

Women in Academia: Workshop with Itır Erhart in collaboration with ECREA Women's Network

As the inspirational presentations in the Female Agency and Subjectivity in Film and Television Conference seek to develop new strategies for subverting patriarchal narratives, this workshop, organized in collaboration with ECREA Women's Network, invites the participants to take the time to speak about the challenges that women encounter in higher education on everyday basis. The initial objective of the workshop is to bring women academics together in a platform based on mutual respect and trust to articulate shared challenges and search for the ways to create gender equality in higher education not only for women but also for LGBTQ+ scholars. So, we invite not only women but all feminized subjectivities who not respond to the male and heterosexual norm to participate in the workshop.

The workshop invites the participants to point at the common problems that fuel gender inequality in higher education and collectively think of ways to make a difference, including where to start and where to go. By simultaneously highlighting why it is important to try and make a difference, the workshop also tackles the hindrances faced during our efforts and aims to create an opportunity for revealing differences, strengths and weaknesses in particular institutions, appreciating diverse practices and find ways to take action at individual and collective levels.

With these purposes in mind, the workshop aims to invite the participants to put their heads together to find new ways for creating an academic environment based on gender equality. How can we recognize and overcome gender-based discrimination in higher education? What are the best practices that could be inspiring for us? What new tactics and strategies can be proposed to achieve gender equality? Starting from sharing our situated experiences, how can we collectively imagine a different academia? By means of the new ways and strategies the workshop intends to increase the visibility of research done by scholars whose point of view is often marginalized in academia such as women and LGBTQ+ people and challenge white male perspectives on producing knowledge. Please join us on April 13, 2019 at 13.30 in Istanbul Bilgi University, Santralistanbul Campus, E1.301, to share your experiences, find solutions and speak up about gender inequality in higher education.

Dr. Itır Erhart studied philosophy and Western Languages & Literatures at Boğaziçi University. She completed her M.Phil in Philosophy at the University of Cambridge. In 2001 she started teaching at Istanbul Bilgi University, Department of Media and Communication Systems. In 2006 she earned her PhD from Boğaziçi University in philosophy. In 2015 she became an associate professor. She does research and teaches courses on gender, sports, human rights and social movements. Itır is also the co-founder of two social enterprises, Adım Adım (Step by Step), and Açık Açık (Openly). In 2009 she was featured on CNN Turk's "Turkey's Changemakers", in 2014 she became an Ashoka Fellow.

ECREA Women's Network

The Women's Network aims to address all challenges women face in research and in higher education. Being a woman in academia has always been challenging, especially in societies with strong patriarchal traditions. Apart from difficulties for finding a balance between everyday routines and conducting research, women in higher education have to face gender bias in any academic setting. The first objective of the network is to create a platform for female scholars to speak up about the problems they encounter in the academia and be in solidarity with colleagues around the world.

The ECREA Women's Network also intends to facilitate, contribute to, and disseminate (research on) female scholarship. By bringing people together, stimulating the exchange of insights and practices, we aim to contribute to equality and identify diverse practices in higher education in Europe and beyond, revealing differences, strengths, and weaknesses. Through the organisation of workshops, lectures, and panels - in close collaboration with all ECREA sections - the Women's Network seeks to function as a platform to increase the visibility and impact of female scholars within ECREA, and initiate and maintain discussions on gender inequalities in academia beyond national as well as institutional borders.

Additionally, we aim to support critical research initiatives that challenge white male perspectives on knowledge. Generally speaking, the position that not only women but also LGBTQ+ people occupy in the higher education is often marginalized. Both cultural and structural conditions intervene to define, give visibility to and legitimise the competences, expertise and knowledge of female and LGBTQ+ scholars. The existing system of practices embedded in the academic context—at the level of both the labour market and organisational and cultural systems—reinforces a gender regime that has consequences in different areas.

To achieve all these goals, the ECREA's Women's Network calls for support to organize events, collaborate in research projects, and generate and disseminate information about the work of female and LGBTQ+ scholars. The network intends to coordinate knowledge and initiate discussions concerning the issues within our scope through different channels including its website, Facebook page, ECREA discussion forums and ECREA events. In this way, the Women's Network seeks to inspire future research and activities that promote gender equality in higher education in the European academic context and beyond.

We would like to encourage you to become a member of the ECREA Women's Network and to engage with the network's objectives and activities. Below you find the URLs of our website and Facebook group, as well as a link to our revised objectives to which you are invited to comment on or contribute to, by getting in touch with us via e-mail (ecreawomensnetwork@gmail.com) or posting a comment on the network's discussion forum in ECREA Intranet until May 15, 2019.

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