

*Mohamed Ag Ayoya,
Ariel Higgins-Steele, Donatella Massai,
Chantal Umutoni, Asako Saegusa,
Jean-Claude Mubalama,
Stephanie Kleschnitzki,
Sandra Lattouf, Solofo Ramarason,
Françoise Gruloos-Ackermans
mayoya@unicef.org

UNICEF, Port-au-Prince, Haiti

For the Wellcome Trust data on grant awardees see <http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/Funding/Grants-awarded/index.htm>

1 Ministry of Public Health and Population. Case report, April 10, 2012. <http://www.mspp.gov.ht/site/downloads/Rapport%20journalier%20MSPP%20du%2010%20avril%202012.pdf> (accessed May 4, 2012).

Gender inequality in awarded research grants

Under-representation of women at higher levels of faculty in the biomedical sciences has long been noted.¹ However, whereas differences

in representation in academic sciences are clear, less is known about disparities in important indicators of research success that might partly account for such differences, such as success in obtaining funding.²⁻⁴ For instance, the equity of amounts awarded to male and female awardees has not been assessed.

We used publicly available data from grants awarded from Oct 1, 2000, to Sept 30, 2008, by a major UK biomedical funding body, the Wellcome Trust, to assess grant funding amounts awarded to women versus men. Gender was assigned to each primary recipient on the basis of name, with consensus agreement by GB and NTVD (internet searches resolved disagreements). Data were available on 10283 awards made to 7015 individuals. We compared monetary differences by gender using ANOVA, with adjustment for rank (predoctoral, doctoral, professorial).

Awards ranged from £150 to £16.8 million (mean £281284, SD 7.54). After correction for a main effect of academic rank ($F_{[2, 10283]}=158.97$, $p<0.0001$), there was a significant gender difference, with men awarded on average £44735 more than women ($F_{[1, 10283]}=6.54$, $p=0.011$; figure). We also calculated a yearly rate; a similar pattern was noted for academic rank ($F_{[2, 10250]}=62.93$, $p<0.0001$) and gender ($F_{[2, 10250]}=9.13$, $p=0.003$), with men again awarded more than women.

Our analysis shows that women received smaller grants from the Wellcome Trust, on average, than did men during this period. In the UK, it is unusual for a grant to be awarded for an amount less than that applied for, and previous findings⁵ indicate that success rates for research fellowships and project grants administered by the UK's Wellcome Trust are equivalent for men and women, although fewer women apply for grants than would be expected. Thus, in our opinion, the most likely explanation for the difference in

amounts awarded to women and men is that women are systematically less ambitious in the amounts of funding requested in their grant applications. If we are correct, this represents a potentially modifiable target. Mentors throughout the academic career pathway should ensure that women are as ambitious as men in their outlook, and in their grant proposals; men should be encouraged to be economical when costing such applications.

We declare that we have no conflicts of interest.

*Gillinder Bedi, Nicholas T Van Dam,
Marcus Munafa
gb2326@columbia.edu

Division on Substance Abuse, New York State Psychiatric Institute, New York, NY 10024, USA (GB); Department of Psychiatry, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Columbia University, New York, NY, USA (GB); Department of Psychology, University at Albany, SUNY, Albany, NY, USA (NTVD); Department of Psychiatry, Mount Sinai School of Medicine, New York, NY, USA (NTVD); and School of Experimental Psychology, University of Bristol, Bristol, UK (MM)

- 1 Burrelli J. Thirty-three years of women in S&E faculty positions. Arlington: National Science Foundation, 2008. <http://www.nsf.gov/statistics/infbrief/nsf08308/> (accessed July 18, 2012).
- 2 Lincoln A, Pincus S, Leboy P. Scholars' awards go mainly to men. *Nature* 2011; **469**: 472.
- 3 Symonds M, Gemmell N, Braisher T, Gorringer K, Elgar M. Gender differences in publication output: towards an unbiased metric of research performance. *PLoS One* 2006; **1**: e127.
- 4 Pohlhaus J, Jiang H, Sutton J. Sex differences in career development awardees' subsequent grant attainment. *Ann Intern Med* 2010; **152**: 616-17.
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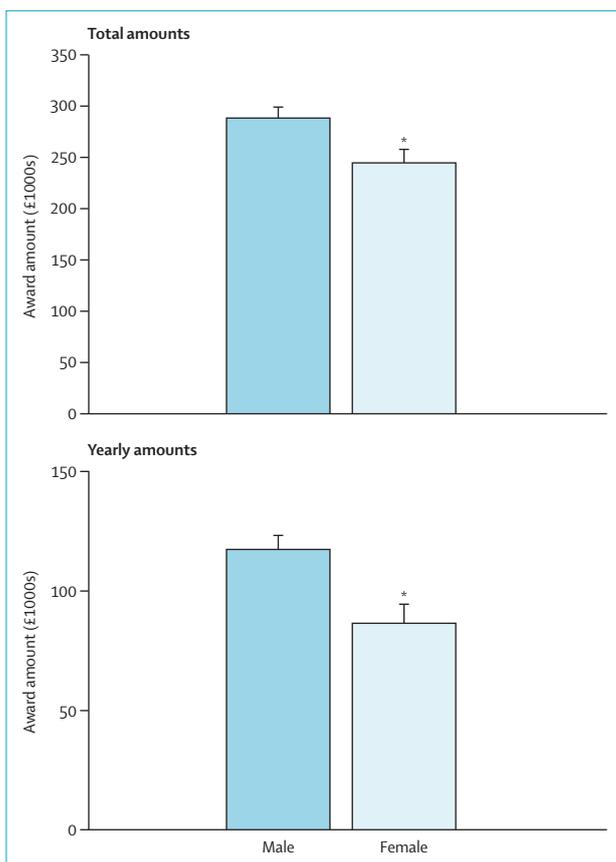


Figure: Wellcome Trust award amounts 2001-08 by recipient gender. Data are marginal means corrected for academic rank (error bars=SE). *Significant difference ($p<0.05$).

Department of Error

Lorenz MW, Polak JF, Kavousi M, et al, on behalf of the PROG-IMT Study Group. Carotid intima-media thickness progression to predict cardiovascular events in the general population (the PROG-IMT collaborative project): a meta-analysis of individual participant data. *Lancet* 2012; **379**: 2053-62. In the Summary of this Article (June 2), the first line of the Findings should have read: "Of 22 eligible studies, 16 with 36 984 participants were included." The Cardiovascular Health Study cohort 1 and cohort 2 should have been subcohort 1 and subcohort 2 throughout. These corrections have been made to the online version as of Aug 3, 2012.