

Women in Technology @CERN

With a focus on
Mentoring Program

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WIT HISTORY

▶ WIT founded in 2016 by two members of the CERN IT Department

▶ Women Networks in Industry and Academia already very popular by then, but nothing similar existed at CERN yet

▶ Informal grass roots community relying on voluntary work and welcoming all genders and professional fields

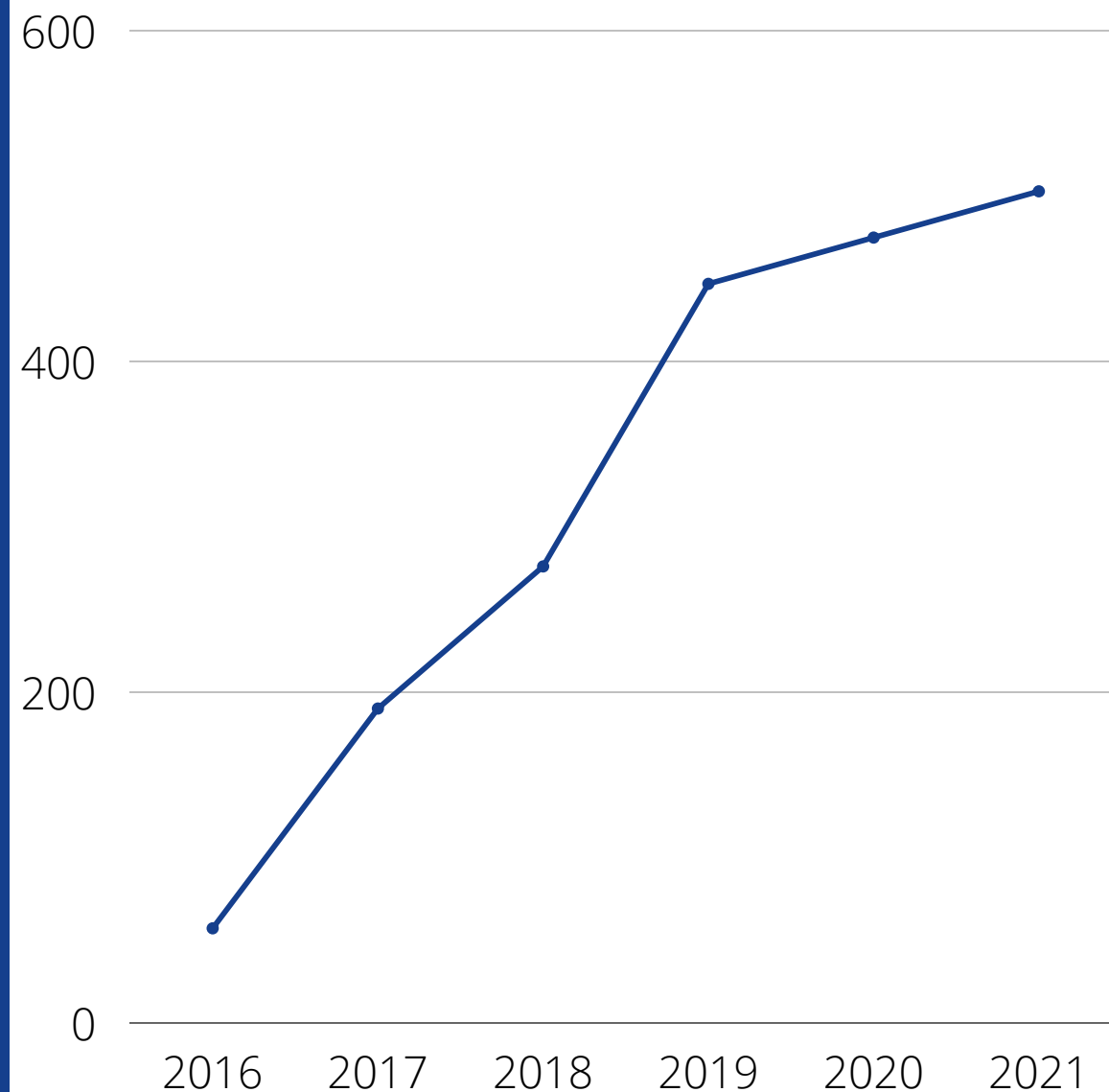
Potential of Women Networks [1]

- ▶ Create community
- ▶ Provide a place to connect
- ▶ Help build confidence
- ▶ Inspire
- ▶ Help reducing the gender gap

WIT in numbers

Mailing list

~500 members



Women in Technology at CERN

A grass roots community to promote gender equality and female participation in technology
Research Services · Geneva · 608 followers

✓ Following

Visit website

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Overview

The idea for a CERN Women in Technology group began in early 2016, when several new members of department realized that the Women in Technology networks from which they had benefited at university did not exist at CERN, or even in the Geneva area.

After speaking with like-minded colleagues, they decided to found a group at CERN where colleague exchange ideas on common topics and share career advice and experiences. Thus the "Women in Technology at CERN" grass-roots community came on the scene, to complement the other professional community within the diverse CERN environment.

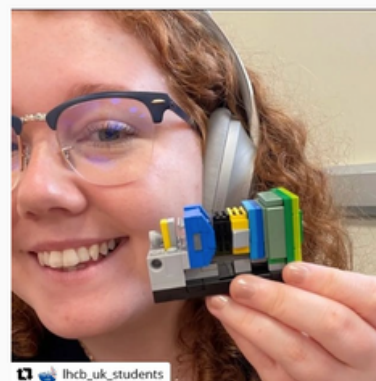
Mattermost channel (community chat)

250 members

Social media

Instagram - 1026 followers

Linkedin - 608 followers



STRUCTURE

Reorganisation in
November 2021



Talks and
Lectures

Outreach

Mentoring

**WIT
STEERING
COMITTEE**

Communications

Web & Social
Media

Networking

WIT Steering Comittee - 9 members
All WIT volunteers - 24 members

MENTORING

"A relationship in which a more experienced or more knowledgeable person helps to guide a less experienced or less knowledgeable person via advice, opinions, strategies and policies focused on career or life advancement." [2]

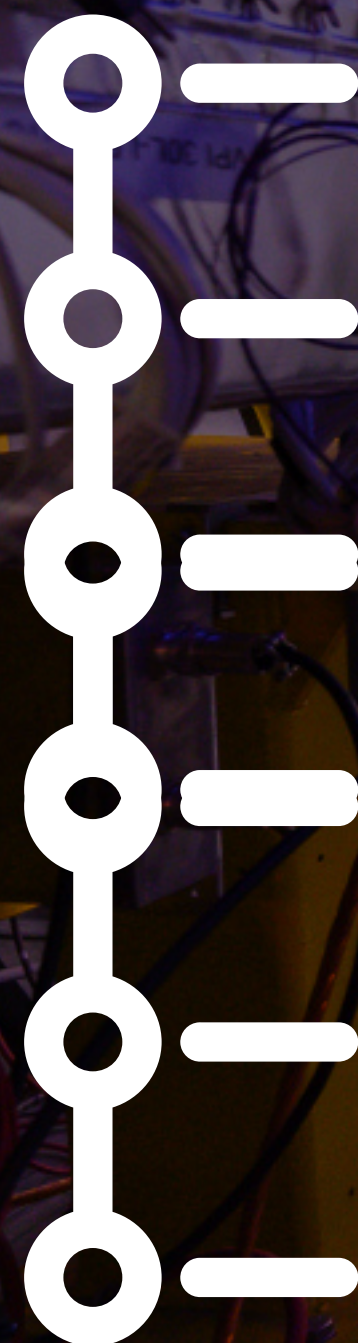
- Once per year, May - December
- Open to all CERN members of personnel
- 1-on-1 mentoring model (face to face & remote)
- Pool of ~50 mentors
- Matching by the mentoring committee

Mentor-mentee pairs

Year	Mentor-mentee pairs
2018	11
2019	12
2020	15 (4 alumni)
2021	20 (11 alumni)
2022	32 (6 alumni)
TOTAL	90

OVERVIEW

Timeline



Applications

March

Matching

April

Kick-Off

May

Program

May - December

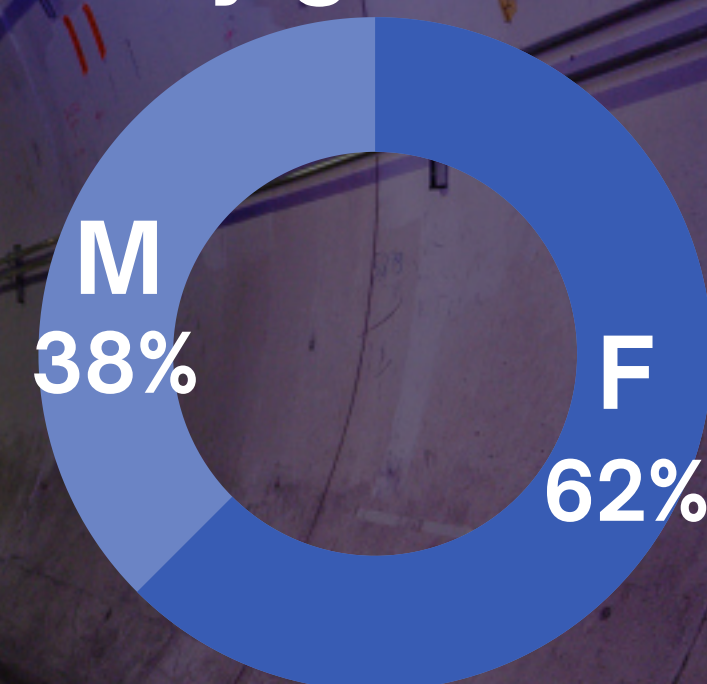
Check-in

June & October

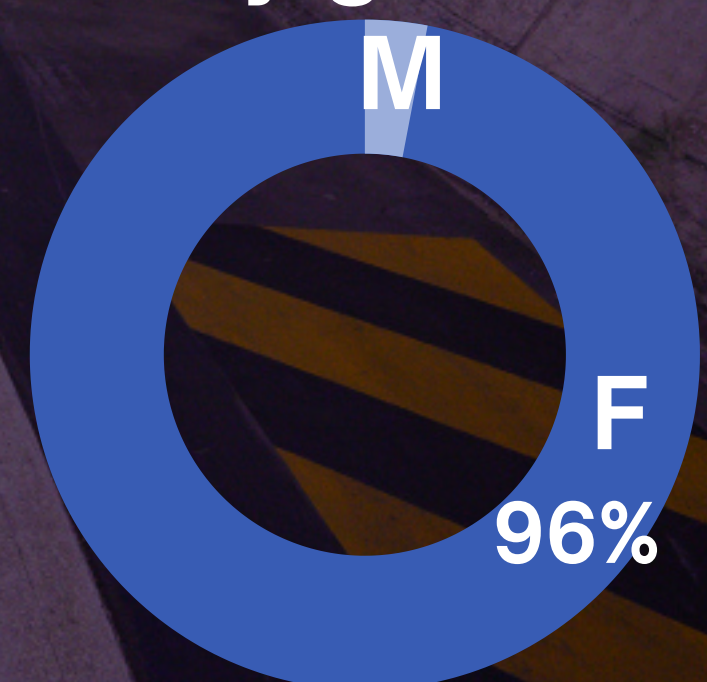
Feedback

January

Mentors by gender (2022)

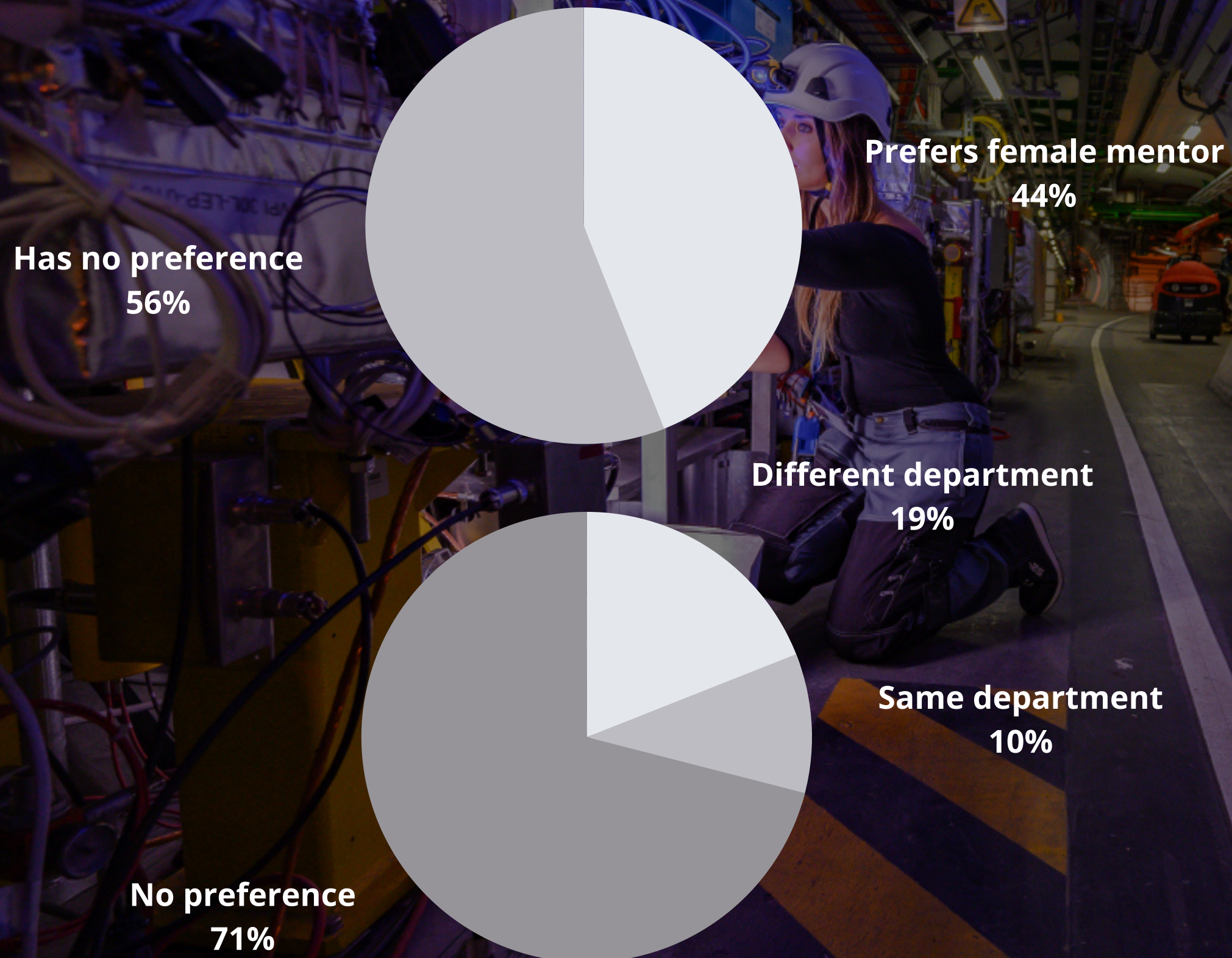


Mentees by gender (2022)



Mentees' perspective

2022



Focus areas

- Information on scientific or **technical career pathways**
- Advice and information on **career evolution, resume writing**
- Building **self-confidence**
- **Developing soft skills** (presenting, networking, public speaking...)
- Improve **participation in meetings** or discussions
- Concrete advice on **leadership skills**

BUILDING BLOCKS

Ingredients to start

- Volunteers/Coordinators to run the program
- A group of experienced employees (mentors)
- Knowledge-sharing
- Confidentiality
- Managing expectations

SCALING UP

Check-in &
communication
space

Collaboration with the
Diversity and Learning &
Development Offices—
training for participants

Collaboration with
CERN Alumni

Kick off training by
different
organizations

Trainings offered by
mentors

TAKE AWAYS [3]

MENTEES

Reflection on career and goals

"I found my mentoring experience very enriching. I was unsure what career path to choose after my PhD. It is much more clear now!"

Support and encouragement

"Having access to someone with experience outside of CERN was very valuable as the overall topics evolved around career choices, managing people and "real world" challenges."

Increased self-confidence and assertiveness

"The last half a year taught me so much, gave me a lot of perspective and helped me improve in many personal and professional areas."

MENTORS

Personal fulfilment

"From a mentor perspective, I'm glad I could work with my mentee, we have both learned a lot from this exercise. It was really rewarding to see my mentee progress as well as to share difficult moments."

Reflecting on own skills and career

"I feel I learnt a lot from my mentee and our mixed mentoring/coaching approach is very useful! "

Exposure to new perspectives

"Great experience! It was fulfilling to be able to mentor young generations of female scientists and understand their goals and wish."

THANK YOU

Start small and
scale up
gradually



Communicate
and listen to
your
community



Training,
guidelines,
matching



Collaborate
inside and
outside the
Organization



USEFUL LINKS

Web page: www.cern.ch/wit

Subscribe to our mailing list: wit-matters@cern.ch

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/wit.at.cern/>

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/wit-cern/>

Mattermost: <https://mattermost.web.cern.ch/wit/channels/town-square>

Agenda: <https://indico.cern.ch/category/8115/>

Contact us: contact-wit@cern.ch

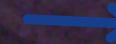
Proceeding - EPS2021 conference (PoS(EPS-HEP2021)897):

<https://pos.sissa.it/398/897/pdf>

REFERENCES

- [1] Do Women's Networking Events Move the Needle on Equality?
https://hbr.org/2018/02/do-womens-networking-events-move-the-needle-on-equality_
- [2] HR Research Institute: The State of Coaching and Mentoring 2021
https://www.hr.com/en/resources/free_research_white_papers/the-state-of-coaching-and-mentoring-2021-research-_ko15l6uz.html?
- [3] Equality Challenge Unit: Mentoring: progressing women's careers in higher education
- [4] Informal Mentoring as an Organisational Resource:
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S002463010200064X>

BACK-UP SLIDES



MOST COMMON PITFALLS

- Lack of commitment
- Lack of concrete mentoring objective
- Mentor ≠ job offer
- Poor communication
- Being critical instead of constructive

(POTENTIAL) BENEFITS FOR THE ORGANIZATION [3][4]

- Higher career satisfaction
- More collegiality, greater participation
- Organisational learning
- Increased employee productivity, motivation, retention and commitment
- Enhanced opportunities for networking

CRITERIA TO APPLY AS A MENTOR



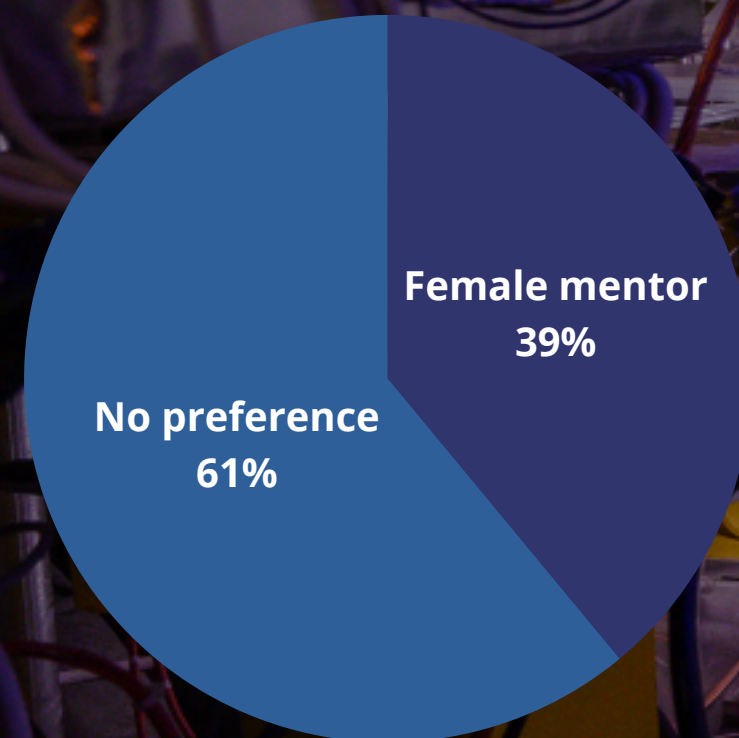
- Senior woman/man @CERN with more than 10 years of technical and management experience
- Eager to share experiences, critical knowledge and explain how the organization works
- Leader by heart willing to provide friendly feedback, offer challenging ideas and trigger self-awareness
- Good active listening skills and ability to hold difficult conversations
- Willing to spare ~20- 30 hours between May and December to support a mentee

More numbers

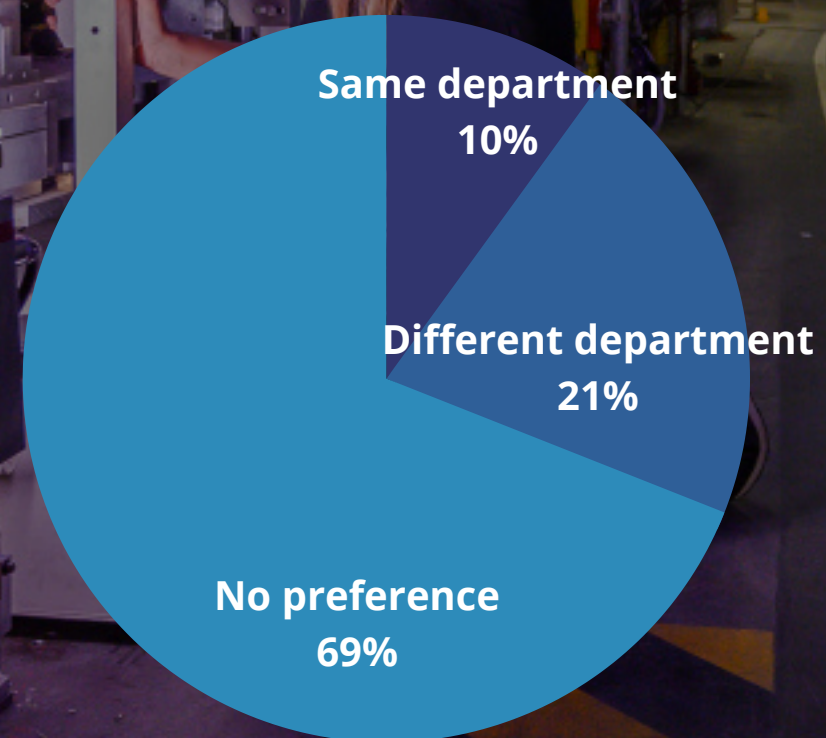
Cumulative for 2020 - 2022



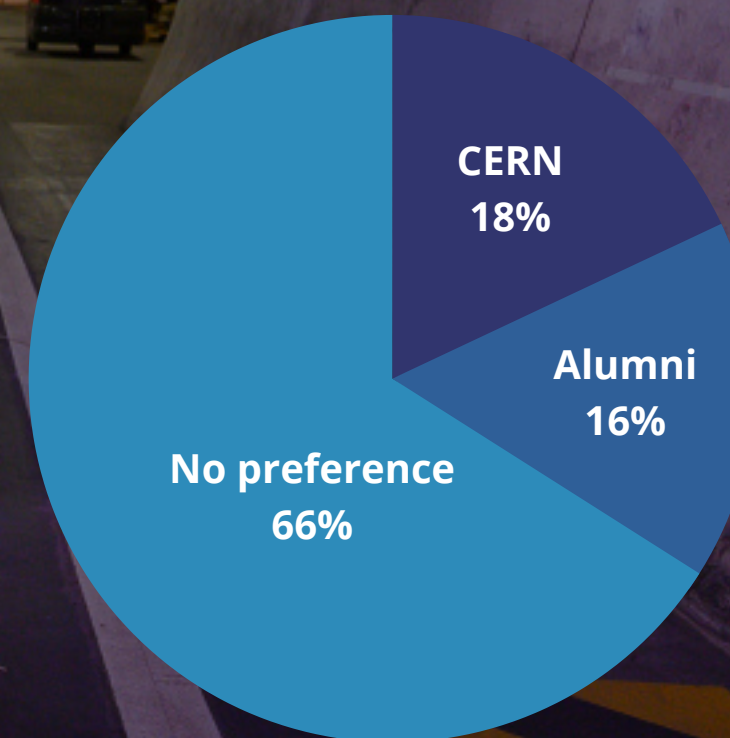
Mentor gender preference



Mentor department preference



CERN vs Alumni mentor preference



Mentees background

