

## Signing for gender equality in European physics research

To remove barriers to the recruitment and career progression of female physicists, the directors of four NWO physics institutes AMOLF, ARCNL, DIFFER and Nikhef have signed Gender Equality Plans (GEP) to promote female physicists careers. The official ceremony took place on Monday night, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2018 at the start of Physics@Veldhoven in front of the physics community.

The signing kicked-off a systematic approach to accelerate the improvement of gender balance in the national physics community leading to structural change in the research institutes. 'AMOLF aims to have 25% of its scientific group leaders to be female in 2022', says director Huib Bakker. DIFFER director Richard van de Sanden has similar goals: 'we pursue to have 20% of our scientific staff to be women within four years.'

During the last year the four physics institutes made a thorough evaluation of the status quo of their gender balance. A quantitative data analysis and the results of a broad evaluation by an external gender expert institute (Joanneum Research, Austria) have set the starting point to design tailored Gender Equality Plans. To demonstrate and promote the legitimacy of agreed actions and measures the new GEP were signed and launched by the institutes' directors with the overarching goals:

- The removal of barriers to the recruitment and career progression of female scientists
- Gain of unconscious bias awareness

To reach these goals a concept with specific measures and actions tailored to the needs of each institute will be implemented and monitored.

### Science with and for Society

NWO-I, the Institutes Organisation of NWO, is partner in the gender project GENERA (granted within the Horizon 2020 work program Science with and for Society). GENERA aims to develop a common framework to promote gender equality in European research organizations operating in the field of physics. With support of the GENERA project the four physics institutes developed the Gender Equality Plans (GEP) to promote female physicists careers and set up individual GEP teams for the design, the implementation and monitoring of GEP.



*The four directors shake hands after the signing ceremony*