

# Dual Anonymous review of Observational Proposals

**ASI 2020 WGGE Session  
February 15, 2020**

**Based on:**

**Doling out Hubble time with dual-anonymous evaluation by Lou Strolger and Priyamvada Natarajan, Physics Today 2019.**

**(Un)conscious Bias in the Astronomical Profession: Universal Recommendations to improve Fairness, Inclusiveness, and Representation by Alessandra Aloisi and Neill Reid, State of the Profession White Paper, Astro 2020 Decadal Survey, arXiv:1907.05261[physics.soc-ph]**

# Gender Disparity in observation proposals

**Around a 1000 proposals submitted every year  
1/5 of these are successful (Neill Reid '14)**

**From 2001-2012:**

**Success rate of proposals by females: 19%  
by males: 23%**

# Cycle 25

**Invited Observers - Stefanie Johson and Jessica Kirk**  
**Proposals review (higher ranks ones to make it to discussion stage)**

**No gender bias**

**Face to face discussion**

**Skewed in favour of males**

**Suggestion: Blind review at discussion stage too**

# Steps taken

**Working group formed to check status of anonymous reviews and give recommendations**

**STScI adopted a system of **dual-anonymous** review for cycle 26**

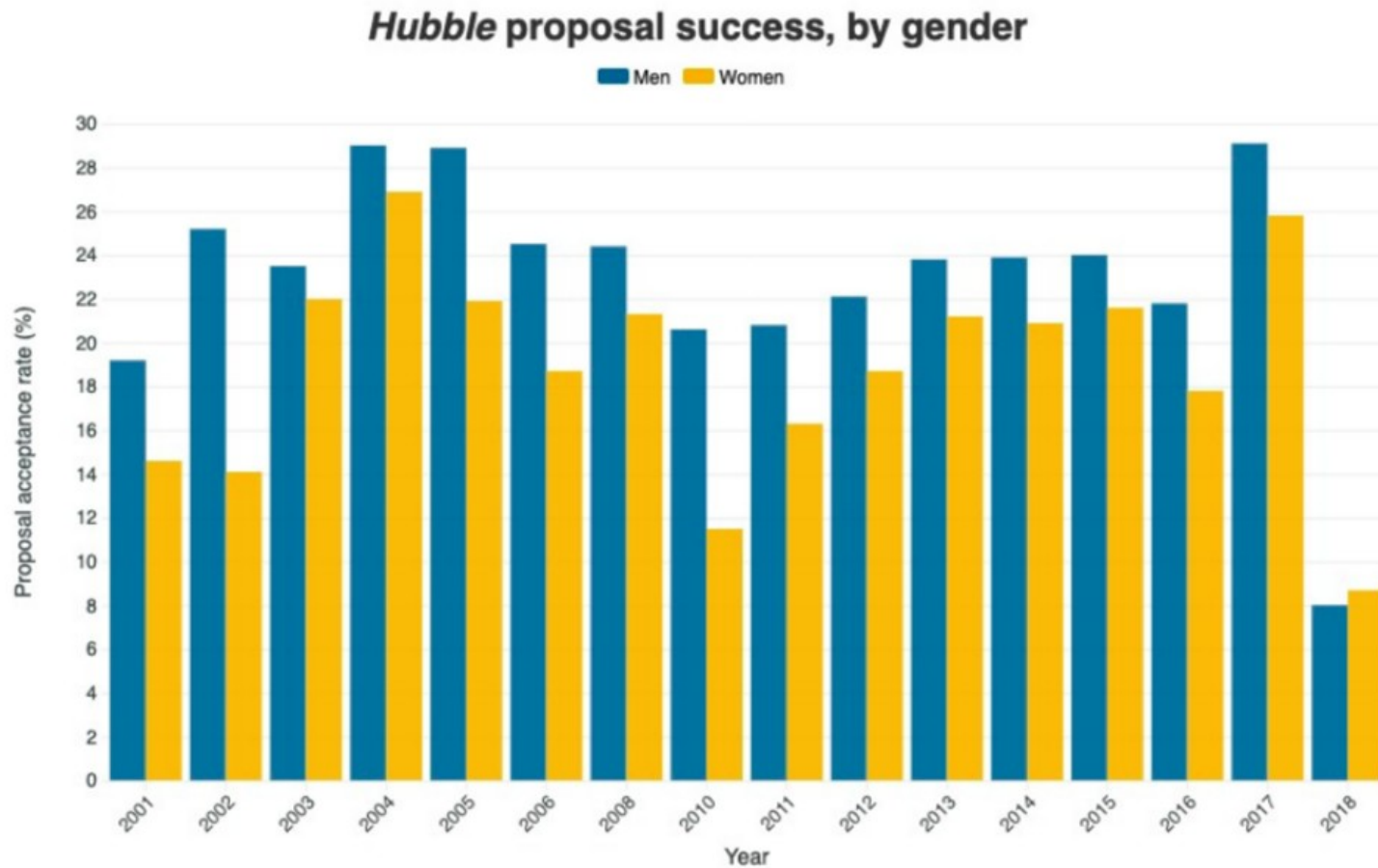
**--Authors to anonymize proposals**

**--Reviewers not to guess**

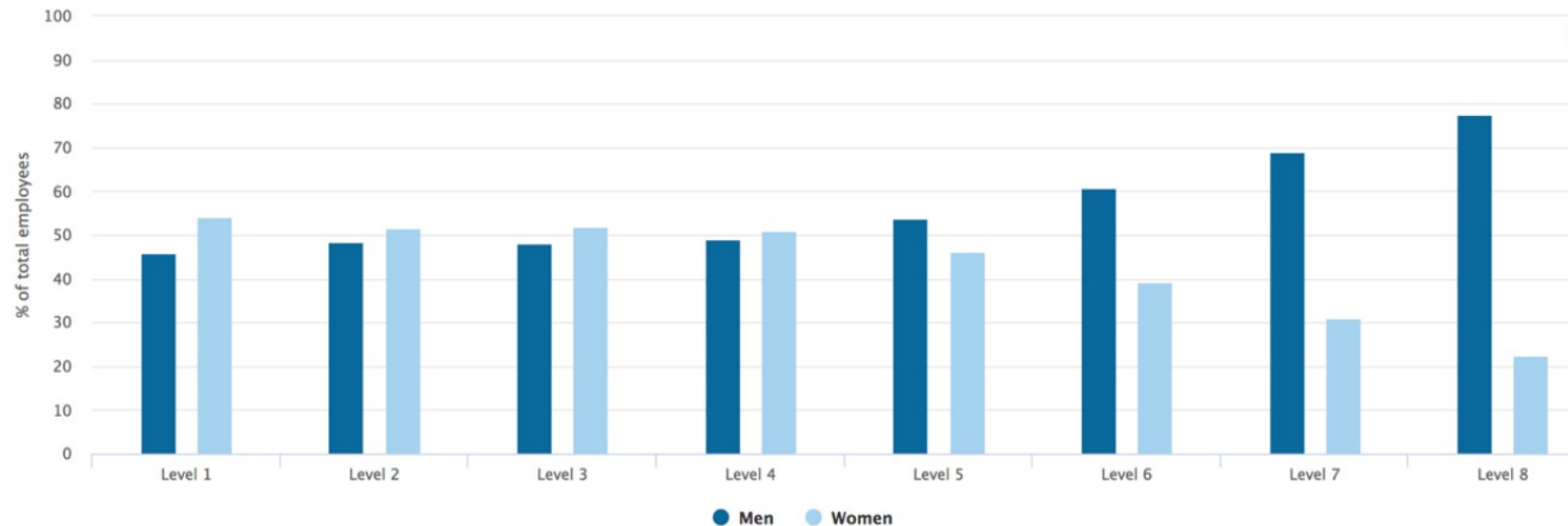
**“reviewers would need to identify the important underlying intellectual questions and evaluate them”**

**Result: **Women PIs had a higher success rate than men****

# Proposal Success, by gender

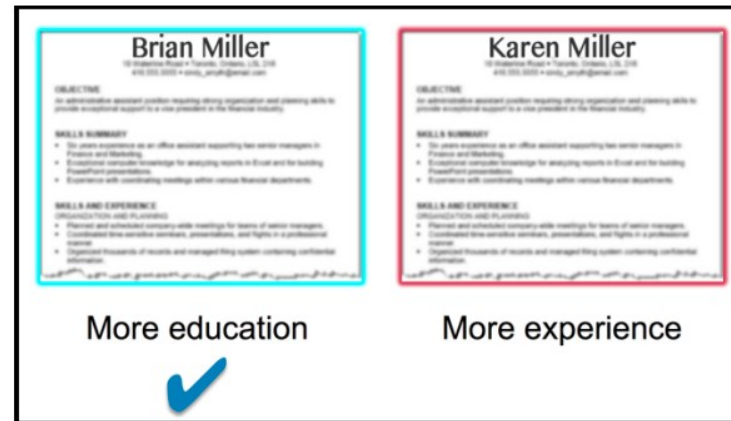


# Astro 2020 white paper



**“Changes in gender ratio when a 5% bias is introduced in favor of men vs. women in the simulation of a generic organization starting with a 1-1 gender ratio at each level and run over a 10-year period” Martell, Lane, & Emrich (1996)**

# Higher leap



**“The two different ways in which unconscious bias affects evaluation of individuals (from “Fostering Women’s Leadership”, Davies’ keynote presentation at “Building a Culture of Women Leaders” organized by the National District Attorney Association (NDAA) on 20 July 2015). If gender bias is considered, women are held to higher “standards” than men (left), or different “criteria” are used from a hiring committee to evaluate a candidate, i.e., experience for a woman versus education for a man (right).”**

# Recommendations

**Bias Training - improves bias awareness**

**Introduce “explicit and objective criteria” before the evaluation process and consistently use them throughout**

**Track progress**

**Introduce dual anonymous peer review process in**

**Allocating telescope time**

**Disbursing grants and funds**

**In recruitment**

**JWST cycle 1 will have dual anonymous review**

**NASA is now implementing dual-anonymous reviews for all its facilities  
(Witze 2019)**