

**Outputs/Decisions from strategic policy discussion session
NWCI and WITS
At DIT, on May 22nd, 2007**

Presenters Margaret Finlay, Chair WITS
Joanna McMinn Director NWCI

Facilitated by: Frances Buggy, DIT - WITS executive delegate to NWCI

Objective: To establish if there were any areas of common interest between both organisations which would justify our continuing membership as a delegate organisation of the National Women's Council of Ireland, and if so, to clarify how we might best collaborate on the areas of interest to WITS.

Attendance: of approximately 14 people included at least 3 other members from the WITS executive, representatives from WISER DIT and WISER TCD for the open session and as the representatives from both organisations decided to become new members of WITS they were included in the strategic discussion following the departure of the guest speaker – Joanna McMinn.

It was agreed that WITS would continue to be a member of the NWCI and would try to negotiate a lower membership rate to eg. €100 – then in 2 years time the situation would be reviewed once more.

It was agreed that Frances Buggy has a mandate from the attendance/the WITS executive, to continue to represent the WITS executive as the WITS delegate at NWCI events to advance the areas of the WITS policy agenda which NWCI , now that this evening has made the nature of the mandate clear.

And WITS will encourage Gayle as WITS administrator to attend any event not already attended by Frances, and encourage our regional members to attend NWCI regional events on a regular basis as part of their evolving regional roles, (MF to raise that particularly at the Cork event to avail of the up to 2 remaining places at the NWCI events around the country.)

A vote of thanks to Dublin Institute of Technology for the provision of the venue for the event, at no venue charge.

Agreed positioning for WITS regarding NWCI quadrants:

Political/equality (WITS 1)	Economic/work/life balance issues (WITS 2)
Socio-cultural (WITS 3 Possible input on Education policy)	Affective issues

It was agreed that WITS must contribute to the education of NWCI board and delegate organisations – particularly the 2-3 delegate organisations from the workplace – on the SET and workplace /societal /educational issues of relevance to WITS. In order that they can disseminate our general messages more broadly/raise awareness of our SET related issues, support/be aware of our initiatives – but NOT in any way to overshadow our independent targeted initiatives or compromise our WITS identity/branding.

This informing of the NWCI/their delegate organisations will be via WITS participation in the NWCI event quadrants listed above, and supported by dissemination of any existing position papers /resource documents regarding:

- Educational policy/SET and gender diversity- the importance of role model days for late stage primary and early stage secondary career/subject guidance**
- Gender equity in SET research /management careers**
- Gender equity in SET funding opportunities**
- Positive public messages about the SET contribution of Women at all levels, particularly aimed at women/girls themselves and decision makers.**
- Encouragement of a more critical well informed debate on SET and relevant political/work related issues for WITS - in the NWCI and beyond.**
- Education of decision-makers influencing the SET agenda**
- WITS solo & joint initiatives on projects supporting the above areas and in particular the key common area of supporting the opportunities for advancement of women in decision-making at all levels in the public/private sectors, and of economic improvement for women working in SET generally(e.g. Pensions/Wealth management etc.)**
- WITS press releases agreed by the WITS board can be issued to NWCI channels for further circulation/awareness raising.**