

Social Research Call

Title:

***VISIBLE: Autism Screening in Women.
Supporting and Making Visible
Women's Autism.***



Acronym: VISIBLE

Project leader: Paula Morales Hidalgo

Host organisation: Universitat Oberta de Catalunya

Main purpose of the project: To develop a screening questionnaire that specifically addresses the female phenotype of autism across the lifespan and reduces gender bias in the detection and diagnostic procedures.

Design/methodology/approach: The questionnaire will be designed through continuous feedback and two-way communication with the autistic community. The method includes pilot testing, qualitative and quantitative psychometric evaluation of the questionnaire. The target population will be autistic women and a comparison group at different stages of development that will complete an online assessment.

Potential results: We will provide a screening questionnaire with specific age-forms and a detailed analysis of its psychometric properties. A free website will be created to share the tool, with the purpose of reduce the under-diagnosis of autism in females and facilitate early access to specialized psychosocial and educational support services.

Social relevance of the research: Women are disproportionately at risk of not receiving a diagnosis of autism due to the long-term prevalence of an androcentric research perspective in the field. We need to make autistic women visible through screening and awareness raising to increase their opportunities for diagnosis and support and thus improve their quality of life.

Originality/value of the project: The new screening questionnaire will be one of the first to be created and validated in Spain from a sex-gender and developmental perspective, based on scientific evidence and the first-person experiences. An improvement in screening tools and methods will contribute to epidemiological research and service planning in Spain.