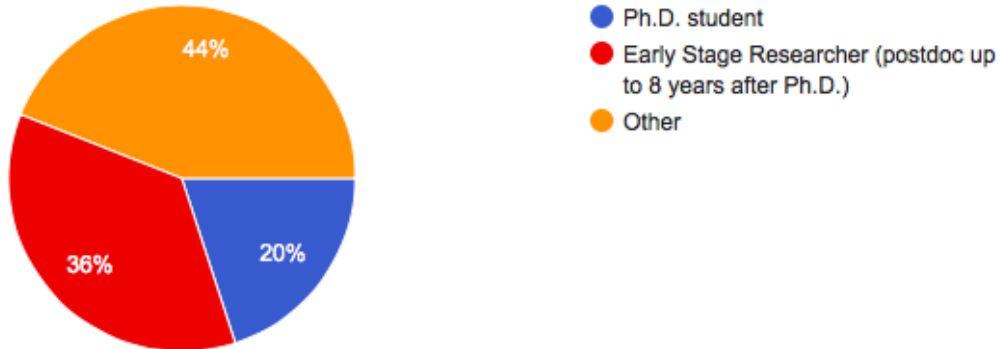
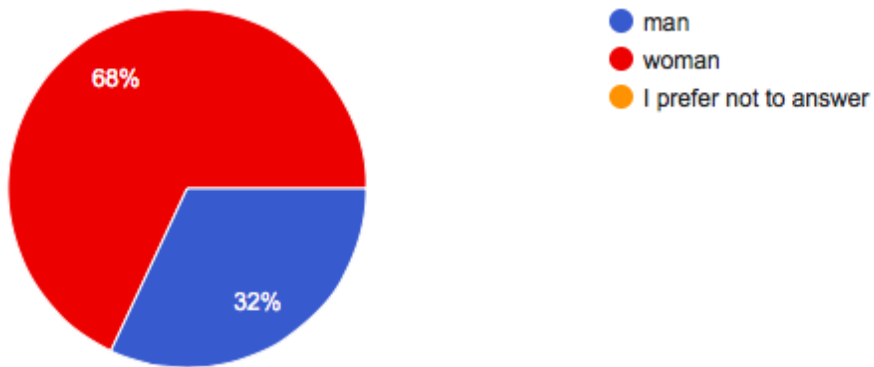


Summary of the questionnaire about the 2nd Workshop on String Theory and Gender at Institut Henri Poincaré, 09-10 June 2016, Paris

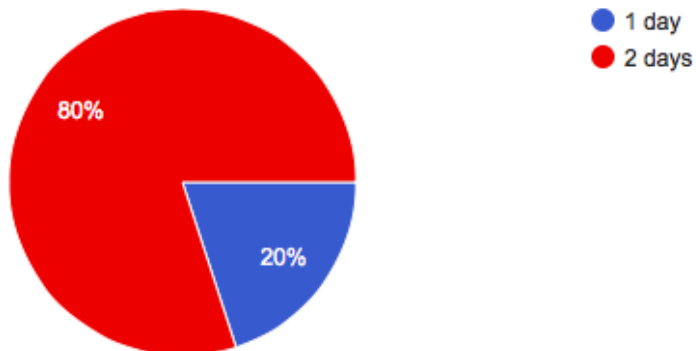
1. I am a



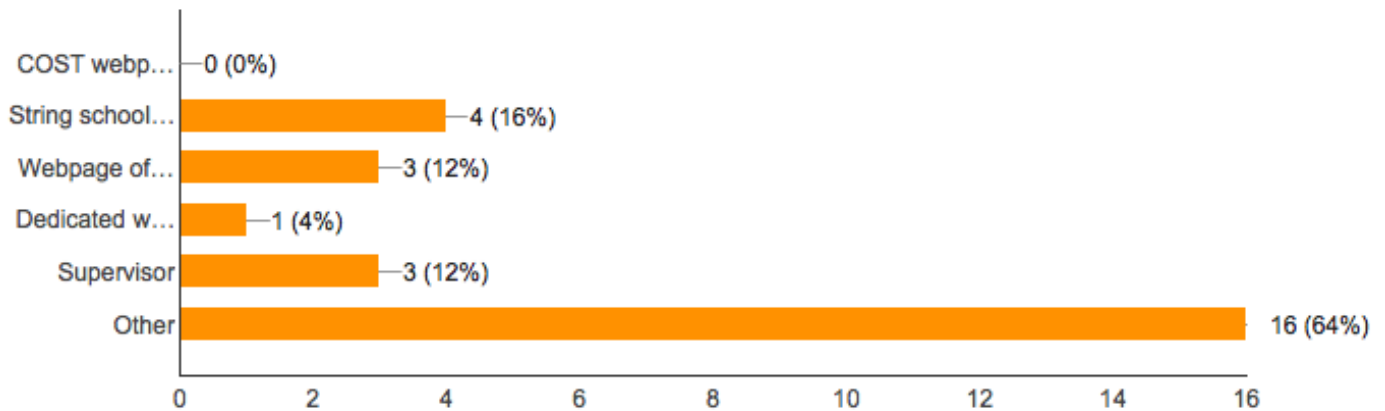
2. I am a



3. Participation in the workshop: did you stay (2 days is the full length of the workshop)



4. How did you hear about the workshop?

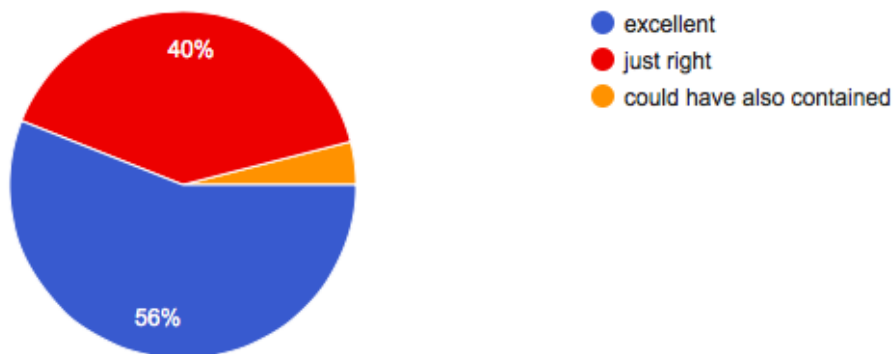


Other:

- colleagues (4X)
- invited speaker (2X)
- mailing list womenstrings / Email announcement / COST e-mail announcement / Webpages on general string theory workshops / via email announcing the workshop, forwarded to me
- From organizers of the previous edition which I had contacted previously for other reasons
- String-maths trimester
- CERN Diversity Office / Office of Diversity
- I am part of the SC

5. How content were you with the organisation?

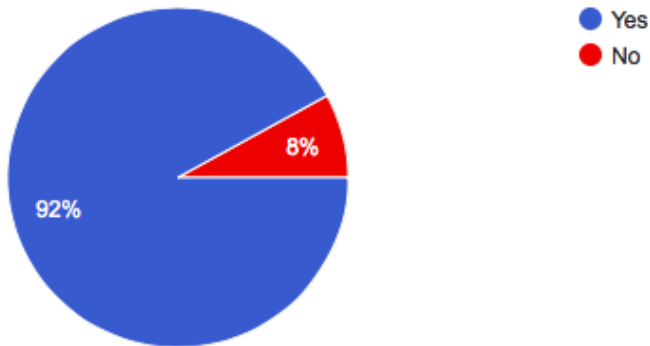
(a) The information provided on the web-page and e-mails was



Comments:

- * abstracts of talks

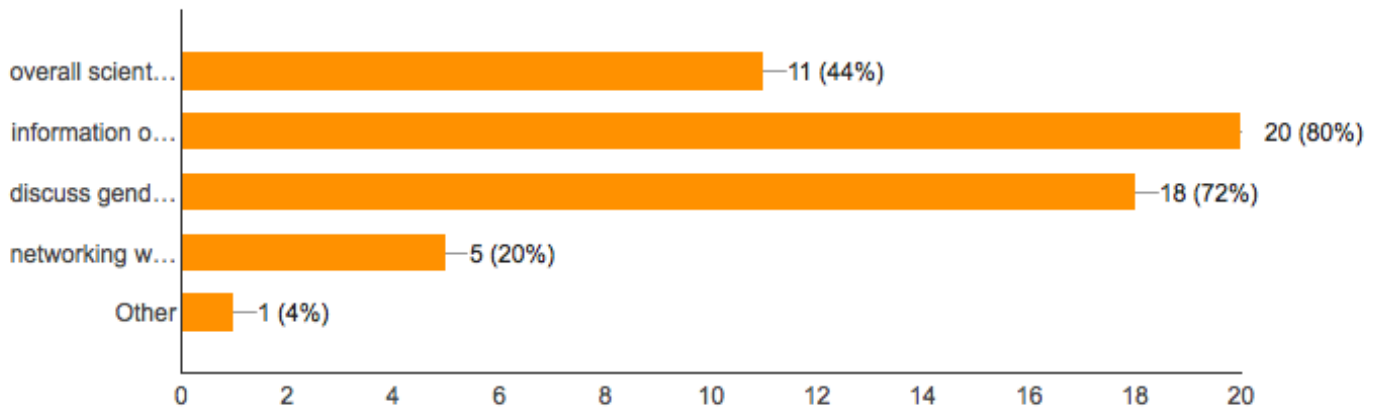
(b) Did the information come at the right time?



Comments:

- * It could have been provided earlier
- * The announcement of the workshop could have been earlier

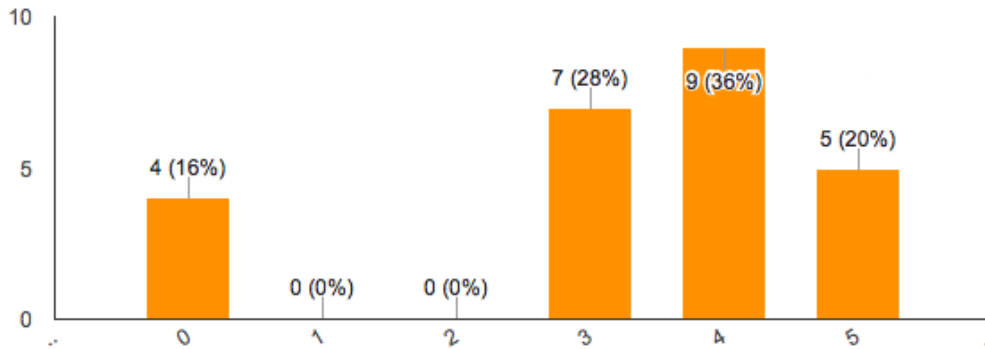
6. What was your motivation to participate? (You can choose several options)



Other: Publicly support the gender debate

7. How did you like

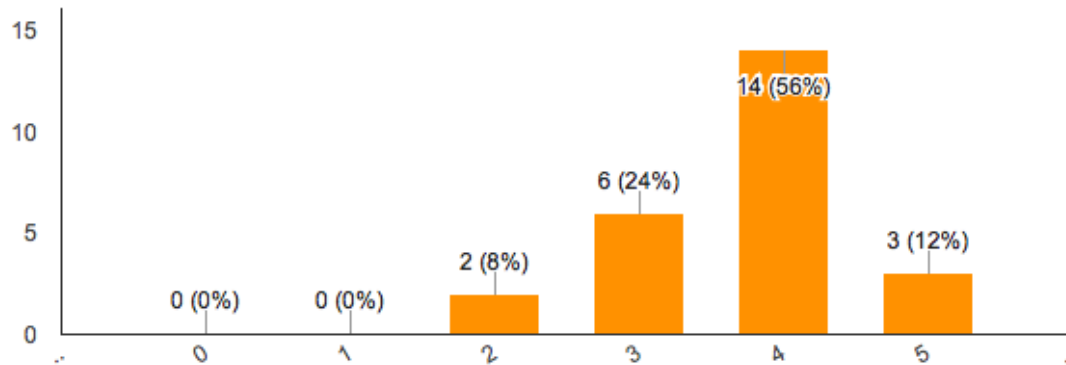
(a) ...the string theory talks? (on a scale from 1 to 5 with 5 corresponding to “excellent”, and 0 corresponding to “did not attend”)



Comments:

- * The first talk (about CFTs) was excellent, as it provided a broad overview. Unfortunately the three other talks had the tendency to flee quiet rapidly into details about the speakers own work.
- * I mainly went for the gender issues, not the string stuff; I would have preferred the entire conference to be dedicated to gender issues. If I wanted to attend string theory talks, I'd just find a program elsewhere specifically tailored to my research interests.
- * Is it possible to get a copy of all slides?

(b) ...the gender talks?

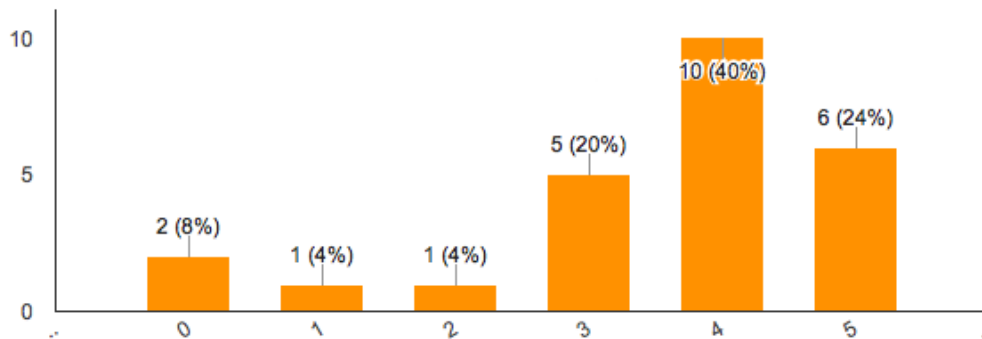


Comments:

- * I would prefer more focus on gender issues within our field, rather than wider gender issues in schools etc.
- * They were good! It would have been nice to also include information on places besides Europe, though
- * Suggestion: remind the speakers that the audience will look at diagrams and statistics with special attention.
- * some talks of the speakers involved on European and CNRS gender policy gave quite inaccessible presentations, but it is probably hard to find better speakers.

- * Focus on the abnormal problem in Physics, which does not seem to improve with time, and include more discussions
- * Perhaps the gender talks could have been more focused on examining the presence of women in String Theory in particular.
- * Rippon did not have so much to add to her previous talk, better to avoid same speaker twice if possible . She was nice to have around anyhow...
- * I think the discussion on ways or tools that one could need to address gender issues has not been quite satisfactory.
- * Would be interested in talks proposing - and debating - specific actions this audience can or should take to effect change. By "this audience" I mean individual researchers, some quite senior, and all by assumption interested in improving gender parity in the field. So large-scale bureaucratic initiatives are important, as is research in neurology, but neither is immediately applicable by us.
- * The round table was too crowded with 'buraucrats' that do not give real input other than the money they spend trying to make statistics, etc. I saw only a few people doing a real effort to change things.

(c) ...the gender discussion?



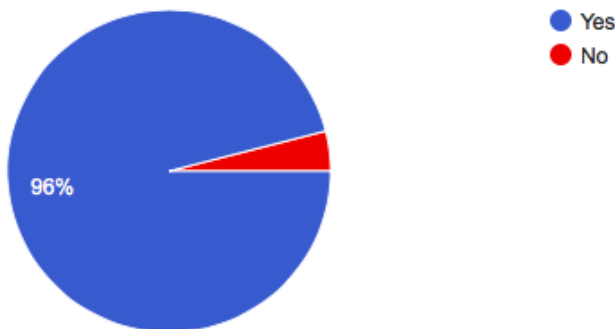
Comments:

- * I very much liked the way the talks were coordinated, i.e. 2x3 small talks followed by a quick wrap-up and discussion.
- * I did expect more discussion about the issues in general in stead of questions about projects handling the issues
- * maybe I would have liked more something like a round table where people could discuss more, but I understand that this is not effective with a lot of participants
- * I would have preferred the discussion to be a full Q&A with the audience, particularly to bring up other topics that were not addressed. For example, transgender people were never even acknowledged, and it would have been nice to have some discussion of intersectionality between gender (really, cisgender

women's) issues and other minority (LGBT, ethnic minorities, etc.) issues in theoretical physics.

- * To change the next conference into String and Gender Theories in order to improve the place of women in the research !
- * Next time also add a part of "practical points" where some hands-on problems & solutions & possible actions are discussed/provided: now all most all of it was about general issues and overviews and there was hardly anything you could take with you to make a change or have an affect on your institute/situation/university etc.. some small 'sit together' discussing/sharing small things one can do that could make a difference would have been nice
- * I think it would be very important to give everybody (regardless whether woman or man) the opportunity to finish their statement without interruption. I think the chairmen should have been more sensitive to that.
- * include discussion session at least twice a day
- * I would prefer more time for group discussion on gender issues, especially on strategies for concrete action. (I did not attend the discussion this year, but based on my experience last year, I felt that one discussion was not enough. People had a lot to say!)
- * Our mail colleagues are slowly understanding more of the issues, very good.
- * I think this could be improved by both extending the time for discussions and by organising it. For instance, the organization could be based on previous questions formulated by the participants.
- * More a series of short talks than a discussion. A truly open discussion would have been better

8. Do you think these events are useful? Did you learn something new about gender issues?

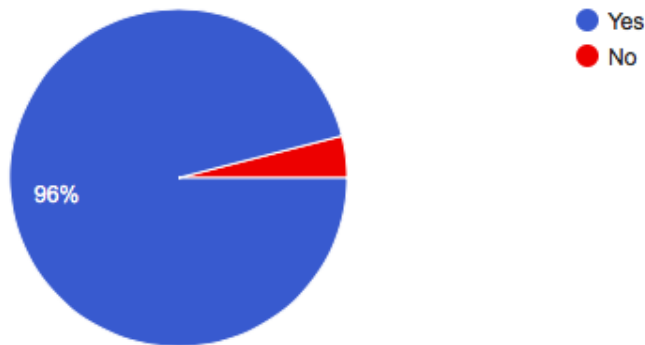


Comments:

- It made the gender issue in our field a lot more clear in my mind and what could be done about it. I would say that it raised my attention to some issues and aspects I was not aware of.

- I was interested by non French points of view and actions
- As a starting phd student I learned a lot. I didn't realize some of the problems. It made me really put things in perspective about how I felt in the past and truly motivated me for the future.
- it creates awareness on the issues, it gives also useful indications on what is the policy at European level
- Already work extensively in this area.
- It was illuminating to hear about how things stand in Europe (I'm from the US)
- I appreciated the talk of the neuro-scientist even if I had already heard her at the previous meeting, learning more about the total absence of evidence that the scientific capacities of women are "minor" even in the experiment of spatial rotation that seemed to be the only one in which there was evidence. I appreciated to learn about the current efforts to spend the funds of the european commission, as I think they should be better, more field-oriented organized.
- Understanding the issues and solutions that are thought of throughout Europe.
- I've found out that all most all of the issues I'm having are not just 'in my head' but they are real and are there because of the gender difference: it was very supporting to know that it's not 'me' being faulty..
- The first talk gave a firm basis to encounter prejudice. The round table showed successfully how to implement gender-oriented initiatives, and the potential if there was more support.
- I heard of new results of experiments on the brain and behavior
- The gender talks are not always great but do provide new perspectives and information from a perspective outside of theoretical physics. I would like to see more statistics about academia (numbers of women in different fields) and stories about successful strategies for increasing the number of women (if possible)
- Useful statistics re gender balance and insight into local initiatives
- Interesting statistics and comparison between interventions. A lot can be done if we ask specific money along the lines of Hamburg
- However, I think this can be improved by promoting the discussion about ways of deepen the understanding of such issues and by providing tools to society to address them.
- I learned about things that have been done elsewhere, had an opportunity to think about issues and discuss them. I did not come away armed with many specific ideas I can implement back home.
- I learnt that there is a lot of money from the Eu that could be better used in programs for women at each stage. Nevertheless, I also learnt from good programs as mentoring, etc that should be better followed.

9. Do you think it would be a good idea to keep organizing “String Theory and Gender” events?



Comments:

- I think that diversifying the academic world of string theory will take a long time and a lot of work of which 'raising awareness' is a very important component.
- They are good to sensitise the String community on Gender issues
- I think it's good to keep this as an important problem. And as I said, it is very useful for starting researchers!
- It is important to create a "tradition" there, it has to be thought as "natural" to have such events, at least until they are needed (which I think it will be for a long time unfortunately)
- It was useful, but I would strongly encourage more emphasis on gender issues (fewer or no physics talks), a discussion about gender issues for people besides cisgender women (e.g. the experiences of transgender men and women, and of gender non-conforming people), and at least a bit of discussion on the status of other minorities in theoretical physics
- They are an excellent and unique chance to exchange honest opinions on problems that are constantly dismissed or minimally considered in our Departments and groups.
- Continue raising awareness among physicists, acknowledging solutions being set up at the university level.
- It would be very supportive if the message of how gender differences affect students etc. is being spread: I think more girls would be staying in physics if they find confirmation it's not 'them' being 'wrong', but the issues they/we encounter are real and are experienced by others as well, and that the reason for it is the gender difference.... not just themselves
- The workshop made it clear to me that there is still a long way to go. Also, awareness for gender issues is still incredibly low in our field.
- There is a real problem here, and it's not going anywhere!!

- I think these events are crucial. As with any social movement, success hinges on maintaining persistent pressure to keep the issue on the agenda, providing a space to discuss the issues openly, and building solidarity through formal and informal networks. That always begins with a small group of dedicated individuals building momentum over the years. These meetings are essential for that.
- Theoretical physics still has some way to go to reach gender equality!
- The community is understanding the terms of the problem and slowly overcoming biases
- I do not think there are specific issues related to string theory and gender, I believe the issues we discussed are shared with many related fields. The focus on a small subfield has advantages in terms of networking and audience interest in science talks. But most of the speakers on gender had no experience with the field, its practices, or the community, and showed little interest in learning any of this.
- It is a crucial issue. There are still many issues unsolved.

10. Do you have any ideas how to get FEMALE researchers more involved?

- Making the combination of research and family more convenient such as day care on every campus etc.
- Not really, maybe involving more men, insisting with seminars, mentoring programs, mailing lists, newsletter
- Fund more of them to attend!
- I would keep the scientific level of the talks extremely high (trying to invest money on this, and trying to convince invited speakers showing previous speakers lists and growing interest of previous events). If I have further ideas I would write to the organizers.
- Keep insisting on female researchers issues alone (e.g. discriminations, parity problems in committees, ...) on one side. Generalize the approach to parenthood, family life on the other side (to attract people that do not relate to female researchers issues).
- add a 'practical' aspect to the workshop: like, this you can do, this can e.g. be dealt with in this way, you could inform the institute about that, ... etc.
- Talk very concretely about what to do to improve the situation. I think female researchers are tired of endless discussions that don't go anywhere. There is a demand for concrete change.
- They are sufficiently involved. The problem is on the other side.
- Many physics departments have women in physics groups. Targeting those with emails announcing and advertising the event may help. Furthermore, expanding the scope from just string theory to "theoretical physics" may help (bearing in mind that the event might grow much larger).

- Via mentoring and information re importance of networking
- Add a session where they can talk rather than listen, explaining their views, giving input from new generations
- It is difficult to make the younger ones to speak out. At the end they are alone in front of the committees. But we must transmit them the idea that we want to change something for them, for the young ones. It is our priority.

11. Do you have any ideas how to get MALE researchers more involved?

- Why call it "gender"? It was clear to me that the scope is actually much broader. Also parenthood and young fathers struggle with the archaic structures of the academic world.
- They need a male 'role model' as well who addresses the gender problems. Conferences as this one, seminars...
- maybe inviting them to participate in such events
- As above: fund more of them to attend, as they are less likely to come if they have to fund their own travel expenses and more likely to come if invited explicitly with funding.
- Unfortunately the male researchers who would most benefit from such an event are those who think there's no problem with gender in theoretical physics and thus won't bother to come. Perhaps it might be useful to have some male "ambassadors" to encourage attendance from their male colleagues? Of course, providing travel funds or accommodation could also help, but that might be difficult to do.
- Promoting the subject using male speakers. Generalize the approach to parenthood, family life on the other side (to attract people that do not relate to female researchers issues).
- make the problems the gender-differences and male-abundance causes more clear: spell them out completely.
Example: because there are so many man almost everything is done in the male-fashion, female students feel that it is 'wrong' or 'inappropriate' or 'unwanted' to do things their way - the female-way - and therefore they feel locked-out, unwanted, and/or unwelcome... so they leave the institutes and Physics.
- The awareness among male researchers is still very low. A lot of them are not aware of the many stories of day-to-day discrimination and just have the feeling that their own job perspectives get threatened by gender initiatives. I think it is crucial to create awareness on a much larger scale. Apart from that, there are many issues (for instance parenting, mobility, fixed-term contracts, researcher stereotypes, fairness and respect) where young female and male researchers share a common interest. Showing male researchers that these initiatives actually also

improve their situation could very much foster a atmosphere of collaboration instead of confrontation. Also, it is crucial to show that the gender debate is not just something to support women, but to create a more fair and open working environment from which everybody profits.

- Find a way to give incentives to male reserachers who collaborate/mentor/promote more female researchers.
- Stressing value of diversity in research groups and also work-life balance issues
- Discuss more with them criteria of excellence
- This is much harder. I heard a male organizer declaring publicly that they are not interested in the subject. But we have to be aware that this is the kind of attitude that we will have to fight.

12. Do you have any ideas how to get YOUNG researchers more involved?

- Highlight the overview part and invite more pedagogical speakers!
- announce the events on social media
- I think the mentor program for young female researchers is a very good idea. As for young men, it is important that the gender problems keep getting addressed by conferences such as this one. nothing different from what I said above
- I think young researchers (including women) have the naive view that good work alone will enable them to make a career in string theory. It is hard to convince them that gender issues (and more generally poor working conditions) will matter for their own careers.
- Same as above - maybe also encourage respected senior scientists to be more outspoken about these issues and encourage attendance? Young people tend to also care more about other minorities - at least in US social justice circles, the concept of "intersectionality" (that an individual's experiences are defined not just by their membership in a single group, but by their membership or lack thereof in a whole range of minority groups) holds a lot more traction for young people than for the older generations, I suspect. I think older generations tend to think of "gender in physics" as just the experiences of straight, white, cisgender women. So perhaps making the topics more explicitly inclusive of other identities and minorities might attract a broader base of young people.
- Invest in student conferences to raise awareness. Insist more on parenthood problems to attract more broadly (like postdocs, for instance).
- First of all, I think it is a problem that young researchers just serve as some kind of audience to these workshops, while the speakers are mostly older people. Young research have a very different perspective and attitude that is basically ignored at the gender workshops so far (and this also renders the debates on gender issues rather traditional). I think there should be more opportunity for young researchers to get involved and to be heard.

- Find a way to give incentives to male researchers who collaborate/mentor/promote more female researchers.
- Perhaps by allowing time for short research talks (15 mins.)?
- Combination of the above
- Let them talk more
- The same as for female. It is their rights that are at stake here. They have not understood it enough, in my opinion.

13. Any other comments and ideas for improving future events?

- Probably it would be helpful to understand how all these projects on gender issues funded by EU are concretely affecting the situation of female scientists in Europe. Which are the concrete steps?
- I included my comments in my previous answers: more focus on gender; a discussion about people other than cisgender women; discussion about other minorities; and an open Q&A for the audience to bring up any other topics they'd like to discuss.
- The explanatory part related to researchers themselves was a bit sketchy. For instance, the fact that female researchers are underrepresented at the full rank professor level was exposed, but never discussed. This part of the issue should be more investigated in the future since it is fully relevant to the audience.
- I would very much like to see a talk on gender performativity, in the spirit of Judith Butler. I think this is a dimension that is often ignored in more traditional gender debates.
- More group discussion sessions!
- Connect session with institute or big regular conference as a satellite workshop to maximize the audience. Great work, thanks!
- I think it would be good to have organised discussions which could be based, for instance, on selected questions made by the participants. One could for instance be asked to complete a survey like this one some time before the dates of the event.
- We have to try to make more impact at an emotional level. I think that involving women in our field that are ready to speak out could be a good idea.