

**World Forum on
Urban Forests**
Mantova 2018

*PS 2.1 Changing people
November 28, 2018*

Girls Talk Trees: Examining barriers to women in arboriculture and urban forestry across Canada and the United States

Adrina C. Bardekjian, MFC, PhD

Co Authors: Lorien Nesbitt,
Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch, Barend Lötter

University of British Columbia
UFORIA Research Group

Why?

I believe everyone has the right to feel heard and that people need to get uncomfortable to effect meaningful change.



What we wanted to understand

- Objective:
 - To examine various narratives relating to **barriers, experiences, motivations and perspectives** of women in arboriculture and urban forestry.
- Questions:
 - What do we know about women's **participation**?
 - What are the **opportunities to improve women's involvement in the labour markets**?



What we did (methods)

- Background: research about women in arboriculture and urban forestry is minimal
- Survey (Canada and US)
- Quantitative and narrative analysis

Arboriculture – a female perspective

Ann Currell*

Principal Planner – Trees and Environment, London Borough of Barnet, Langford, UK

The Arboricultural Association's 50th anniversary prompted a look at female involvement in arboriculture, both in the context of the Association and in a wider, mainly British, context. Starting with a brief historical introduction, the piece highlights several of the different ways that women have worked with trees. Much of the information below is based on discussions and correspondence during 2014 with a number of people, to explore the range of roles and some of the motivation of the "Treeladies". The research attempts to include a range of contributors, many of

ATTITUDES AND EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN AND MINORITIES IN THE URBAN FORESTRY/ ARBORICULTURE PROFESSION

By Michael R. Kuhns¹, Hope A. Bragg², and Dale J. Blahna³

Abstract. In a study of urban forestry/arboriculture professionals in the United States, we found that love of trees and plants was most often listed as the reason for women and minorities entering the profession, followed closely by love of the outdoors. This order was reversed for white males. Employment potential in the profession for white males was a motivating factor for the forestry profession was females, and minority management, those who profession for enjoyment. Motivating factors that highest in importance, respondents generally disagreed with the level of of discrimination and

Key Words. Urban forestry, women, gender, entry into these professions is lagging behind their entry into many other professions. Reasons for this lag are unclear, but based on past studies it may be due to professional development, dissemination, cultural

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Women in arboriculture and urban forestry – We need your input!

Please take a few minutes and complete our online survey below.
This project will provide valuable insight into how women participate in and perceive, influence and engage within urban forestry and arboricultural careers.

Study Team
Dr. Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch
Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia
2424 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4
Email: cecil.konijnendijk@ubc.ca

Dr. Adrina C. Bardekjian (Primary contact)
Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Faculty of Forestry, University of British Columbia
2424 Main Mall, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6T 1Z4
Email: adrina.bardekjian@ubc.ca

In recent years, we are seeing more young women embrace opportunities and pursue careers in arboriculture and urban forestry, both in practice and study. The objective of this research is to assess the current status of women's participation in these fields, with a focus on identity construction and diversity, and to develop new models and tools for enhancing collaborative practice and transdisciplinary learning to increase participation by women in the industry.

This research is being conducted by Dr. Adrina C. Bardekjian and her postdoctoral supervisor, Dr. Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch, through the University of British Columbia, Department of Forest Resources Management.

We are currently looking for women in these industries, in Canada and the United States, who are willing to share their experiences and insights by participating in this online survey. This will take no longer than 15 minutes of your time. Questions will deal with personal experiences as a woman working in arboriculture and/or urban forestry. We do not foresee any risks or discomforts from your participation in this research.

All information you supply during the survey will be held in confidence and the names of all participants, will remain strictly confidential. Pseudonyms will be used in all reports and publications associated with this research, unless the participant requests otherwise. During the study, data will be safely stored in a locked facility on a password-protected computer and only the study team listed above will have access to this information. Once the study is complete, the data will be kept archived in a secure location at UBC for a minimum of five years after publication, at which point it will be destroyed. All data will be collected using FluidSurveys. The version of FluidSurveys licensed to UBC is hosted in Canada and is fully compliant with section 30.1 of the BC Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).

Your participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may choose to stop participating at any time. Your decision not to volunteer will not influence the nature of your relationship with the University of British Columbia either now, or in the future. If the questionnaire below is completed, it will be assumed that consent has been given. The main study findings will be published in academic journal articles and through conference presentations.

If you are willing to participate in our survey below, please respond by **October 31, 2017**.

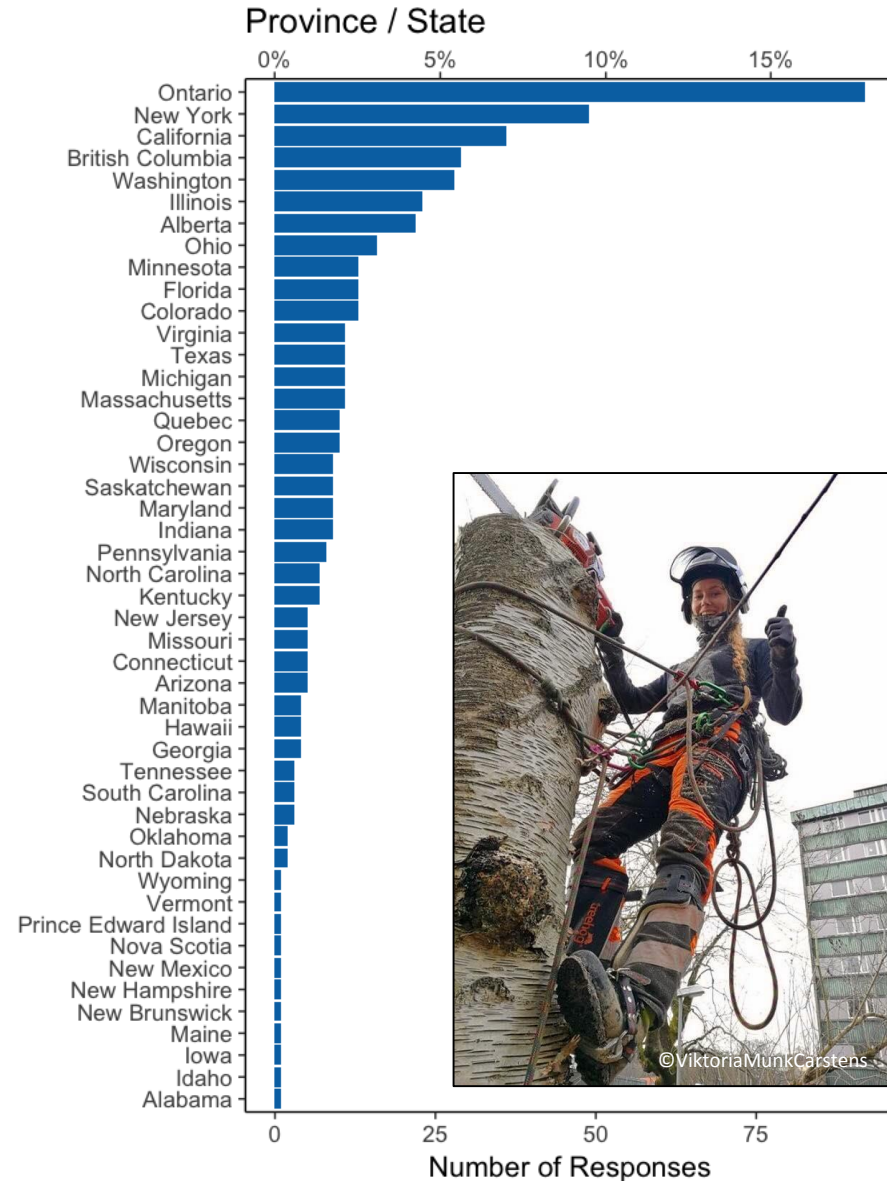
Questions about this Research? If you have questions about this research in general, or about your role in the study, please feel free to contact Dr. Adrina C. Bardekjian by email (adrina.bardekjian@ubc.ca). You may also contact her supervisor, Dr. Cecil Konijnendijk van den Bosch (cecil.konijnendijk@ubc.ca).

We greatly value your time and appreciate your input.

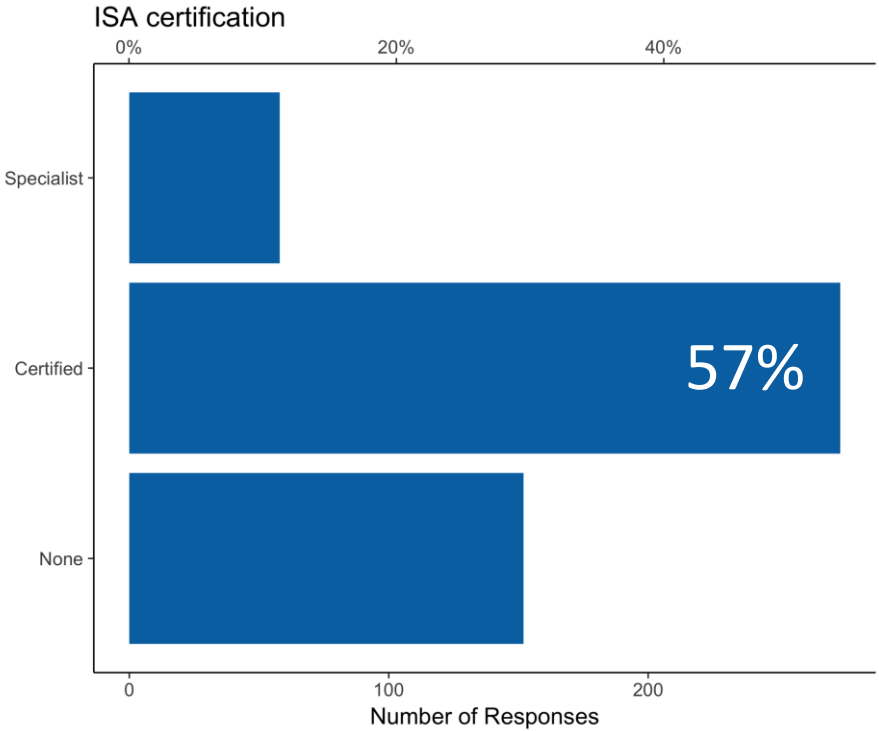
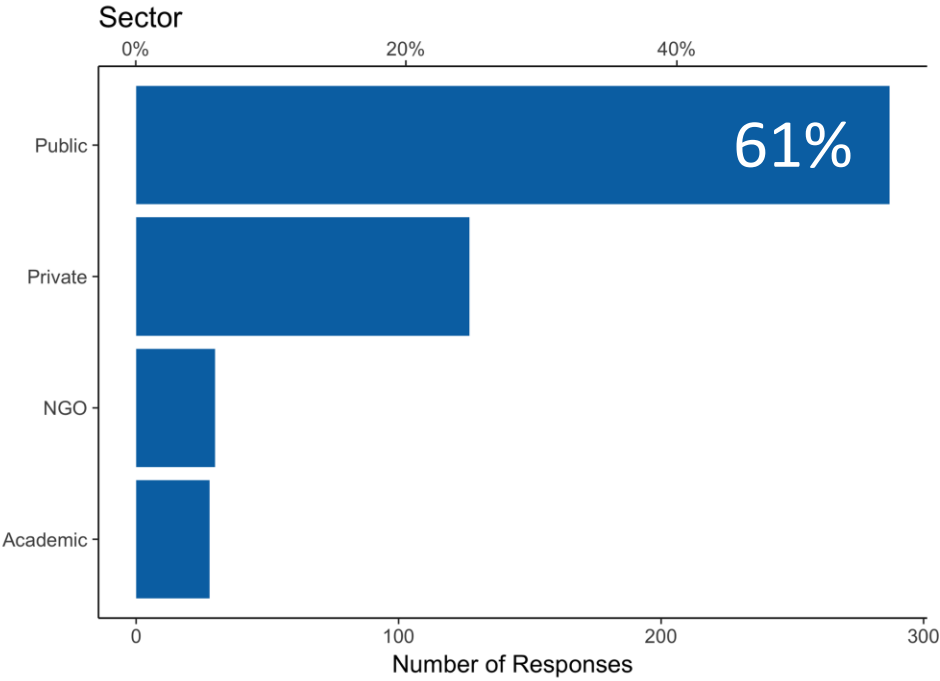
Thank you!

About our respondents

- 515 respondents
- US (67%), Canada (33%)
- Industry: Arb (19%), UF (57%)
 - Other (24%)
- Age (32% between 25-34)
- 11+ Years of experience (47%)
- Education (various levels)



About our respondents



Are women experiencing inequity?

Summary of Likert Responses

Women and men are treated equally in my industry (n=506)

I have experienced or witnessed sexist behaviour or sexual harassment in my industry (n=503)

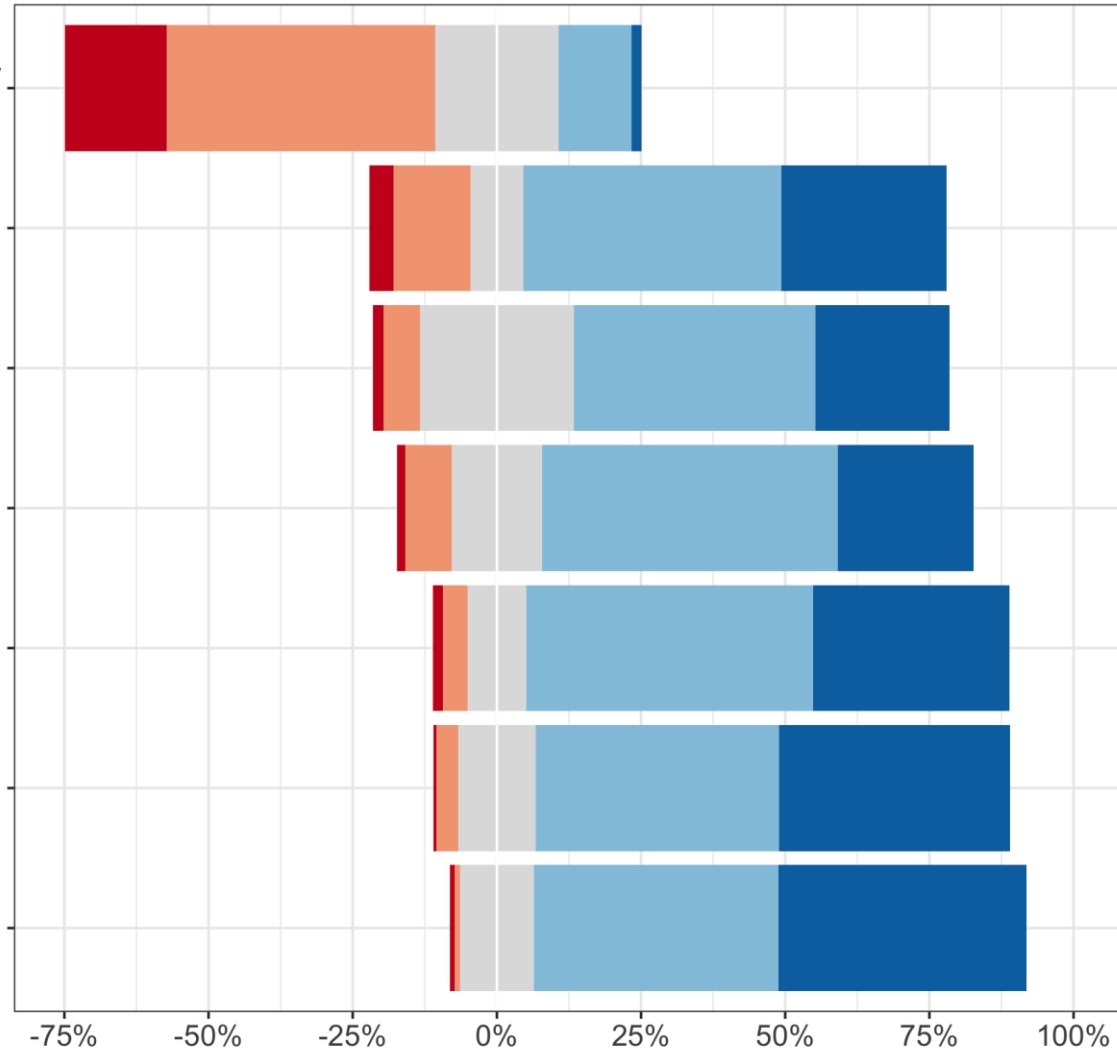
The number and proportion of women in my organization has increased during the past five years (n=503)

The dominant themes/aspects of my current work are also the ones I'm most interested in (n=509)

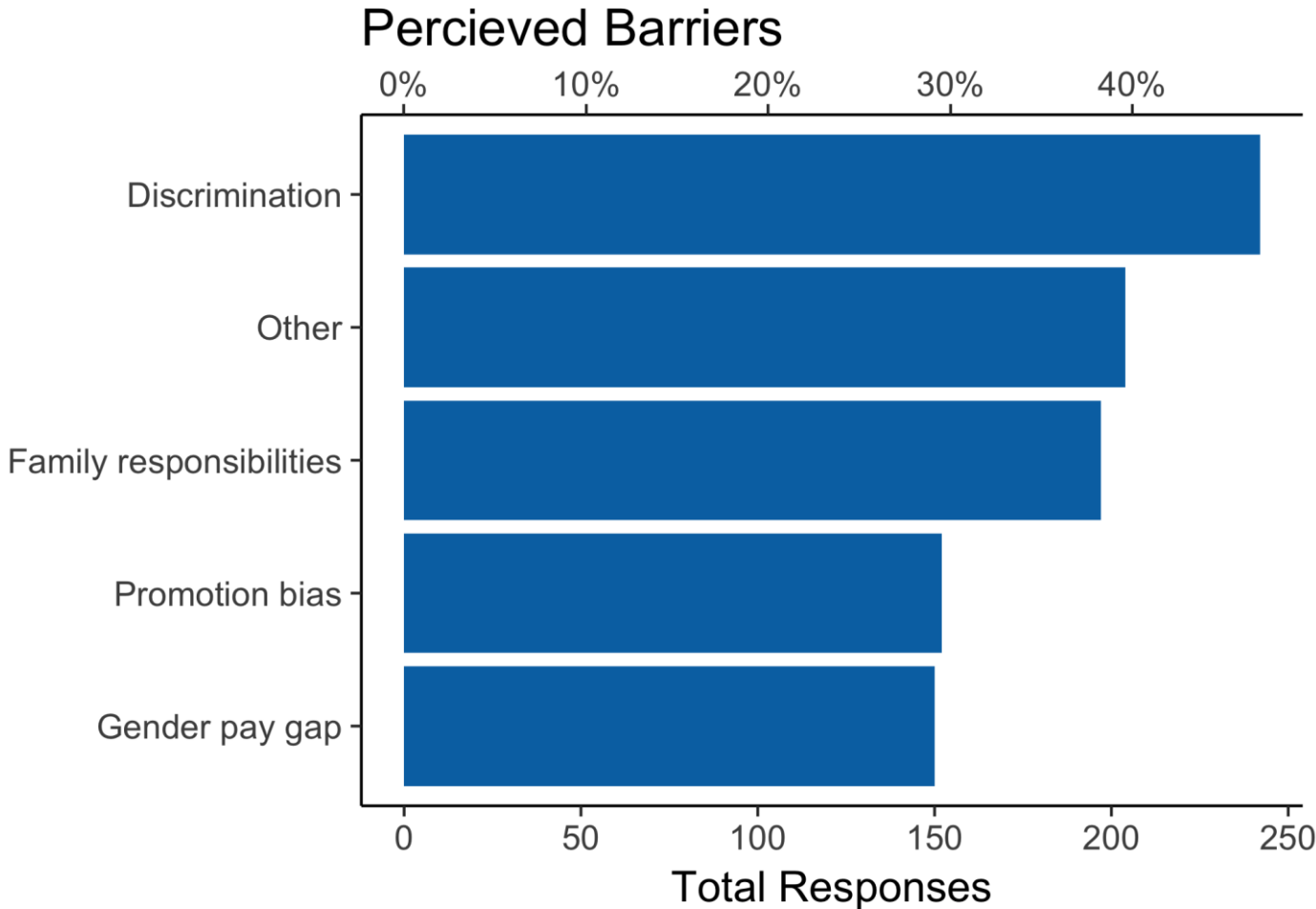
Women in our industry face a set of challenges and barriers different from men (n=512)

Being ISA certified or having RPF designation, or similar certification(s) enhances opportunities for professional development (n=507)

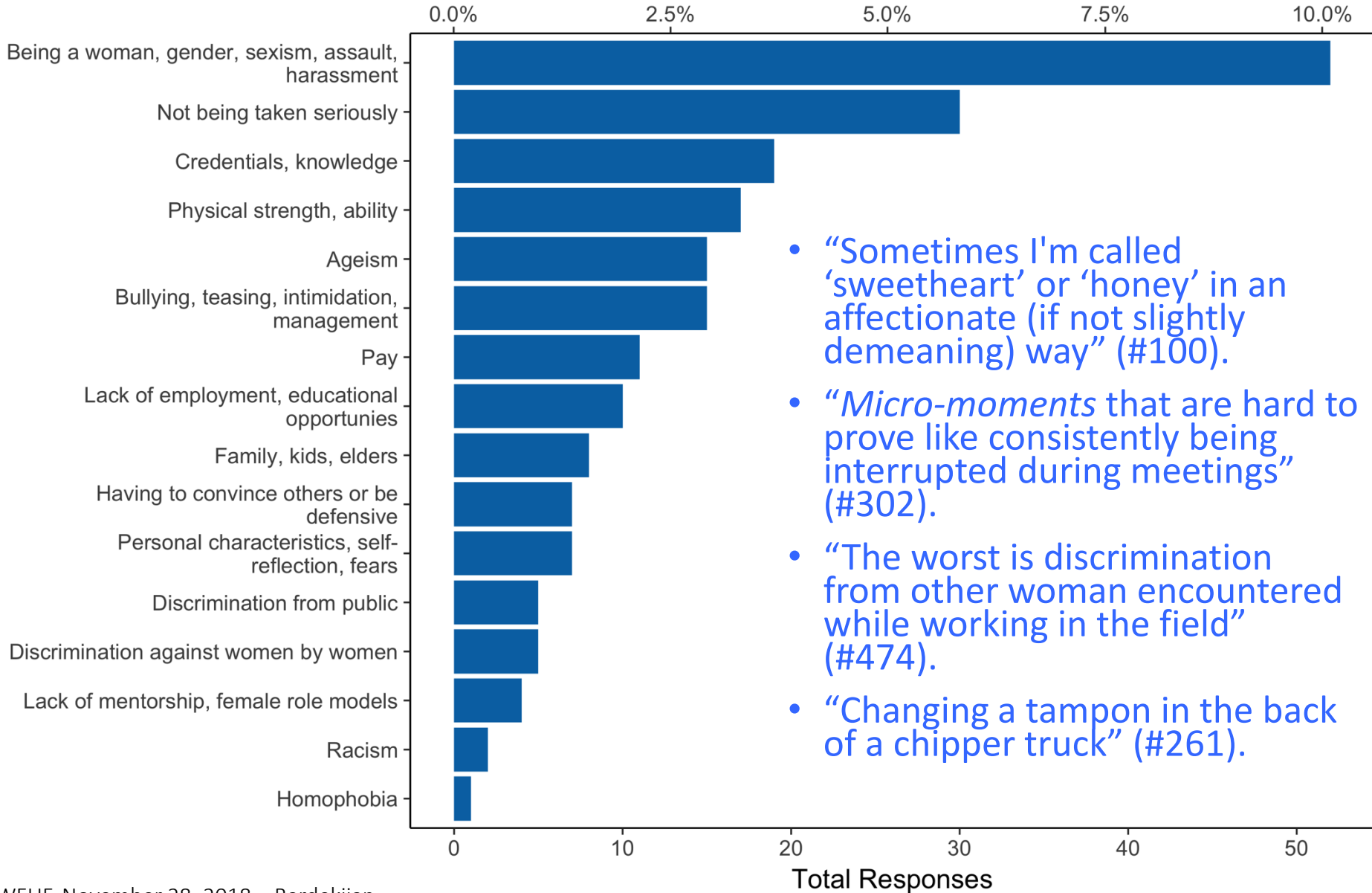
Being a woman in my industry makes a specific and important impact (n=509)



What are the barriers that women are experiencing?

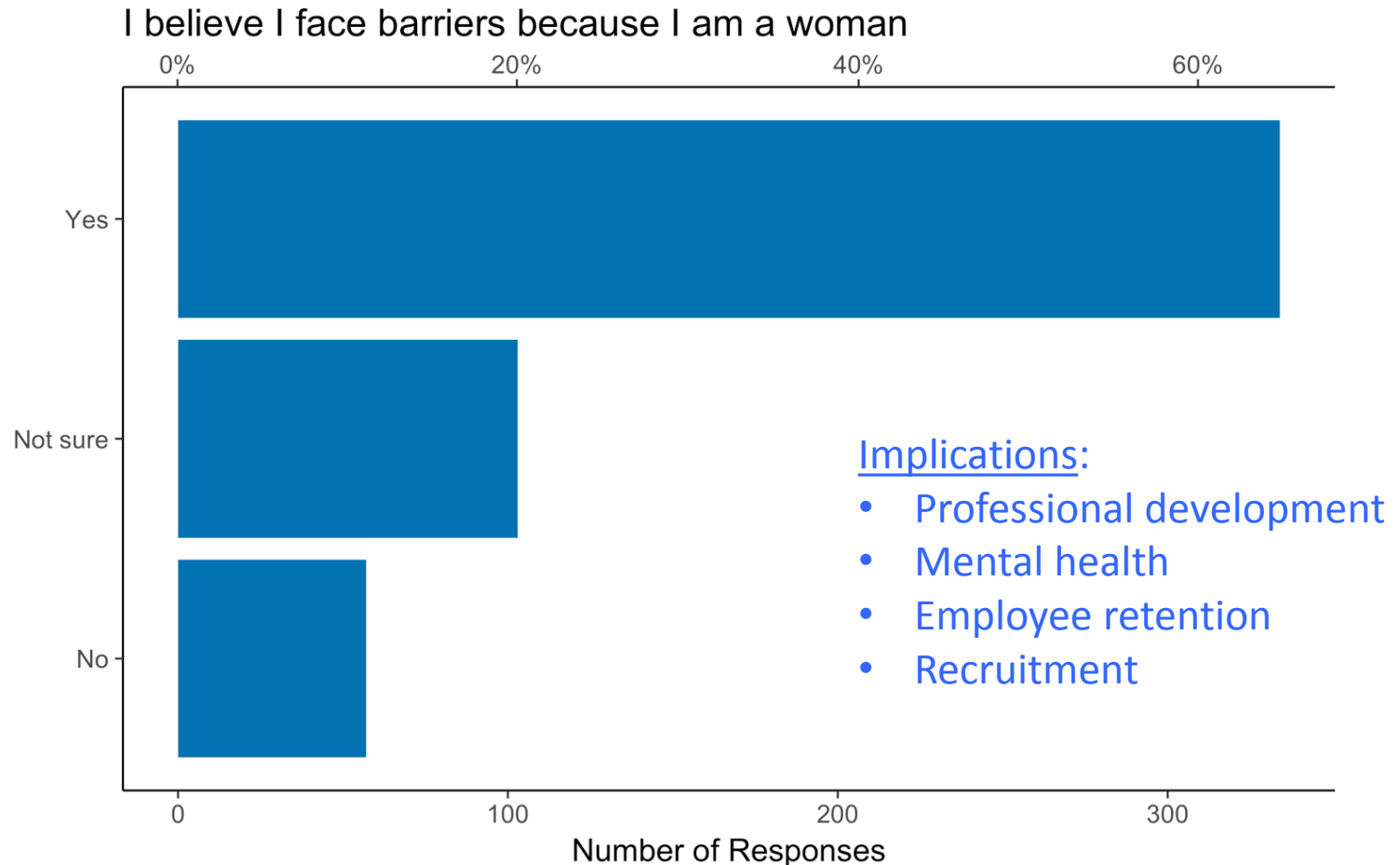


Identified barriers

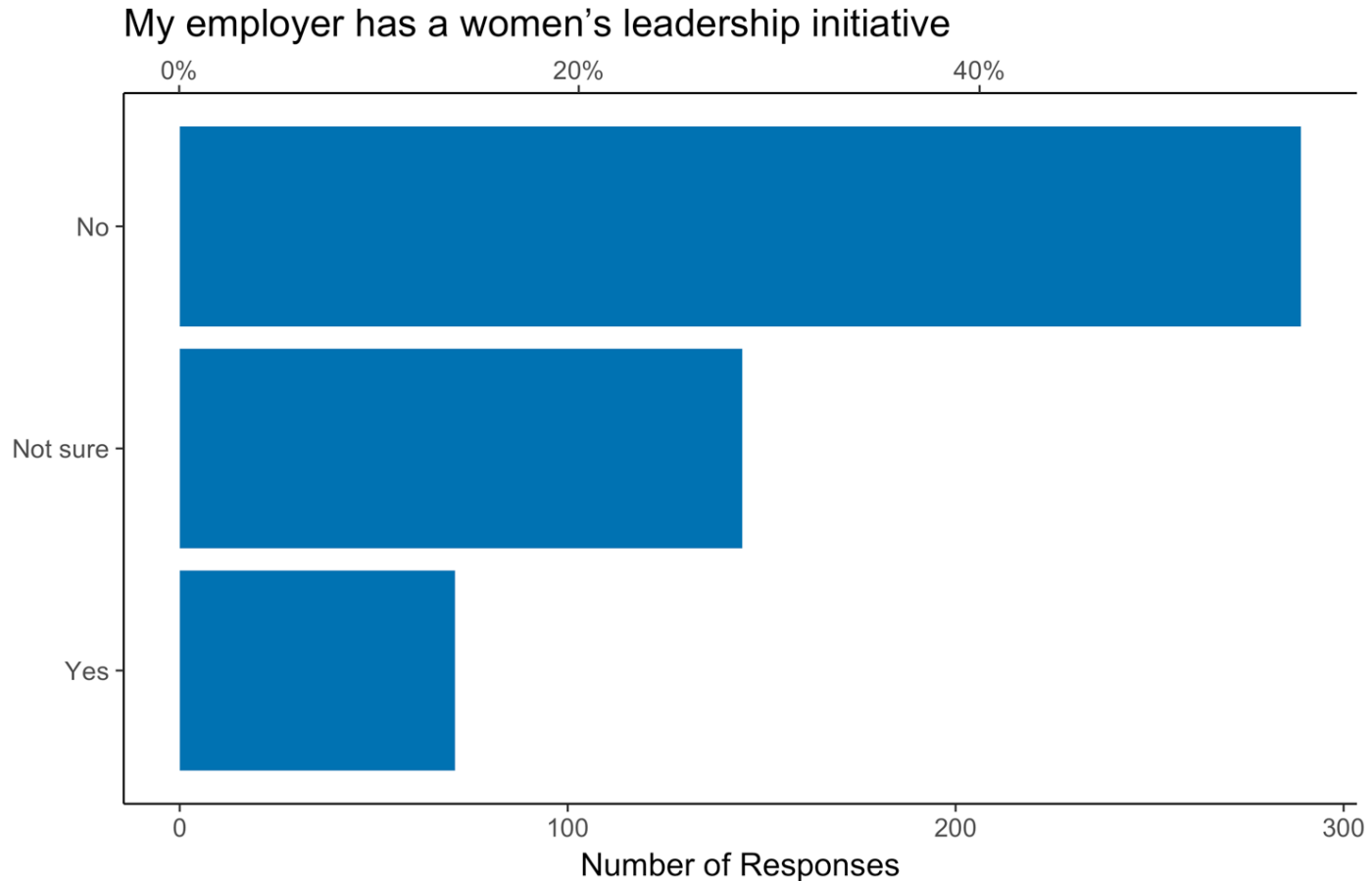


- “Sometimes I’m called ‘sweetheart’ or ‘honey’ in an affectionate (if not slightly demeaning) way” (#100).
- “*Micro-moments* that are hard to prove like consistently being interrupted during meetings” (#302).
- “The worst is discrimination from other woman encountered while working in the field” (#474).
- “Changing a tampon in the back of a chipper truck” (#261).

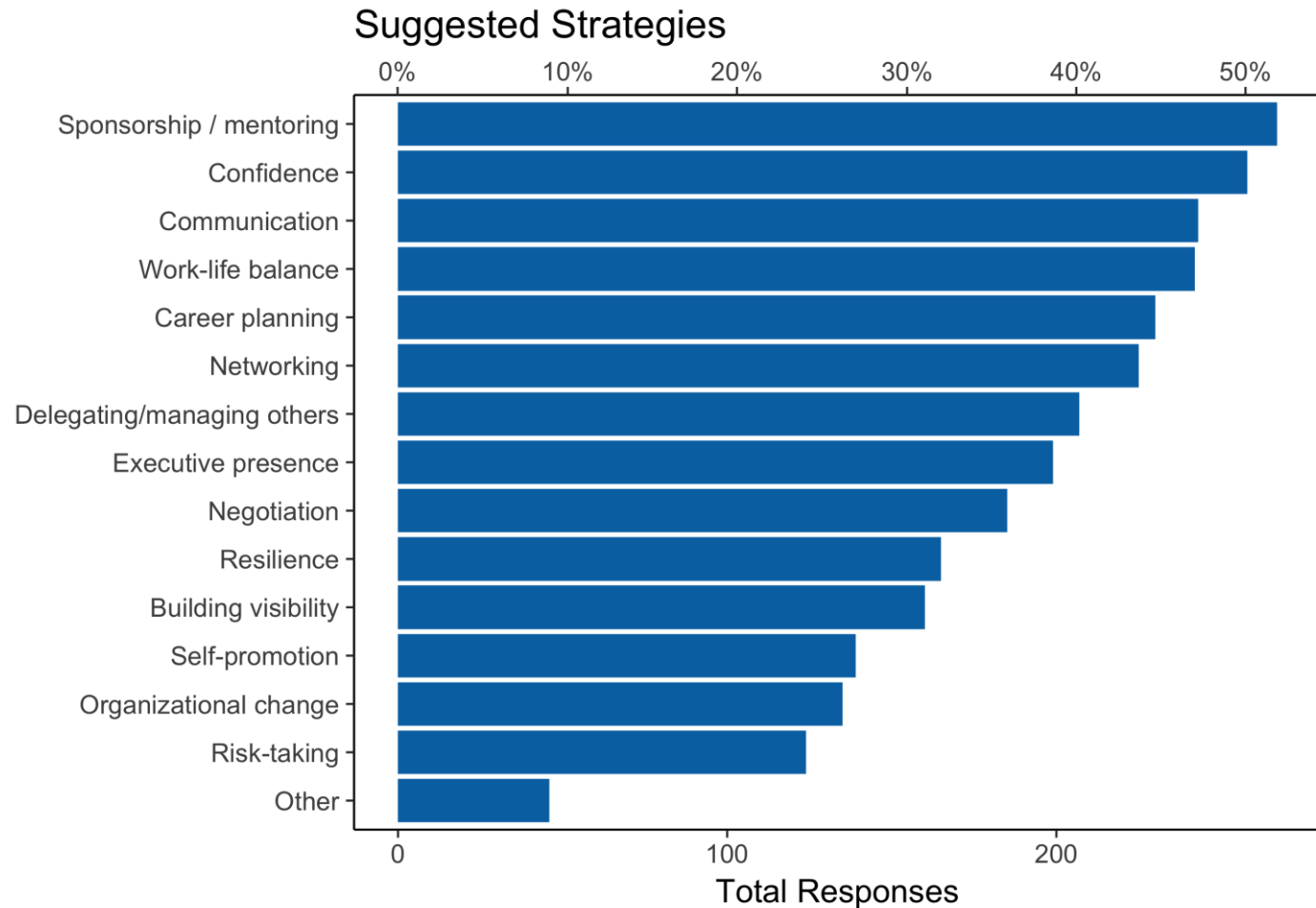
68% feel that the barriers they face are because they are women



Do women have leadership opportunities at work?



How can we promote women's leadership?



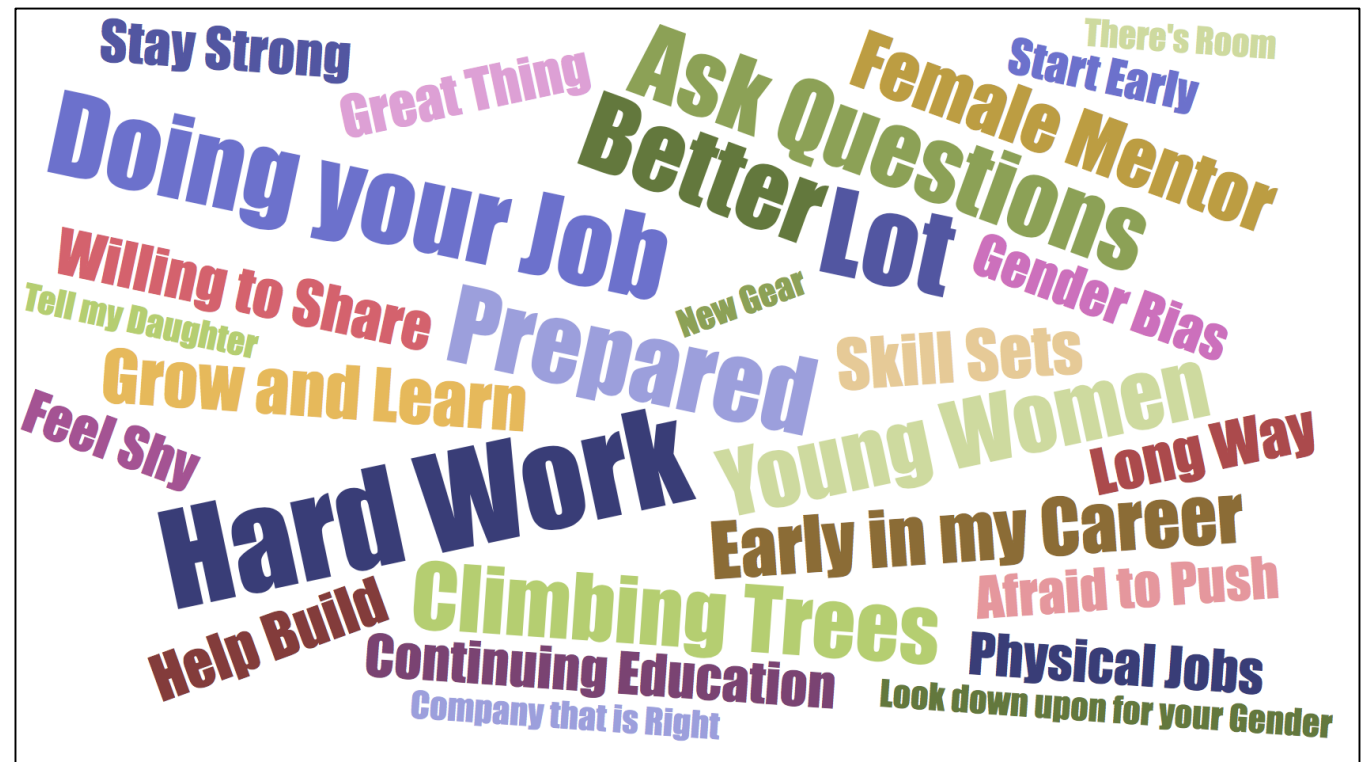
Suggestions for education

- “...spending time with **experienced arborists in the field** and taking classes was the best combination for learning” (#67).
- “...more classes **in business and entrepreneurship...**” (#22).
- “...my education gave me the tools to understand the horticulture and arboriculture side of my job but did not prepare me for the **people management...**” (#505).
- “...more **crossover between urban forestry and arboriculture knowledge.** Better integration of applied and social science issues and methods” (#2).
- “...lack of **access to research** literature for those outside universities is extremely limiting and frustrating” (#53).
- “... more emphasis on **career possibilities** within the green industry would have been helpful” (#180).



Advice to young women...

- “I always tell others that you must identify as Forester - not a female Forester. If you walk into a room full of male Foresters and consider yourself somehow inferior because you are a woman, you are setting yourself up for failure” (#7).



Where are we going now?

- Developing suggestions to help solve some of the identified issues
- Outlining a summary of the suggested strategies to improve working conditions and development opportunities
- Sharing results: presentations, panel debates, publications
- Phase II – searching funding

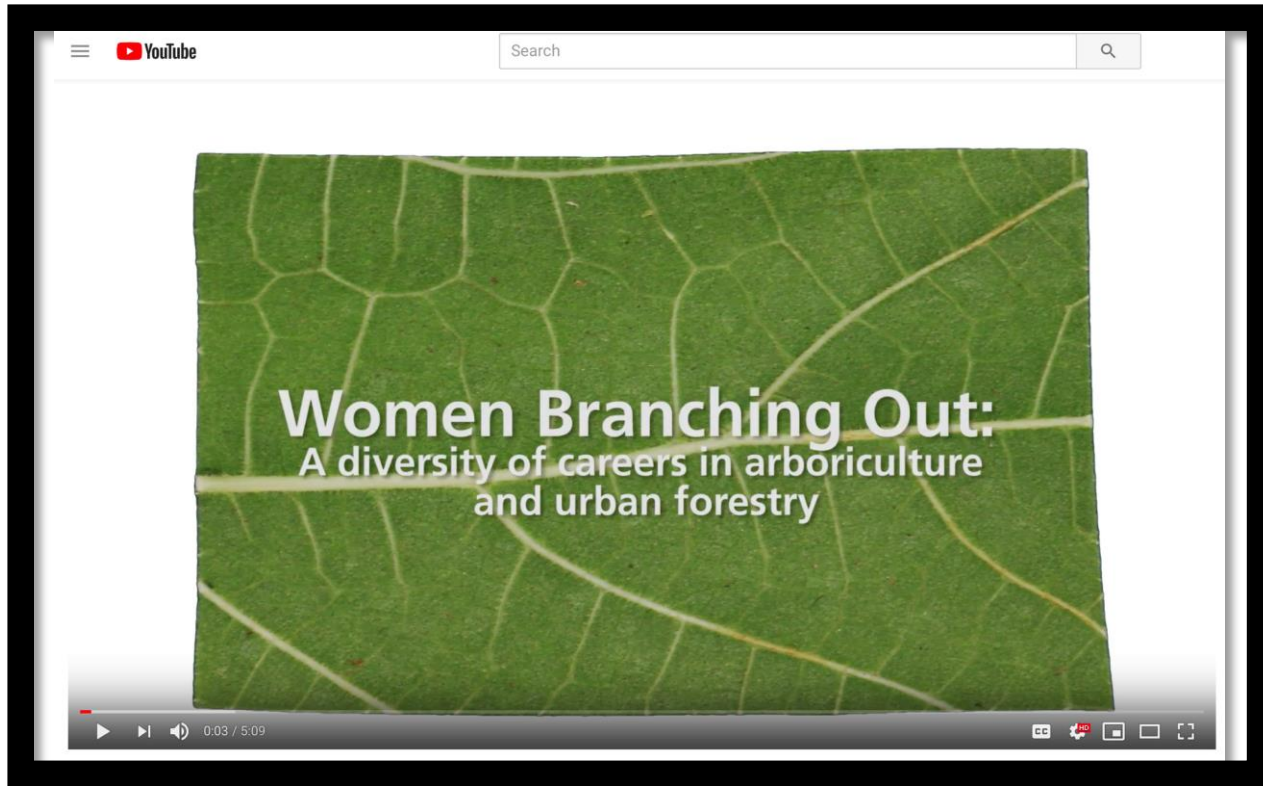


Networking for Women

- Women in Trees conferences (Fleming College, Ontario)
- Women in Arboriculture events and online platforms (e.g. ISA International and Canadian chapters)
- Women in Trees, Women in Wood (online networks)
- Women's climbing workshops
- Industry skills training workshop (Bartlett, April 2018)



Profiling women in the industry



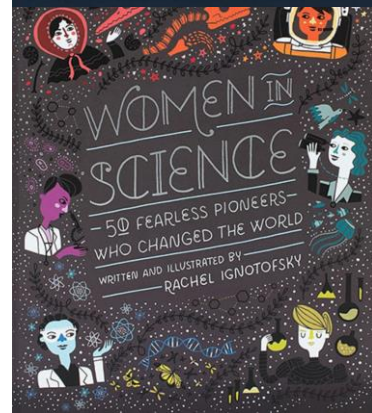
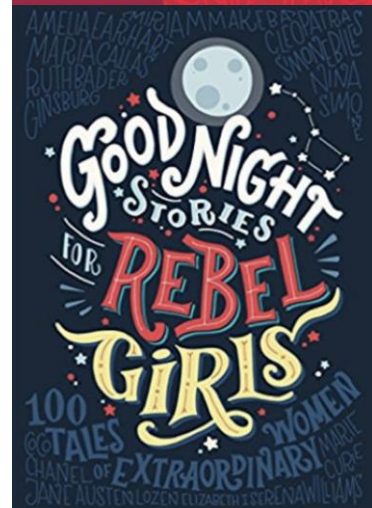
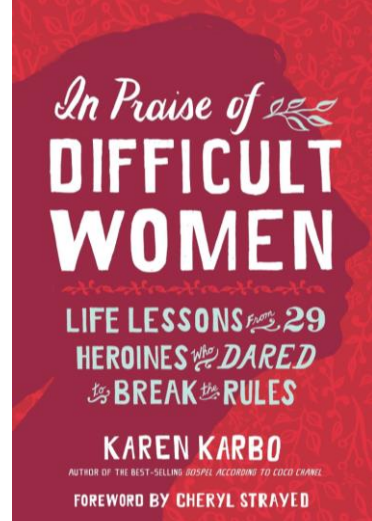
A film by Adrina C. Bardekjian
In collaboration with Fleming College



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- Networks who circulated our study
- Everyone who shared their photos





Thank you.

Adrina C. Bardekjian, MFC, PhD
www.adrinabardekjian.com



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