MISSION STATEMENT

AWIS champions the interests of women in science, technology engineering, and mathematics across all disciplines and employment sectors. Working for positive system transformation, AWIS strives to ensure that all women in these fields can achieve their full potential.
PRESIDENT’S LETTER

Our new Strategic Plan charts out a bold agenda for AWIS! The result of months of discussions, the Plan has three fundamental goals: to work towards positive system transformation, to help all women in STEM achieve success, and to optimize our organizational capacity.

Decades of research on gender issues have shown clearly that rectifying issues that impede women improves the environment for men as well. We now recognize that the very structure of our educational and work environments limits opportunities for women and girls — and so changing structural components is necessary to continue making progress toward equity.

We also recognize that women take a multitude of pathways as they navigate their careers, and there is no single recipe for success in science. AWIS encourages all women to reach their potential, and supports choices that individuals make as they weigh their options and work within constraints. We must continue to learn about the special challenges of women of color, and to effectively include their concerns in AWIS’ work. Finally, AWIS plays a crucial role in highlighting and celebrating the accomplishments of women STEM professionals in all disciplines and work sectors.

AWIS must continue to keep its focus on our fundamental identity as a member- and chapter-structured organization. Our small and dedicated staff in DC is augmented by the thousands of individuals who volunteer their time for local

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Advocate for positive system transformation

AWIS is not satisfied with the status quo of women in STEM. While women in these disciplines have made great strides over the past four decades, fundamental and systemic changes are needed to remove the remaining barriers to their full participation in the STEM enterprise. AWIS works both at the national level and through its chapters around the country to promote equity, workplace best practices, and diversity.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Increase awareness of issues that impede and endanger American competitiveness by limiting progress in STEM careers
- Promulgate results of important national studies on gender inequity in learning environments and workplaces
- Work with federal and local agencies to show how gender equity aligns with their goals for workforce development
- Actively seek out opportunities for positive coverage in the media of AWIS activities and positions
- Highlight ways to restructure STEM environments to foster diversity and inclusion to advance national competitiveness
- Focus on career transitions and special needs of women of color and other underrepresented groups
- Actively propose and support federal legislation and initiatives which are consistent with AWIS policies and position statements such as, but not limited to: 1. Economic equity; 2. Flexible work options; 3. Parental leave; 4. Improvement of post-doc employment status; and 5. Title IX compliance.
- Develop mechanisms to engage individuals and chapters in advocacy
- Identify opportunities for innovation and systemic change across multiple work sectors
- Promote best practice models for employers and educators by gathering and highlighting examples from different disciplines, work sectors, and industries
- Highlight the central role of professional societies in advancing women’s careers
- Expand our voice through strategic alliances and partnerships
Help all women in STEM achieve success

Professional development and educational opportunities are central to personal effectiveness and professional growth. With a diverse portfolio of programs at both the national and local levels, AWIS equips members with necessary knowledge to navigate their professional lives. Through chapters, members have access to a network and professional development programs.

AWIS is committed to highlighting the achievements of women in STEM on our website, in our magazine, through social media, and in AWIS chapters around the country. Our activities bring together members and community leaders for informal networking, mentoring exchanges, and special events. AWIS is building an endowment to fund strategic projects that ensure continuing support for the next generation of women in STEM.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Encourage lifelong learning, professional development, and a culture of mentoring future generations
- Support diverse career pathways
- Develop opportunities to support entry and re-entry into the STEM workforce
- Create toolkits for professional development, including mentoring and work-life management
- Find innovative ways to support underrepresented minority women in STEM careers
- Increase diversity among our members and leadership
- Partner with minority-serving STEM organizations to address issues of gender equity
- Create and sustain forums for networking
- Promote and encourage chapter activities
- Reach out through social media
- Convene regional and national meetings
- Celebrate the accomplishments of women in STEM
- Highlight effective practices for recognition and advancement
- Publicize achievements, awards, and opportunities for women in STEM
- Facilitate the nomination of women for high level positions, awards, and recognition

As we developed this new Strategic Plan, we also looked to our previous Plan to assess how much progress had been made. It was highly gratifying to review the previous three years, which saw AWIS grow in new directions and become established as a go-to organization for gender equity in STEM. If we adhere to our bold agenda for the next three years, AWIS will indeed be what Gandhi called the “change you want to see in the world”.

Joan M. Herbers, PhD
Maximize our impact by optimizing organizational capacity

A strong national organization requires effective local chapters, a diverse and engaged membership, and resources from public and private donors. AWIS must capitalize on our uniqueness: we are the only multidisciplinary organization for women in STEM across all employment sectors, and we have the infrastructure, know-how, and convening authority to offer programs and initiatives nationally, regionally, and locally.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Build an endowment to secure the long-term financial stability of AWIS
  - i. Expand Board and chapter commitments to endowment fundraising
  - ii. Identify additional people, corporations, and foundations that support women in STEM
  - iii. Improve participation by AWIS members and Fellows
- Grow the organization (members, chapters, and infrastructure)
- Increase and diversify membership across all work sectors and disciplines
- Enhance institutional and corporate engagement
- Expand grant activity in support of our mission
- Identify and develop future leaders for AWIS
- Find additional volunteer opportunities within the organization
- Engage a diverse set of members in AWIS committees and task forces
- Encourage individuals active in chapters to consider running for Board positions
- Enhance partnerships with local chapters
- Stimulate chapter growth in strategically defined locations
- Help chapters increase capacity and growth
- Provide guidance and training for chapters to participate in advocacy initiatives
- Leverage strategic alliances and collaborations that advance AWIS goals