



Sparkling Science >

Science linking with School  
School linking with Science

PROJEKT OUTLOOK 20<sup>th</sup> October 2008

fe|male

**LEADING INSTITUTION**

Danube University Krems  
Department for Interactive Media and  
Educational Technology  
Coordinator: Mag.<sup>a</sup> Dr.<sup>in</sup> Sabine Zauchner MAS, MSc  
Contact: [sabine.zauchner@donau-uni.ac.at](mailto:sabine.zauchner@donau-uni.ac.at)

**SCIENTIFIC CO-OPERATION PARTNER**

Berlin School of Economics  
Harriet Taylor Mill Institute, Berlin

**SCHOOLS INVOLVED**

BG/BRG, Purkersdorf  
BRG Ringstraße, Krems  
Marie-Curie-Oberschule



BM.W.F<sup>a</sup>

[www.bmwf.gv.at](http://www.bmwf.gv.at)

Austrian Federal Ministry of  
Science and Research

## fe|male

### Students design technology-supported learning scenarios

The research project fe|male will inspire girls and boys for new technologies: fe|male explores Web 2.0 technologies under the gender aspect and identifies opportunities for their deployment on the basis of the competencies and needs of the students.

New media have increasingly been adopted in education, which is evident from the sharp increase of scientific attention given to this area. It is also established that interactive and playful components foster the learning process. The professional deployment of innovative, technology-supported learning scenarios lags behind this development. Furthermore, the varying approaches of girls and boys towards new technologies have found little consideration in the pedagogical environment.

The research project fe|male is devoted to this theme: fe|male places Web2.0 technologies in education in the center of the research focus. These technologies will be analyzed under the aspect of gender and also in relationship to their didactical deployment within the framework of a gender-sensitive academic education. A key aspect of the project is that the lived-in world of the youths will be the point of departure. Popular internet activities such as the social interaction through the networks MySpace, Twitter, SchülerVZ or Flickr, but also the production of content within a community serve as potential starting points for the development of future technology-supported learning scenarios in schools.

### Equal opportunity through the backdoor

Based on the internet usage habits of students, “fe|male” pursues three goals: to explore and to develop educational programs with a focus on gender aspects and to hereby contribute that girls also become interested in technical applications, while taking into account their skills, competencies and content preferences. This is based on the assumption that Web 2.0 technologies, which comprise the core ideas of the web, namely user-friendliness, standardization, participation and re-utilization will increasingly gain importance and might be referred to as the “passage point” of the technology-gender-discourse. “The recent impulses emanating from Web 2.0 might contain the potential to ‘genderize’ the until now male-oriented technology design,” states project director Dr.<sup>in</sup> Sabine Zauchner, Danube University Krems.



## Shaping research

Secondly, in accordance with the guidelines of “Sparkling Science” students will be integrated into the entire research process from the start. The project takes place in collaboration with three partner schools in Austria and Germany (BG|BRG Purkersdorf; BRG Krems, Marie Curie Secondary School, Berlin/DE). Based on young people’s media-centered lived-in world, Web 2.0 applications will be analyzed in terms of their feasible deployment in teaching. The initial reaction of Emina, a 16-year-old student at the Marie Curie Secondary School, Berlin, to this project: “Communication in the web is completely fun and to also try it out in the classroom would be exciting.” The selection of the offerings will be based on the expressed interest of the participating students of the partner schools and will be established during the initial project phase by means of workshops. In a second phase, the applications will be implemented within the project works at the various partner schools and will be evaluated in a formative fashion by the participating students and teachers. The evaluation will focus on didactical and gender-specific aspects relating to the expedient deployment in education. Angelika Weiss, the teacher responsible and assistant school director at the Marie Curie Secondary School, describes her expectations towards the project: “I am in suspense to learn whether a connection between the everyday lived-in world and the academic realm can be established that might lead to different learning results.”


## Utilizing research and fostering interest in technology

Not only the active incorporation of girls and boys in this research project, but also the ability of the students to exploit the insights and to share the acquired knowledge is the third focus of fe|male. Selected and interested students of the respective project teams will be empowered to pass on the jointly developed insight in regard to the didactical and gender-sensible teaching and learning scenario within their own educational context, and also to other participating institutions of higher education by means of presentations and seminars.

Therefore, students’ active participation in the tangible research tasks and increased competencies in the area of content will be completed as they will also actively participate during the utilization and dissemination phase of fe|male. From the start, the project strives to improve technical and media-related skills, but also communicative competencies of the users. “Apart from increased computer and internet competencies, the overall curiosity towards technology will be facilitated, which is a further goal of the research project fe|male,” expounded Prof. Heike Wiesner, a cooperating partner and responsible party for the formative project evaluation, Harriet-Taylor-Mill-Institute, Applied Science University of Economics Berlin.







Sparkling Science >  
Science linking with School  
School linking with Science

BM.W\_F<sup>a</sup>

[www.bmwf.gv.at](http://www.bmwf.gv.at)

Austrian Federal Ministry of  
Science and Research