

Women life scientists file fewer patents

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A U.S. professor says women life scientists in higher education apply for patents at a far lower rate than do men.

University of California-Berkeley Assistant Professor Waverly Ding says such women life scientists patent their work at a rate of 40 percent of that of their male peers.

Although the gender gap in the academic life sciences has narrowed, Ding says the gap remains wide in female faculty's commercialization of scientific research, as measured by patenting activity.

"There are many studies that investigate the gender gap in other areas of attainment, such as productivity, promotions and representation in elite universities," Ding said. "But there was little being said about the gender gap in commercialization of a faculty member's discoveries."

The research by Ding and co-authors Fiona Murray of the MIT Sloan School of Management and Toby Stuart of Harvard Business appears in the journal *Science*.

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