



## FIZnews

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## Women @ FIZ: a series of interviews by FIZ Karlsruhe

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*Karlsruhe March 8 2025* — March 8 is International Women's Day. The day before, Equal Pay Day reminds us that women still lag behind their male colleagues in terms of pay. So it's no wonder that the month of March at FIZ Karlsruhe is all about women in science and science support. With the interview series “Women @ FIZ”, we want to make the various perspectives, experiences and career paths of women at our institute visible. The series highlights personal careers, challenges and successes and provides an insight into the important role that women play in research and in the scientific infrastructure.

Even though a lot has happened in terms of equal rights in the last hundred years, the statistics for the German scientific landscape are still sobering. Women are still severely underrepresented in leading positions in science. According to the Federal Statistical Office, the proportion of women in research and development in Germany in 2021 was just 29.4% - one of the lowest figures in the European Union. The situation in management positions is even more drastic: The proportion of female professors at German universities is currently only 28% (source: Federal Statistical Office).

These figures clearly show that it is still necessary to strengthen female role models in science and create visibility for their achievements. With “Women @ FIZ”, we are doing just that: giving women in science and science support a platform to tell their stories, share their perspectives and thus contribute to equal opportunities and diversity in science.

Our interview series kicks off with Lea Sophie Singson, who works as a research assistant in the “Intellectual Property Rights” department at FIZ Karlsruhe. In the

interview, she emphasizes that the gender distribution in law is balanced at the beginning of the course. However, the further up the career ladder you look, whether in terms of professorships or partnerships in law firms, the lower the proportion of women becomes. Lea Sophie Singson attributes this on the one hand to the conditions in these professional fields, which are very problematic in terms of starting a family and private life; there is also a lack of female role models: “The legal world is still very conservative and quite a boy’s club,” says Singson.

Some of Lea Sophie Singson's personal experiences also make it clear that women are still confronted with certain prejudices and challenges in professional life. For example, she tells of a superior in a law firm who predicted that her career would be limited despite her excellent performance and good grades, as she would eventually have children and take care of her family at some point - a statement that a man would certainly not hear in a similar conversation. However, Lea Sophie Singson also emphasizes how proud she is that her superior at FIZ Karlsruhe is a woman who has children and still has a successful career: “I can relate to her.”

The lawyer also has a message for young women who aspire to a career in science or the legal world: “Stay yourself. It would be very sad if young women, in order to fit in, would lose the qualities that make them unique. Whatever it is that makes you unique – don’t kill that spark.”

Listen to the whole interview at [Youtube](#).

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