

**Title:** ProExcel – Frauen in Wissenschaft und Forschung  
Förderung von Spitzenleistung und Innovation für  
zukünftige Entwicklungen  
*ProExcel – “Women in Science - Promoting Excellence  
and Innovation for Future Development”*

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**Event:** Conference, Kiel, Germany, 17-23 March 2013

**Brief description:**

In both South Africa and Germany, the percentage of women who hold top scientific positions is still relatively low or limited to traditionally "feminine" subjects. But why is this? What needs to happen to correct this imbalance? This issue will be addressed at the conference "Women in Science – Promoting Excellence and Innovation for Future Development" to be held at Kiel University of Applied Sciences from 17 to 23 March. This conference will bring together expert opinion from South Africa and Germany on promoting women in science and research as well as in the natural sciences and technology, giving particular consideration to the historic conditions of the post-apartheid era and German reunification. At the same time, however, the event is also geared toward students, researchers, university administrators and interested members of the public.

Over three days the conference will provide scientists from South Africa and Germany, (post-)graduate students and young scientists, whether female or male, with a forum for presenting their research work in an international realm, to share ideas about careers in science and network beyond national borders. Every day of the conference will be dedicated to a particular issue: day one focuses on the gendered cultures in science and research, while day two looks at career paths in (natural) sciences and technology. The third day is entitled "Global Change Research – Knowledge beyond Academic Cultures and National Borders". The questions have their origin in the fact that gender equality in the sciences continues to represent a considerable challenge for the educational systems in South Africa and Germany. The

consequences of such a low percentage of women working in top scientific positions, known as gender bias, will be problematic for future development if a remedy is not found. The future of science depends both locally and globally on the increased and equal participation of women as well as on the opportunities open to them.

Increasing the percentage of women in mathematics, IT, natural sciences and technology (MINT) has been a particular challenge for many years and is the goal of far-reaching framework programmes, measures and funding initiatives. Structural changes endure, and gender and diversity are key factors for change and innovation in South Africa just as they are in Germany.

Parallel to the conference, the South African delegation is invited to visit universities and research institutes in Kiel to gain insight into the possibilities for studying, teaching and researching in Germany. The itinerary includes a visit to Kiel University of Applied Sciences and the GEOMAR – Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel as well as Kiel University and the Kiel Institute for the World Economy.

Parallel zur Konferenz erhält die südafrikanische Delegation beim Besuch von Hochschulen und Forschungseinrichtungen in Kiel Einblick in die Studien-, Lehr- und Forschungsmöglichkeiten in Deutschland. Auf dem Plan stehen die Fachhochschule Kiel und das GEOMAR – Helmholtz-Zentrum für Ozeanforschung Kiel sowie die Christian-Albrechts-Universität zu Kiel und das Institut für Weltwirtschaft an der Universität Kiel.