

Join the next cohort of RisingWISE!

By Helen Alexander

Our award-winning programme for women in STEMM is now open for applications until the 4th of September.

Over 350 women have been through RisingWISE and it came as a wonderful surprise that the programme that **Katia Smith-Litiere** and I run with our fantastic Oxford counterparts, Louisa Trevail and Sally Charles, won the **Commitment to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion** Oxford Vice Chancellor award last month.

In a year with 170 entries and more than 1,000 individuals nominated, this award has been a powerful acknowledgment of the ongoing impact of the programme, which has often been described as 'life-changing' and 'transformational' by those that have taken part.

The award panel chose the programme for "broadening mindsets, reframing skills, expanding networks and exploring new career options for women in STEMM to realise their full potential."

We are now looking for the next cohort.

So, what's it all about? The programme is delivered in partnership between the University of Cambridge and the University of Oxford and is designed to support women early career researchers.

Through a combination of skills development workshops and peer collaboration, our participants develop new professional contacts, test and refine early-stage ideas and gain exposure to entrepreneurial thinking, learning what that might look like in the lab or in starting a venture.

This past year we had a highly engaged cohort, with 63 participants (ten more than last year) actively exchanging expertise and building relationships that extended beyond the programme. As a result of participating, they are now considering a range of pathways across academia, industry, venture creation and commercialisation, reflecting the programme's core message that there is no single route to success. 100 per cent of all participants said that they'd recommend the programme to others and half of them said that it had already changed their future direction.

The programme is mainly online, but ends with a two-day residential, which took place in Cranfield this year. That time was key for participants, as the interdisciplinary teams transformed their research into venture ideas and delivered high-quality pitches to a panel of judges. The standard was exceptional, underlining that if this can be achieved in such a short time, the potential for these researchers to create world-changing impact is considerable!

Overall, RisingWISE has been instrumental in building confidence, leadership skills and helping early career researchers in STEMM (Science, technology, engineering, mathematics and Medicine) further develop the toolkit they need to take the next step in their career.

Want to get involved?

RisingWISE is free for all participants and is currently funded through HEIF, the Royce Institute, the School of Clinical Medicine, the School of Technology, the School of Physical Sciences, the School of Biological Sciences and Ceres Agri-Tech, based out of Cambridge Enterprise. Apply [here](#).