

Addressing Systemic Barriers to Women Advancing in the Post-Pandemic Workplace

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Summary

After our groundbreaking research project concluded in 2021, the Association of Professional Engineers and Geoscientists of Alberta (APEGA) received another three-year (2021-2024) grant from Women and Gender Equality (WAGE) Canada exploring the impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has and continues to have on barriers women engineering and geoscience professions face in Alberta. Our session will provide a high-level overview of key findings and final recommendations from this new research.

Theory / Method / Workflow

Combined, our two WAGE research projects garnered substantial participation from APEGA's membership, with approximately 10,000 members and 650 companies across Alberta having participated in identifying and addressing systemic challenges. The outcomes of our first WAGE project identified four core barriers: 1) traditional masculine work environments, 2) inequitable career development and advancement opportunities, 3) bias, discrimination, and harassment and 4) the difficulty of re-entering the workforce after a leave. Through a meticulous analysis of companies' recruitment, promotion, and retention practices we substantiated the pressing need to both retain and promote women in the workplace. Our most recent WAGE project had over 7,000 members participate in our survey and enticed seven companies to join our initiative dedicated to creating the leading practice guideline. Employing an intersectional lens accounting for factors such as race and ability, our findings highlighted the critical barriers affecting women, including economic challenges, remote work issues, limited advancement opportunities, and caregiving responsibilities that continue to impact women today.

Results, Observations, Conclusions

*Placeholder. As data is currently being analyzed and not yet finalized, preliminary results, observations, and conclusions will be provided at a later day.

References

APEGA. *Women in the Workplace Report* (2021.)