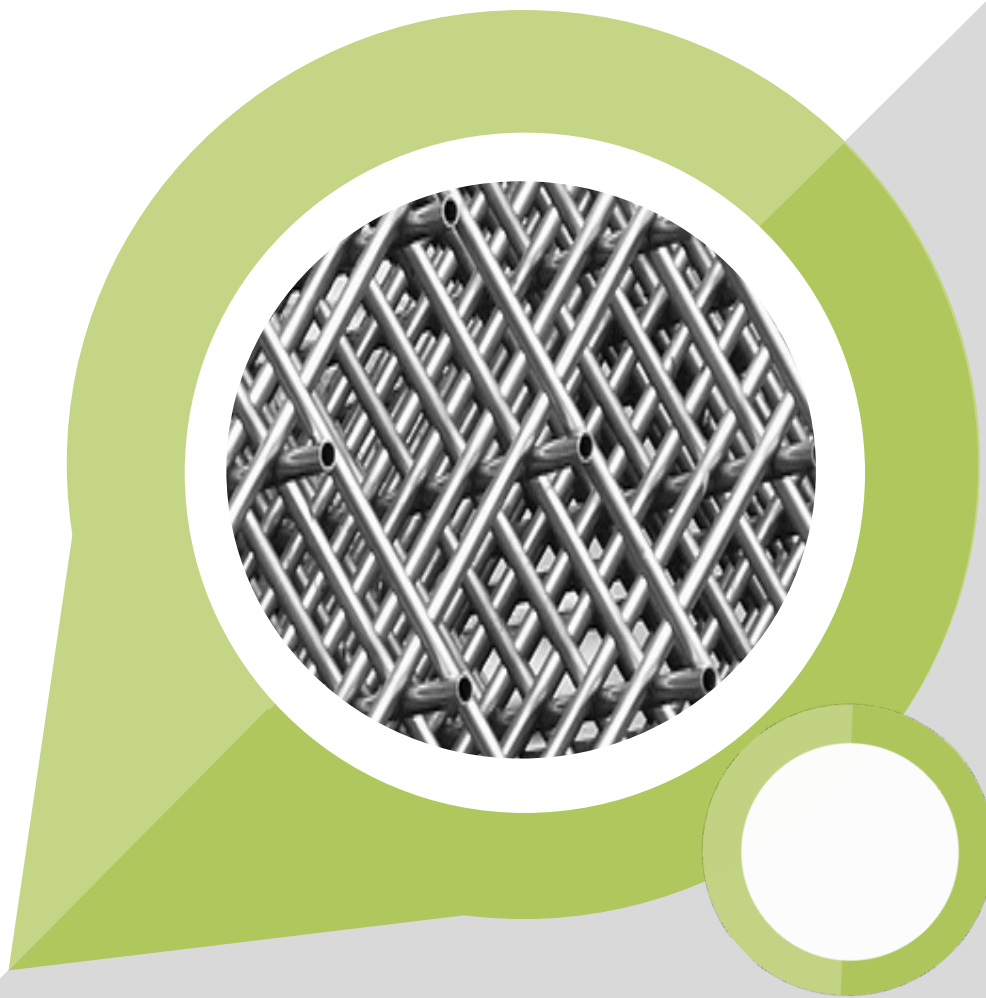


# Lightme



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:** Peny Eleni

**Profession:** Chemical Engineer, PhD

**Entity (Name & type/ industry, Uni, etc.):** PoliMi

**Position in the Entity:** Project Manager

**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?

Chemical Engineering (Bachelor and Master Degree), PhD in Process, Analysis and Design on polymers and Postdoc in encapsulation of bioactive compounds for the development of novel cosmeceutical products.

A-Q2: Who has served as an 'influencer' in your path to a STEM focused education and/or career?  
From a very beginning, as a student, I have a preference in Mathematics, and later on in Physics and Chemistry. My mother always supports and encourages this inclination of mine, and then in high school I was lucky to meet inspired teachers in these fields that helped me explore more and excel this magic field of science.

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

Usually I don't, however, I haven't applied yet for a job that traditionally considered as "man" work, for example in "heavy industry".

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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?

My favourite thing is that I can be related with science from a different point of view. It is always challenging for me to work in research projects not having a position in a laboratory.

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

This was a priority and choice from the first years in school and never changed.

## B/ Women in STEM Impact

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

No, I have noticed in the past though others (men & women) to questioning my involvement in STEM due to my gender.

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?

For me this was never a matter of gender. I always believe that if you enjoy been involved in this field, you have to educate yourself, be as good as possible - as in every profession, ideally- and follow it. It was a matter of surprising though, the fact that in university there was a common sense that mans could be succeeded better as engineers than women. I don't believe that I have made something to change this opinion, as I was never believe it, however, I am happy if anyone was been motivated from my steps.

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

From my point of view, the crucial matter is to involve more women in this discussion.

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"?

I am lucky enough because always in my career I believe that everything is possible as long as you want it and work hard for it.

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?

I would advise them to think independently from their gender, and if STEM is their field of interest, study a lot, think a lot, try a lot and go for it!

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

Just have the same attitude for all, girls and boys.

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

I believe that nowadays, most of the industries in civilized world, occupying a good number of women. Thus, I would advise them to keep selecting their employees having as criteria their ability to execute successfully the assigned job.

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

If we knew what it was we were doing, It would not be called research, would it?

ALBERT EINSTEIN