

The ETSF social policy has been created by the *Nanoquanta* Network of Excellence¹, funded under the FP6 of the European Community.

It originates in two observations:

1. There is an increasing demand for flexibility within our area of research. Young scientists in particular are asked to move with or without family throughout Europe and to accept short-term contracts.
Subsequently, stress and feelings of insecurity are growing and it becomes increasingly difficult to take time off for achieving important personal goals without compromising ones career – especially in the beginning or the middle of a contract.
2. The role and participation of women in science emerged as a major policy concern at the European Union level in the late 1990s. Women are under-represented as graduate students and researchers, among senior university staff and as members of scientific boards (see EU's report "She Figures2006"²).
Gender issues in science can not be dissociated from many general questions in society such as the organizational structure of work and gender inequality in education.

The ETSF social policy would like to:

- promote the future careers of participants
- be an example for a humanistic approach to science and research.

The ETSF social policy is implemented using three main tools:

- a policy Consensus on society issues
- a Mentoring process
- the appointment of two Ombudspersons

¹ <http://www.nanoquanta.eu/>

² http://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/pdf/she_figures_2006_en.pdf