



## Shared Vision: Desired Goals

To define their vision for women scientists, including an “ideal” working model of the scientific community, members of each working group described what conditions would be like when the career issue being discussed by the group was finally resolved. They did so by first imagining a future point in time when the specific questions associated with their issue had been successfully resolved, and all concerns related to women’s careers in science had been fully addressed. Working from this future perspective, participants suggested observable data and intangible differences that would unquestionably indicate the successful resolution of their specific career issue. They organized their comprehensive list of items into categories, which they then titled according to the overarching theme of each category.

Themes crossing all working groups demonstrated remarkable agreement among participants about the ideal outcome of advancing women’s contributions to science through professional societies, regardless of the issue being addressed. Descriptions of the primary characteristics of the groups’ imagined future, in which all five career issues for women scientists have been resolved, follows. The characteristics are organized into eight goals and are presented in order, based on the number of groups that mentioned them, from most frequently mentioned to least frequently mentioned. Table 1 links these thematic goals to the five women’s scientific career issues under consideration, showing which goal was thought to be an important element in the desired outcome for each defined issue.<sup>7</sup>

### Goal 1 A new cultural norm for women

At some imagined future point, when all career issues for women in science are resolved, “gender bias is eliminated, women’s leadership and communication styles are valued, the image and perception of women is highly valued, and science and family are compatible roles for women and men in this society.” Encompassing a broad spectrum of characteristics, this goal may represent the ultimate outcome of all the working groups.

<sup>7</sup> Some interpretation was made with regard to these and other themes throughout the document. Further clarification may be required to fully capture the specific intention of each working group.

**Goal 2** Equity with male counterparts

The existence of equity for women in science refers primarily to the equal representation of women in their disciplines and societies, as compared to their male counterparts. Many of the items involving equity focus on leadership positions and the holding of “influence and power.” The term “parity” can also be used to describe this goal. Equity/parity may be the easiest outcome to measure, as data becomes more available on society membership, honorary awards, grants, faculty positions, leadership roles, pay rates, journal editors, and so on.

**Goal 3** High visibility and recognition

When current career issues cease to be obstacles for women in science, there is increased recognition and widespread “professional respect” for the accomplishments and contributions of women scientists. Large numbers of well-known women deliver keynote addresses and women routinely “receive awards” for their achievements.

**Goal 4** Mentoring as an integral part of career development and advancement for women

Mentoring is “gender neutral” and refers to both one-to-one and institutional programs. Some of the characteristics of this goal are that “men seek out women mentors,” and “mentoring women is intrinsic to societies.” In the envisioned future, mentoring occurs in high schools, as well as at assistant professor and senior scientist levels. Mentoring may well be one of the most important activities for bringing about other desired outcomes.

**Goal 5** Varied and valued career options for women

Expanded career possibilities for women in science are “widely promoted and highly visible” at all stages of the career pathway. As a result, more teen girls opt to take high school science, an “incubator” environment provides conditions favorable to the advancement of women in science, and greater numbers of mid- and upper-level women scientists remain on their chosen career tracks.

**Table 1** Thematic Goals Linked to Issues Addressed by Working Groups

Issue – Thematic Goal	Mentoring and Networking	Career Development	Sharing Women in Societies	Model Systems	Outreach and Collaboration
1 A new cultural norm for women	x	x	x	x	x
2 Equity with male counterparts	x	x		x	x
3 High visibility and recognition for successful women	x	x		x	x
4 Mentoring as an integral part of career development and advancement for women	x		x	x	x
5 Varied and valued career options for women	x	x	x	x	
6 Readily available networking, resources, and support for women	x	x		x	x
7 Professional advancement and skill building for women through scientific societies		x	x	x	
8 Inner and outer empowerment	x		x		

**Goal 6** Readily available networking, resources, and support

**Women have access to, and are “included in,” non-gender-biased networks. These networks are formal and informal, as well as “faculty and employer sponsored.”**

**Goal 7** Professional advancement and skill building through scientific societies

There is significant support within societies to help women in science advance their careers. Such support exists in the form of “mechanisms to promote an individual’s career, funding for skill building and development, affirmative public statements from scientific societies, and job access and advancement through societies.”

**Goal 8** Inner and outer empowerment

The final goal of the shared vision may sum up the entire set: empowerment. Inner empowerment refers to women being comfortable with themselves and their careers, feeling valued and effective, and holding an empowered attitude — free from any victim-like mentality. Outer empowerment includes the collaboration and exchange from peers and role models, and “MIT-type studies initiated by societies.”<sup>8</sup>

<sup>8</sup> The MIT Study reported on the status and perceived marginalization of women faculty. See Appendix C for the complete reference.