



Institute of Organic Chemistry
Polish Academy of Sciences

The Gender Equality Plan

2022 – 2027



1. INTRODUCTION

Gender equality is one of the fundamental human rights. Ensuring equal rights, opportunities and responsibilities for all genders is essential for sustainable development and economic growth. Incorporating gender dimension in scientific research increases the level of scientific excellence and expands the group of people interested in research results. Moreover, promoting gender balance and diversity helps to create working environment where people can display their full potential and all talents can flourish.

The Institute of Organic Chemistry Polish Academy of Sciences actively works on creating an inclusive and safe working conditions where all employees are treated equally, regardless of their gender identity, ethnicity, nationality, language, religion or sexual orientation. Despite measures taken so far, the Institute shall improve its efforts to promote the concept of gender balance, provide equal opportunities and support the advancement of scientific careers of women who are an underrepresented group at the Institute.

The Gender Equality Plan for the IOC PAS presented herein is the result of internal analysis and consultations carried out at the Institute in November 2021. The adopted comprehensive strategy for years 2022 – 2027 is based on five strategic objectives aimed at achieving the overarching goal of improving gender equality at the Institute.

2. GENDER EQUALITY AT THE IOC PAS – DIAGNOSIS AND ANALYSIS

> IOC PAS in numbers

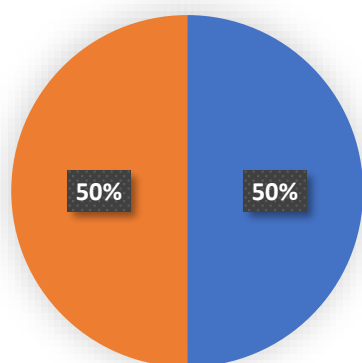
The Institute of Organic Chemistry is a small research Institute with less than 200 employees. At the beginning of November 2021, the composition of employment was as follows:

TABLE 1. Employment structure at the IOC PAS (as of the beginning of November 2021).

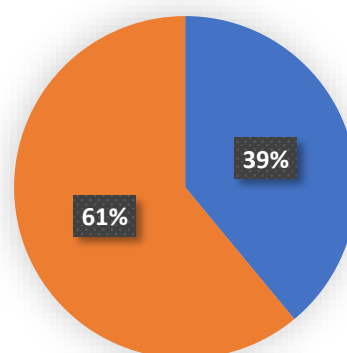
| | Women | | Men | | Percentage of all employees |
|--------------------------------|-------|------------|-------|------------|-----------------------------|
| | Count | Percentage | Count | Percentage | |
| Administrative employees | 21 | 88% | 3 | 12% | 6% |
| Supporting employees | 5 | 63% | 3 | 37% | 3% |
| Chemists – technical employees | 16 | 70% | 7 | 30% | 9% |
| PhD Students | 32 | 57% | 24 | 43% | 25% |
| Assistants | 17 | 35% | 32 | 65% | 29% |
| Adjuncts/Post-docs | 4 | 22% | 14 | 78% | 12% |
| Assistant Professors | 0 | 0% | 5 | 100% | 12% |
| Professors | 2 | 17% | 10 | 83% | 4% |

The IOC PAS employs 140 researchers (72% of all employees) including PhD Students and 55 administrative, technical and supporting employees (28% of all employees). The percentage of women employed at the Institute is 50% among all employees and 39% among research staff.

IOC PAS employees



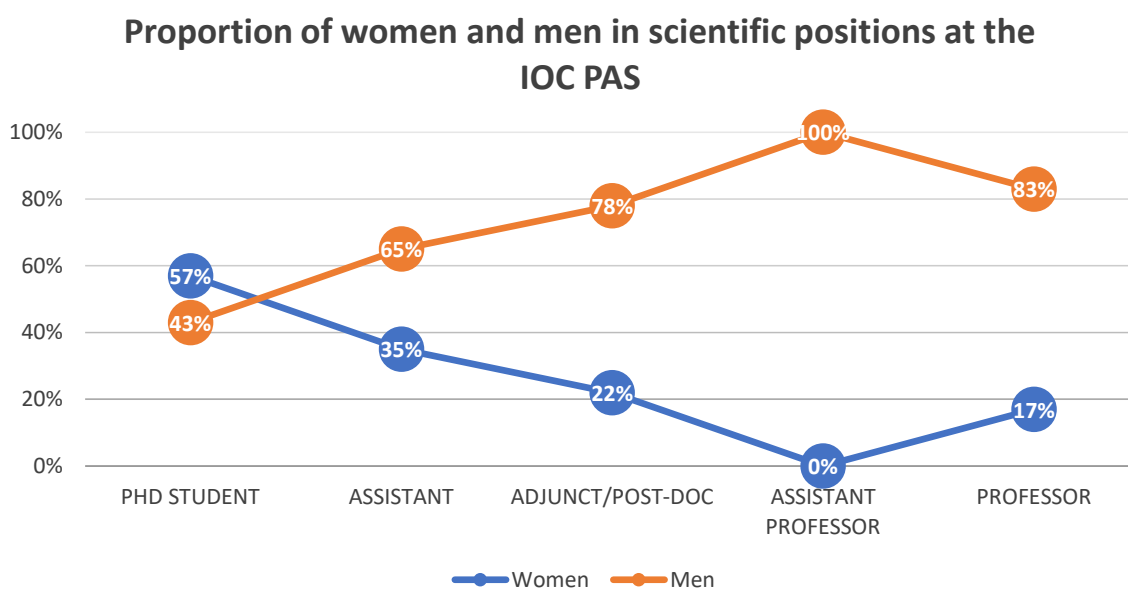
IOC PAS researchers



■ Women
■ Men



Despite the maintenance of gender balance in the Institute as a whole, a detailed analysis of the employment structure reveals inequalities in the scientific career development of women and men. Women are an underrepresented group among employed scientists, and their numbers in senior positions are significantly lower than in technical or administrative ones. The graph presenting the gender distribution within career stages at the IOC PAS has a typical “scissors” pattern.

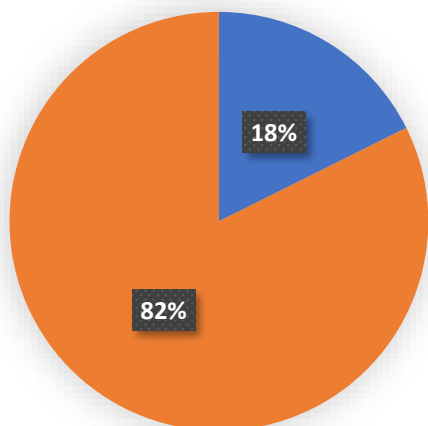


At the level of early-stage-researchers, women outnumber men indicating that women are more likely to complete doctoral studies and perform better in qualifying proceedings to the Doctoral School. The situation changes to the opposite at later career stages, as men more often hold postdoctoral positions and follow the career path to habilitation and professorship. **At the Institute we observe the problem of the “leaky pipeline” which is a metaphor used to describe the loss of women from scientific position before they reach the senior level.**

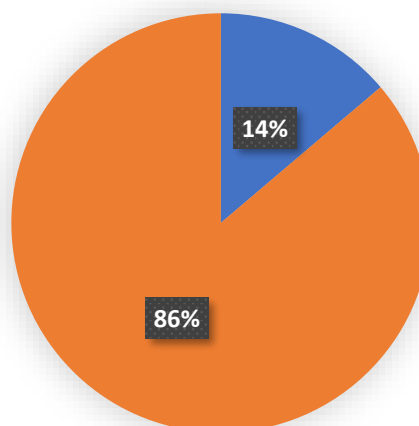
As a consequence of the low number of women in senior positions at the IOC PAS, the gender balance in decision-making bodies is severely distorted. The Board of Directors consists of three male representatives and the representation of women in the second most important decision-making body, the Scientific Council, is only 18%. Similar proportions are observed among the Research Group Leaders (14% of them are women) and Principal Investigators of research grants (24% are women).



Scientific Council

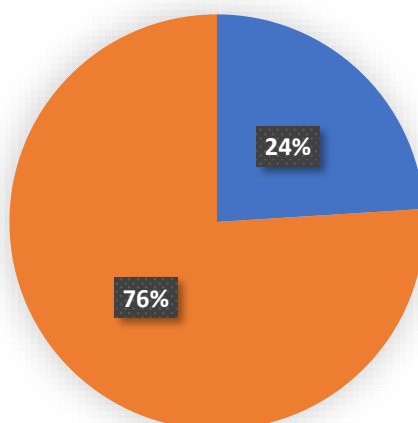


Research Group Leaders



■ Women
■ Men

Principal Investigators of Research Grants



■ Women
■ Men

For administrative positions, the situation is reversed. There are 8 administrative departments at the IOC PAS, of which only one is headed by a man, while the remaining departments are headed by women. The employment structure of administrative positions reflects women's greater interest in supporting positions than in scientific career paths.

> Gender pay gap

The remuneration system for employees at the IOC PAS is defined in the internal remuneration regulations, and the Institute makes every effort to ensure that the rules are transparent and fair. In assessing the differences in salaries between men and women in individual positions, only the basic salary was taken into account, which is the only salary that the Institute has any influence on.

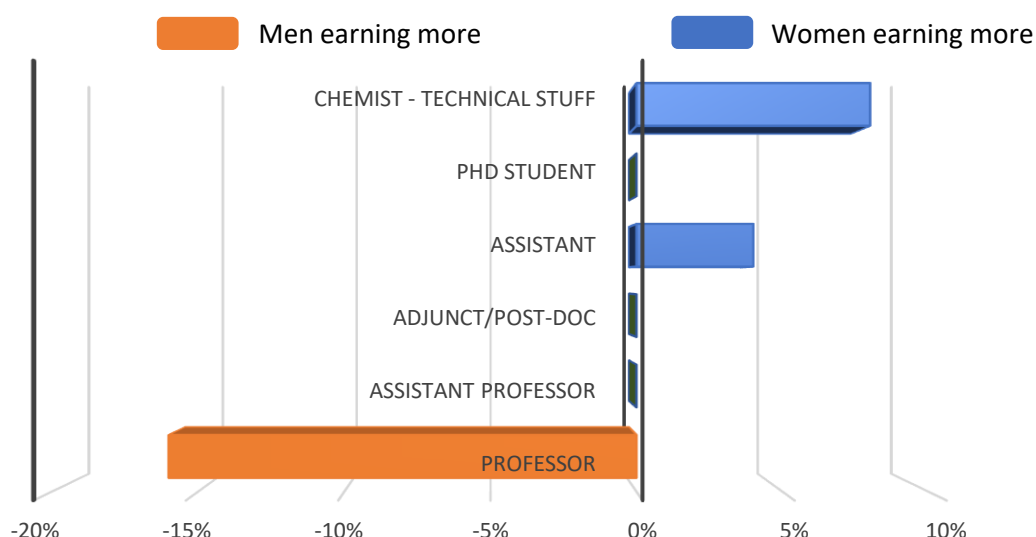


Funds received from grants are not dependent on our unit and are primarily influenced by the career development of the scientist.

In the majority of scientific positions there are no or very small (<10%) differences in salaries according to gender. A standout group is that of professors, where men earn 15% more than women. This difference is mainly due to the longer professional seniority of men in this group (that factor according to Polish law has substantial influence on salary).

In the remaining groups of employees, it is not possible to estimate the differences in remuneration between men and women, as only one gender is employed at a given position. Such a situation occurs in the case of supporting or administrative employees.

Differences in salaries between men and women in scientific positions at the IOC PAS



> Internal survey

In order to assess the situation at the Institute of Organic Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences and diagnose potential problems, a survey on gender equality issues was conducted among all employees in November 2021. The survey was designed to explore the perspective of our employees, and to identify gender differences in perceptions. The questionnaire included questions on general working conditions, work-life balance, gender equality, career development, as well as harassment and mobbing. The survey was fully anonymous and data on gender, age or position were collected for statistical purposes.



The questionnaire was completed by 50% of employees, with a slightly higher participation rate among women than among men (53% vs. 47%). The low participation rate among all employees, as well as the high number of "no opinion" responses to most of the topics discussed, made it clear that the topic of gender equality was not of interest to the majority of employees. **One of the most important conclusions from the analysis of the survey results is that issues related to equal treatment of women and men and subconscious gender biases require to be more widely disseminated among all groups of employees.**

A more detailed analysis of the survey allowed conclusions to be drawn about the specific issues raised in it. The general working conditions at the Institute were rated 3.9 out of 5.0, which gives a good level of job satisfaction at the IOC PAS. The main problem diagnosed in this section is the excessive workload of scientists, which is a common problem throughout the worldwide scientific community. Among researchers, ~55% of the respondents admitted that it is common for them to work more than 10 hours per day or on weekends, with this situation being much more common among men (68%) than among women (43%).

Most of our employees (>79%) are aware of the possibility of flexible or partially remote work. Questions about the ability to combine private life with professional duties received low scores (~2.8 out of 5.0), indicating problems with excessive workload and family responsibilities. The incomplete knowledge of some employees regarding work organization principles is one area for improvement at the Institute.

To diagnose potential problems of our employees in terms of their needs for combining parenting and work, they were asked about possible solutions to facilitate these issues. For a large proportion of them (~40%), the most important thing is the ability to take advantage of flexible working hours, as well as remote working. Employees are less interested in reducing the number of responsibilities or extending the time to perform them (~20%), while adjusting employee evaluation criteria is an important issue for them (~35%). There were no diagnosed differences in perceptions of men and women in this section.

According to the conducted survey, some inequalities in access to various goods for women and men are evident at the Institute. 30% of the respondents believe that career advancement is easier for men than for women. However, their statements suggest that this situation does not result from formal difficulties for any of the genders, but from the traditional division of roles in our society. Comments indicated that it is easier for men to focus on work, while women have to divide their attention between work responsibilities and family roles. Over 70% of employees see no



difference in the allocation of attention from supervisors, the roles of principal investigators, funding, awards or recognition of intellectual contribution between women and men, however those who recognise the difference always choose men as a better treated gender.

In the survey, employees were also asked about issues related to sexual violence, mobbing and microaggression. None of the respondents felt a victim of sexual harassment at the Institute, but about 20% of the employees experienced verbal mobbing or microaggression. To a much greater extent (~40%), this problem is noticeable among foreigners employed at the Institute, which, according to their comments, is often due to cultural differences. The results of the survey clearly confirmed the necessity to conduct trainings on discrimination and to raise employees' awareness of cooperation with people from different backgrounds.

3. GOALS OF THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR THE IOC PAS

An analysis of the internal situation in the Institute of Organic Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences has shown that the Institute experiences gender inequality problems typical of scientific units conducting research in the field of life sciences. **Women's lower interest in pursuing a scientific career results in their underrepresentation in management and decision-making bodies. Difficulty in combining family life with professional responsibilities, especially for women, results in slower career progression.** In addition, some problems related to verbal mobbing and microaggressions do occur at the IOC PAS, which is particularly evident in the recent period in which the Institute is becoming an increasingly international environment.

In order to respond to the problems existing in our unit and to take measures to ensure gender equality in the Institute, a Gender Equality Plan was prepared. The plan includes five main objectives:

- › **GOAL 1: Promoting gender equality and raising awareness about the importance of gender diversity among the employees of the IOC PAS**
- › **GOAL 2: Improving the work environment to facilitate work-life balance**
- › **GOAL 3: Supporting the advancement of women's scientific careers**
- › **GOAL 4: Ensuring gender equality in recruitment processes**
- › **GOAL 5: Increasing representation of women in decision-making bodies, committees and scientific events**



The goals set correspond to improvements to be made by the IOC PAS in every area affecting the creation of a tolerant and inclusive work environment. The comprehensive plan includes creating a friendly organisational culture, improving conditions for work-life balance, ensuring improved gender balance in decision-making bodies and equal treatment of women and men in recruitment processes. Measures against violence or verbal mobbing will be introduced, as well as actions taking into account the gender dimension in research and development.

4. GENDER EQUALITY PLAN – GEP (2022 – 2027)

GOAL 1: Promoting gender equality and raising awareness about the importance of gender diversity among the employees of the IOC PAS

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Timeline</i> | <i>Indicators</i> |
|---|--|-----------------|--|
| Appointment of the Gender Equality Officer (GEO). The main tasks of the GEO will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› ensuring gender-sensitive communication at the IOC PAS› promoting gender equality issues via regular informative actions, dedicated page on the website, newsletters etc.› gathering data on gender equality at the IOC PAS› regular monitoring of GEP implementation | Director of the Institute | IQ 2022 | Position established |
| Creation of a page on the Institute's website dedicated to communicating gender equality content. The content will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› GEP for the IOC PAS› Data and statistics on gender equality in science› Useful resources to raise awareness of the gender equality issues | Gender Equality Officer | I-IIQ 2022 | Gender Equality content available on the website, updated every year |
| External trainings and seminars on gender equality, gender-based violence including sexual harassment and anti-discrimination – conducted by specialists in the field, obligatory for all employees of the IOC PAS <ul style="list-style-type: none">› special emphasis on training for managers and Team Leaders› tailoring the training to the needs of foreigners | Director of the Institute, Gender Equality Officer | 2023 – 2027 | One training per year |



| | | | |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Informative actions about events related to promoting gender equality and diversity, interesting webinars, important scientific publications – encouraging participation and involvement of the IOC PAS employees by sending a newsletter. | Gender Equality Officer | 2022-2027, on regular basis | Increased awareness among employees measured by periodic surveys and consultations |
| Introduction of the internal recommendations on the composition of research teams conducting scientific research – to the extent possible, research teams should be gender balanced, taking into account the constraints of the typical gender distribution in a given research topic. | Director of the Institute | III-IVQ 2022 | Introduction of new recommendations, gender-balanced composition of research teams |

GOAL 2: Improving the work environment to facilitate work-life balance

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Timeline</i> | <i>Indicators</i> |
|---|--|-----------------|---|
| Creation of the Family Friendly Policy – a document specifying internal regulations which facilitate work-life balance. The document will explain: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› conditions of maternity/paternity leaves› possibilities of flexible working hours, home office, part-time work, unpaid leaves etc. | Deputy Director, HR Department | III-IV 2022 | Family Friendly Policy available and disseminated among employees |
| Introducing changes to the hours of meetings of Scientific Council/Committees/Collegiums, to support a work and family life balance. | Director of the Institute | II-IIIQ 2022 | New recommendations introduced by 2023 |
| Amendments to the periodic evaluation system and periodic evaluation forms – introduction of an optional section where employee can specify the amount of time spend on caring duties during the past evaluation period. When evaluating employees only the effective work time should be considered, excluding the time of caring/parental leaves devoted to caring for family members. | Board of Directors, Scientific Council | III-IVQ 2022 | Changes introduced before the next evaluation period |
| Consultations with employees regarding infrastructure needs to facilitate childcare on the premises of the Institute. Discussing possibilities of creating a breastfeeding room, childcare room etc. | Gender Equality Officer | 2022 – 2023 | Opinions enabling future actions collected by the end of 2023 |



GOAL 3: Supporting the advancement of women's scientific careers

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Timeline</i> | <i>Indicators</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Establishing the programme: "Visiting Women Professors" Women Professors will be invited to give lectures at the IOC PAS and inspire young scientists by their own achievements. Lectures will be combined with discussions to allow PhD students to make professional connections with established researchers. | Board of Directors, Secretariat | IIQ 2022 – IVQ 2023 | Number of lectures given by women professors |
| Establishing the programme of financing additional scientific positions for research projects run by the Principal Investigator who is on extended sick leave/maternity leave/paternity leave etc. The aim of the programme is to ensure the proper course of the research project without unnecessary breaks which will facilitate the return of the Principal Investigator to scientific activity. The programme is expected to make it easier for women to combine developing their scientific careers with building families. | Director of the Institute | I-IIQ 2023 | Number of PIs taking part in the programme |
| Inform about and encourage participation in networking groups designed for young female scientists. Sharing experiences in a group of people facing the same career development issues/doubts will make it easier to overcome them. | Gender Equality Officer | 2023 – 2027, on regular basis | Level of participation among our PhD Students/female researchers |

GOAL 4: Ensuring gender equality in recruitment processes

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Timeline</i> | <i>Indicators</i> |
|---|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Appointment of an Impartial Observer who will be present during recruitment processes for senior positions. Main tasks of the Impartial Observer will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› ensuring gender-sensitive communication› ensuring impartial treatment of all candidates› providing feedback to Selection Committees on potential subconscious biases in the recruitment process | Director of the Institute | I-IIQ 2022 | The Impartial Observer present in recruitment processes for senior positions since 2023 |



Introduction of **internal recommendations for the selection of candidates:**

- > to the extent possible, the Selection Committees should ensure gender balance among the Candidates invited for interviews
- > if two Candidates have equal qualifications, it is recommended to select the Candidate of the underrepresented gender in the particular position

Board of
Directors

I-IIQ
2023

Increase in
employment of
the
underrepresented
gender

Active promotion of job offers among women candidates for positions in masculinised areas and men candidates in feminised areas – advertisements through networking groups, dedicated portals, social media groups etc.

HR
Department,
Gender
Equality
Officer

2023 –
2027,
on
regular
basis

Increase in job
applications from
the
underrepresented
gender

GOAL 5: Increasing representation of women in decision-making bodies, committees and scientific events

| <i>Action</i> | <i>Responsibility</i> | <i>Timeline</i> | <i>Indicators</i> |
|--|---|-----------------|---|
| Introduction of internal recommendations regarding participation of women in decision-making bodies. To the extent possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none">> Increasing the representation of women in Scientific Council> Appointing both women and men as chairpersons of decision-making authorities> Ensuring the presence of at least one woman in each Committee | Board of Directors, Scientific Council | I-IIQ 2023 | Increased representation of women in decision-making bodies by 2027 |
| Conducting a focus group study with the underrepresented gender in decision-making bodies. The purpose of the action is to gather perceptions and experiences of the underrepresented group about their treatment/opportunity to speak/respect for opinion by the dominant gender. | Gender Equality Officer | I-IIQ 2024 | Qualitative indicator of equal treatment in decision- making bodies |



5. IMPLEMENTATION AND MONITORING

The implementation of the proposed Gender Equality Plan requires the involvement of various departments in our Institute. **One of the key aspects will be the appointment of a Gender Equality Officer to monitor the proper progress of the tasks undertaken. The aim of the GEO should be to make the activities for equal treatment of women and men one of the strategic goals of the Institute of Organic Chemistry PAS.** The full support of the Board of Directors and decision-making bodies will facilitate the introduction of the plan and the implementation of individual tasks.

> Resources

Implementation of the GEP requires allocating adequate resources, both human and financial. **The Institute will allocate financial resources to implement the plan, including, in particular, funding for anti-discrimination trainings for management and other employees, programmes to support women's career development, and the position of a Gender Equality Officer.** Moreover, in accordance with the Institute's generally accepted policy, additional sources of funding, e.g. in the form of grants, will be sought to enable the Institute to broaden the scope of its gender equality activities.

As our Institute is a small research center, it is not necessary to create a separate department for the purposes of the gender equality issues. **Tasks will be divided among administrative staff, and a Gender Equality Officer will be responsible for their coordination.** The expected aggregate commitment of employees to gender issues will not exceed one FTE, and employees will receive performance bonuses for their work.

> Indicators

To track the gender-related changes over time at the IOC PAS, the gender-sensitive indicators will be monitored. **The assessment of the situation will be based on quantitative indicators in the form of gender-disaggregated data.** The monitored data will include in particular:

- > Percentage of women/men in each position
- > Differences in salaries for each position
- > Recruitment statistics – number of applications from each gender, number of women and men recruited for each position



- › Statistics on PhD Students – number of applicants for admission, number of students admitted, number of students who completed their doctorate
- › Grant application statistics – number of people applying for internal/external grants
- › Career development statistics – number of people promoted, awarded with internal awards etc.

Data will be collected on a continuous basis and presented in the form of annual reports.

In addition to quantitative indicators, qualitative indicators will be considered. **Qualitative data will be based on the perceptions and experiences of individual employees monitored through regular focus groups meetings and anonymous surveys.** Particular attention will be paid to monitoring the quality of women's participation in decision-making bodies and their role as Team Leaders. Additionally, qualitative indicators will include factors such as examining the level of satisfaction with gender equality and anti-discrimination trainings, an assessment of the use of non-discriminatory language and willingness to use the solutions introduced by the GEP.

› Time horizon

The Gender Equality Plan is developed for a period of 5 years. The Institute believes that this is the minimum amount of time necessary to implement extensive changes in our unit. **The plan will be evaluated at mid-implementation, in 2025.** Necessary changes and modifications can be made at this stage.