

**APIKS Chile 2023**  
**Universidad de Tarapacá, January 24 - 26, 2023**  
**The academic profession moving forward: gender equality and/or early career researchers**

**Call for Contributions**

The APIKS<sup>1</sup> survey included a module for *Academics in Formative Career Stages*, to be answered by academics not in the ranks of full or associate professor or their equivalents. The survey sought to probe the degree of independence and fulfillment in their jobs, mentoring, networking, and other forms of development support, expectations as to future career trajectories, degree of satisfaction with current work conditions, among other factors of professional and personal relevance.

Academics in formative career stages, more commonly referred to as early career researchers or ECRs (a fuzzy category that usually includes doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, sometimes together with assistant professors in the tenure track), have increased in numbers, in self-consciousness as a group within academia, and in the variety of their endeavors (Skakni, Calatrava Moreno, Seuba, and McAlpine, 2019). As the stay in the category of ECRs seems to lengthen questions of the meaning of the roles arise (Friesike, Dobusch, and Heimstädt, 2022; Sala-Bubaré, Skakni, Inouye, Weise and McAlpine 2022).

While these are formative years, ECRs are under pressure to publish, win grants, teach and other aspects of academic production, perhaps even more than their more senior colleagues, as they need to gain promotion to a more stable position in academia. Tensions between following a well-trodden research path versus taking risks in finding one's research niche and voice may be significant. Low salaries and job insecurity are often part of the equation too. The gendered distribution of labor takes its toll as well. As with everything, the pandemic seems to have had mixed effects in the lives of ECRs (Jackman, Sanderson, Haughey, et al., 2022)

It has been a few decades since the studies on the academic profession unveiled the gender variable as one aspect that makes academic careers different between males and females. More recent studies show that the patriarchal system affecting higher education institutions is to be recognized in practices and significantly deeper habits and relationships among its members, including students, professors, and administrators, which tend to undermine women's rights and career development. What seems to be particular to women's reality is a worldwide phenomenon with different emphases around the globe. The literature on the academic profession research shows that

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<sup>1</sup> Academic Profession in the Knowledge Society

female professors have lower levels of success than men, even though evidence shows that there are certain levels of relative similar merit. So, other variables affect their performance and promotion, such as the domestic life and discrimination that women have to endure throughout their lives, to name a few.

As APIKS scholars, we invite the APIKS community to reflect on the academic profession from a gender perspective and share and compare their national reality with the rest of the world. The gender perspective is a very timely topic to discuss and there is still a lot to learn about how it affects and shapes the modern academic profession.

The COVID-19 pandemic radically changed multiple aspects of the academic profession, and its effects are still to be seen. For early career faculty, those in a critical period of socialization into the research community, the pandemic may have long-lasting effects (Gibson et al., 2020). Recent studies suggest significant heterogeneity implications for this group (Jackman et al., 2022). For instance, national lockdowns meant more time and productivity gains for some but poorer working conditions and increased pressure for others. In particular, female researchers saw a decrease in their research productivity compared to their male counterparts (Lerchenmüller et al., 2021). As we progress in the current recovery period, the APIKS community must get together and examine the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic for academic work in our nations and, more importantly, the emerging changes in the knowledge society. We welcome data, analyses, and perspectives on these issues.

### **APIKS Conference 2023**

*The academic profession moving forward: gender equality and/or early career researchers*

Suggested questions (but not limited to):

1. What are the trends of activities (teaching, research, external engagement, governance and management) developed by early career academics according to gender?
2. How does discipline or field influence early career academics development? Are there differences by gender?
3. What are the trends regarding the type of place of employment for early career academics according to gender?
4. How do early academics experience their job environment?
5. How do early career academics perceive their competencies/abilities? Are there differences by gender?
6. Does gender influence the type of activity declared to be carried out (daily academic work vs professional development) by early career academics?

7. How did COVID-19 affect faculty in general and the development of early career academics in particular?

**Guidelines:** Based on this call please submit an abstract (max. 500 words, without any reference) of your proposal to [apiksconferencechile@gmail.com](mailto:apiksconferencechile@gmail.com) no later than December 7, 2022.

Decision: December 15, 2022

### References

- Friesike, S., Dobusch, L. and Heimstädt, M. (2022), "Striving for Societal Impact as an Early-career Researcher: Reflections on Five Common Concerns", Gümüşay, A.A., Marti, E., Trittin-Ulbrich, H. and Wickert, C. (Ed.) *Organizing for Societal Grand Challenges* (Research in the Sociology of Organizations, Vol. 79), Emerald Publishing Limited, Bingley, pp. 239-255
- Gibson, E. M., Bennett, F. C., Gillespie, S. M., Güler, A. D., Gutmann, D. H., Halpern, C. H., Kucenas, S. C., Kushida, C. A., Lemieux, M., Liddelow, S., Macauley, S. L., Li, Q., Quinn, M. A., Roberts, L. W., Saligrama, N., Taylor, K. R., Venkatesh, H. S., Yalçın, B., & Zuchero, J. B. (2020). How Support of Early Career Researchers Can Reset Science in the Post-COVID19 World. *Cell*, 181(7), 1445–1449.
- Jackman, P. C., Sanderson, R., Haughey, T. J., Brett, C. E., White, N., Zile, A., Tyrrell, K., & Byrom, N. C. (2022). The impact of the first COVID-19 lockdown in the UK for doctoral and early career researchers. *Higher Education*, 84(4), 705–722.
- Lerchenmüller, C., Schmallenbach, L., Jena, A. B., & Lerchenmueller, M. J. (2021). Longitudinal analyses of gender differences in first authorship publications related to COVID-19. *BMJ Open*, 11(4), e045176.
- Sala-Bubaré, Skakni, Inouye, Weise & McAlpine (2022) Early career researchers making sense of their research experiences: a cross-role and cross-national analysis, *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, 52:(5), 748-767.
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