

# TESTED BY CRISIS

## *Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy*

IMPACT  
REPORT  
2020



## ABOUT GENDER CHAMPIONS IN NUCLEAR POLICY

Launched in November 2018, Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy (GCNP) is a project of the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI). Now encompassing 70 organizations worldwide, GCNP is a leadership network that brings together heads of organizations working in nuclear policy who are committed to breaking down gender barriers and making gender equity a reality in their spheres of influence. Working in locations across the United States, and in Vienna, London, and Chennai, India, Gender Champions are presidents, directors, and other leaders of organizations whose agendas and/or members address nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear weapons policy, nuclear disarmament, nuclear security, nuclear deterrence, nuclear energy, and related topics.

To learn more about GCNP, our Gender Champions, and how you can participate, visit [www.gcnpolicy.org](http://www.gcnpolicy.org).

## ABOUT THE NUCLEAR THREAT INITIATIVE

NTI is a nonprofit global security organization focused on reducing nuclear and biological threats imperiling humanity.

[www.nti.org](http://www.nti.org)

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# REFLECTING ON 2020

**T**he global pandemic that shut down offices around the world just a few months into 2020 created a true test for the Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy network in just its second year. We are proud to say it was a test met with courage, honesty, and a firm commitment not to see the nuclear community lose its gender equity gains.

Gender Champions and Focal Points did not step back from their pledges during the pandemic. Instead, they worked to help their staffs adapt to the new circumstances. They were guided by their principles to treat every person with respect and fairness; to include, invest in, and value diverse and emergent perspectives; to build safe and inclusive workspaces; and to continue to work together in a spirit of openness, honesty, and transparency. They worked to promote women leaders inside and outside their organizations, and they used the commitments they made when they joined the network to help guide their responses to the pandemic.

This was most evident in responses to the protests calling for justice in the wake of the horrifying killing of George Floyd when Gender Champions and Focal Points supported their colleagues' efforts to launch calls for accountability and action against racism within the nuclear policy community.

Since its start in 2018, GCNP has grown into a resilient network with members

who learn from each other, share stories and knowledge, and give generously. Their ties sustained the network through 2020, and the network's progress is seen in this impact report.

We are not naïve. We understand that without continued investment and commitment, our communities could lose the gender equity gains we have made. The survey results included in this report show how the pandemic is having a disproportionate impact on women. If not addressed, we risk losing many of the talented people the field relies on to make progress in reducing nuclear risks and promoting nuclear energy.

## Our Thanks

We are especially grateful to Mackenzie Cater for her work this year to help the network adapt to changing circumstances and to address new challenges. The network also would not have been nearly as strong without the support of Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins, Yasmeen Silva, John Sarrao, and Ben Loehrke, and we are grateful for their efforts to support GCNP over the past year.

We also want to give special thanks to Ploughshares Fund, whose generous support has made GCNP possible, and to the leaders of the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) for giving this project a permanent home.

We want to take a moment to recognize the immense legacy of Dr. Vartan Gregorian,

the president of Carnegie Corporation of New York, who passed away in April 2021. Dr. Gregorian was an early supporter of Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy, joining at a time when we still were not sure how the initiative would take shape. We were personally touched by his encouragement and support and proud to list him as one of our members. Here at GCNP, we will be remembering him for his kindness, openness, and listening ear.

GCNP is its network of Champions, Focal Points, and quiet-but-active supporters who are creating change within their institutions and communities. We are in awe of what they have accomplished and the dedication they have shown these past two years. In addition, we are grateful to the 53 organizations that reported data for inclusion in this report, despite the very real challenges posed by the pandemic, and we are heartened by the 21 new members who joined during the past year. We look forward to reporting on their work in the next impact report.

Lastly, our sincere thanks to Ambassador Laura Holgate, co-founder of GCNP, without whom this community may not have come into existence. Her courage and voice have left an indelible mark on the field, and we are honored to count her as a part of this network.

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**Michelle Dover**  
Program Director  
Ploughshares Fund

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**Jack Brosnan**  
Program Officer  
Nuclear Threat Initiative

# HOW IT WORKS: OUR FRAMEWORK

Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy (GCNP) is a leadership network focused on advancing gender equity in the nuclear policy community. Bringing together likeminded heads of organizations who recognize gender equity as a mission-critical priority, the initiative provides peer support and an accountability-backed framework to ensure that forward progress stays on leaders' agendas.

Heads of organizations become Gender Champions by agreeing to uphold the Panel Parity Pledge to avoid whenever possible speaking on panels of all-male experts and by devising three commitments to be implemented by their organizations over one year. These commitments are developed using the SMARTIE (Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Relevant, Timely, Inclusive, Equitable) framework. Commitments are flexible and often unique, intended to address the specific needs, structure, and realities of a given organization. The SMARTIE framework encourages Gender Champions and Focal Points to consider these factors through the lens of gender; as a result, the development of commitments becomes a deliberative and introspective process in and of itself. This

type of flexibility is paramount to GCNP's success and enables inclusion of organizations representing a range of sectors, staff profiles, and missions.

Each Gender Champion may designate one or more Focal Points within their organization: these are staff members who support implementation of SMARTIE commitments, track their Gender Champion's public appearances toward upholding the Panel Parity Pledge, and serve as points of contact with GCNP.

Focal Points submit data annually describing progress made in implementing their Gender Champion's SMARTIE commitments and their success in upholding the Panel Parity Pledge. Individual reports are not made public, and the data gathered from Focal Points are aggregated and presented in annual reports as an indicator of progress made by the GCNP network as a whole. The process of gathering data and self-reporting on performance promotes accountability and incentivizes follow-through, reducing instances of "one-off" or "box-checking" efforts.

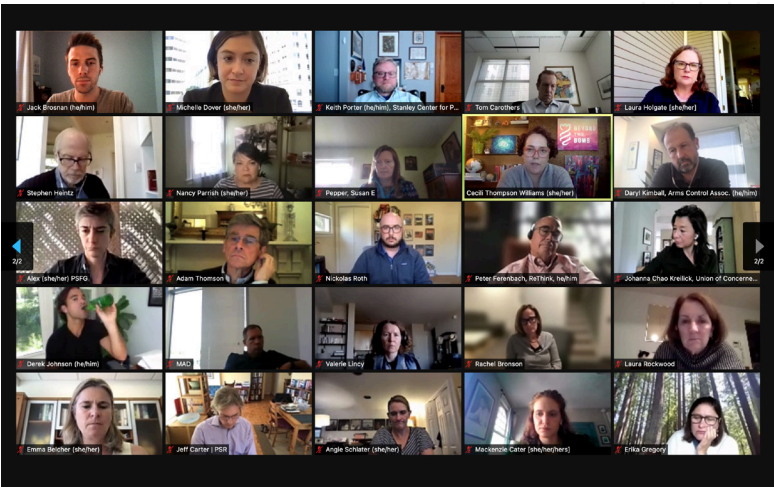
"Having a public accountability mechanism through our membership has been key to our successes and indoctrination of gender representation into our everyday working practices."

— FOCAL POINT FOR A LONDON-BASED NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION

# NETWORK GROWTH

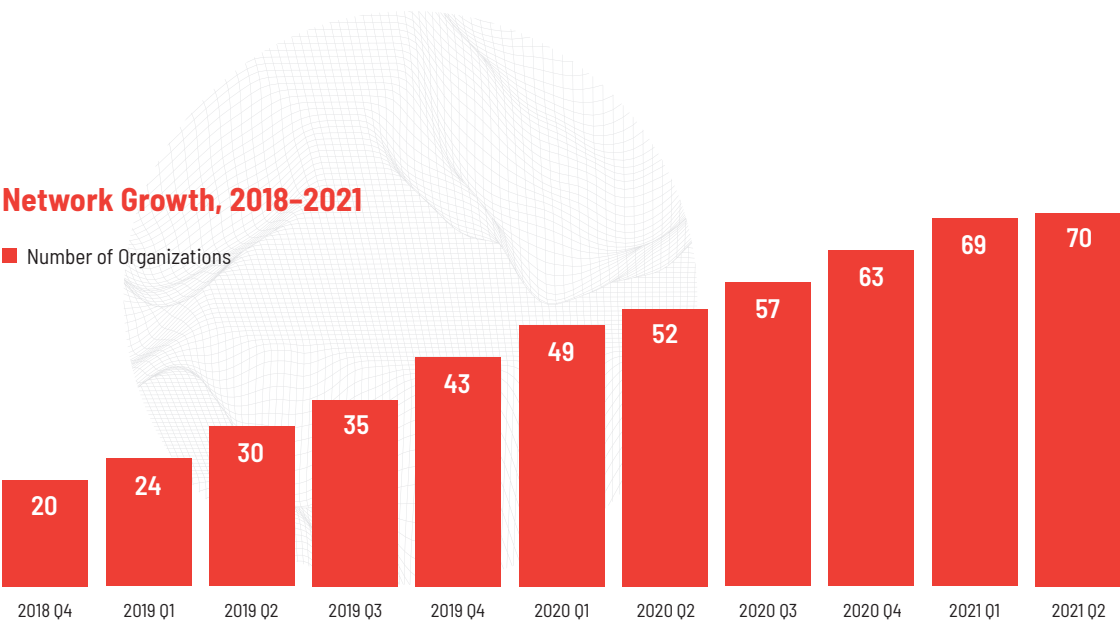
GCNP’s success in reaching all corners of the nuclear policy community and connecting allies through the network depends on executives agreeing that gender equity is a priority. Across the community, 2020 was an enormously challenging year during which everything from maintaining continuity of operations within organizations to hosting group conversations required an extraordinary degree of care and effort. Amid the increased demands imposed by COVID-19, executives found time to prioritize advancing gender equity by becoming Gender Champions.

Since the beginning of 2020, the number of organizations in the GCNP network has grown from 49 to 70. Through 2020, this meant more faces on the network’s Zoom calls, and a dramatic geographic expansion across the United States and the world. Gender Champions can now be found in California, Idaho, Illinois, Michigan, New Mexico, and North Carolina—as well as in Chennai, India.



Meeting of Gender Champions, September 2021

Each new Gender Champion helps build important recognition that how the nuclear policy community works is as important as the work it does. As executives, Gender Champions are uniquely positioned to use their authority, platform, and public visibility to act as advocates by normalizing dialogue about gender equity and raising it to the forefront of discussion.



# COMPOSITION OF THE GCNP NETWORK

By one metric, the nuclear policy community is surprisingly diverse: the number and type of organizations whose work overlaps and inter-connects within its professional ecosystem is large. These organizations span public and private sectors, the academic world, and more; some are deeply technical, others human-focused; some are entirely composed of unpaid volunteers or exist to further professional development and networking.

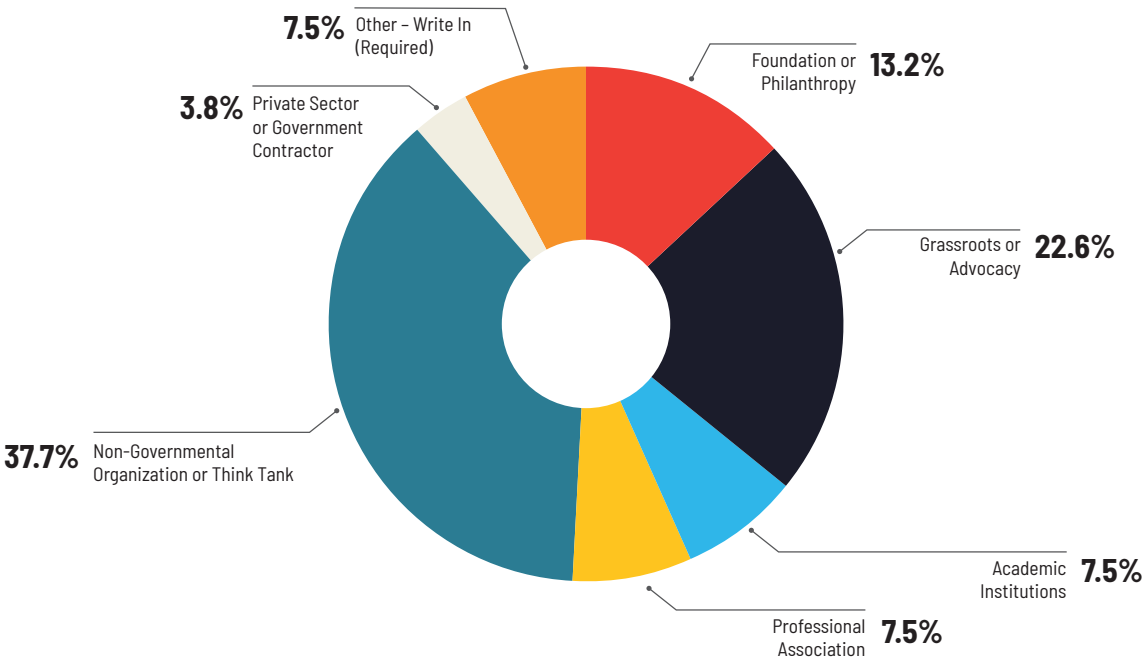
As the GCNP network has expanded, it has grown to connect corners of the nuclear policy community whose work was tangentially related but who may have otherwise had no contact. Now comprising 70 organizations, the GCNP network connects organizations who build and maintain nuclear weapons with those who seek total disarmament through a shared recognition that their impact will be enhanced by the equitable and active participation of women. Gender Champions representing

organizations of all shapes, sizes, and missions agree to adhere to the initiative’s code of values and to uphold the Panel Parity Pledge.

Founded in Washington, DC, the initiative’s roots run deep in the community of U.S.-based non-governmental organizations, think tanks, and philanthropies, but each sector of the nuclear policy community faces its own gender equity challenges. An organizationally diverse network has enabled open dialogue and exchange of best practices representing a range of experiences. Small, nimble non-profits have shared their experiences piloting innovative approaches and adapting principles of gender equity into their work, while private-sector peers with thousands of employees have shared insight into corporate best practices and layered human resources systems.

In 2020, GCNP’s network has grown to include several important new sectors of the nuclear

## Diversity of Organizations in GCNP Network





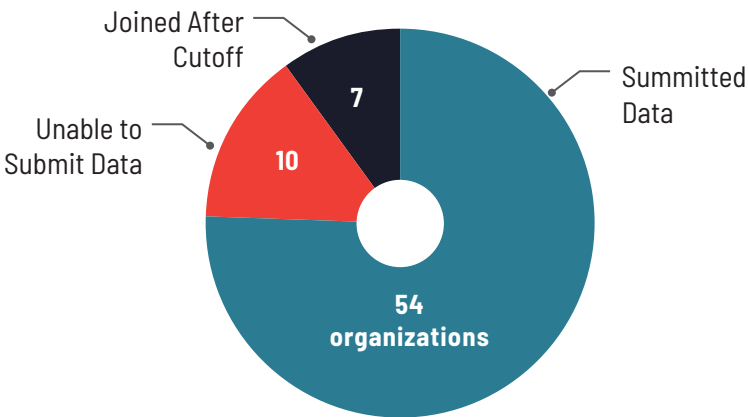
policy community, an especially critical form of expansion. These include media outlets specific to the nuclear policy community and private-sector entities that primarily employ large numbers of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) professionals. Diverse representation in public fora and highly technical communities is a widely recognized challenge in the nuclear policy community, and organizations in these spaces are ideally positioned to contribute to breaking down those barriers.

### Organizations Included in This Report

While the GCNP network grew appreciably through 2020, data from all 70 member organizations are not reflected in this report. Organizations join the GCNP network on a continuous, rolling basis, and many leaders become Gender Champions while data collection is underway. In an effort to present a clear picture of actions taken by Gender Champions and Focal Points who have had a full year to work toward advancing gender equity, data are not requested from organizations who join the network following the opening of the data collection period. Instead, these seven organizations will continue forging ahead on implementation of their commitments and will report data for inclusion in GCNP’s 2021 Impact Report.

Although accountability is a key component of the GCNP model, a focus on pragmatic flexibility ensures that annualized reporting does not become punitive. The past year proved particularly challenging, and an additional 10 organizations who would otherwise have submitted data for inclusion in this report were simply unable to do so. Recognizing the unprecedented challenges faced by organizations seeking to maintain continuity of operations and support their employees during a global pandemic, data collection was concluded without reports from these organizations.

### Organizations Included in 2020 GCNP Impact Report



### OUR SHARED VALUES

In becoming members of the GCNP network, Gender Champions and Focal Points are bound together by a shared purpose of working to advance gender equity. They also agree to adhere to a code of values and are expected to act in accordance with the highest ethical standards, including:

- Treating every person with respect and fairness;
- Actively including, investing in, and valuing diverse and emergent perspectives;
- Creating and maintaining safe, inclusive workplaces free from harassment and discrimination;
- Promoting women leaders inside and outside our organizations;
- Working together with other Champions in a spirit of openness, honesty, and transparency.

These values form the backbone of the initiative’s culture and guide its efforts. Achieving gender equity depends, in part, on the firm belief that every person is worthy of respect and deserves to feel safe and valued in their place of work. Establishing agreement on these values ensures that members of the GCNP network operate from shared expectations in modeling respectful behavior. When they do, norms of respectful behavior are reinforced throughout the nuclear policy community. A culture of fundamental respect helps create more welcoming conditions for the advancement of gender equity and a healthier professional community.

# GENDER BALANCE WITHIN THE NETWORK

## Gender Champions and Focal Points

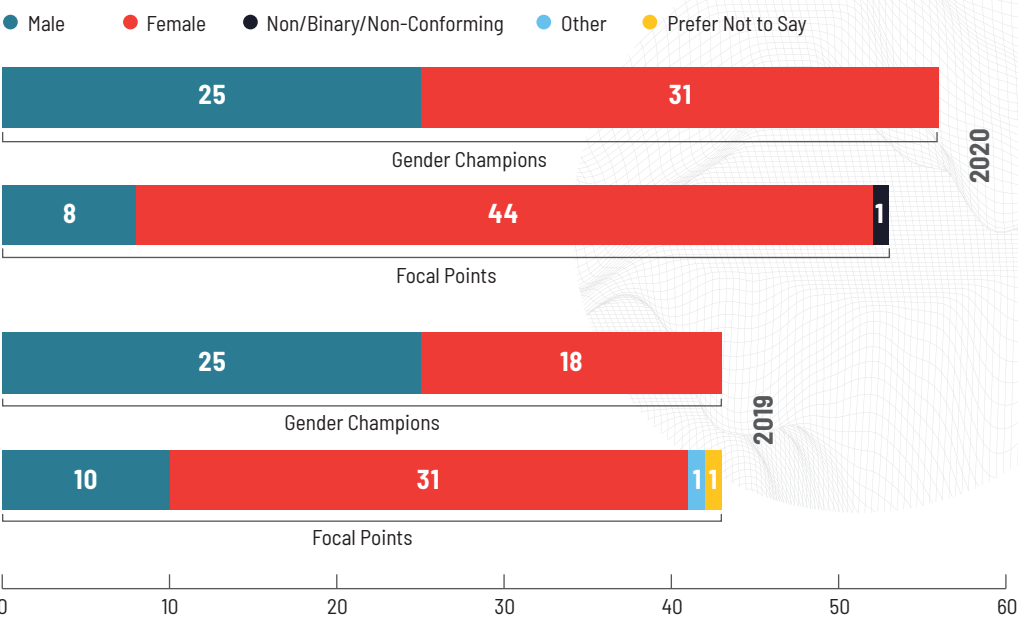
Change does not happen as the result of a single person’s efforts. Most Gender Champions work in tandem with one or more members of their staff who are deputized to serve as the primary point(s) of contact between their organization and the network. These Focal Points work to ensure that gender equity is always an agenda item for their Gender Champions. They serve as the conduit by which organizations exchange best practices through the GCNP network, capture and report data back to the initiative on progress made in advancing gender equity, and work to build and reinforce new norms around respect for diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) across the nuclear policy community.

Most executive positions in nuclear policy organizations are filled by men, a mark of the gender inequity that this initiative exists to address. Reflecting this status quo, the majority of Gender Champions in the first year of the

initiative also were men—leaders who chose to stand up as allies in the fight to advance gender equity, leveraging their privilege to create change. GCNP does not require Focal Points to be chosen from senior staff and provides flexible guidelines to help Gender Champions decide who within their organization is best suited to fill this role. Often this results in the position being open to volunteers who independently express interest in working with the initiative—a majority of whom are women.

It is a known challenge that without great care and caution, diversity, equity, and inclusion focused efforts can very easily place the lion’s share of work on the shoulders of the population they seek to serve. To prevent this dynamic from taking hold in GCNP, the network monitors the relative gender balance of Gender Champions to Focal Points as an indicator of progress and a reminder of where the burden of work falls. With a second year of data available, longitudinal comparison of gender

## Gender Ratio of Gender Champions to Focal Points







ratios across the network is now possible. In 2020, we saw a shift in the gender ratio of Gender Champions to near parity, with women now constituting the majority. This change represents growth of the GCNP network to include more organizations led by women, and turnover in positions of leadership. Although the GCNP network may not be representative of the entire nuclear policy community, this shift is a clear sign that a significant number of women now are serving as leaders of organizations, and it defies the long-running trend of executive positions in the community being nearly universally filled by men, with women struggling to rise above mid-level positions.

Less encouraging is the slight but noteworthy reduction in the number of men serving as Focal Points, a voluntary role which offers little public visibility but demands significant work in support of a Gender Champion. A small number of men fill this role, but Focal Points still overwhelmingly identify as women, speaking to a need to engage more men across the nuclear policy community with the idea that advancing gender equity is a critical endeavor.

Monitoring Progress at All Levels

As part of an effort to gather more robust data about the gender composition of the nuclear policy community, GCNP for the first time in 2020 requested information about the gender identity of organizations’ staff, leadership, and boards of directors. These ratios are median figures developed from self-reported data submitted by the 53 organizations included in this report.

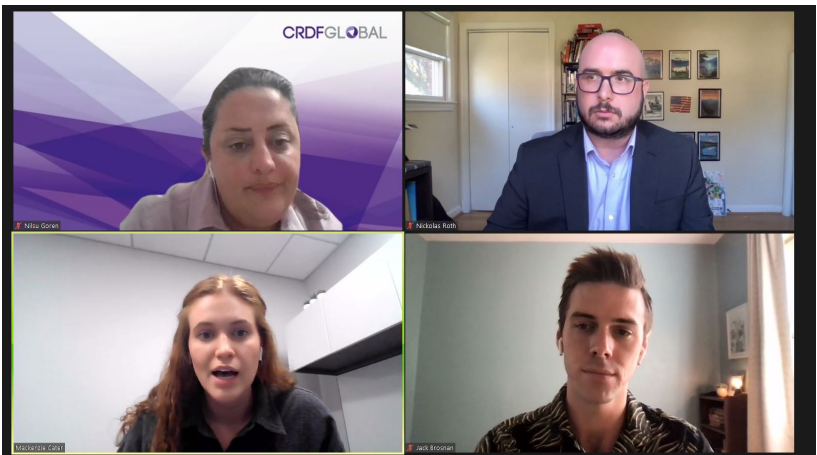
Organizations in the GCNP network vary widely in size and composition, with permanent staffs ranging from two to 10,000 and disparate leadership structures. The organizations are most likely to be small (42 percent have 10 or fewer personnel) and more than half are led by women and thus may not be a representative sample of the nuclear policy community at large. Despite this, median gender ratios offer

Median Gender Ratios of Organizations in the GCNP Network

Staff	5 Men	:	7 Women
Leadership	1 Men	:	1 Women
Board of Directors	6 Men	:	5 Women

a rough basis for comparison and reveal some important trends.

On first glance, the near parity of these numbers spells good news for gender equity; however, in a comparison of medians, although the margins are narrow, they can be significant. The proportion of these numbers across levels of seniority hint at an important structural challenge in the nuclear policy community: junior staff overwhelmingly outnumber their senior counterparts, as do members of boards of directors. This means few opportunities for advancement exist in the field, presenting a challenge for the pursuit of gender equity without significant attrition. Further, women are overrepresented in junior positions and underrepresented in the most senior positions. This disparity contrasts the strength of talent “pipelines” that bring diverse new candidates into the field with the generational backlog of gender inequity at the most senior levels.



Dr. Nilsu Goren, Nick Roth, Mackenzie Cater, and Jack Brosnan at Stimson Center webinar “Community in Crisis: Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Equity and Inclusion in Nuclear Security”

# RESILIENCE IN UNPRECEDENTED TIMES

Unprecedented events defy planning and preparation in the best of times. The nuclear policy community emerged from a series of unprecedented events in the first half of the 20th century: the first intentional splitting of an atom, the creation and use of nuclear weapons, and the discovery of myriad peaceful uses for nuclear technology. Each significant development catalyzed the emergence of a new branch of the community, from nuclear physicists and engineers, to disarmament advocates, to regulators, policy analysts, and beyond. In 2020 this community of ad hoc branches faced one of its greatest challenges as COVID-19 spread across the globe, reaching full pandemic status in the first quarter of the year.

## Maintaining Continuity of Operations

Even for a community focused on existential threats, where many members share some expertise in the adjacent field of biosecurity, there was little effective contingency planning. National and local authorities managed as best they could, recognizing that “flattening the curve” of the infection and its societal effects and prioritizing safety was necessary to maintain some level of essential economic activity. Heads of organizations suddenly found themselves responsible for navigating an uncharted landscape, working with incomplete information and shifting public health guidance as knowledge of this novel virus improved. Responsible for maintaining course on their organizations’ respective missions as well as the health and safety of their employees, these leaders worked to develop new policies and best practices under great duress. Of the 70 organizations in the GCNP network, none were

forced to close their doors. However, pitfalls abound when heads of organizations are forced to make critical decisions about compensation, employment, and employee safety under duress and without support.

## Inequity Re-entrenched

The nuclear policy community has struggled to address a decades-long backlog of inequity, some of which mirrors society and some of which is unique to the community itself. Conditions brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic greatly exacerbated existing inequities by raising new barriers to access and participation among already marginalized groups. Pandemic response measures led to the closure of schools, daycares, and other care facilities; millions of people worldwide have fallen ill, experienced long-term health effects, or required additional care due to pre-existing conditions. These factors in tandem have created a massive net increase in the volume of unpaid care work, the majority of which has been shouldered by women.<sup>1</sup> This effect came on top of the pre-existing gender disparity in time spent on unpaid care work, which has been well-documented and studied, along with its impact on employment outcomes.<sup>2</sup>

Women continue to carry a disproportionately large share of unpaid care work, even as it has increased in volume. In many workplaces across the nuclear policy community, responding to the pandemic included a shift to remote work to maintain typical working hours and existing divisions of labor. Expectations for women in the workplace have not changed, but many women now are caring for sick relatives,

1 Kate Power, “The COVID-19 Pandemic Has Increased the Care Burden of Women and Families,” *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy* 16:1 (2020), 67–73, <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/15487733.2020.1776561>.

2 Gaëlle Ferrant, Luca Maria Pesando, and Keiko Nowacka, *Unpaid Care Work: The Missing Link in the Analysis of Gender Gaps in Labour Outcomes* (OECD Development Centre, December 2014), [https://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Unpaid\\_care\\_work.pdf](https://www.oecd.org/dev/development-gender/Unpaid_care_work.pdf).

homeschooling children, and raising infants while responding to emails, managing teams, and meeting deadlines. Single parents also face great obstacles, many isolated from their social and familial support systems to prevent spread of the virus while working and caring for children.

Through late 2020 and into early 2021, GCNP conducted its own research on the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, releasing an anonymous survey that gathered responses from 231 individuals. The nuclear policy workforce is dominated by college-educated white-collar professionals, a group that was largely able to transition to remote work with minimal disruption. Under these conditions, observed trends differed somewhat from broader economic analysis focused on retail, food service, and other public facing sectors.

Despite this, GCNP’s survey results showed that women were nearly twice as likely to have experienced economic hardship as men, and more than three times as likely to have had their work hours reduced. Among those whose work hours were reduced, 86 percent of women attributed reductions to an increased volume of care work while zero percent of men did the same. Women also tended to spend more time overall on care work; the median percentage of total time spent on care work during an average day was two times higher among women than men. The obvious and immediate impacts of the pandemic directly challenged women’s ability to stay engaged in the professional sphere, a challenge much less pronounced for their male colleagues.

Looking beyond the pandemic, more than half of the women who responded to GCNP’s survey were concerned that the pandemic would have a negative impact on their prospects for professional development or advancement, while less than one-third of men felt the same way.

“As with all organizations, the current pandemic has created significant challenges for maintaining momentum. Further, some impacts are gender-specific and risk becoming systemic. As we re-invent the future of work it will be important to translate post-pandemic work environment to a strength rather than a liability for gender equity.”

—FOCAL POINT FOR A U.S.-BASED NATIONAL LABORATORY

This level of uncertainty about professional outcomes makes remaining in the field a less attractive proposition—and in fact one in three women and one in four men surveyed indicated that the pandemic had caused them to consider leaving the nuclear policy field or making a change of career. This level of potential attrition is deeply concerning for the future outlook of the nuclear policy workforce, and the gender disparity shown in these figures directly threatens the fragile forward progress that has thus far been made toward advancing gender equity in the field. Adding to the discouraging outlook: among those surveyed, as women were more than three times as likely to have lost access to professional development funds due to the pandemic than men.

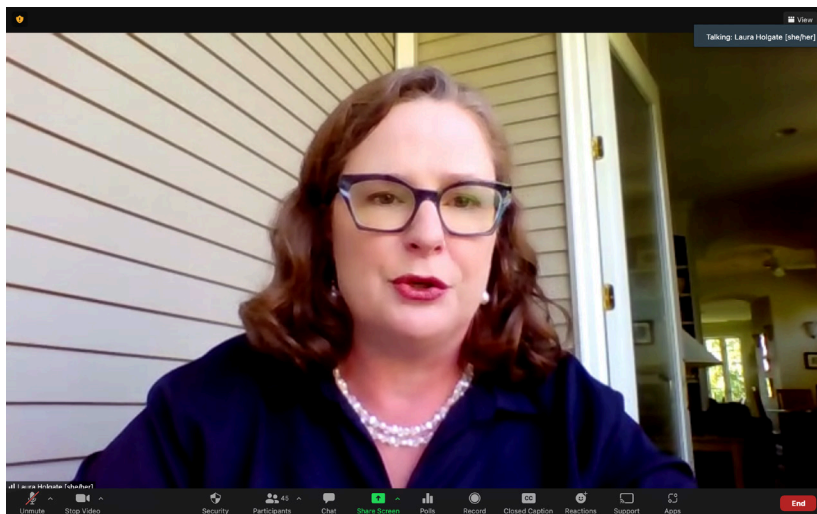
Some projections indicate that women’s participation in the general workforce may not return to pre-pandemic levels until 2024—two years behind men.<sup>3</sup> Although great progress has been made in developing a strong pipeline to bring diverse talent into the nuclear policy community, no full reckoning has been made of what has been lost in 2020. Worse yet, it may

3 André Dua, Kweilin Ellingrud, Michael Lazar, Ryan Luby, Sanjay Srinivasan, and Tucker Van Aken, “Achieving an Inclusive US Economic Recovery,” McKinsey, February 3, 2021, <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/public-and-social-sector/our-insights/achieving-an-inclusive-us-economic-recovery>.

be years before the long-term impacts of the pandemic on the nuclear policy community are fully understood.

## Commitments in Practice

Among heads of organizations, Gender Champions may have been better equipped to address the challenges of a pandemic than their peers. Through voluntary commitments made prior to the pandemic, many Gender Champions had implemented systems that would become essential in 2020, including remote work, flexible work hours, accommodations for parents and caregivers, and paid internship programs. These systems became immediately essential in early 2020 when normal operations became impossible, but organizations who were forced to develop them quickly in response to the pandemic faced a much steeper learning curve in adapting to new conditions. Basic concerns like selecting vendors for teleconference services, establishing standard operating procedures for remote meetings, and rebuilding lines of communication are highly time consuming.



Gender Champions Co-Founder Laura S.H. Holgate, vice president for Materials Risk Management, Nuclear Threat Initiative

Teams well practiced with and equipped for remote work and other flexible arrangements would be able to skip these steps entirely,

instead devoting attention to addressing emergent concerns directly stemming from the pandemic.

Additionally, a number of Gender Champions had previously made commitments designed to elevate representation of women as subject matter experts in the nuclear policy community. As women faced an increasing burden of care work and engagement with professional development opportunities became more challenging, it became more important for conveners and organizers to monitor diversity of representation in the online formats that replaced conferences and panel discussions to ensure that women didn't lose ground as recognized subject matter experts and valuable members of the nuclear policy community.

Results of GCNP's survey of the gendered impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic showed a sharp schism between the experiences of those working at organizations in the GCNP network and those outside it. Respondents at organizations led by Gender Champions were more likely to feel supported by their employer, to have received support for home office expenses, and to have access to professional development funds; they were less likely to have considered leaving the field, to be concerned about their professional development, and to have lost their jobs or had their hours reduced. GCNP cannot claim causation or direct credit for this disparity of experience—but it does appear likely that principled, human-focused leadership is a common factor in producing better outcomes.

The survey results show that Gender Champions may have been best prepared for the second- and third-order effects of the pandemic on gender equity. By engaging in an ongoing dialogue about gender equity in their professional community and devoting time to devising measures to address equity challenges, these leaders were primed to monitor symptoms of marginalization.



## Gendered Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic among GCNP Members

METRIC	Difference between GCNP and Non-GCNP Organizations*
• Was not separated from employment during the pandemic	+7.1%
• Own work hours or colleagues' hours not reduced due to pandemic	+18.2%
• Own pay or colleagues' pay not reduced due to pandemic	+14.7%
• Considered leaving the nuclear policy field or changing careers due to pandemic	-5.4%
• Concerned that the pandemic would have a negative impact on professional development or advancement	-19.8%
• Still had access to professional development funds or resources during pandemic	+17.6%
• Regularly scheduled performance review conducted during pandemic	+27.4%
• Felt adequately supported by their employer during the pandemic	+20.3%
• Had access to remote work prior to the pandemic	+5%
• Had access to "other" flexible work options prior to the pandemic	+10.7%
• Received a stipend from their employer to offset home office expenses	+24.8%

\* Survey results drawn from 231 unique responses; respondents were asked to self-identify whether their employer was a member of Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy.

### Challenges in Data Collection

Amid the challenges and competing priorities in 2020, many Gender Champions and Focal Points continued pushing forward in their work to advance gender equity, including through diligently reporting indicators of their progress to be recorded in this report. As the volume of annual data gathered by GCNP grows, however, 2020 is likely to stand out as an outlier given the sudden shifts caused by the pandemic and the results of the presidential election in the United States.

Experts who regularly appear in the news media and on panel discussions dramatically curtailed their public appearances in 2020, whether due to changes in opportunity, shifting media attention, or changes in their own availability. Organizations that had outlined ambitious commitments for themselves were

suddenly hard pressed to maintain focus on strategic goals. Staff members of many organizations temporarily relocated to be closer to family, while others left the nuclear policy community entirely or moved on to new opportunities. Late in 2020, the incoming Biden administration began laying transition plans for the executive branch, leading to significant turnover across the community. For GCNP's network of Focal Points, collecting data to submit to the initiative on their organization's work to advance gender equity was both another competing priority, and much more challenging than the past year.

These challenges are reflected in this report, both through personal anecdotes and the character of the data. As mentioned at the opening of this report, 10 organizations that would typically have submitted data to GCNP were unable to do so.

# AN EVOLVING UNDERSTANDING

## The Complexity of Gender Identity

Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy was founded to break down barriers by advancing gender equity by promoting representation and inclusion of women experts. Marginalization in the nuclear policy community exists beyond the gender binary, however. A broader understanding of gender identity has emerged in the accepted model of the gender spectrum, encompassing “cisgender,” “transgender,” and “non-conforming” gender identities.

“Cisgender” describes a person whose gender identity corresponds to the biological sex they were assigned at birth; “transgender” describes someone whose gender identity differs from the biological sex they were assigned at birth; and “gender non-conforming” describes gender identities that are entirely separate from biological sex. Inequity exists across the gender spectrum, and historically cisgender men have been overrepresented in the nuclear policy community. In seeking to advance gender equity, GCNP works to address marginalization and discrimination across the gender spectrum. Because GCNP’s work to advance gender equity recognizes the challenges faced by cisgender and transgender women as well as those who identify as gender non-conforming, use of the term “women” by this initiative is inclusive of any person who identifies as such. Maintaining a focus on gender equity ensures that this initiative is able to address the specific and differing needs of those marginalized on the basis of their gender identity.

## Intersectionality and Gender Equity

Intersectional diversity refers to the understanding that human identity is complex and multifaceted, emerging at the confluence of various social and political factors. These factors can create conditions of discrimination

and privilege, potentially in parallel across different dimensions of identity. Gender identity is one dimension of a person’s identity and may compound or contribute to marginalization and discrimination.

GCNP maintains a primary focus on gender, but advancing equity necessitates considering other forms of marginalization and discrimination in the nuclear policy community (e.g., racial identity, socioeconomic class). Recognizing this, GCNP takes an intersectional approach to promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion. Leveraging the initiative’s flexible framework of accountability-backed commitments, Gender Champions are encouraged to address multiple dimensions of marginalization and discrimination in their work.

## One Framework, Not One Size

“One-size-fits-all” diversity efforts are unlikely to succeed as they fail to consider what differentiates groups and individuals experiencing discrimination and marginalization.

On the other hand, failure to engage with the intersectional nature of human identity and its interplay with inequity would undermine this initiative. Recognizing the respective obstacles faced by women of color, people of non-conforming gender identities, cisgender white women, and others casts stark light on the challenges and opportunities facing the nuclear policy community. An intersectional approach to diversity where conversations are opened and driven by a focus on gender, but not confined by it, is both powerful and flexible. Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy seeks to arm allies with this powerful and flexible approach, gird them with a network of peer support, and give them the room to define their own course.



# RESULTS: PANEL PARITY PLEDGE

## Building Norms through Evolving Best Practices

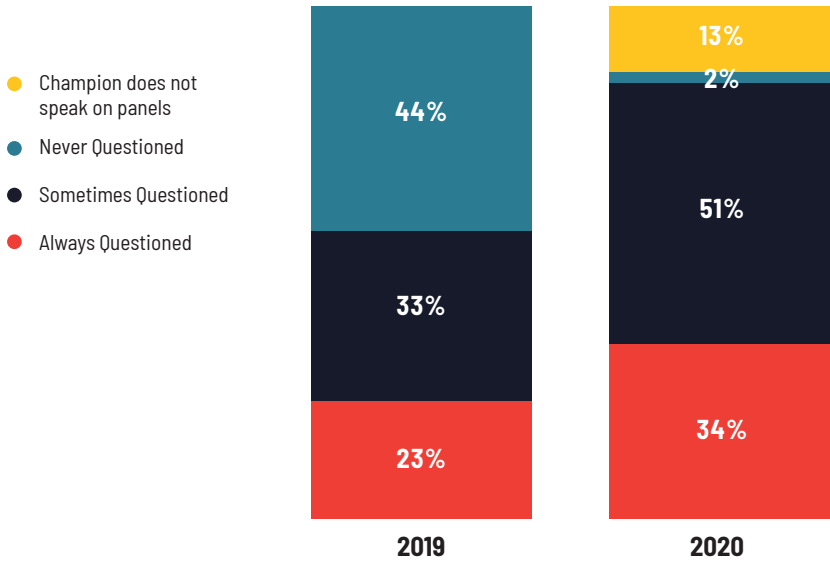
Some of GCNP’s most effective tools for advancing progress on gender equity have come about as evolutions in practice, developed through exchanges of best practices by Gender Champions and Focal Points. In its first year of existence, GCNP offered Focal Points a standard set of questions that could be used to question event organizers when a Gender Champion was invited to join an all-male panel of experts. Members of the GCNP network observed that when a Gender Champion receives a speaking invitation, it can be difficult to determine the overall gender composition of an event and what work has already been done by the event’s organizer. Gender Champions and Focal Points quickly began to adopt the practice of *regularly* questioning event organizers about their process for ensuring diverse representation, transforming it from a tool for course correction into an exercise in norm-building. Elevating the practice of questioning event organizers from a reactionary measure to a standard operating procedure directly attacks assumptions about who *should* be represented at events and challenges event organizers to deliberately include considerations of diversity in the planning process when constructing an event and inviting expert guests. Between 2019 and 2020 there was a dramatic increase in the frequency with which Gender Champions and Focal Points questioned event organizers, displaying successful uptake of the practice.

In a similar fashion, the practice of identifying oneself as a Gender Champion during public appearances has emerged as norm-building tool through evolution in practice. The frequency with which Gender Champions self-identified as such during public appearances was not measured in 2019. Following discussion within

“We have been successful across all of our commitments, which is a reflection of the organization-wide buy-in to this concept. Our staff has made the questions that underpin our goals part of our standard operating procedure, always asking ourselves who we are engaging and why. It is becoming reflexive for us as an organization, and that is why we are succeeding in meeting our goals.”

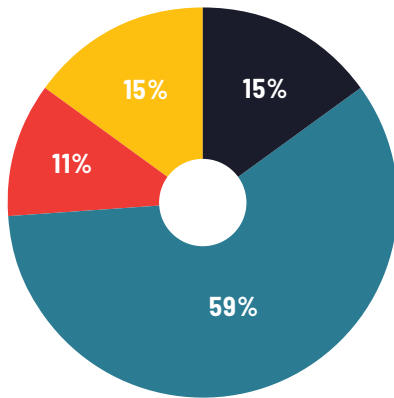
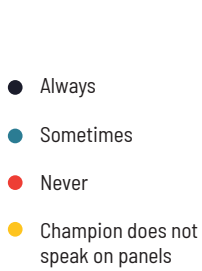
– FOCAL POINT FOR A WASHINGTON-BASED ADVOCACY GROUP

## Questioning Event Organizers



the GCNP network of how the practice can be a useful tool for highlighting gender equity in challenging situations, Gender Champions were encouraged to do so deliberately, and

## Gender Champions Who Publicly Identify as Such



Focal Points were asked to report on uptake. Most Gender Champions either always or sometimes publicly identify as such (74 percent) whereas a small but significant group (15 percent) do not speak on public panels.

“We’re so grateful for the support that has come from exploring these issues in community with other organizations. For example, I was empowered by the Stanley Center’s example to ask challenging questions to an event host. In the end, we got encouraging answers and were able to promote the GCNP in the process. I would not have felt as confident going that alone.”

—GENDER CHAMPION FOR A U.S.-BASED ADVOCACY GROUP

Both measures have evolved organically from voluntary actions taken by members of the GCNP network and have seen significant uptake across other organizations. These trends speak to one of GCNP’s greatest strengths: a network of peers, allies, and friends who support one another by providing advice, inspiration, and solidarity in the face of great challenges.

## Upholding the Panel Parity Pledge

The Panel Parity Pledge is the single common pledge made by all Gender Champions: to avoid, whenever possible, speaking on all-male panels of experts. Although it may be the easiest piece of the GCNP framework to understand, in practice it can be extremely difficult to implement. Nuclear policy is an inherently political pursuit, and Gender Champions often grapple with rationales for joining all-male panels: access to influential audiences, opportunities to work with key partners, challenging situations in complex international forums. By upholding the Panel Parity Pledge, Gender Champions show that gender equity is as compelling a priority as any other mission-critical objective.

Overall, 12 percent fewer Gender Champions successfully upheld the Panel Parity Pledge in 2020 than in 2019—an unfortunate reduction but one that also warrants closer examination as the share of Gender Champions who did not speak on any panels grew significantly in 2020 and the way in which GCNP gathered data for the category shifted. First, in 2019 Gender Champions who did not appear on panels or make public appearances were considered to have upheld the Panel Parity Pledge as they

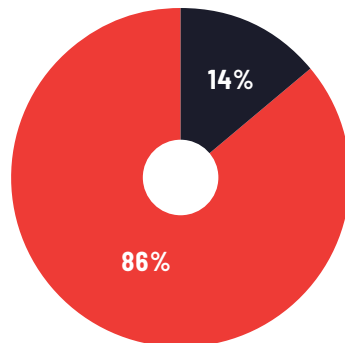
had not spoken on any all-male panels. As the GCNP network grew through 2020 and more executives who do not generally make public appearances became Gender Champions, it became more important to separate this group out for transparency and accurate tracking of progress. Second, the availability of opportunities to speak on panels changed dramatically in 2020 due to the global pandemic. As webinars grew in popularity, some Gender Champions spoke on many more panels than would have been previously possible; due to constraints on travel, availability, and capacity, others chose not to speak on panels at all. Given the number of confounding factors at play in 2020, it will be increasingly important to closely monitor Gender Champions' success in upholding the Panel Parity Pledge in 2021 and beyond. At the same time, it is encouraging that more than three quarters of this group upheld their pledge in a challenging year.

## Why a Panel Parity Pledge

As in many professional communities, visibility and the ability to establish oneself as a respected subject matter expert are closely tied to professional advancement in the nuclear policy community. In a community historically dominated by cisgender white men, opportunities for public appearances as an expert have not been distributed equally or equitably. The decades-long practice of featuring the same overrepresented experts has resulted in development of a malformed norm—the assumption and overvaluation of male expertise—that creates an artificial barrier to opportunity for women and other marginalized groups. If a critical mass of senior experts in the nuclear policy community are unwilling to speak on all-male panels and will step forward to push event organizers toward prioritizing diversity, a stronger, healthier, more intentional norm can be built.

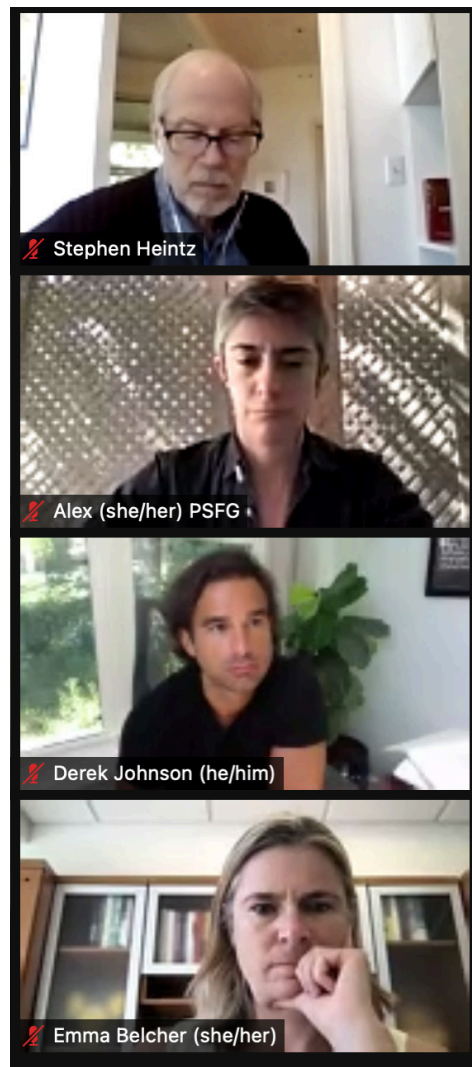
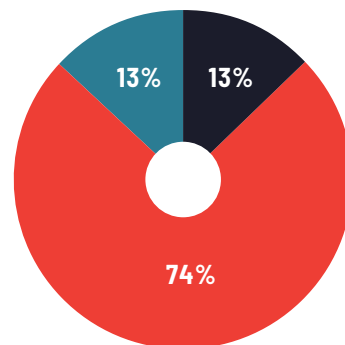
### Panel Pledge Performance 2019

- Spoke on All-Male Panel
- Did Not Speak on All-Male Panel
- Did Not Speak on Panels



### Panel Pledge Performance 2020

- Spoke on All-Male Panel
- Did Not Speak on All-Male Panel
- Did Not Speak on Panels



Stephen Heintz, Alexandra Toma, Derek Johnson, and Dr. Emma Belcher at a meeting of Gender Champions, September 2021.

# RESULTS: VOLUNTARY SMARTIE COMMITMENTS

## Year-to-Year Progress

As the GCNP network expanded over the course of the year, the number of SMARTIE commitments being implemented and tracked by its members grew in parallel. Through 2020, the 53 organizations included in this report made and worked to fulfill 159 individual commitments and, despite the significant challenges posed by the pandemic, stayed almost perfectly on par with the previous year in their successful implementation of these commitments. In 2019, Gender Champions and Focal Points completed implementation of 65 percent of their commitments; in 2020 that number was 62 percent. Surprisingly, the number of commitments that organizations found too challenging to implement even partially *fell* between 2019 and 2020, from seven to just two. Another key difference in 2020 was the inclusion of data from organizations who joined the GCNP network in late 2019 or early 2020 and thus did not have a full year in which to work on their commitments—accounting for 12 percent of all commitments reported on in 2020. Perhaps most impressive was the character of commitments made by Gender Champions in 2020, many of whom were entering their second year in the role and chose to set more ambitious targets for themselves. Under these conditions, Gender Champions and

“We’ve found it important to integrate DEI goals and our SMARTIE commitments into internal processes and discussions. From the top down, this includes representing those goals in our strategic framework, adding them to our employment policy manual, integrating those goals into programming strategy documents, and monitoring those goals during program planning and implementation.”

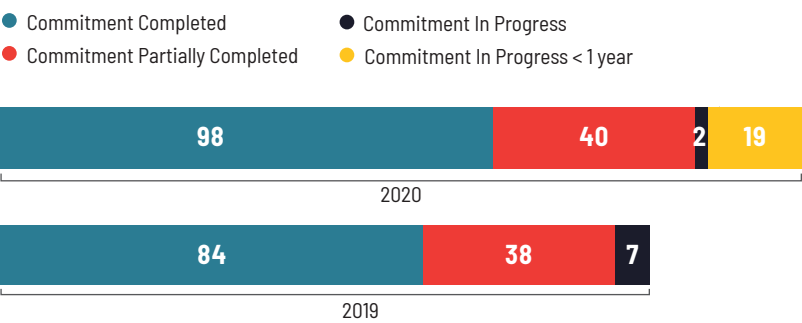
– FOCAL POINT FOR A U.S. BASED PHILANTHROPY

Focal Points showed remarkable dedication in implementing their commitments, maintaining the GCNP network’s forward momentum under their own power.

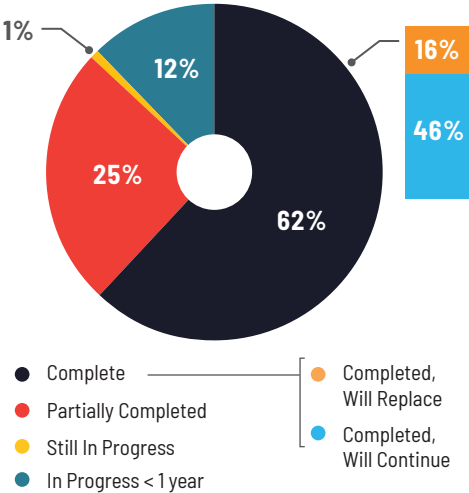
## Creating Durable Change

In 2019, GCNP began tracking the amount of time that organizations took to implement the commitments made by their Gender Champions. A key takeaway was that some commitments would require ongoing work beyond initial completion. Ultimately the amount of time taken to implement a commitment proved to be of less relevance to the goal of catalyzing change within an organization and across the community than the steps taken after a commitment was completed. Reflecting this observation, GCNP’s 2020 data collection questionnaire asked Focal Points to indicate whether commitments were considered complete and ready for replacement with a new commitment, or whether they would require some form of

## Completion of Commitments by Year



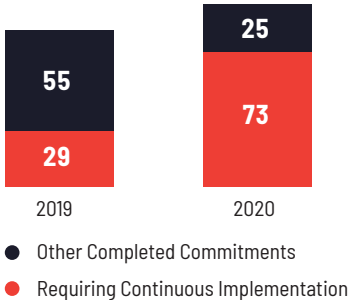
SMARTIE Completion 2020



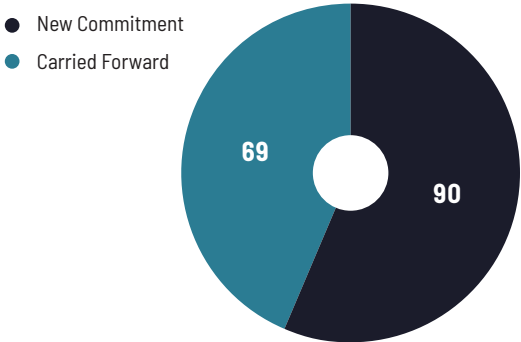
continuous or ongoing implementation. Of the 159 SMARTIE commitments made by Gender Champions in 2020, 62 percent were completely implemented; of completed commitments, 46 percent were earmarked for continuous work, while 16 percent were discrete commitments with a clear end point. Although commitments that can be closed out and replaced provide a satisfying sense of completion and bolster numeric measures of success, commitments requiring continuous work speak to a change in the DNA of an organization, a permanent change in thought and practice that influences its day-to-day operations.

From 2019 to 2020, the share of completed commitments requiring continuous implementation grew significantly from just over one-third to nearly three quarters. This again reflects the more challenging nature of the commitments made by Gender Champions in 2020, with many executives seeking to address complex structural challenges or develop long running programs and initiatives. Whether these commitments will continue to be tracked using the GCNP framework in years to come is at the discretion of Gender Champions and Focal Points; they may choose to maintain these commitments as or in addition to their required three SMARTIE commitments, or they may continue to track their implementation internally.

Commitments Requiring Continuous Implementation by Year



New vs. Carried Out Commitments

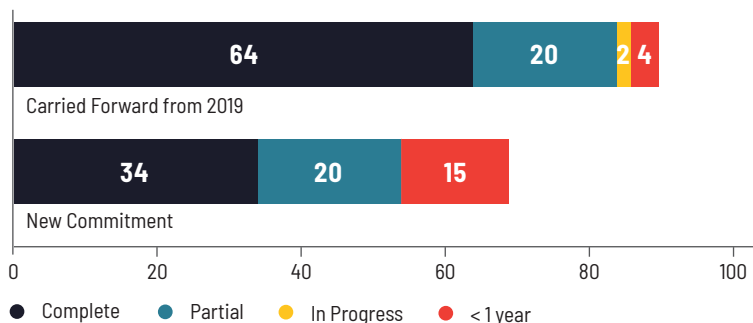


Moving in Increments: Commitments Carried Forward

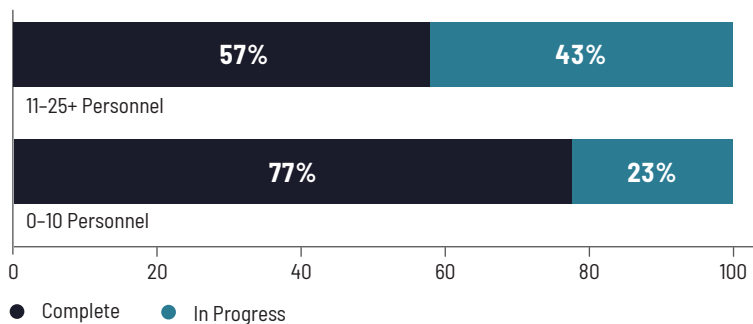
Entering the GCNP network’s second year of data collection, many Gender Champions and Focal Points chose to carry forward commitments that had been made in 2019 for continued work. In some cases, this reflects commitments that were partially implemented in 2019 but required additional work to fully implement; in other cases, Gender Champions set more ambitious conditions of success for a previously completed commitment. Whereas most SMARTIE commitments worked on in 2020 were newly set, 69 (43 percent) were carried over from 2019.

Unsurprisingly, carried-over commitments were completed at a higher rate than newly set commitments. Work or planning for implementation likely already was underway for carried over commitments, and in the case of newly set commitments, lessons learned from previous implementation work simplified follow through to completion. Interestingly,

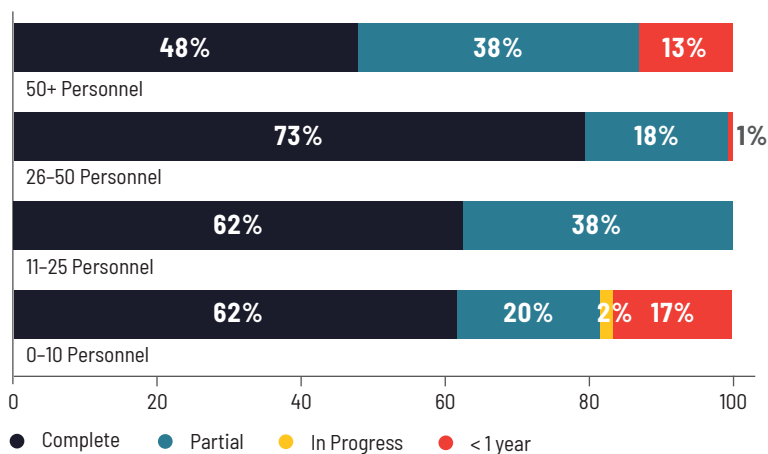
## Completion of New vs Carried Forward Commitments



## Commitment Completion by Organization Size (2019)



## Commitment Completion by Organization Size (2020)



among the group of carried-over commitments are the only two commitments that Gender Champions and Focal Points found too difficult to fully or partially implement during 2020 and remain entirely in progress. These figures show the value of incremental progress in moving toward an ambitious goal. Adaptation of lessons learned allows commitments to be more specifically tailored to the realities and challenges of an organization, making progress more likely and impactful. Further, allowing

commitments to be carried over to a new calendar year maintains accountability but does not disincentivize slower progress whereas dictating a timeline runs the risk of turning commitment implementation into an exercise in box checking.

## Bureaucracy vs Stability: Organization Size

The GCNP network includes organizations ranging in size from two personnel to 10,000; while commitments are unique and flexible, an organization's size and structure almost certainly impact how commitments are implemented. Since 2019, the GCNP network has grown to encompass a number of mid-size organizations, typically consisting of 26–50 personnel, for which more granular categories were developed to capture nuanced data. To facilitate comparison of data across years, 2019 data on organization size has been consolidated into two categories (0–10 personnel, 11–25+ personnel) matching those used in GCNP's 2020 data collection questionnaire.

In GCNP's 2019 Impact Report, data showed that smaller organizations saw more success in implementing commitments, possibly due to simpler bureaucratic structures, more nimble governance, and fewer internal stakeholders. In 2020, however, this trend was reversed, with mid- to large-sized organizations seeing more success in implementing commitments. It's likely that these organizations reaped the benefits of greater stability during a global pandemic, as they are likely to have a larger proportion of support staff and generally maintain a larger operating budget. Organizations in the smallest size bracket were the only group who identified commitments that they were unable to implement even partially—highlighting the immense external pressures of the pandemic on these organizations. As the GCNP network continues to grow to encompass organizations of different sizes and structures and the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic wane, this currently uncertain trend will bear watching.

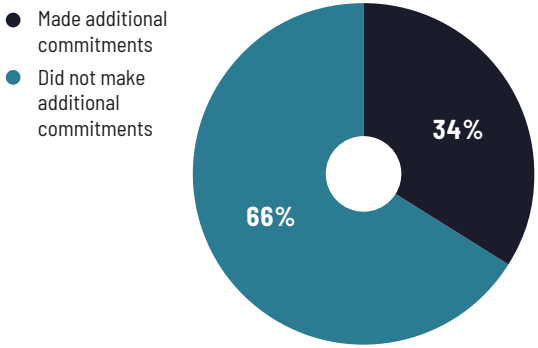


# THE EXTRA MILE: ADDITIONAL COMMITMENTS

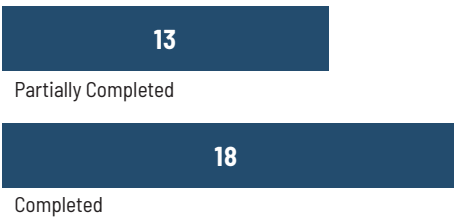
Although each Gender Champion is required to make three SMARTIE commitments, some choose to make additional commitments based on their organization’s needs and priorities. More than one-third of organizations who submitted data for inclusion in this report chose to make additional commitments in 2020. For purposes of comparison on an equal basis, additional commitments are separated out from the set of 159 core commitments that span all of the 53 organizations included in this report.

Every additional commitment made by a Gender Champion saw at least some progress toward successful implementation; 18 (58 percent) were completely implemented while the remaining 13 (42 percent) were partially implemented. Additional commitments represent added effort on the part of Gender Champions and may speak to particular priorities of an organization or its leadership. As Gender Champions and Focal Points completely implement their initial commitments, the process of making new commitments is likely to become more involved and a reduction in the number of additional commitments may follow. Completely implementing commitments reaps rewards in terms of lessons learned and often provides deeper insight into structural challenges that prevent further progress. Ensuing commitments become more detailed and deeper reaching, decreasing the call for additional commitments. This should not be seen as a sign of diminished effort or enthusiasm, but rather of increasing efficiency in the process of commitment setting and reporting.

## Organizations Making Additional Commitments



## Completion of Additional Commitments



“This year, we co-created the pledges with a number of colleagues and made a clear plan about who will be involved in implementing them and how. I hope that this will help with implementation, as before it felt like everything fell on the shoulders of the focal point.”

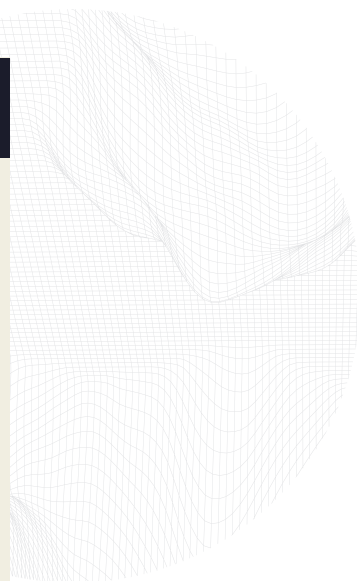
—FOCAL POINT FOR A NEW YORK-BASED PHILANTHROPY

## What's Smarter Than SMART?

GCNP is driven by a desire to learn and a spirit of constant improvement; the initiative's internal structure and practices reflect this ethos. Drawing on the past year of experience with development and tracking of Gender Champions' commitments, GCNP has arrived at several evolutions in practice that make for development of more impactful targets.

In early 2020, a member of GCNP's network of Focal Points suggested a thoughtful addition to the initiative's flexible accountability framework, which asked Gender Champions to make commitments using the SMART (Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Relevant, Timely) framework. Referencing emergent best practices found among resources offered by The Management Center, a Washington-based organization that trains leaders in effective management practices for social change, that aligned with GCNP's aims, the accountability framework was updated to SMARTIE (Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Relevant, Timely, Inclusive, Equitable). This iterative update is intended to build considerations of inclusiveness and equity into Gender Champions' development of commitments. By working through the SMARTIE framework, Gender Champions naturally engage in a discussion of why and how their commitments will advance equity and inclusiveness and are pushed to consider what metrics indicate success in doing so.

Toward developing stronger, better tracked commitments, Gender Champions also are encouraged to build a greater degree of specificity into their goals, setting clear targets and success conditions. More robust and thoughtful development of commitments enables more detailed tracking that can illuminate where challenges have been unearthed in the process of implementing a commitment. As an additional best practice, Gender Champions are now asked to develop or launch their commitments in collaboration with their entire organization, when possible, including colleagues in the process to create additional points of accountability and reinforcement.



# 2021 AND BEYOND

The past year has challenged gender equity in the nuclear policy community in ways that no one could have anticipated; what follows likely will be a slow climb back to some of our most recent markers of progress. It is heartening, however, that a large and growing number of leaders are committed to the cause of advancing gender equity and are willing to make doing so a priority.

In an incredibly challenging time, GCNP's network has been a source of warmth, strength, and support for its members. New allies have become trusted friends, bridging the distance over Zoom calls and email, exchanging ideas and guidance and listening in solidarity. Trying times have shown that within the nuclear policy community there is a wealth of strength, intelligence, creativity, and empathy waiting to be elevated and amplified. As it again becomes possible, the greatest opportunities for catalyzing change and reinvigorating the community's drive for constant improvement will involve bringing people together.

GCNP's first year was marked by tremendous external growth; in its second year, the initiative's growth largely has been internal. Systems and ideas have been tested, improved, and tested again with results to show; the journey has not been one of unbroken or perfect progress, but each stumble or roadblock is an opportunity to improve. Success will mean embracing unprecedented, catalytic events as they come, committing to never stop learning, and always seeking to do better.

## Spreading Change

Following the inauguration of President Joe Biden in January 2021, a number of Gender Champions and Focal Points departed their posts in civil society organizations, bound for new roles as political appointees and civil servants. Although their presence will be missed within the GCNP network, friends, allies, and colleagues rest assured in the knowledge that they carry their values and priorities with them into federal service. Though the number of organizations in the nuclear policy community led by Gender Champions has grown dramatically over the past two years, they represent the tip of the iceberg. The circulation of Gender Champions and Focal Points to new professional communities propagates the message that gender equity is a critical priority beyond the reach of this network. Once an ally, always an ally.

"GCNP has modeled the kind of tone that makes this work rewarding and approachable. When we blend an expectation of accountability and data with a culture that is welcoming and mutually supportive, it encourages staff and activists to take agency and see themselves as agents of change."

— GENDER CHAMPION FOR A  
WASHINGTON, D.C.-BASED ADVOCACY GROUP

# GENDER CHAMPIONS

## LIST INCLUDES GENDER CHAMPIONS ACTIVE BETWEEN APRIL 2020 AND APRIL 2021

### **Jamal Abdi**

National Iranian American Council

### **Andrew Albertson**

Foreign Policy for America

### **Dr. Todd Allen**

Fastest Path to Zero Initiative  
Nuclear Engineering & Radiological Sciences at  
Michigan

### **Lauren Bean Buitta**

Girl Security

### **Dr. Emma Belcher**

Ploughshares Fund

### **Jenna Ben-Yehuda**

Truman Center, Truman Project  
Women's Foreign Policy Network

### **Sebastian Brixey-Williams**

BASIC

### **Rachel Bronson**

Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists

### **Matthew Bunn**

Managing the Atom

### **Amb. William J. Burns**

Carnegie Endowment for International Peace

### **Jeff Carter**

Physicians for Social Responsibility

### **Marissa Conway**

Centre for Feminist Foreign Policy

### **Jonathan Cowan**

Third Way

### **Michael Dignam**

CRDF Global

### **Rodney C. Ewing**

Center for International Security and Cooperation

### **Lynn Fahselt**

ReThink Media

### **Maggie Feldman-Piltch**

Unicorn Strategies

### **Brian Finlay**

The Stimson Center

### **Ellen Friedman**

Compton Foundation

### **Nancy Gallagher**

Center for International and Security Studies at  
Maryland

### **Seth Grae**

Lightbridge Corporation

### **Dr. Vartan Gregorian\***

Carnegie Corporation of New York

### **Erika Gregory**

N Square

### **Dr. John Hamre**

Center for Strategic and International Studies

### **Dr. Karin von Hippel**

RUSI

### **Laicie Heeley**

Inkstick Media

### **Stephen B. Heintz**

Rockefeller Brothers Fund

### **Dr. Roger Howsley**

Word Institute for Nuclear Security

### **Kirthi Jayakumar**

Gender Security Project

### **Amb. Bonnie Jenkins**

Women of Color Advancing Peace and Security

### **Derek Johnson**

Global Zero

### **Dr. Chantal de Jonge Oudraat**

Women in International Security

### **Al Jubitz**

Jubitz Foundation

### **Colin H. Kahl**

Center for International Security and Cooperation

### **Jhansi Kandasamy**

U.S. Women in Nuclear

### **Frederick Kempe**

The Atlantic Council

### **Dr. Joanna Kidd**

Ridgeway Information

### **Daryl Kimball**

Arms Control Association

### **Maria Korsnick**

Nuclear Energy Institute

### **Valerie Lincy**

Wisconsin Project

### **Kristina Lunz**

Center for Feminist Foreign Policy

### **Thom Mason**

Los Alamos National Laboratory

### **Marion Messmer**

BASIC

### **Stephen Miles**

Win Without War

### **Dr. Ernest Moniz**

Nuclear Threat Initiative

### **Dr. Matthew Moran**

King's College London

### **Dr. Ali Nouri**

Federation of American Scientists

### **John Palfrey**

John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation

\* Dr. Gregorian, a dedicated champion for gender equity, passed away on April 15, 2021.

**Nancy Parrish**

Women's Action for New Directions

**Christine Parthemore**

Council on Strategic Risks

**Susan Pepper**

Institute of Nuclear Materials Management

**Craig Piercy**

American Nuclear Society

**Keith Porter**

The Stanley Center for Peace and Security

**Dr. William Potter**

James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies

**Diane Randall**

Friends Committee on National Legislation

**Kathleen Rest**

Union of Concerned Scientists

**Laura Rockwood**

Open Nuclear Network

**Lindsay Rodman**

Leadership Council for Women in National Security

**Joan Rohlfing**

Nuclear Threat Initiative

**Nickolas Roth**

International Nuclear Security Forum

**Amber von Ruden**

North American Young Generation in Nuclear

**Elena Sokova**

Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

**Sarah Streyder**

Secure Families Initiative

**Cecili Thompson Williams**

Beyond the Bomb

**Sir Adam Thomson**

European Leadership Network

**John Tierney**

Center for Arms Control and Non-Proliferation

**Alexandra Toma**

Peace and Security Funders Group

**Lovely Umayam**

Bombshelltoe

**Dr. John Wagner**

Idaho National Laboratory

**Ben Watts**

Tetra Tech

**Penny Willgerodt**

The Prospect Hill Foundation



Meeting of Gender Champions, September 2021

## BECOME A GENDER CHAMPION

Are you the head of an organization or institution involved in any aspect of nuclear policy? Do you know someone who is? Do you wish your boss would do more to promote gender equity in your nuclear policy organization? You, or they, can become a Gender Champion in Nuclear Policy! Each Champion is expected to uphold the Panel Parity Pledge, to empower a Focal Point to contribute to drafting and implementation of three SMARTIE commitments, and to uphold the values of Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy. Gender Champions are featured on the Gender Champions in Nuclear Policy website. For more information about becoming a Gender Champion, visit the GCNP website or contact us:

[www.gcnpolicy.org](http://www.gcnpolicy.org)  
[@gcnpolicy](https://twitter.com/gcnpolicy)  
[gcnpolicy@gmail.com](mailto:gcnpolicy@gmail.com)



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**PLOUGHSHARES FUND**

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