

## **ENGINEERING IN FEMALE PELVIC HEALTH**

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### **MINI-SYMPOSIUM PROPOSAL**

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#### **1 MINI-SYMPOSIUM PROPOSAL**

The goal of this mini-symposium is to provide an overview of current problems in female pelvic health and how investigators are using experimental, mathematical, and computational engineering approaches to tackle them. Historically, female pelvic health issues, especially those related to labor and delivery and their sequela, have not received much attention in the scientific community. While the reasons for this are many (e.g. embarrassment, male focused research efforts, etc.), it is NOT because there is a lack of medical issues that result in significant mortality (e.g. premature delivery), morbidity (e.g. maternal childbirth injury), and negatively impact a woman's quality of life over the long-term (e.g. pelvic organ prolapse, urinary and fecal incontinence). The prevalence and societal costs of each of these issues is often on par or exceeds that of conditions that receive major attention in other fields such as orthopaedics or cardiovascular medicine, with arguably similar impacts on quality of life. With society becoming more open to discussions of these issues and a greater emphasis being placed on women's health research by funding agencies, female pelvic health research is presenting interesting, challenging, and largely unstudied opportunities for bioengineers. While the number of bioengineers with a primary focus on female pelvic health research is still very low worldwide, more and more younger investigators are choosing to pursue this research direction because of high potential of new discoveries that can have a significant impact on healthcare and the extremely challenging multidisciplinary nature of these problems. This mini-symposium highlights the efforts of a number of engineers that have made this area a primary focus of their work.