



Intersectional Inequalities in Science: Trends, Issues, and Prospects

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Since the 1990s, promoting gender equality in research and innovation has become a growing priority in Switzerland and across Europe. Despite notable progress (Palomeque Recio et al., 2024), inequalities persist across academic life, including in terms of career progression, task distribution, working conditions, and work–life balance (Le Feuvre et al, 2020; O’Keefe & Courtois, 2019; Schaer, 2021; Sautier, 2021). These inequalities are embedded in science organizations, shaping visibility, recognition, and publication practices (Beaudry & Larivière, 2016; Kozłowski et al., 2022). They are compounded by unequal divisions of care responsibilities (Ni et al., 2025). The notion of academic citizenship (Le Feuvre et al., 2024) highlights that “being a researcher” goes beyond functions or titles: it includes normative, affective, social, and cultural dimensions that shape who is seen as successful and who belongs to the group of privileged academics. Understanding how academic communities reproduce or challenge social hierarchies requires close attention to work organization, resource allocation, and institutional cultures that define who is recognized as a legitimate member of the scientific community.

The COVID-19 pandemic offered a salient illustration of how structural inequalities affect careers, disproportionately harming early-career researchers and members of underrepresented groups (Ballif & Zinn, 2023; Vincent-Lamarre et al., 2020). Beyond gender, other social hierarchies, such as class origins, racialization, sexual identity, family configuration, or national belonging also shape career inequalities yet remain insufficiently explored in research and policy debates (Bhopal, 2020). The social determinants that constrain participation in the scientific community—and, more broadly, in the production of science—raise questions about the extent to which society is in movement. The research workforce has transformed over time, becoming less men-dominated and more international. At the same time, the political consensus around equality, diversity, and inclusion policies—and the research that addresses these issues—has been called into question, while academia simultaneously faces growing budgetary constraints and shifting governance models.

This workshop calls for contributions addressing intersectional inequalities in science from structural, organizational, or interactional perspectives, and fostering dialogue between empirical research, lived experience, and institutional practices. Traditional contributions and alternative formats are equally welcome.

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Please submit your abstract by 31 March 2026, in French or English (max. 500 words), by email to pierre.benz@unige.ch