

Small Particles, Big Issues: PRIORITYze DEI

Issue 41 28/05/2025: Gender Bias in Physics Citations

Dear all,

We hope this email finds you well.

In academic science, what we cite shapes what we value. But what if citation practices themselves perpetuate systemic inequities?

A recent *Nature Physics* Perspective by Teich et al. (2022) provides one of the most comprehensive analyses to date of **gendered citation practices in physics**. Their findings are striking: papers authored by women are cited significantly less than expected, while those authored by men are consistently over-cited.

Even more concerning, this imbalance is **not random**, it varies depending on who is citing, what they're citing, and how close they are to the work. Male-dominated teams tend to perpetuate the gap, especially when referencing work beyond their disciplinary or co-authorship networks. The disparity is widest in general physics journals and remains stubbornly stable over time.

But there's a way forward. The authors recommend **individual and collective action**, such as:

Citation Diversity Statements (CDSs): Reflecting on and reporting the gender balance in our reference lists.

Longer bibliographies: Papers with more references tend to show more equitable citation patterns.

Awareness and training: Equipping researchers to recognize and reduce bias in everyday scholarly practices.

Journals, too, have a role to play, by promoting inclusive authorship, lifting limits on reference lists, and embracing transparency measures.



You can read the full article here: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41567-022-01770-1>

Let's make sure the scientific record reflects the full diversity of who contributes to it.

Best regards,
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