

# NSF Grant: AGU and Partners Aim at Gender Issues in Geosciences

Funding through July 2021 supports a project in the Earth, space, and environmental sciences to promote gender equity and train scientists to recognize and counteract sexual harassment.



With NSF help, scientific institutions will develop bystander intervention training and materials. Credit: Rawpixel/iStock/Getty Images Plus

By [Billy M. Williams](#) © 10 August 2017

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has recently awarded a grant to the American Geophysical Union (AGU) and partners from higher education institutions and other geoscience societies to help

combat sexual harassment. The ADVANCE grant ([https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD\\_ID=1725879](https://www.nsf.gov/awardsearch/showAward?AWD_ID=1725879)), awarded on 21 July, will support development for the Earth, space, and environmental sciences of bystander intervention training and materials.

NSF's support totals \$1.1 million over 4 years across participating institutions and will end on 31 July 2021. The funded project, entitled "ADVANCE Partnership: From the Classroom to the Field: Improving the Workplace in the Geosciences," includes a team of Earth and space scientists; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education experts; and leaders from the Earth Science Women's Network.

Erika Marín-Spiotta of the University of Wisconsin–Madison (<http://news.wisc.edu/uw-geographer-leads-initiative-against-sexual-harassment/>) will lead the initiative. Blair Schneider of the Association for Women Geoscientists and Billy Williams of AGU will act as co–principal investigators. Four additional partnering institutions—California State University, Los Angeles; University of California, Merced; Brown University; and Colorado College—will participate as well.

Aided by the grant, the project team aims to improve workplace climate and increase gender parity in the sciences (<https://eos.org/articles/tackling-sexual-harassment-in-science-a-long-road-ahead>). Bystander intervention training will enable scientists in positions of authority not only to recognize sexual harassment but also to respond appropriately to prevent and even eliminate the behavior within their workplaces.

AGU has been at the forefront of addressing sexual and other types of harassment in the sciences. Last year, the organization convened a workshop (<https://news.agu.org/press-release/scientific-societies-speak-out-against-sexual-harassment/>) of leaders from scientific societies, academia, and government to discuss (<https://eos.org/agu-news/agu-sponsored-workshop-targets-sexual-harassment-in-the-sciences>) gender-based harassment on campus, in the field, and at scientific meetings.

AGU's participation in the ADVANCE grant will build on these prior workplace climate activities (<https://eos.org/agu-news/moving-forward-at-fall-meeting-against-harassment>). AGU members and others interested in further information and resources can visit <http://stopharassment.agu.org> (<http://stopharassment.agu.org>).

—Billy M. Williams (email: [bwilliams@agu.org](mailto:bwilliams@agu.org) (<mailto:bwilliams@agu.org>)), Vice President, Ethics, Diversity, and Inclusion, AGU

**Citation:** Williams, B. M. (2017), NSF grant: AGU and partners aim at gender issues in geosciences, *Eos*, 98, <https://doi.org/10.1029/2017EO079495>. Published on 10 August 2017.

Text © 2017. The authors. CC BY-NC-ND 3.0

Except where otherwise noted, images are subject to copyright. Any reuse without express permission from the copyright

owner is prohibited.