



STATEMENT

FEM Maastricht University Executive Board

12.05.2020

The Executive Board of FEM stands opposed to the decision of the NWO not to grant an extension for the submission of proposals under the VIDI scheme. Under the current circumstances, we believe this decision to be discriminatory to researchers with caring responsibilities who cannot rely on services as schools, or daycare. Many of us at Maastricht University are now combining caring responsibilities with education, research, and management tasks and it is clear that our academic output suffers as a result.

A first look into the number of journal submissions reveals that women's productivity is hindered during the lockdown, especially due to the disproportionate division of caring responsibilities at home. Women with caring responsibilities have currently no time to work on grant proposals. The potential consequences of this NWO decision will be severe for young academics who rely on grants to secure promotions or tenure. While, in the past, the NWO has made great steps for the advancement of gender equality, this decision may reverse these efforts.

We urge the NWO to reconsider their decision and grant an extension for the VIDI applicants of 2020. We also ask to consider a particular "COVID-19 care leave" in the experience section of the CV, to take into account the reduced productivity. We strongly advocate for the above measures to ensure a level playing field for all.

Sincerely,

Dr. Aurélie Carlier
Dr. Christina Peristeridou
Dr. Luana Russo
Dr. Constance Sommerey
Dr. Rianne Fijten

Executive Board
Female **EM**powerment Maastricht University