

What must KWSE do for another great leap forward?

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In 2018, the Ministry of Science and ICT of the Republic of Korea reported that Korea ranked 5th in total R&D expenditure and 6th in Full Time Equivalent (researchers equivalent to full-time equivalent) among OECD countries. Moreover, the UNDP HDI (Human Development Index) of Korea is 0.901, little bit higher than the OECD average of 0.887. However, according to the results of several studies including the international collaborative survey conducted by KWSE, gender perception in the field of science and technology varies widely by gender and age, and in particular, strong gender barriers are observed among researchers in their 20s and 30s. Despite the efforts of the Korean government to improve the status of women in STEM, for example by enacting the Law in 2002 to support women scientists and engineers, there is still much to do to close the gender gap in STEM. As the first NGO of women in STEM established in Korea, KWSE will continue to serve as a center for gathering the voices of women in STEM by conducting international cooperative studies. Moreover, KWSE should put more efforts to convey the situation of women scientists and engineers into policy making for another great leap forward to assure a better working environment for our young women in STEM area.