

Foreword

Peter Aufreiter

Director General and Scientific Management

Martina Griesser-Stermscheg

Head of the Research Institute

Gender-conscious action, in particular gender-conscious research, mediation and exhibition practice, has been a mainstay of the mission statement of the Technisches Museum Wien mit Österreichischer Mediathek (TMW) since 2019.¹ As a stated aim, it is taken into account by all its scientific and operational departments. It is founded on the conviction that gender and its diversity are relevant to all and sundry. The TMW takes its socio-political remit seriously and makes full use of the opportunities at its disposal as a popular extracurricular place of learning for Vienna and Austria as a whole: specifically, that museums are capable of reinforcing but also of altering traditional views, including those on gender.

Over the past few years, significant exhibitions and educational activities have been put together in the spirit of gender-conscious action involving the collaboration of all TMW departments. Among them, to name but a few: a collection installation entitled *Who owns PINK?*², which discussed and deconstructed the feminine connotations of this particular colour. Also, various projects funded by the Federal Ministry for Climate Action, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) and the Federal Chancellery (BKA), such as the nextgen*LAB³ on the gender-sensitive mediation of digital technologies in the TMW's own in-house Makerspace; and, most recently, the mediation programme on offer exclusively to schoolgirls in conjunction with the anniversary

show and online exhibition *Women at Work*⁴ marking the 150th anniversary of the Women's Pavilion at the Vienna World Exposition of 1873. The cross-departmental *Gender Focus* working group is a key driver of this process and acts as a platform for regular exchanges of information, lively discussions and reflections on professional experiences in the everyday workings of a museum. The working group's activities are documented by the in-house research institute.⁵

2019 saw the publication, for the first time, of a theme-based issue on 'Gender & Technology', the 81st volume in the TMW's academic periodical series, *Blätter für Technikgeschichte* [History of Technology Booklets].⁶ In light of the ever increasing number of gender-conscious initiatives at the TMW and the welcome momentum generated as a result, it is now time for a separate, stand-alone academic journal aimed at reaching the widest possible readership in open-access format while providing the queer community with another institutional body to address its concerns. The first issue of *insightOut. Journal on Gender and Sexuality in STEM Collections and Cultures* is available now, in September 2023. The new journal is based (at least for the time being) on the *Vienna Workshops on Gender and Sexuality in STEM Collections*, which have been held since 2020, and the resulting high-calibre contributions from international gender experts, who meet at the TMW each year to exchange views on and discuss different topics.

We are much indebted to Sophie Gerber for setting up and steering the *Gender Focus* working group over many years, for her scientific leadership and organisation of the first three *Vienna Workshops on Gender and Sexuality in STEM Collections* (*Outer*

¹ See https://www.technischesmuseum.at/museum/aufgabe_des_museums (27.7.2023).

² See https://www.technischesmuseum.at/presse/wem_gehoert_pink (27.7.2023).

³ See https://www.technischesmuseum.at/tmw-zine/forschungsprojekt_nextgenlab (27.7.2023).

⁴ See https://www.technischesmuseum.at/ausstellung/women_at_work (27.7.2023).

⁵ See https://www.technischesmuseum.at/museum/forschungsinstitut/fokus_gender (27.7.2023).

⁶ See https://www.technischesmuseum.at/produkt/gender_technik (27.7.2023).

Edge: Queer[y]ing STEM Collections, 2020, together with Eleanor S. Armstrong, *Feminist and Queer Perspectives on Food*, 2022, together with Sophie Kühnlenz, *Diverse Infrastructures? Gender, Queer and the Foundations of Society*, 2023)⁷ and for the concept and editorial stewardship of the new Open Access journal *insightOut*. We would also like to thank Ursula Emesz for the layout and Viktoria Calvo-Tomek for the easy accessibility via the TMW online portal.



⁷ https://www.technischesmuseum.at/besuchen/kalender/vienna_workshop_on_stem_museums_gender_and_sexuality (27.7.2023).