SCIENCES, SEXES, IDENTITIES

Geneva University and Hospitals, in collaboration with Santé sexuelle suisse foundation, unite to promote sexual health, gender equity and empowerment.

SSI HAS REACHED MORE THAN 400'000 PEOPLE IN 4 YEARS

SEXUAL LITERACY THROUGH A UNIQUE PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH

The *Sciences, sexes, identities* (SSI) program aims at improving knowledge on genital anatomy, the physiological bases of sexuality, the diversity of bodies and identities, and sexual rights. The courses, teaching tools and videos, are sex positive, inclusive of all genders and orientations, and are developed in a collaborative way, based on interdisciplinary scientific data and the latest pedagogical paradigm.

Myths, misconceptions, and taboos impact sexual health while contributing to violence and discriminations based on sex, gender and sexual orientation. These forms of violence disproportionately impact women and LGBTIQA+ individuals. Launched in 2018, the *'Sciences, sexes, identitiés'* program (SSI) develops courses and teaching tools for education and health professionals, as well as the general public, to promote sexual health, gender equality and access to healthcare. It has already reached more than 400,000 people in 49 countries. Aiming at broadening its impact in the next three years, the SSI program will focus on developing new resources on sexual anatomy and physiology, as well as evaluating, translating and promoting the existing ones.

3D GENITALIA

In 2020, the SSI team developed a 3D prototype of male and female genitalia from MRI and CT scan images taken *in vivo* at the Geneva University Hospital. These realistic and scientifically approved designs allow the complete anatomy to be taught in an interactive way. It also shows homologies of the clitoris and the penis, due to their common embryological origin. The dismountable 3D kit can be used for teaching anatomy in schools or university as well as for patient education in the clinical practice (sexology, gynecology, urology, surgery). The next steps will enable us to go from a proof of concept to a definitive version (2025), alongside multi-lingual pedagogical sequences.


- Dismountable 3D female and male pelvis kits

- A teaching module including the 3D kits for practical anatomy work at Geneva University, Medicine Faculty and Hospitals

- A ready-to-use pedagogical sequence for the 3D kits to be used in biology classrooms

- A user's guide for the clinical context

ANATOMICAL AND HISTOLOGICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF THE CLITORIS

Today, there are knowledge gaps in vulva and clitoris anatomy compared to their male counterparts. This affects anatomy education and clinical practice, including vulvar surgeries. The SSI program developed egalitarian and inclusive anatomical charts, which are now integrated in official French Swiss schoolbooks and frequently downloaded (20k/year) in Switzerland and abroad. These charts include the embryological analogies between female and male reproductive system, as well as anatomical and physiological information related to sexual, and not only reproductive functions. The results of an ongoing research project (2022-2025) on neurovascular and sensitive anatomy and histology of the clitoris and the distal urethra will allow to gain new knowledge and pedagogical resources to emerge.

Appareil génital femelle
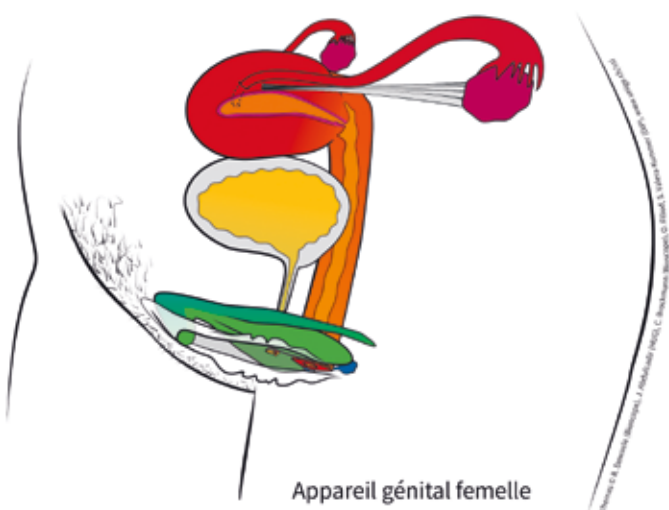
- New anatomical and histological medical drawings for anatomy books and schoolbooks

- Peer-reviewed scientific publications

ANATOMY, SEXUALITIES, AND IDENTITIES AT SCHOOL

Several scientific studies report discrepancies between the needs of young people regarding information on sexuality and the competence of those who supervise them. These discrepancies result in young people trying to find answers on the internet or from their peers, having a direct influence on their sexual health. Accessing information through parents or at school contributes to protecting young people from abuse, delays the age of first sexual encounters, prevents risks of pregnancies or sexually transmitted infections, and reduces the number of unwanted relations. Therefore, adolescence is the most suitable moment to promote sexual health. SSI continues to develop original resources addressing teenagers directly, or through their teachers and parents.

○ Ready-to-use pedagogical sequences for teaching genital anatomy, its diversity and its functions related to pleasure

○ Parents workshop 'How to approach puberty, sexuality and intimacy with children and teenagers?'

○ Interactive workshop 'Sexes' on biological sex, its development and variations

○ *Biology and Sexualities* – an interdisciplinary 8hr e-learning course for biology teachers, biology or medical student and sex educators

A WEB APP

The prevention and care of FGM complications are parts of the 17 sustainable development goals (SDG). At least 200 million girls and women aged 15 to 49 from 31 countries have suffered from female genital mutilation. Every year, close to 4 million girls, often younger than 15 years old, are at risk of becoming victims of female genital mutilation. In Europe, 600,000 girls and women are affected, and 22,000 are affected just in Switzerland.

The SSI team has developed a prototype for a web app which improves communication and information between health professionals and their patients on vulva anatomy, FGM/C practices and their care. The content has been translated into eight languages, including those among populations where mutilations have a high prevalence. The next step includes evaluating the prototype of this app practically in order to develop the final product in 2025.
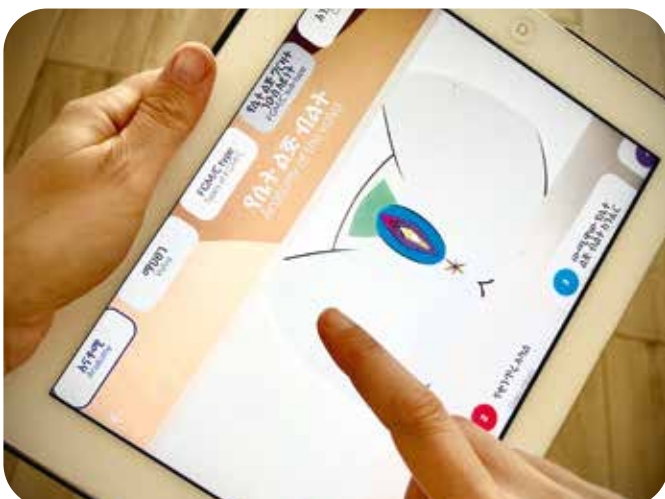
○ The definitive version of the webapp *Let's talk FGM*

○ Peer-reviewed scientific publications

IMPACT

In the next three years, the program's efforts will go towards professionalization and evaluation of different resources. The impact will be increased through academic communications and in international organizations. By 2025, we hope to expose, thanks to a largely developed program, more than 500k students, teachers, and health professionals to the most recent interdisciplinary scientific knowledge on sex, gender and sexuality. We aim at increasing knowledge and changing behaviors which contribute to sexist, sexual, homo-, bi- and transphobic violence and discriminations.

SCIENTIFIC TEAM

Dr. Jasmine Abdulcadir
Gynecologist trained in sexual health and pathologies of the vulva, staff physician responsible for the gyno-obstetrical emergency unit and for the specialty consultation in the care of women and girls with female genital mutilation at the University Hospitals of Geneva.

Maéva Badré
Biologist with a master's degree in Women's Health, sex educator and PhD candidate in Biology, UNIGE.

Dr. Céline Brockmann
Biologist, PhD in Biology of Reproduction, co-founder, and co-director of the Bioscope and teacher in the Faculty of medicine, UNIGE. Head of the SSI program.

Julien Da Costa
Pedagogical designer and developer of innovative learning systems, mainly in the 3D interactive field, UNIGE.

Dr. Caroline Jacot-Descombes
Sociologist, director of the SANTE SEXUELLE SUISSE.

Dr. Christophe Lamy
Head of anatomy teaching, Faculty of medicine, UNIGE.

Dr. Arnaud Merglen
Epidemiologist and pediatrician specialized in adolescent medicine, staff physician at the general pediatric department and the youth health consultation at the University Hospitals of Geneva.

Pr. Mathieu Nendaz
Doctor, head of UDREM and vice-dean of teaching in medicine faculty, UNIGE.

Patricia Silveira
Biologist and researcher in education science, UNIGE.

Dr. Michal Yaron
Gynecologist specializing in pediatric and adolescent gynecology, staff physician in charge of the policlinic of gynecology at the University Hospitals of Geneva.

Dr. Leen Aerts
Gynecologist and sexologist in a private practice, specialized in sexual health, pathologies of the vulvae and chronic pain, former staff physician at the University Hospitals of Geneva. President of the 'Société Suisse de Sexologie.'

MORE INFO
UNIGE.CH/SSI

CONTACT US

Dr. Céline Brockmann
Celine.brockmann@unige.ch
www.unige.ch/ssi