deploying cutting edge *sociometric* technology. “Sociometric badges” (see photo) are smartphone sized, sensor packed devices developed over the last decade at MIT. Results of studies using this technology in hospitals, banks, and call centers in the US have produced ground breaking insights on the characteristics of well-functioning teams¹.

Case Study Requirements

We are looking for a research teams with 8-20 members where neither men nor women are a clear “minority” (< 20%). Participation then involves:

- Conduct a min. of five interviews: 2 interviews at the management /HR level, 1 interview with the team leader and 2 more interviews with team members. Interviews will last 30 minutes to 1 hour and gather background information on the teams’ history and dynamics, working climate as well as the wider organisational and disciplinary context.
- Wearing of sociometric badges. Team members will carry sociometric badges for approx. one week during their normal working activities. The badges are lightweight devices to be worn

¹ See for example: Pentland AS (2012) The New Science of Building Great Teams. *Harvard Business Review*.

around the neck that record different interaction and nonverbal communication data. All data is anonymous. Individual team members can opt-out and/or wear dummy badges.

The participation in the case study does not imply any additional workload or change of routines for participants – except for the five interview candidates. A member of the GEDII team will be available on site, resolving doubts and taking care of badges.

Potential Benefits

GEDII is among the first projects in Europe to use sociometric badges. So far they have been used in studies exploring the flow of knowledge in organizations or what makes teams creative. The badges are not freely available for purchase – except for academic research. Hence, GEDII offers the opportunity for case study participants to access cutting edge technology for improving team communication and collaboration. It also offers the possibility to raise awareness about how gender aspects might impact team dynamics. We are keen to discuss case study results in an open discussion with participants and make available the gathered data (on an aggregated level) if desired.

Privacy and research ethics

The research carried out by GEDII is based upon the respect and openness towards its participants while protecting their privacy at all times. We conduct our research within an ethic of respect for the person, knowledge, democratic values and social justice. Participation in this research will be completely voluntary and have the possibility to withdraw at any point from the case studies. A document for “informed consent” will be distributed prior to the start of the case studies, detailing data privacy, protection, access, deletion rights.

Project Consortium



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