

University of Tromsø  
Promotion Project  
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The Promotion Project is designed to increase the confidence of individual applicants as they consider applying for promotion. The heart of the project is a trial evaluation, i.e., a simulation of the promotion process. The structure of the project is as follows.

1. We wrote to all department chairs and asked them to identify the women associate professors in their departments who have portfolios nearing that of what is necessary for promotion.
2. We invited these women to join our project, emphasizing that it is intended for those who want to apply for promotion in the coming two years.
3. We gathered for a half-day seminar all of the women, their chairs, and their deans. During this seminar, we emphasized the importance of the project for the leadership and Board of the university, and we invited speakers with interesting stories to tell about their career paths. We also emphasized to the deans and chairs our expectation that they would support and facilitate the participation of their faculty members in this project.
4. We held a seminar for the project participants, focusing on the structure of an application for promotion. What does a good letter of application include? How is it structured? What will the committee do with it? How can you write in ways that will help them with their work? We talked about how to choose what to include in the application portfolio, and invited successful professors from different fields to reflect on the process, acknowledging cultural differences for promotion among different areas of research.
5. The participants then had a few weeks to produce an application portfolio having the same structure as a genuine application for promotion.
6. While they were working on the applications, the project coordinators were collecting from department chairs the names of external colleagues who would be likely candidates for evaluating each individual's application for promotion. Those individuals were contacted and were engaged, with compensation, to undertake an evaluation of one or more individual applicants, including a frank assessment of what the individual needs to do to be prepared to apply for promotion.
7. During this period, we also advertised funds internally that faculties could apply for in connection with The Promotion Project. Each individual will have different needs to reach the necessary level for promotion. Chairs and deans would identify measures for individuals and apply for funding to support them. Relevant projects could include short-term buy-outs from teaching duties, statistical support, research assistance, data processing support, and more.
8. The results of the trial evaluations are being returned now, in June, 2011. They will be conveyed to the individual applicants, who will come together again in August for a seminar on how to use the evaluations to progress towards promotion.
9. Our project includes one simple measure to help the participants push their writing forward. In particular, we will take them away for a week in October, for [a write-in](#).
10. After that, we'll continue to support them and nudge them forward until the application deadlines for promotion, in September, 2012 or early 2013.

The most explicit goal of this project is to increase the percentage of women full professors and docents at the University of Tromsø, from its current level of 25% to a new level of 30%. If we succeed, we will get closer to a tipping point at which we will gain even greater benefits from nearing gender balance at the top of our system. And if we do that, women and men will be together, in the same room, to the benefit of science and education.