



sex and gender determinants
as gateway to precision medicine

The Women's Brain Project

Communication on Engagement to the UN Global Compact

From: 6 February 2022

To: 8 January 2024

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Part I. Statement of Continued Support by the President

We are pleased to confirm that the Women's Brain Project reaffirms its support to the ten principles of the UN Global Compact with respect to human rights, labor, environment and anti-corruption. With this commitment, we express our intent to support the UN Global Compact advancing these principles, and will make a clear statement of this commitment to our stakeholders and the general public.

We further commit to participating in and advocating for the UN Global Compact in the following ways:

- Conduct applied research and thought leadership to advance best practices.
- Promote the UN Global Compact Ten Principles and educate a variety of audiences about sustainability
- Support UN Global Compact business participants in implementing and reporting on their sustainability efforts

Sincerely yours,

Matthias Burkhalter
President of the Women's Brain Project

Part II. Description of Actions

Over the past four years, we have continued our efforts to promote our mission to bring precision to medical research, towards sustainability in healthcare.

Men and women are different when it comes to disease risks – frequency, severity, symptomatology, diagnostic journey and even response to treatments. Our mission is to clearly identify such differences and leverage them for sex and gender tailored solutions, as well as to bring precision to novel technologies, clinical practice and policy for brain and mental disease. We publish research and lead a global debate, engaging with experts, policymakers, patients and the public, and campaign for sustainability in healthcare

Our approach to make a difference while focusing on the differences is defined on five pillars.

- Establishing the World's first Sex and Gender Precision Medicine Institute
- Improve novel technology use in medicine by leveraging sex and gender differences
- Addressing sex and gender differences in medical practice
- Generating scientific evidence to understand how sex and gender differences impact brain and mental diseases
- Promote policy changes to support men and women's specific medical needs

Our own processes for evaluating these solutions have been refined to streamline both the submission of innovator solutions and their evaluation by experts.

We have also developed and created a new website at <https://www.womensbrainproject.com/> and will create contents to interact with our partners and stakeholders and intensified our relationships with different UN entities, OECD, WEF and others.

We will resume to organize and expand our flagship event the Women's Brain Project International Forum on Women's Brain and Mental Health. The next Forum will take place in 2024. In 2024 we will also host and participate in a number of workshops and webinars.

Part III. Measurements of Outcomes

As of today, the Women's Brain Project is structured into seven working groups and a three-part advisory board. The organization is proud to have four ambassadors representing our cause worldwide.

Our expert's community has also grown to nearly 100 volunteers from all over the world.

The Brains behind the Women's Brain Project.

The Women's Brain Project was founded by Dr Antonella Santucci Chadha, Dr Annemarie Schumacher Dimech and Gautam Maitra in 2017.

We are a group of academic scientists, medical doctors, engineers, experts and volunteers from various areas who have decided to take action and initiate a discussion on the role of sex and gender in brain and mental diseases.

As the Women's Brain Project takes a significant step forward by establishing a foundation, our team is undergoing a period of growth and transition we appreciate your patience as our site undergoes ongoing updates.

Finally, I am particularly pleased to continue my work with our four Ambassadors Chérie Ballinger, Sofia Petersson, Fagun Thakrar, Sylvia Day and our Honorary President Mara Hank Moret.

Our Sponsors in Recent Years

We are grateful for the support from our partners in the past years. 2024 will be a year of transformation for WBP as we are going to change the association into a Swiss foundation. This organisation will operate the first, dedicated institute for sex and gender precision medicine.

The Supporters

Brain and mental diseases currently affect 450 million individuals across the globe, representing an enormous unmet medical need and adding to social inequity. The Women's Brain Project partners are interested in furthering the agenda of addressing sex and gender differences in brain and mental health as the gateway to precision medicine.

We offer several partnership options for companies based on the level of investment and engagement.

Our Scientific Sponsors

The Women's Brain Project organizes events, workshops and ECM (continuous medical education credits) courses for companies and organizations interested in furthering their understanding of sex and gender differences in brain and mental health as the gateway to precision medicine.

Focuses

Be Brain Powerful® Challenge

The Be Brain Powerful® Campaign aims to create fundamental change in the way we think about and care for our brains. Understanding the latest science behind cognitive decline, brain health and preventive measures is critical to empower individuals when it comes to their brain and mental health.

The Women's Brain Project is pleased to offer the adapted and translated campaign in Switzerland in collaboration with the Global Alliance on Women's Brain Health and USAgainstAlzheimer's, who launched the original campaign in the United States in 2019.

Would you like to take part in a short and easy training course for better brain health? The Be Brain Powerful® challenge is now available in Switzerland in four languages.

Longevity Week Hosted by The Longevity Forum: A Spotlight on Longevity Medicine

This year, the Longevity Forum once again hosted "[Longevity Week](#)", a premier international event focusing on the burgeoning field of longevity medicine. Held in London, the event attracted eminent personalities including Professor Andrew J Scott, a renowned economist and co-author of 'The New Long Life' and 'The 100-Year Life'. Joining him were Dr Peter Attia, a distinguished expert in longevity medicine, alongside billionaires Jim Mellon, co-founder of the Longevity Forum, and Bryan Johnson, an American entrepreneur famous for his anti-ageing endeavours.

During the Week, the [AEON Foundation](#), an organisation leader in longevity medicine research and policy, hosted a broad discussion on longevity policies, an emerging domain aimed at crafting public health strategies for healthy ageing and prevention. This discussion drew upon advanced biotechnology and artificial intelligence tools.

The event was graced by illustrious guests such as Andrew Steele, scientist and author; Andrea Maier, president of the Healthy Longevity Medicine Society; Antonella Santuccione, CEO of the Women Brain Project; Elena Bonetti, member of Parliament and former minister; and Silvio Garattini, founder of the Mario Negri Institute.

Participants unanimously emphasised the necessity and inevitability of transforming public health into a preventive healthcare model. Elena Bonetti underscored the need for bold policies to foster this shift in the medical sector. Additionally, Professor Silvio Garattini highlighted the current focus of medicine on care and treatment, noting that a preventive approach could significantly reduce the prevalence of societal afflictions like cancer and diabetes. Similarly, Antonella Santuccione, remembering the important research contribution of the Women's Brain Project, underlined that women suffer more comorbidities than men and that we need to focus on specific and tailored preventive campaigns for women, thus achieving precise prevention and precise longevity.

In this regard, the [Women's Brain Project](#) (WBP), a global organisation dedicated to addressing gender-specific aspects of brain health, is currently fostering a series of important research projects and educational programs, aimed at creating prevention strategies and healthy longevity for women.

The AEON Foundation, along with other international associations including the Longevity Forum and the Women's Brain project, is committed to raising awareness about the value of the longevity medicine approach among businesses and institutions. Dr. Nicola Marino, director of the AEON Foundation, remarked, "The essence of developing longevity policies lies not in merely extending life but in enhancing its quality, and fostering a balanced system that accommodates a demographically complex population." He added, "An interdisciplinary approach is vital for healthy longevity, integrating ageing biology research with biotechnological and information technology advancements like AI algorithms and remote monitoring devices. This approach aims to narrow the gap between life expectancy and health, promoting genuinely preventive and participatory medicine."

In the ambit of ambitious health objectives, transforming scientific breakthroughs into policies that extend healthy human life is critical. This holistic approach necessitates interventions at individual, societal, and population levels, countering ageing-related issues like multi-morbidity and frailty. Strengthened by the latest in technology and ageing biology research, including the use of various biomarkers, these strategies are crucial for better ageing management. As Peter Attia pointed out, focusing on not just lifespan but also the quality of physical, cognitive, and emotional health can lead to significant improvements in both longevity and life quality.

Recent studies in longevity are shedding light on the economic and social impacts of an ageing population. A [study in Nature Aging](#) by Andrew J Scott and the acclaimed scientist David Sinclair suggests that each additional year of healthy life expectancy could generate an estimated economic benefit of \$38 trillion annually in the United States. Increased longevity implies not just a longer life but an enhanced one, with healthier, more active individuals contributing both through consumption and active workforce participation. This dual benefit offers direct economic advantages for businesses and the economy while reducing healthcare and assistance costs.

Professor Scott, speaking at the event, noted, "The ageing society presents benefits that will impact us both individually and collectively." He stressed the importance of investments in scientific research, institutional commitment to longevity policies, and innovation in preventive care to realise these benefits.

The Women's Brain Project holds landmark roundtable to enhance care in Parkinson's Disease (PD)

Parkinson's Disease (PD) is more prevalent among males than females; globally, **4.6m males are living with Parkinson's as compared to 3.8m females.**ⁱ

Although males are more likely to be diagnosed with Parkinson's, **females appear to have more negative effects and less of a response to existing medicines.**ⁱⁱ

Research shows that **caregiver burden is high among Parkinson's caregivers (the vast majority being women)**, who likely face emotional, social, physical, and financial challenges as a result.ⁱⁱⁱ

On the occasion of [World Movement Disorders Day](#), #MoveDisorder, and during the globally recognised Care Partner Awareness month, the [Women's Brain Project \(WBP\)](#) held the **WBP roundtable on enhancing care in Parkinson's Disease (PD)**, supported by sponsorship from AbbVie.

This first roundtable, held on 29th November 2023, brought together key stakeholders to discuss how we can ensure better outcomes in Parkinson's care by addressing vital policy changes. The intention was to determine the need for action to enhance care in PD and find **policy solutions at global, EU and national levels**. Central to this is the importance of **lived experience, both of the patient and the caregiver**, as well as the **gender perspective**. The first roundtable validated the policy initiatives that need greater attention and focus. A summary note with key recommendations for action will now be developed, paving the way for potential collaboration opportunities for all stakeholders in the form of new impactful policy-led activities into 2024 and beyond.

The roundtable event, held under the Chatham House Rule, brought together people with lived experience, global and European policy-led stakeholders, PD experts and clinicians. The roundtable marks the first step of an initiative to raise awareness and propose tangible policy solutions to tackle the challenges facing both people living with Parkinson's and caregivers, to enhance their quality of life.

This multistakeholder initiative, involves international governmental organisations, as well as PD associations, caregiving associations, neurological associations, think tanks and leading experts at global, European and national levels, and most importantly people with lived experience. In light of the roundtable, WBP will explore the best way forward. This initiative could be carried out through a number of roundtables, resulting in the formulation of 'policy asks', which will be potentially developed into a White Paper / Call to Action for launch during the course of 2024.



“We believe that all marches start with first steps. It is vitally important that all key stakeholders come together now to create a more favourable Parkinson's policy environment for both patients and caregivers, taking into account gender-specific needs. This will require a truly multistakeholder and multidisciplinary approach.

-Dr Antonella Santuocione Chadha
Women's Brain Project,
Pro Bono CEO and Co-Founder



“As highlighted in the WBP-commissioned Economist Impact [White Paper, Sex, gender and the brain: Towards an inclusive research agenda](#), although males are more likely to be diagnosed with Parkinson’s, females appear to have more negative effects and worse reactions to existing medicines. We also know that the PD caregiving burden is very high among women. We believe that all marches start with first steps. It is vitally important that all key stakeholders come together now to create a more favourable Parkinson’s policy environment for both patients and caregivers, taking into account gender-specific needs. This will require a truly multistakeholder and multidisciplinary approach.” said **Dr Antonella Santuccione Chadha, Co-founder and pro bono CEO of WBP.**

“At AbbVie, we understand the realities and challenges that people living with Parkinson’s disease and movement disorders face,” said **Dr Maurizio Facheris, Global Development Lead, Neuroscience Development, AbbVie.** “This partnership with the Women’s Brain Project reinforces our commitment to advance the standard of care for people living with these neurological disorders, their care partners and their loved ones.”

We thank everyone who participated in the roundtable today for their invaluable contributions. Together we are making a genuine difference to advance care in Parkinson’s.

A Patient’s Journey Through Alzheimer’s Disease

The Women’s Brain Project (WBP) is proud to announce a pioneering ground-breaking project exploring how sex and gender impact the Patient Journey specific to Alzheimer’s disease. This will be a fundamental step towards personalized care for persons living with Alzheimer’s disease (AD).

Over 55 million people live with dementia worldwide. The vast majority of patients are women representing 70 per cent of the patient population. Worldwide also caregivers are predominantly women. This is a staggering figure, made all the more striking as it rises on a daily basis, with forecasts reaching 78 million by 2030. This means that 55 million women in the world will have Alzheimer’s disease by then. Sex and gender differences along the ‘Patient Journey’ – a first step towards optimizing care for persons living with Alzheimer’s Disease. Sex and gender differences in Alzheimer’s disease play a crucial role not only in prevalence and incidence of the disease but also in risk factors, biomarkers, symptoms onset and symptoms characteristic. Sex (biological) and gender (socio-cultural) differences in Alzheimer’s disease are particularly relevant in the individual’s diagnostic pathway and care journey. Even clinical trial recruitment is significantly impacted by sex as our recent JAMA work has proven.

Nevertheless, several sex and gender-based factors are not yet captured in a standard ‘Patient Journey’. WBP’s project takes a patient-centric approach to paint a comprehensive illustration of an individual’s journey from symptom onset to treatment completion.

Considering sex- and gender-specific factors is a key step to improve access to and precision of diagnosis of Alzheimer’s disease, and to recognize the patient’s specific needs throughout the lifecycle of treatment, solution development and care. A paradigm shift towards precision neurology will optimize the Alzheimer’s disease diagnostic pathway and patient journey. “Alzheimer’s disease is a medical condition which requires specific tailored approaches for innovative treatments and care; this project will set the basis to understand where the known biological differences in this disease will impact the patient’s journey and how stakeholders

can precisely intervene to ameliorate it”, says pro bono WBP CEO Dr Antonella Santuccione Chadha.

Strong partners join forces with the WBP to bring the Patient Journey to life.

The importance of this work is underlined by the fact that Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI) will contribute to this project.

Wendy Weidner, Research and Policy Project Lead, Alzheimer’s Disease International (ADI) says. ‘ADI is pleased to work alongside WBP on this project to explore sex and gender-specific impacts on the dementia journey. Ensuring equal access to a timely diagnosis and holistic post diagnostic care is a pillar of our global work. The opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the impact on women will help us strengthen this further and improve impact.’

The work will be initially sponsored by Lilly, while new stakeholders are welcomed to join in the effort. For more than 30 years, Lilly has been committed to Alzheimer’s disease research and development with the ambition of bringing innovative Alzheimer’s disease therapies and diagnostics to patients who need them most. We are delighted to support the Women’s Brain Project study into the potential differences gender can make to patient diagnosis and treatment. This will provide important insight for the Alzheimer’s community in addressing potential inequities in care.

This landmark patient research study will be carried out in collaboration with the global consulting firm Charles River Associates (CRA), and will uncover differences in the AD patient journey between women and men.

Angela De Martini, Vice President at Charles Rivers Associates says. ‘It’s a privilege for Charles River Associates to have the opportunity to support WBP in this important project and we are looking forward to the moment when we can share the findings with the whole Alzheimer’s disease community’

The patient research study will be conducted in the US, Germany, France, UK, Italy and Spain and will be published in the course of 2024. This will serve as the first pilot and has the potential to be increased to other countries at a later date.

Women's Brain Project | Switzerland

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