

# AWIS

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

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**AWIS Report Finds STEM Industry Lacking Diversity and Funding for Women**

*Report Defines Actionable Steps for Businesses, Entrepreneurs, Investors, and Entrepreneurship Support Programs*

**Washington, DC - April 25, 2018** – Today the [Association for Women in Science \(AWIS\)](#) will release its groundbreaking report, [Revolutionizing the STEM Entrepreneurship Ecosystem](#), outlining systemic entrepreneurship barriers to opportunity and access for women in STEM. In addition, the report provides actionable recommendations for businesses, investors, and entrepreneurship support programs to expand funding opportunities, increase diversity and cultivate gender equity in STEM. AWIS is a leading global organization that advocates for women in STEM.

“Women STEM entrepreneurs face a whole host of systemic inclusion challenges. Over the last four years, more than 200 companies made their initial public offerings, yet fewer than 20 were led by women CEOs and only four of whom were led by women of color,” said Janet Bandows Koster, Executive Director and CEO of the Association of Women in Science. “Working with entrepreneurs and investors across the country, AWIS is able to understand why conventional approaches are failing and identify tangible ways to address these issues effectively. Every investor, business leader, accelerator director, and woman in STEM should read this report.”

Among other solutions, the new AWIS report outlines the following answers to systemic entrepreneurship barriers faced by women in all disciplines of STEM, especially women of color:

- Funders, entrepreneurs, and entrepreneurship support program leaders should seek connections to organizations and individuals with a demonstrated track record of engagement with diverse founders;
- Incubators and accelerators should remove “weed out” philosophy and keep entrepreneurs engaged through holistic support; and,
- Investors should start collecting demographic data on founders and their leadership teams and boards and share it openly.

The research draws on findings from the AWIS STEM to Market (S2M) two-part program that galvanizes inclusive and productive STEM entrepreneurial ecosystems. STEM to Market is funded by the Ewing Marion Kauffman Foundation. The report will be presented today at the AWIS [Summit on Innovation and Inclusion: Women at the Forefront of STEM](#) in San Francisco with nearly 200 of the most influential STEM leaders in attendance including Bahija Jallal, PhD, President, MedImmune and Executive Vice President, AstraZeneca; President, AWIS National Governing Board; Sue Desmond-Hellmann, MD, MPH, CEO, Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; Tony Prophet, MBA, Chief Equality Officer, Salesforce; Melinda Richter, MBA, Global Head of Johnson & Johnson Innovation, JLABS; and Rachel Haurwitz, PhD, President and CEO, Caribou Biosciences.

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*The Association for Women in Science (AWIS) is a global network with 80 grassroots chapters and affiliates connecting more than 100,000 professionals in STEM with members, allies and supporters worldwide. Founded in 1971, AWIS has been the leading advocate for women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics to achieve business growth, social change, and innovation. We are dedicated to driving excellence in STEM by achieving equity and full participation of women in all disciplines and across all employment sectors. To learn more, visit [www.awis.org](http://www.awis.org) and @awisnational.*