

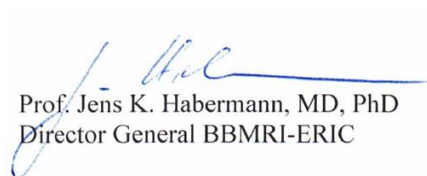
Gender Equality Plan

BBMRI-ERIC

Document information

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	2
2. METHODOLOGY.....	3
3. ACTION PLAN	3
3.1. Goal 1: Improve work-life balance and organizational culture at BBMRI-ERIC.....	4
3.2. Goal 2: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	5
3.3. Goal 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	6
3.4. Goal 4: Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content.....	8
3.5. Goal 5: Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment	9
4. MONITORING AND REPORTING	10
5. REFERENCES.....	10
6. TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS	10

1. INTRODUCTION

Gender equality benefits research and innovation (R&I) by improving the quality and relevance of R&I process, by attracting and retaining more talent, and by ensuring that everyone can maximize their potential. As a result, BBMRI-ERIC aims at embedding gender equality principles in its organisational culture.

BBMRI-ERIC is a European research infrastructure for biobanking. We bring together all the main players from the biobanking field – researchers, biobankers, industry, and patients – to boost biomedical research. Ultimately, our goal is to make new treatments possible in the most inclusive way possible, making sure that women, men, nonbinary people, and the entire diversity spectrum are equally taken into account.

This document describes a set of commitments and actions aiming to promote gender equality through institutional and cultural change.

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) contains objectives from the 5 fields suggested by the European Commission (European Commission, 2020).

These recommendations have been adjusted to match the current circumstances of BBMRI-ERIC and will be adapted with the evolution of the institution.

In order to follow the progression of practice on this topic, BBMRI-ERIC's approach to gender equality is not limited to sex and gender binaries. Our goal is to advance gender identity equality, diversity, and inclusion on a gender-diverse basis.

2. METHODOLOGY

In its commitment to gender equality, BBMRI-ERIC appointed Mónica Cano Abadía as the lead of the GEP in July 2021. In order to identify the challenges that BBMRI-ERIC faces regarding gender mainstreaming, a gender equality audit was conducted by nowa (nowa, 2021), a non-profit organization based in Graz (Austria). An awareness-raising workshop with nowa kick-started the process towards GE at BBMRI at the beginning of November 2021. During this process, a series of individual and group interviews were conducted, as well as a final workshop at the beginning of February 2022. nowa sent their final report with the results of the audit to BBMRI-ERIC on February 16, 2022. In their final report, nowa shared their results, recommended future actions, and highlighted that BBMRI is on the right track in terms of GE, as both leadership and staff are interested in the topic and ready to contribute their expertise and experience to develop a GEP.

With the guidance of nowa, this GEP is thus evidence-based and data informs the GEP's objectives and targets, indicators, and ongoing evaluation of progress.

3. ACTION PLAN

The European Commission recommends the following 5 thematic areas to organize the content of the GEP:

- Work-life balance and organisational culture (Goal 1)
- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making (Goal 2)
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression (Goal 3)
- Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content (Goal 4)
- Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment (Goal 5)

The Action Plan towards GE outlined below will follow this recommendation.

3.1. Goal 1: Improve work-life balance and organizational culture at BBMRI-ERIC

Measure No.	Measure	Timelines	Targets	Indicators	Responsibilities/ Resources
1.1	Working from home agreement	<i>Q1 2021 – Q3 2022</i>	<i>Agreement drafted by legal expert and implemented by HR</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the guidelines</i>	<i>HRS</i>
1.2	Public statement supporting gender equality	<i>Q2 2022</i>	<i>Statement written by DG and GEDS</i>	<i>Publication of the statement</i>	<i>DG, GEDS</i>
1.3	Review of job descriptions in terms of gender equality	<i>Q3 2021 – Q2 2022</i>	<i>Revised descriptions drafted by staff, revised by unit heads, and implemented by</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the descriptions</i>	<i>HRS</i>
1.4	Policy for parental leave and return	<i>Q3 2022</i>	<i>Policy drafted and implemented by HR</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the guidelines</i>	<i>HRS</i>
1.5	Consideration of gender and care obligations in the hiring process	<i>Continuous from GEP adoption and when vacancies are available</i>	<i>Advertising positions offering the possibility of working part-time</i>	<i>Number of vacancy advertisements considering gender and care obligations</i>	<i>HRS</i>
1.6	Guidelines for equality-oriented language and communication	<i>Q3 2022</i>	<i>Guidelines for internal and external communication</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the guidelines</i>	<i>Head of Outreach, Education, and Communications</i>

3.2. Goal 2: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Measure No.	Measure	Timelines	Targets	Indicators	Responsibilities/ Resources
2.1	Promote and maintain gender balance in all BBMRI-ERIC's internal working groups	<i>Continuous from GEP adoption and when committees are created</i>	<i>Equal and fair representation of different genders</i>	<i>Committees' gender profile</i>	<i>DG</i>
2.2	Gender equality training	<i>Q4 2022</i>	<i>Provide all decision-makers and leaders with gender equality training</i>	<i>Number of attendees</i>	<i>GEDS</i>

3.3. Goal 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Measure No.	Measure	Timelines	Targets	Indicators	Responsibilities/ Resources
3.1	Disseminate vacancies across at least 3 platforms and/or websites in order to reach equally qualified people from all genders	<i>Continuous from GEP adoption and when vacancies are available</i>	<i>Vacancies systematically disseminated on 3 platforms</i>	<i>% of female, male, and nonbinary candidates applying for each vacancy</i>	<i>HRS</i>
3.2	Use gender-neutral language in vacancy advertisements	<i>Continuous from GEP adoption and when vacancies are available</i>	<i>Usage of non-binary pronouns and gender-neutral language in all vacancy advertisements</i>	<i>Number of vacancy advertisements using non-binary pronouns and gender-neutral language</i>	<i>HRS</i>
3.3	Update recruitment guidelines to include gender balance perspective	<i>Q4 2022</i>	<i>Revised guidelines drafted and implemented by HR</i>	<i>Number of changes carried out in procedures supporting GE</i>	<i>HRS</i>
3.4	Revision of processes for recruiting and onboarding considering equality	<i>Q4 2022</i>	<i>Revised guidelines drafted and implemented by HR</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the guidelines</i>	<i>HRS</i>

3.5	Integration of gender equality in regular staff appraisals	<i>Continuous from GEP adoption and at least once a year</i>	<i>Staff appraisals per year concerning career planning, continuous education</i>	<i>Number of staff appraisals per year</i>	<i>DG and/or Unit Heads</i>
3.6	Policy: training for personnel development considering gender equality	<i>Q4 2022</i>	<i>Allocation of training hours per employee</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the policy</i>	<i>HRS</i>

3.4. Goal 4: Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

Measure No.	Measure	Timelines	Targets	Indicators	Responsibilities/ Resources
4.1	Awareness of / commitment to gender equality and diversity in workshops and events	<i>Continuous from GEP adoption and each time an event is organized</i>	<i>Attention to speakers invited and time flexibility for participants</i>	<i>Number of events that consider gender equality as a factor in its organization</i>	<i>GEDS</i>
4.2	Creation of the webinar series “ELSI Dialogues on sex and gender in biomedical research”	<i>Q4 2021 – Q4 2022</i>	<i>Awareness-raising on the importance of sex- and gender- sensitive research</i>	<i>Number of webinars</i>	<i>ELSI Services and Research</i>
4.3	Integration of the sex and gender-sensitive perspective across different unit activities	<i>2023</i>	<i>Awareness-raising on the importance of gender-sensitive perspectives in all activities</i>	<i>Number of webinars with a gender-sensitive perspective</i>	<i>Unit Heads</i>
4.4	Promotion of gender bias and related activities in research projects	<i>Q4 2020 – ongoing</i>	<i>Awareness-raising on the importance of sex- and gender- sensitive research</i>	<i>Number of projects with a gender perspective</i>	<i>ELSI Services and Research</i>

3.5. Goal 5: Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment

Measure No.	Measure	Timelines	Targets	Indicators	Responsibilities/ Resources
5.1	Policy to prevent discrimination, harassment, violence, and mobbing	Q4 2022	<i>Measures to prevent discrimination, violence, and mobbing and to act appropriately in corresponding incidents</i>	<i>Internal dissemination of the policy</i>	HRS
5.2	Appointment of contact points for the topics of discrimination or harassment	Q3 2022	<i>Appointment of contact point(s)</i>	<i>Communication of the contact point(s) to staff</i>	DG
5.3	Harassment and discrimination prevention training	Q4 2022	<i>Tools to prevent discrimination, violence, and mobbing and to act appropriately in corresponding incidents</i>	<i>Number of attendees from staff</i>	GEDS

4. MONITORING AND REPORTING

The first 9 months of implementation of this GEP will serve as piloting period after which an assessment will be performed. The outcome of this assessment is a series of recommendations for the second year of implementation of the plan. Additional objectives and targets on gender equality (or other types of inclusiveness) will be proposed based on availability of data.

5. REFERENCES

- nowa (2021). nowa. Available at: www.nowa.at (Accessed: March 30th, 2022).
- European Commission (2020). *Gender Equality in Research and Innovation*. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/info/research-and-innovation/strategy/strategy-2020-2024/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en (Accessed: March 30th, 2022).

6. TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DG – Director General

ELSI – Ethical, Legal, and Societal Issues

GE – Gender Equality

GEDS – Gender, Equality, and Diversity Officer

GEP – Gender Equality Plan

HRS – Human Resources Specialists

R&I – Research and Innovation