

# **Open science & feminist psychology – a dream team?**

*Helena Hartmann*  
OSI Talks Lübeck

## How it started



Maddi Pownall  
@maddi\_pow

#OpenScience people! I'm looking for early career (broadly defined) feminist researchers who would like to contribute to a piece titled 'Navigating Open Science in Early Career Feminist Research' for this CFP [journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmsc](https://journals.sagepub.com/pb-assets/cmsc)



Dr. Helena Hartmann (she/her)  
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Drop me a DM if you are interested in feminist approaches to science, please fill out [@kohinoordarda's](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS...), [@sarah\\_sauve's](https://twitter.com/sarah_sauve) and my short 3-min survey, we are still looking for tons of voices from all career stages!

Please share/RT!

Link: [docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS...](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLS...)



Research Article

## Navigating Open Science as Early Career Feminist Researchers

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### Abstract

Open science aims to improve the rigor, robustness, and reproducible science, the open science movement has been championed by proposed innovative new tools and methods to promote and encourage this emerging way of doing research. However, engagement with the open science movement. We, 10 feminist ECRs from various backgrounds, explore open science through a feminist lens to contribute to ECRs. Taking a critical and intersectional approach, we discuss challenges faced by shifts towards open science. We also propose how to navigate academic precarity. We identify ways in which open science can support the future for feminist ECRs who wish to engage with open science.

### Keywords

open science, feminist psychology, early career researchers, open

## How it's going

### Feminist approaches to (psychological) science - the why, the what and the how

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### Abstract

A feminist lens on scientific research brings forth many advantages, such as broadening theoretical perspectives, encouraging collaboration and inclusion of marginalised groups, and widening the scope of research methods. Despite these potential benefits, there is little to no research on a feminist approach to psychological science. A survey we conducted shows that many academics have no clear concept of feminist approaches, and even of feminism more broadly. This perspective piece aims to answer the *why* (why can the incorporation of feminist approaches be beneficial for psychological science?), the *what* (what are feminist approaches, and/or what can they be?), and the *how* (how can we start incorporating feminist approaches into our own work?). Based on the survey and our unique viewpoints as feminist ECRs working in the field of psychological science, we have two aims: 1) Highlight what possible barriers exist to incorporating feminist practices into one's own work; 2) Give an outlook on how future research can and should take feminist practices into account. In addition, we provide a short glossary introducing terminology that can support the communication of feminist research and practices as well as a curated checklist of feminist practices to start out with after reading this paper.



How do we as early-career feminist researchers **navigate** the world of (Open) Science?

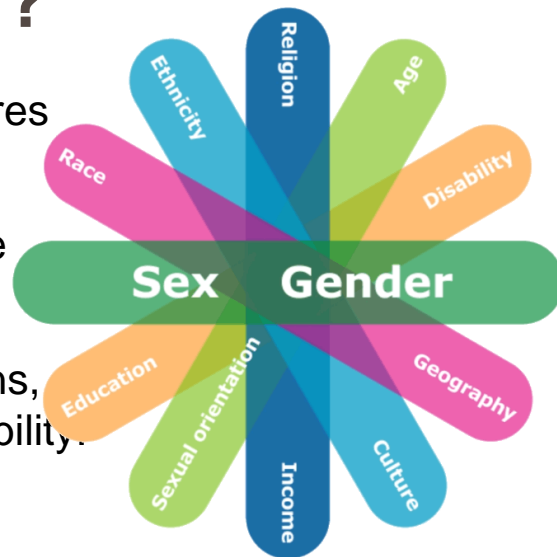
How can the goals of Open Science and feminist psychology **inform** one another?

What can Open Science **offer** us? Why should we incorporate a feminist view into the way we do science?

What do we as feminist ECRs **need to be wary of**?  
What are challenges and barriers?

# What is feminist research?

- Feminist research aims to shed light on social structures and stereotypes to combat gendered inequality.
- Feminist psychology is critical of the dominance of the patriarchal assumptions of 'traditional' psychology.
- Critical of research approaches, methods, assumptions, knowledge production, power structures, and accessibility.



## **As a collective:**

We embraced an intersectional approach to feminist research.

We recognise that who we are and our experiences influence our perspectives.

We appreciate the benefits of Open Science to tackle and counteract inequality in research and psychology.

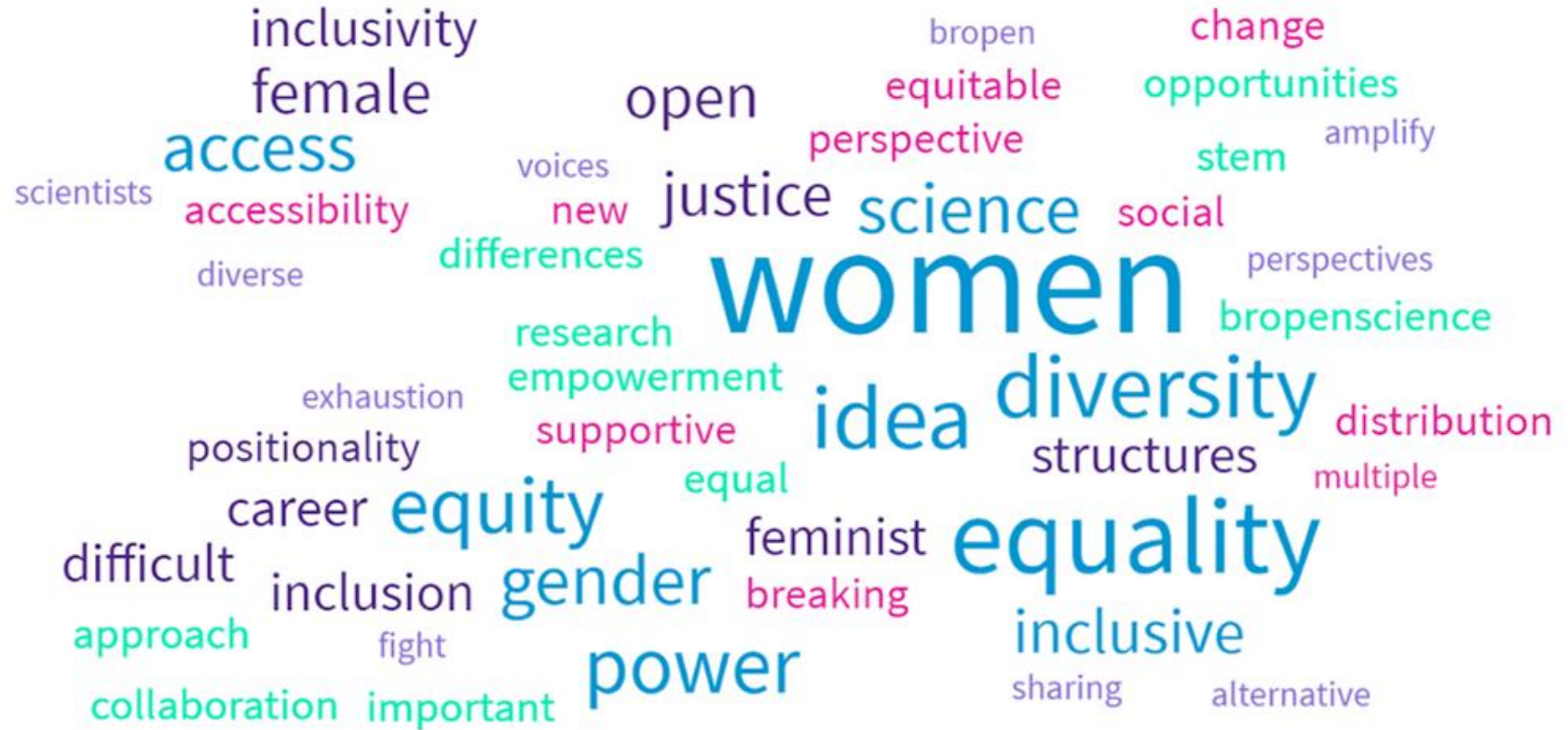
However, we do acknowledge that there are a multitude of factors which can further enable or restrict engagement in the Open Science movement that we do not represent.

## Once upon a time...

Kohinoor, Helena & Sarah met at the meeting of Society for Improvement of Psychological Science (SIPS 2022), ran an informal online survey ( $n=105$ ) & hosted a hackathon on feminist practices on open science:

- **Different locations:** 60% Europe, 17.1% North America, 13.3% Asia, 7.6% South America, 1.9% NA)
- **Different career stages:** 13.3% undergraduate, 37.1% PhD, 10.5% researcher, 19% postdoc, 17.1% professor, 2.9% non-research job
- Participants reported three associations they had when thinking about feminist approaches to doing science in general and answered questions about feminist approaches in the field of open science

# Feminist approaches to doing science?



$n = 105$



~17%

replied they did not know or  
were not sure what was  
meant by such approaches

~22%

are currently using feminist  
approaches to open science  
in their own work

~62%

indicated that they would like  
to implement such  
approaches in the future

~47%

thought their place of work  
would not like to implement  
such practices in the future

$n = 105$





# The Academic Wheel of Privilege

We come from and work in different so-called nation-states as citizens or immigrants, we hold different gender identities, some of us identify as racialized. English is not everyone's first language, some have care duties and we don't all have access to the same levels of institutional resources.



# Open Science

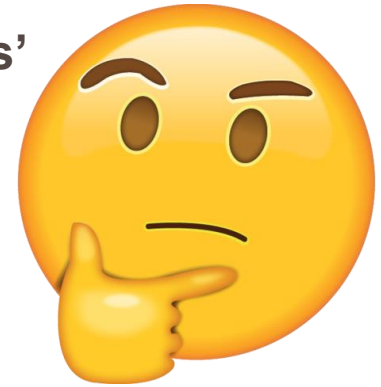


# Feminist Psychology

A concern for reappraising, rethinking, and reconstructing norms of knowledge, power, and scientific inquiry ; i.e., being more critical, inclusive, and open.

# Open Science is a feminist ‘thing’

- Emphasis on Open Access destabilizes power within academia by **democratizing access to knowledge**
- Open Science has been **championed by ‘grass roots’ ECRs** making bottom-up changes
- **Promotes collaboration**, working together, and collegiality (e.g. ManyLabs or Team Science endeavors)
- Can **potentially mitigate against biases** implicit in academia (e.g. gender citation advantage)
- **Encourages critical approaches** to ‘taken for granted’ ideas



## ... or is it?

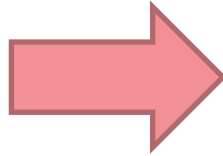
- **Power imbalances exacerbate ECRs (and other groups') vulnerability.** Is it complicit in the culture it aims to deconstruct?
- Feminist epistemologies are concerned with lived experience and therefore **typically use qualitative or creative approaches.**  
Can Open Science accommodate this?
- Vulnerable to **abrasive and competitive online debates.**
  - #BropenScience (see Guest & Whitaker, 2020)
- **Invisible labour** in Open Science

# Example 1: Accessibility of Open Science

- Researchers in the **underrepresented or low/middle income research economies** face unique challenges of infrastructure and access
- Challenge of being an ECR in a **world governed by others**
- **Hidden curriculum** of Open Science
- Is Open Science really **open for all**?



## Example 2: Qualitative Research



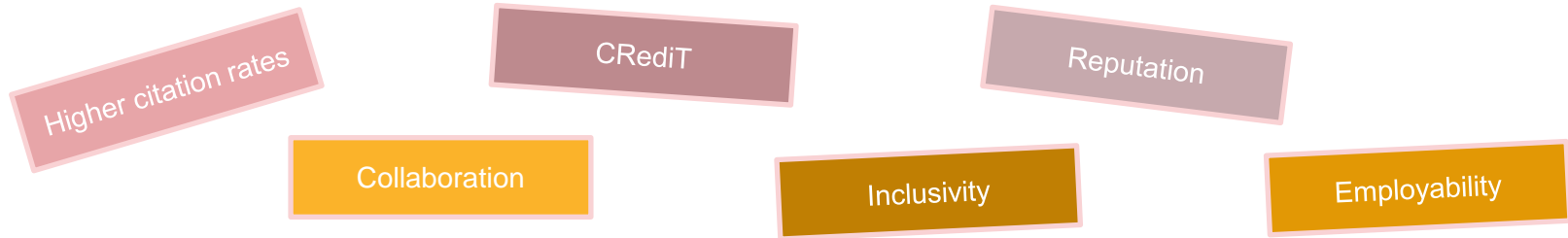
Open science practices have been developed for quantitative research, which don't make sense when applied to qualitative methods

This may negatively impact the careers of ECRs who work in this space

Work is seen as less rigorous and therefore less fundable and publishable

# Open Science can benefit feminist ECRs

“Open Science may be a useful ally to feminist ECRs, by facilitating active and legitimate participation in academic spaces that have previously been closed off to those without access to insider knowledge.”



Practical benefits are not exclusive to feminist ECRs but may allow ECRs to compete equally (i.e. by levelling the playing field)

# and feminist ECRs can benefit Open Science

- Consider **intersectionality** and **positionality** – where are you/others coming from?
- Practice **reflexivity** and be aware of your motivations and actions
- **Teach and mentor** the younger generation in feminist values
- **Think critically**



... but there are barriers too!

Lack of  
knowledge/clarity

Perceived lack of  
objectivity/rigour

Structures of entrenched  
power imbalances

Invisible labor

$n = 105$

## ... but there are barriers too!

- **Fear of persecution, insecurities, social dynamics.** “Whose participation is valued?” (Koyama & Page-Gould, 2020), technological accessibility
- Ability to find and ‘out’ mistakes can ‘normalise the humanness of research’, **but has reputational and personal consequences**
- **Academic landscape still hesitant** to fully endorse open practices and predominantly shaped by patriarchal structures
- Research that stems from a feminist perspective is **more readily scrutinized**
- Before encouraging openness as a status quo in psychological science, we must consider **what else is being ‘opened up’ in the process** and **who governs this process**
- **Institutions need to push for top-down changes** regarding policies, hiring and career opportunities, service imbalance, recognition system, visibility, etc.

How can I start?

## Tip 1

### **Start at your own pace**

There is no 'all or nothing' way to participate

## Tip 2

### **Do what you need to survive**

We need to contextualize Open Science  
in neoliberal academia

## Tip 3

### **Engage in research advocacy**

Help others, be collegiate

## Tip 4

### **Be as open as possible**

Not all data can be open, not all data should be  
open

## Tip 5

### **Find (or create) your community**

Community will get you through

## Tip 6

### **Consider alternative & diverse mentorship**

Mentors are key for academic and personal wellbeing



## Top 10 easiest and most impactful feminist practices

*How can I start?*

# bioDGPs & DGPA Checklists for inclusion & accessibility

Two checklists for conferences/events have been created for 1) organizers and 2) participants. The provided recommendations aim to promote the participation of members belonging to underrepresented groups.

## Diversity and Inclusion Checklist for conference/event presenters

**GOAL:** A checklist with ideas how to promote conference participation and experience of members belonging to underrepresented groups. This can make contributions (poster, talk, symposium, etc.) more accessible. The points are meant as ideas and inspiration, presenters should decide for themselves to which extent they would like to commit to each of them.

- **Posters:** To make your poster more accessible, less text-heavy and better understandable, use bullet points instead of full sentences, use big figures that are self-explanatory (or have subtitles). Possibly supply a link or QR-code for a PDF-version.
- **Presentations:** Consider that your slides should also be readable and understandable for people with reduced vision, possibly supply a link or QR-code for a PDF-version.
- **Sample:** Describe your study populations with respect to diversity categories and think about limitations with regard to generalizability.
- **Language:** If you feel comfortable enough, consider submitting and presenting your work in English to make it more accessible to international scholars. Consider adding flags or other symbols on your presentation for the languages that you speak so people know how they can approach you. Take responsibility to use gender-balanced language in your presentations, by using the \* (Teilnehmer\*innen).
- **Visuals:** Consider using color-blind friendly visuals for your layout, plots, etc. in your poster or presentation. You can find more information and some examples [here](#). Check [here](#) and [here](#) for visuals using R/RStudio.
- **Alt-Text for Images:** If you post about your work or activities on social media and use

## Diversity and Inclusion Checklist for conference/event organizers

**GOAL:** A checklist with ideas how to promote conference participation and experience of members belonging to underrepresented groups. The points in both checklists are meant as ideas and inspiration, presenters and organizers should decide for themselves to which extent they would like to commit to each of them.

- **Timing:** Consider avoiding conference days on holidays or the weekend.
- **Website:** Consider making the website barrier-free (e.g. with reading/audio options) and provide alt-text for pictures.
- **Fees:** Consider a socio-economically fair staggering of participation fees (possibly staggered according to self-assessment of financial possibilities, e.g. for students)
- **Submission:** Consider explicitly stating that contributions by individuals from marginalized or disadvantaged groups are welcome and desired. Consider implementing the submission of results-blind or author-blind abstracts to be less biased by the outcome of a piece of work, and to level the playing field (e.g., for early career researchers (ECRs) that might not have results yet). Consider basing your submission guidelines on academic age, not actual age to include older individuals in the early career phase.
- **Selection:** When selecting keynotes or contributions, consider including a person background/expertise in diversity and inclusion in the selection panel, and/or reflecting critically on discrimination, diversity and inclusion. Aim for a balanced distribution of genders at the event, especially in podium discussions or talks. Aim for theoretical and methodical diversity in contributions to gain new knowledge. A bit more work, but possibly with it: Consider implementing a **peer-review system for talks and posters** so people get feedback on their work before they present.
- Consider **including educational material/guidelines regarding recommendations for presenters** alongside abstract acceptance e-mails (e.g. checklist by the DGPs/DGPA ECRs)
- **Language:** Consider using gender-diverse/gender-neutral language in written and spoken German communication e.g. through use of the \* (Teilnehmer\*innen).

How can I start?



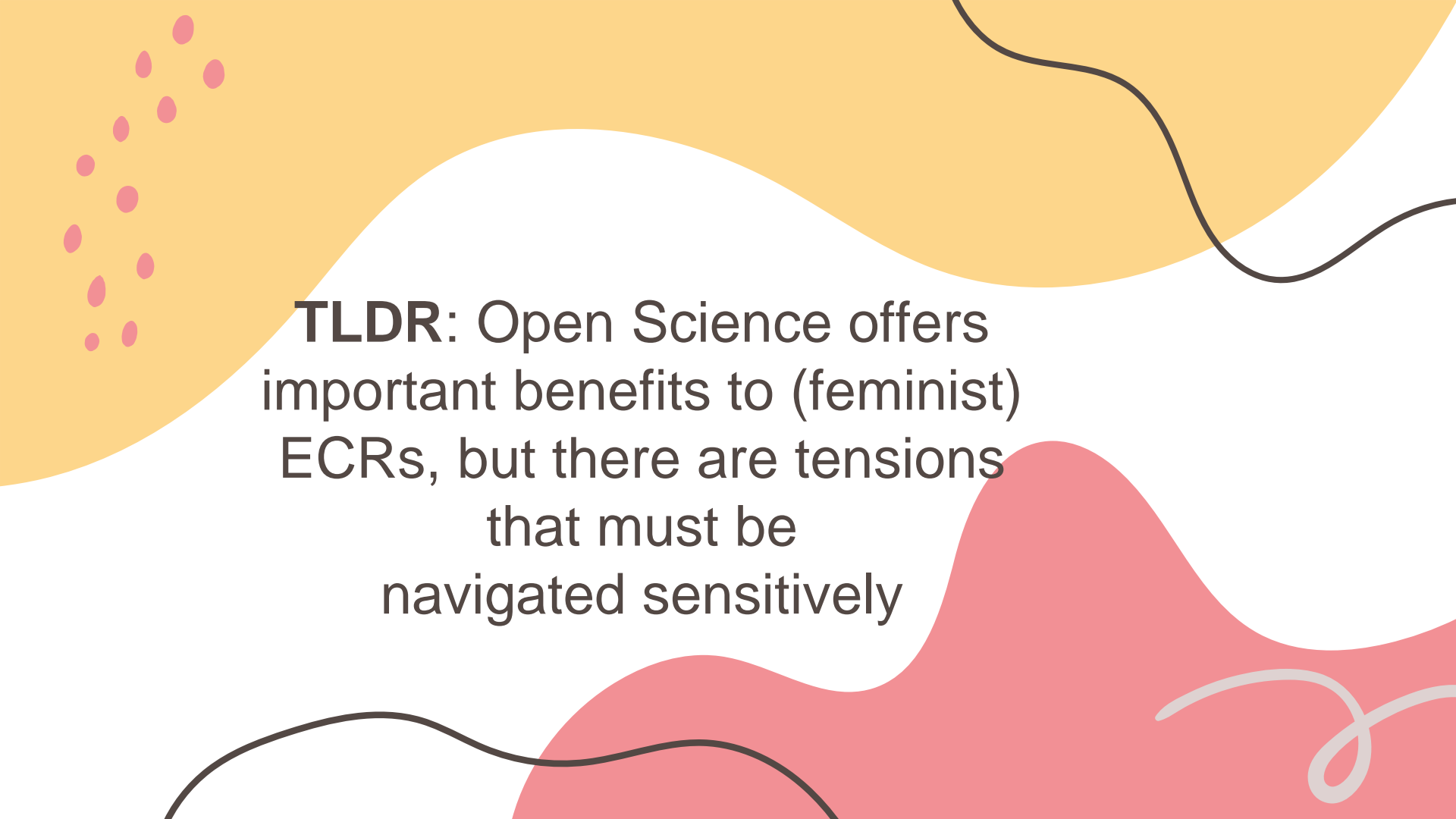
Deutsche Gesellschaft für Psychophysiologie  
und ihre Anwendung e.V.



Fachgruppe Biologische Psychologie  
und Neuropsychologie

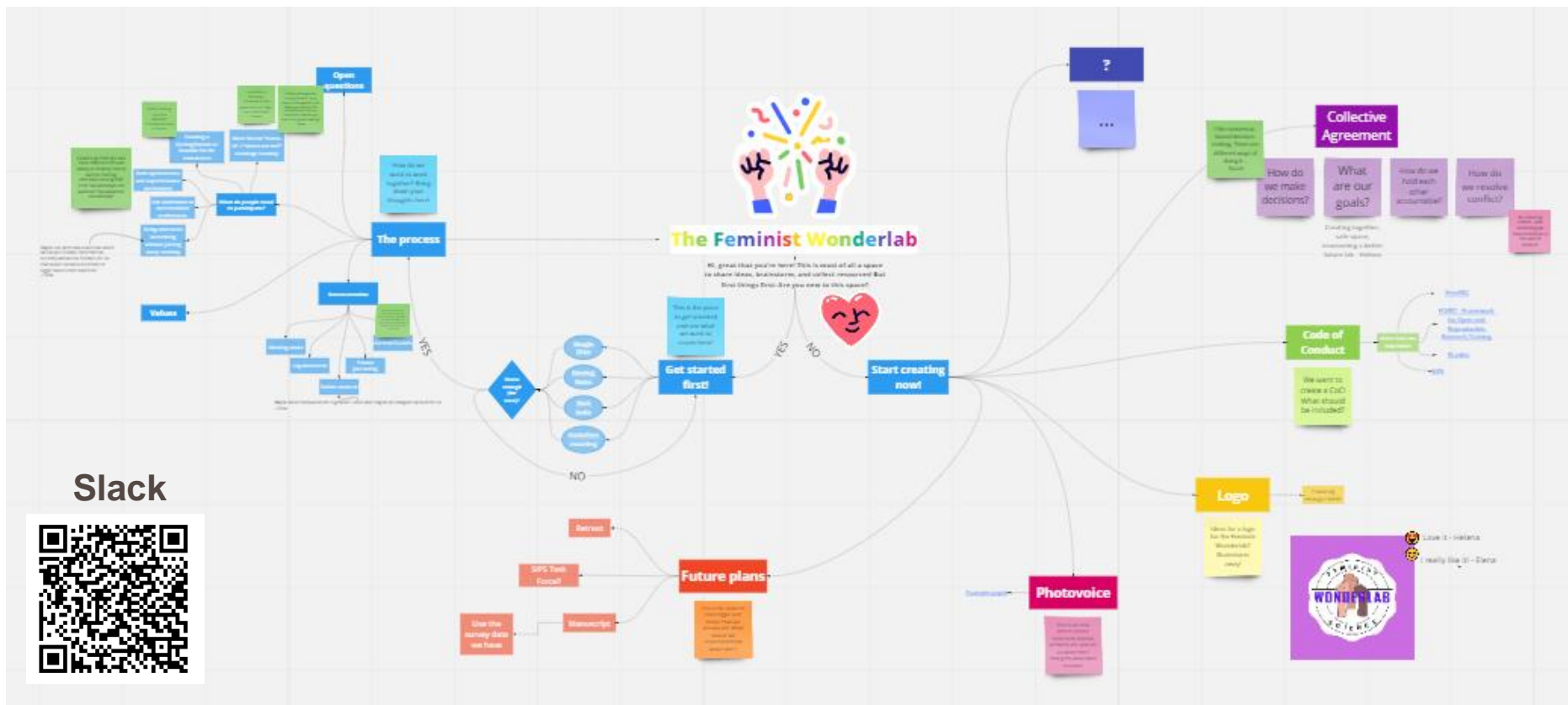
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für Psychologie  
Jungmitglieder





**TLDR:** Open Science offers  
important benefits to (feminist)  
ECRs, but there are tensions  
that must be  
navigated sensitively

# Join us at the Feminist Wonderlab!





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- Zlatomira G. Ilchovska
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- Flavio Azevedo
- Sarah A. Sauvé

# Thanks!

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