

Dear Colleagues,

In 2025, the European Mechanics Society awarded two Solid Mechanics Prizes and named five new EUROMECH Fellows in Solid Mechanics — all of them men.

Is this an unusual outcome? Unfortunately, it is not. A quick look at the EUROMECH website confirms that since the creation of the Solid Mechanics Prize, **all 10 laureates have been men, and only one woman appears among the 25 EUROMECH Fellows in Solid Mechanics** ([source](#)).

This is not a reflection of the community. At the 2025 European Solid Mechanics Conference, **27% of participants were women**. This number may still be far from parity, but it is certainly incompatible with the near-total absence of women among the most visible forms of recognition in our field.

We believe this situation is no longer tenable.

### **A Call for Fair and Inclusive Recognition**

We are writing to propose concrete steps to improve the fairness and inclusivity of the nomination and selection processes for EUROMECH prizes and fellowships in Solid Mechanics.

#### **Current Process (source: [euromech.org](https://euromech.org))**

1. Any EUROMECH member (not including Council and Committee members) may submit a short nomination letter for a colleague (self-nominations are excluded).
2. The committee reviews the short nominations and requests full dossiers for shortlisted candidates.
3. Final decisions are made by the EUROMECH Council.

We acknowledge that the process allows for broad participation. But we also believe that small structural biases can compound over time — especially when nomination patterns are not actively questioned.

### **Our Proposals for Change**

To encourage fairer, more inclusive recognition, we propose the following:

1. **Dual Nomination Policy**  
Each nominator should be asked to submit two nominations: one for a man and one for a woman, with equally strong arguments. If only one is submitted, the nomination should not proceed.  
This encourages nominators to reflect on the breadth of excellence in our community.
2. **Anonymized Nomination Review**  
The committee evaluating nominations should not know the identity of the nominator. This would reduce the influence of prestige or networks, and focus attention on the nominee's contributions.
3. **Balanced Committees**  
Ensure that the composition of the selection committees and council reflects gender and geographical diversity across Europe.
4. **Training in unconscious bias**  
Train the selection committees and council in cognitive biases, particularly those linked to unconscious stereotypes
5. **Transparent Reporting**  
Publish anonymized statistics each year: number of nominations received by gender, number shortlisted, and number selected. This promotes accountability without compromising privacy.

#### **6. Proactive Solicitation of Nominations**

The committee or Council could actively seek nominations from underrepresented groups, including early-career researchers and researchers from smaller institutions. We offer these proposals in the spirit of strengthening our community and ensuring that excellence is recognized wherever it is found — across all genders, countries, and career paths.

We sincerely hope that this letter will open a constructive conversation and lead to positive change.

Respectfully,