



INSTITUTE OF EXPERIMENTAL MEDICINE

**Gender Equality Plan
2022-2023**

INTRODUCTION

Equal treatment and non-discrimination is a fundamental human right that the Institute of Experimental Medicine wishes to nurture and put into practice at the highest possible level and to the benefit of all members of the organisation.

We are committed to developing new organisational processes and innovative actions and measures to support sustainable structural change in the organisation to achieve a greater degree of gender balance and gender equality in a multitude of different aspects. Thus we shall embark on a long journey of organisational change. We seek to apply both self-reflection and a strategic approach to improve gender equality in the organisation and, hence, reach a higher level of social justice, employee satisfaction, retention, and research excellence among all genders of the Institute.

The Institute of Experimental Medicine closely adheres to the recommendations of the European Institute of Gender Equality's Gender Equality in Academia and Research, the so-called *GEAR tool*, as well as the *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans* (GEPs) in laying down the primary building blocks of the Gender Equality Plan.

This first two-year Gender Equality Plan for 2022-2023 sets up seven thematic priority areas in which the Institute of Experimental Medicine shall focus its attention on further development. These key priority areas are the following:

- 1) Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- 2) Gender equality in recruitment, career progression, and retention
- 3) Work-life balance and caring duties
- 4) Organisational culture, awareness-raising on gender biases, stereotypes, and sexism.
- 5) Integration of the gender dimension into research content
- 6) Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment
- 7) Structures for the institutionalisation of Gender Equality

We aim to engage and invite the active participation of all researchers and support staff to successfully implement the actions and measures included in our first Gender Equality Plan.

1) Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

The Institute of Experimental Medicine's organisational structure comprises 20 research teams, eight scientific support units, the Financial Department including Human Resource related tasks, three vice-directors, and the Institute Director. Among the 20 research teams, 16 are led by male researchers, and only 4 of the team leaders are women.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) Identify the barriers to team leadership positions within the organisation	Conduct an employee survey including questions on the perception of barriers for female researchers to reach team leadership positions	X	
	Discuss the topic of the attractiveness of team leadership positions and potential barriers for women for successfully reaching team leadership positions in the organisation and set up some action points for the next two years	X	
2) Increase the organisational knowledge on gender balance in various decision-making bodies	Assess the gender balance of decision-making bodies within the Institute.	X	
3) Increase the gender balance in top management and among team leadership positions by 10% by the end of 2023	Introduce a new system of Succession Planning to identify key talent and develop a pool of potential female and male candidates capable of filling team leadership roles in the future.		X
	Identify the training opportunities needed to develop candidates for the team leadership position.		X
	Review recruitment and selection processes and make sure that both female and male candidates are identified for each leadership position.		X

2) Gender equality in recruitment, career progression, and retention

The Institute of Experimental Medicine has a relatively standardised process for newcomers entering the organisation and moving across the different levels of the organisational ladder. Typically, inflow to the organisation starts with being a PhD student. More than 100 PhD students work at the Institute, and most of them are women. The next stage is after obtaining the PhD degree and becoming a Post-Doc, later a Senior Post-Doc, and finally, for some, the career ends at the Team leadership position or Top management. The gender aspects of these career stages need to be investigated. Additionally, the career progression of the administrative and support staff also needs to be investigated.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) To increase the attractiveness of becoming a PhD student at the Institute for high potential for both genders	Conduct an employee survey including questions on how they perceive the attractiveness of the research career offered by the Institute.	X	
	Identify gender-sensitive messages for recruiting both female and male PhD students.	X	
2) To increase the retention rate of fresh Post-Docs and senior Post-Docs	Conduct an employee survey including questions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction concerning equal treatment, work-life balance, and career progress.	X	
	Identify action steps for the career progression of Post-Docs and senior Post-Docs.		X
	To introduce a new system of mentoring and/or coaching		X
	Create a new career development policy		X
3) To increase the retention rate of admin and support staff by 10%	Conduct an employee survey including questions of satisfaction and dissatisfaction concerning equal treatment, work-life balance, and career progress.	X	
4) To audit the HR system for non-discrimination	To audit the gender balance of recruitment and selection committees	X	

	40% of the under-represented sex participates in committees involved in recruitment/career progression		X
	To audit the gender wage gap for similar positions	X	
	The gender dimensions of different employment forms and contracts will be investigated and the analysis will be made public.	X	

3) Work-life balance and caring duties

The Institute of Experimental Medicine has a commitment to support the reconciliation of work and family commitments. We strive to understand how the organisation could improve its family-friendly policies and thus decrease barriers to career progress.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) To increase the satisfaction of employees with work-life balance by 10% as measured on the employee satisfaction survey	To examine the opportunities of flexible working practices among researchers, support and administration staff.	X	
	Provide employees with flexible work options, including flexitime and distance working or home office in those cases where this is possible.	X	
	Provide employees with the opportunity to leave work in case of emergency situations.	X	
	Examine the possibilities to provide extra opportunities for home office for parents having children below 14 years or with caring responsibilities.	X	
	Examine the performance management system how it affects employees with young children.		X
To maintain the relationship with employees on parental leave	Invite employees to workplace events and training during parental leave.	X	
	Create an online platform (resource group) for parents in the Institute for networking.		X

4) Organisational culture, awareness-raising on gender biases, stereotypes, and sexism.

The Institute of Experimental Medicine has a commitment to nurturing an organisational culture in which gender equality is perceived as a positive value. We strive to raise awareness against gender biases, negative gender-related stereotypes, and sexism and fight against barriers that might hinder gender equality in the organisation.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) To nurture an organisational culture in which gender equality is perceived as a positive value.	Conduct an employee survey including questions on how employees perceive the organisational culture in relation to non-discrimination, gender equality, inclusiveness, and sexism at the Institute.	X	
	Provide training on unconscious biases for team leaders		X
	Communicate the Gender Equality Plan internally and explain the importance of the document	X	

5. Integration of the gender dimension into research content

The Institute of Experimental Medicine has a commitment to finding ways how, in line with the European Research Area objectives, the gender dimension in the content of research performed by the Institute could be enhanced.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) To integrate the gender dimension into the research performed by the Institute and increase it by 10% within five years.	Assess the current research projects and those in the last five years in terms of whether they include a gender dimension or not.	X	
	Organise a workshop for team leaders on how the gender dimension could be integrated to a greater extent in their field.	X	

6. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

The Institute of Experimental Medicine has a commitment to implement effective measures against gender-based violence, in particular sexual harassment. We strive to implement a 0 tolerance policy on sexual harassment and provide a safe working environment to all members of the community by reinforcing complaint mechanisms.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) Raise awareness about sexual harassment	Develop a policy on sexual harassment	X	
	Organise a series of workshops on sexual harassment for employees		X
2) Introduce effective complaint and reporting mechanism on sexual harassment	Establish a policy on how all organisation members can report instances of sexual harassment.	X	
	A policy to set out information about the investigatory and decision-making process, including associated timescales	X	
	Provide advice and information on support available to victims or witnesses of sexual harassment	X	

2) Structures for the institutionalisation of Gender Equality

The Institute of Experimental Medicine commits to creating a sustainable infrastructure for Gender Equality. We strive to increase the transparency of our policies, allocate necessary resources, assign accountability for various tasks, and monitor progress on different indicators of Gender Equality.

Objective	Actions	Timeline	
		2022	2023
1) Create a sustainable infrastructure for Gender Equality	Nominate a Gender Equality Officer	X	
	Set up a Gender Equality Working Group representing different parts of the organisation	X	
	Monitor the progress of the Gender Equality Plan on a yearly basis	X	X
	Publish a Gender Equality Report bi-yearly		X
	Conduct an employee satisfaction survey bi-yearly to involve employees in the needs assessment phase of the Gender Equality Planning process.	X	
	Establish grievance procedures for Gender Equality and discrimination	X	
	Provide training on gender equality and non-discrimination for those involved in recruitment and promotion decisions.		X

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Zoltán Nusser

Director