



H.I.T. Program High Potential University Leaders Identity & Skills Training Program- Inclusive Leadership in Academia

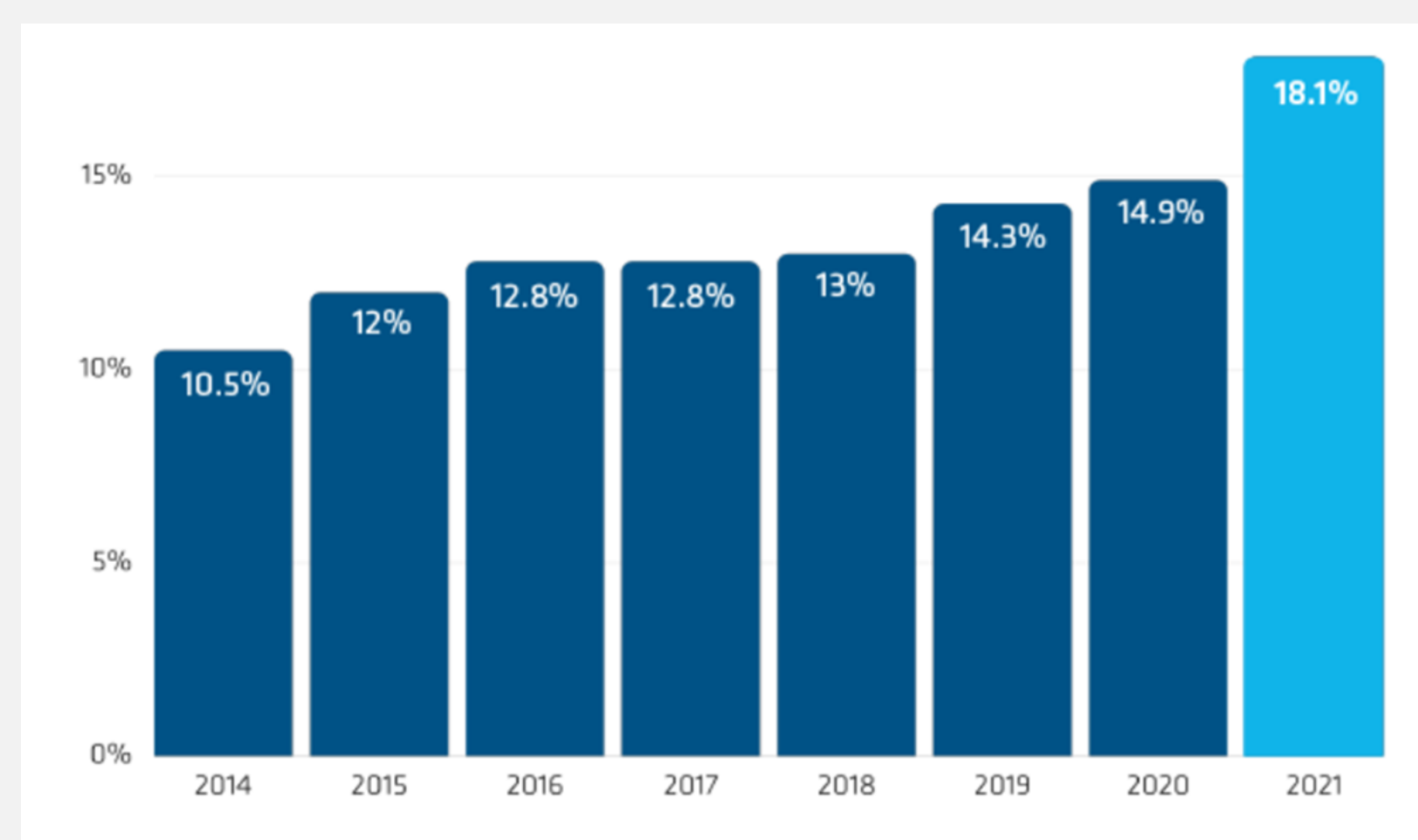
After four successful editions with 100 participants, the H.I.T. Program, involving women full and associate professors from all Swiss universities, has been established at the Center for Higher Education and Science Studies, University of Zurich.

Women faculty and academic leadership

Despite recent progress, women professors are still highly outnumbered by men as university leaders.

European University Association (EUA) data on female leadership (more than 800 universities in 49 European countries):

– 18% female rectors; 29% female vice-rectors



<https://eua.eu/news/645:despite-gains-women-still-highly-outnumbered-by-men-as-university-leaders.html>

Main bottlenecks for women academic leaders:

- Achievement of full professorship
- Institutional mindsets that resist change

Women academic leaders

Women academic leaders bring **new viewpoints and experiences** that can lead to better problem-solving and can enhance the decision-making process in higher education.

More women in top leadership and mid-management roles can help **to challenge and change gender biases in academia**. They also act as role models, inspiring more women to pursue leadership roles.

Gender diversity at senior leadership levels contributes to a **more inclusive and supportive academic culture**.

Through a combination of tailored leadership training, individual coaching, peer-mentoring and networking with women leaders across all Swiss universities, the **H.I.T. Program creates a unique space for women professors** who wish to take the next step up and extend their leadership role and impact.

PROGRAM PARTNERS



New H.I.T. Program

Agenda 2025

- 8-9 days from March-November 2025, with events organized in Zurich, Neuchâtel, Bern and online.

Leadership Training: Engaging workshops designed to enhance leadership skills and boost confidence.

Networking Opportunities: Connect with inspiring alumnae, role models, and peers from various universities.

Academic Leadership Circles: Collaborative (peers-) groups focused on shared experiences and growth.

Personalized Coaching: One-on-one sessions with professional coaches to support individual leadership.

H.I.T. Program: general information

H.I.T. Program 2019-2020 swissuniversities

Launched as a cooperation project led by the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity, University of Zurich, with all Swiss universities as partners, the H.I.T. Program was supported by the Federal Programme P-7: Equal Opportunities and University Development (2018-2020).

www.gleichstellung.uzh.ch/de/projekte/hit_2/2019-20.html

H.I.T. Program 2021-2024 swissuniversities

After a successful edition in 2019-2020 (pilot phase), the H.I.T. Program was further developed and consolidated during the P-7 Programme: Diversity, Inclusion and Equity in University Development (2021-2024).

www.gleichstellung.uzh.ch/de/projekte/hit_2.html

As of 2025: new H.I.T. Program CHES

Thanks to the commitment of senior leadership from all partner universities, the H.I.T. Program will continue as a national leadership initiative, open to women professors from all Swiss universities.

www.hitprogram.uzh.ch



Testimonials alumnae

“With its well-balanced mix of strategic and political instruction, networking and individual counselling, H.I.T. Program came along at a perfect moment in my career. This program enables women academics to reflect, individually and collectively, on their position within institutional structures, and is thus highly motivating for personal development and change.”

Prof. Virginia Richter, Rector University of Bern

“It was very motivating to meet colleagues from all over Switzerland and to see the big potential of the strong female leaders that Switzerland has. I also found the coaching sessions very valuable. Moreover, it is very motivating to see how many of the participants in this leadership program are taking responsibility and are stepping into different leadership roles.”

Prof. Barbara Weber, Vice-President for Studies and Teaching, University of St. Gallen

Acknowledgement of collaborators

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