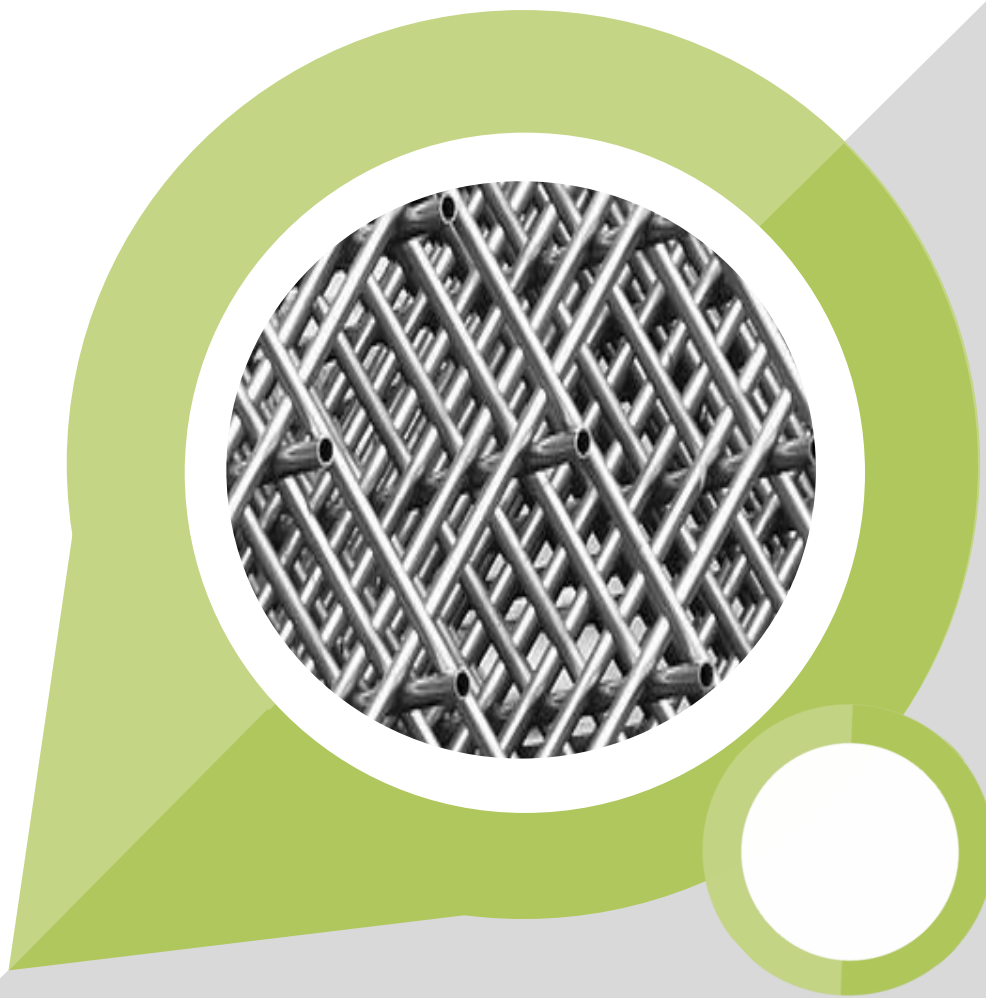


# Lightme



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant Agreement No. 826312

## Questionnaire / Females in STEM<sup>1</sup> professions

**Name:** Elenor Schwarz

**Profession:** Metallurgist

**Entity (Name & type/ industry, Uni, etc.):** ÖGI, Montanuniversität Leoben

**Position in the Entity:** student employee ÖGI, student at Montanuniversität Leoben

**Photo (if available):**



*By completing this questionnaire, I agree that these data will be published in the official website of the project (<https://www.lightme-oie.eu/en/static/home>).*

### A/ Personal Experience

A-Q1: What did you study to get to your chosen career?

I am currently studying metallurgy at the University of Leoben, Austria. My focus is on foundry and metal forming technology.

A-Q2: Who has served as an 'influencer' in your path to a STEM focused education and/or career?

I do not want to praise a single person here. Basically, my parents and some teachers in my early school career encouraged me to try out everything that interested me. This unbiased encouragement was an important part of my school career.

A-Q3: Can you see any roadblocks or challenges which might be influenced by your gender, when applying for a job?

In my last, and also in my previous employment, no barriers were put in my way, based on my gender. However, the question shows me that this is not self-evident, and unfortunately, we women still live in a society in which the choice for a STEM education is associated with certain prejudices.

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<sup>1</sup> STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics

A-Q4: What is your favourite thing about your current job and what do you find the most challenging?

I love to put my learned knowledge into practice, although the parallel education at the university requires a certain amount of time management from me.

A-Q5: How have your beliefs, motivations and aspirations changed over time? When did a career in STEM become a priority or choice

I decided to follow a STEM career out of interest at a very early age, only realizing in later years the extremely important impact it has on our society, economy, and environment.

## B/ Women in STEM Impact

B-Q1: Can you recall any times when you questioned your involvement in STEM because of your gender?

No. Even though I have - unfortunately - had negative experiences because of my gender, I have never questioned my decision because of that.

B-Q2: What are some of the personal experiences - or compelling arguments - that have influenced your thinking around gender and STEM, and have motivated you to get involved in being an advocate for change?

When I was first asked what I could do as a woman with a technical education, I decided for the first time, even if unknowingly, to advocate for change.

B-Q3: How might we involve more males in gender inequality discussions?

In my environment, I have made the experience that most men are very open-minded when you talk about the existing inequalities.

C/ Advice to the younger you and women considering a career in STEM

C - Q1: Which achievement do you look at and think "I'd love to go back in time and tell younger me that this was possible"?

Good question. I think each of us would have liked to know some things earlier. My younger self would certainly have been more confident in school, knowing how much I've already achieved today.

C - Q2: What advice would you give to women who are 1) Curious about STEM, 2) Questioning their STEM related studies, 3) Questioning their STEM related career?

If you are curious about STEM, try it, do it, learn about it! Whether at an information event specifically for women, or at general information programs. There are so many great educational opportunities out there, take your time, and get informed!

If you are already in education or working, ask yourself why you have doubts. Is it because of your chosen field of study, or because of your environment? Try to talk to a mentor about your thoughts.

C - Q3: How might we help girls have more confidence in their STEM abilities?

It is important not only to offer them equal opportunities and motivate them from the start, but also to encourage and challenge them without making them feel it is unusual.

C - Q4: How might we can encourage more industries to consider the long-term implications of gender messaging?

Gender messaging leads to a better working environment for all and enables more young people with potential to choose the education they are really passionate about. Thus, in the long run, industries have a larger pool of qualified, motivated employees.

Do you have a favourite quote? What is it and who is it from?

Don't Panic (Douglas Adams)