



Institute of Organic Chemistry
Polish Academy of Sciences

**Report on the implementation of
the Gender Equality Plan**

2022 – 2027

March 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

In January 2022, the Institute of Organic Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences (IOC PAS) adopted its first comprehensive Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for the years 2022–2027. The GEP reflects the Institute's long-term commitment to creating a workplace in which all employees – regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, or sexual orientation – enjoy equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities.

The Plan provides a structured framework for identifying and addressing gender-based inequalities, eliminating bias, and promoting diversity and inclusion in all areas of the Institute's operations. It is based on the principles of non-discrimination, equal treatment, and respect for diversity, and covers the full scope of professional activity – from recruitment and career progression to leadership opportunities and work–life balance.

Implementation began immediately after adoption, with actions focused on:

- › Raising awareness of gender issues and unconscious bias;
- › Supporting the participation of women in decision-making bodies;
- › Providing mentoring, training, and transparent evaluation processes;
- › Introducing family-friendly measures and embedding gender-sensitive approaches in institutional regulations and practices.

This report covers the period from March 2023 to March 2025. Its purpose is twofold: to present the progress made in implementing the GEP during this period and to inform the update of the Plan itself. The findings and conclusions drawn from the analysis have been used to revise and strengthen the Gender Equality Plan for the years 2025–2027, ensuring that future actions are even more closely aligned with the Institute's strategic goals for equality, diversity, and inclusion.

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

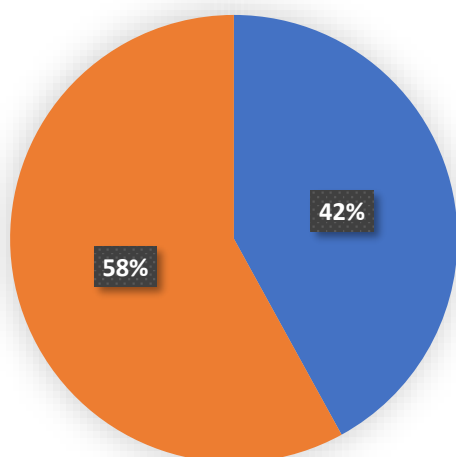
> IOC PAS in numbers

At the end of March 2025, the composition of employment at IOC PAS was as follows:

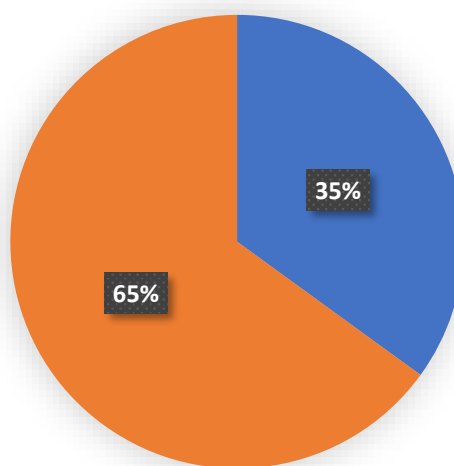
TABLE 1. Employment structure at the IOC PAS (as of the end of March 2025).

	Women		Men		Percentage of all employees
Administrative employees	19	83%	4	17%	12%
Supporting employees	5	62.5%	3	37.5%	4%
Chemists – technical employees	15	71%	6	29%	11%
PhD Students	19	39%	30	61%	26%
Assistants	12	29%	29	71%	22%
Adjuncts/Post-docs	8	29%	20	71%	15%
Assistant Professors	0	0%	6	100%	3%
Professors	2	15%	11	85%	7%

IOC PAS employees



IOC PAS researchers



Although the overall gender distribution among all IOC PAS employees may initially appear balanced – with women representing approximately **42% of the total workforce in 2025**, compared to **46% in 2023** – this apparent parity is largely influenced by the **high concentration of women in administrative and support roles**, where female representation remains dominant. In contrast, **scientific positions, particularly at senior levels, continue to be predominantly held by**



men. This imbalance across employment categories contributes to an institutional structure where gender equality is still lacking, both among scientific staff and the overall employee base.

When focusing solely on the scientific staff (excluding administrative and technical employees), the gender disparity becomes even more evident. In 2025, **women make up only around 35% of researchers**, marking a slight decline from **38% in 2023**. This decrease reflects the persistent overrepresentation of men in research-intensive roles, especially in advanced academic positions. While women are still visibly present among PhD students and postdoctoral researchers, their numbers drop sharply at higher levels of the academic ladder. This uneven distribution not only limits career progression for women but also affects the overall gender composition of the Institute's workforce.

The employment structure at IOC PAS continues to change gradually, in line with the Institute's long-term strategy for achieving gender balance. While no dramatic shifts were observed between 2023 and 2025, the data reflects **incremental changes** in selected employment categories and underscores structural **challenges that remain**.

The **total number of employees has remained essentially stable** (188 in February 2023 vs. 189 in March 2025), which reflects workforce continuity, alongside **minor fluctuations in job categories and gender proportions**. Within this stable context, several notable changes can be identified:

- › **A decrease in the number of assistants** (from 46 to 41 employees), accompanied by a drop in the percentage of women in this group from 39% to 29%. This shift is primarily due to a structural change in how doctoral students are employed – while in 2023 some PhD candidates held part-time assistant contracts, by 2025 this practice had been discontinued. This adjustment applies uniformly to all doctoral students, regardless of gender, and reflects a systemic change in the Institute's employment policy rather than any gender-related factor.
- › **Slight changes in the proportion of women among chemists–technical employees (from 67% to 71%) and administrative staff (from 87% to 83%)** resulted from natural turnover – such as individual resignations and replacements – and do not indicate any specific trend related to gender equality.
- › **A decrease in the percentage of women among PhD students** (from 49% in 2023 to 39% in 2025), partially reversing earlier progress toward gender parity. This outcome appears to be linked to recent recruitment rounds, where a higher number of male candidates met the selection criteria. Despite ongoing efforts to encourage women to apply – through gender-sensitive communication and internal recommendations promoting equal opportunity – the



final recruitment outcomes depended largely on the specific applicant pools and the relative strength of individual candidates.

- › **The number of assistant professors remained unchanged in terms of gender** (0% women, 100% men), highlighting the persistent challenge of the so-called "leaky pipeline." Similarly, no improvement was observed in the representation of women among professors or principal investigators. However, the proportion of women in postdoctoral positions did rise slightly – from 24% in 2023 to 29% in 2025 – which may indicate a slow, positive shift in the medium-term outlook for gender equity at senior research levels.

The **"leaky pipeline" diagrams from 2023 and 2025** continue to illustrate the entrenched gender imbalance in academic career progression at IOC PAS. In both years, women represented a substantial share of early-stage researchers – **49% of PhD students in 2023 and 39% in 2025** – but their representation **declines consistently with each career stage**.

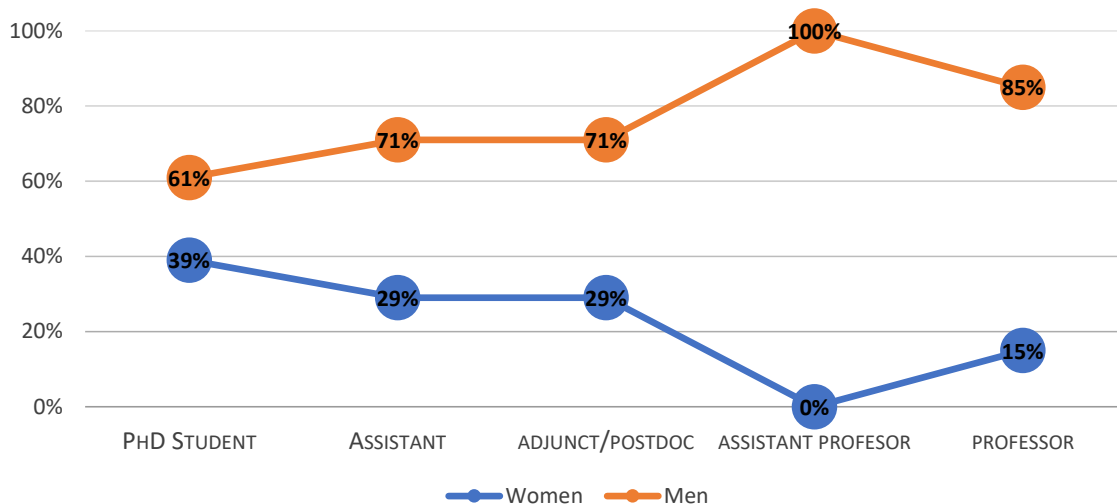
The most significant drops are observed in the transition from doctoral studies to assistant and adjunct positions, and again from adjunct to professorial levels. In 2025, **women represent only 29% of assistants and post-docs, 0% of assistant professors, and just 15% of full professors**. These numbers have remained largely unchanged since 2023, indicating that **structural barriers and unequal retention continue to affect female researchers disproportionately**.

The **modest increase in the share of women at the postdoctoral level** is encouraging, yet insufficient to alter the broader trend. The continued absence of women in assistant professor roles, in particular, emphasizes the **long-term nature of academic advancement** and the inertia of institutional systems.

Overall, the diagrams reflect **deep-rooted patterns in academic career development**, where significant change – especially at the assistant professor and professor levels – **cannot be expected over a short timeframe**. Advancement to senior academic positions typically spans over a decade, making structural change a gradual process. At IOC PAS, we recognize this reality and continue to focus on **expanding the pool of women in science** through inclusive recruitment practices and by supporting early-career researchers in building sustainable academic paths. By strengthening representation at the base of the academic pipeline today, we lay the foundation for achieving gender balance at higher levels in the years to come.

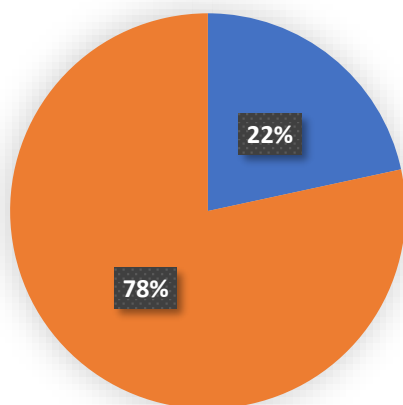


Proportion of women and men in scientific positions at the IOC PAS

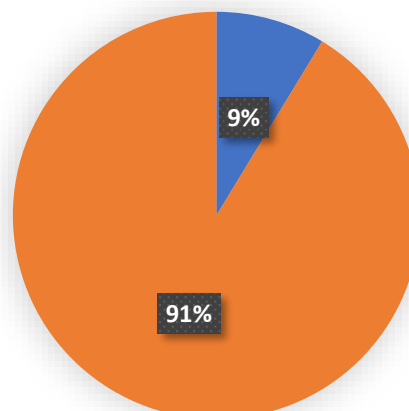


The underrepresentation of women is also evident in leadership and governance structures within the Institute. The proportion of female Principal Investigators remains low, reflecting ongoing barriers to achieving research independence and leading projects – challenges often rooted in earlier stages of career attrition. A similar imbalance persists among Group Leaders, where male dominance has remained largely unchanged since 2023. This highlights the need for sustained institutional support in the form of mentoring and leadership development opportunities, particularly for women transitioning from postdoctoral roles to independent research careers. Furthermore, the Scientific Council continues to be composed predominantly of men, a direct consequence of the limited presence of women at the associate professor and professor levels. As council membership is closely tied to academic seniority, achieving balance in decision-making bodies will require long-term efforts aimed at supporting and promoting women to the highest academic ranks.

Scientific Council

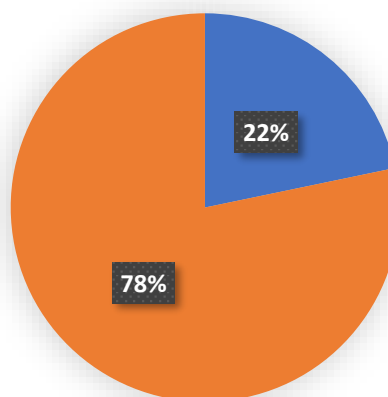


Research Group Leaders



■ Women
■ Men

Principal Investigators of Research Grants



■ Women
■ Men

› Gender pay gap

Between February 2023 and March 2025, the average salaries in all job categories increased as a result of general pay scale adjustments related to the increase of the professor's salary and the statutory minimum wage, in line with Polish labour regulations. This process applies equally to all employees in the same position and is entirely independent of gender.

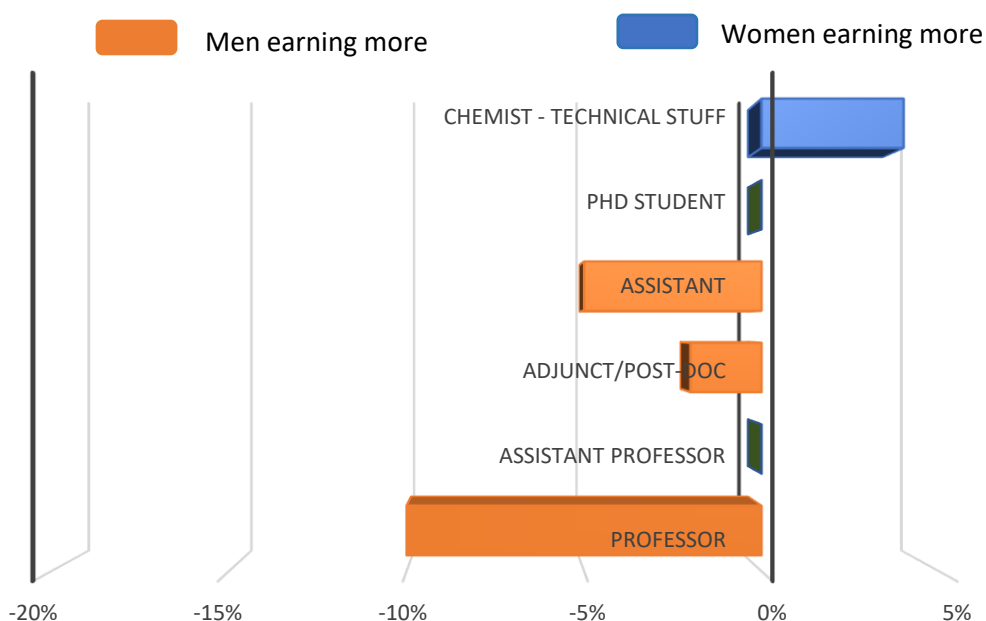
A comparison of gender pay gap data for 2023 and 2025 shows the following changes:

- **Professor** – gap decreased from -16% in 2023 to -10% in 2025 (improvement of 6 pp in favour of women).
- **Assistant Professor** – no gap in either year (0%).
- **Adjunct/Post-doc** – gap increased from 0% to -2% (decline of 2 pp in favour of men).



- **Assistant** – in 2023 women earned 4% more, whereas in 2025 men earned 5% more (net change of 9 pp in favour of men).
- **PhD Student** – no gap in either year (0%).
- **Chemist – technical staff** – gap decreased from 8% to 4% (improvement of 4 pp, reducing the advantage of men).

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



The 2025 update confirms that the Institute's salary structure is fundamentally aligned with position-related pay scales, independent of gender, and that all employees benefited from overall salary increases due to regulatory changes in the professor's base salary and the national minimum wage. Nevertheless, the evolution of the gender pay gap across categories offers valuable insight into underlying dynamics.

The narrowing of disparities in the **Professor** and **Chemist – technical staff** categories is a positive indicator, suggesting that turnover, promotions, or targeted adjustments can have a tangible equalising effect at both senior academic and technical levels. These improvements demonstrate that gender-neutral pay policies, when combined with regular salary scale updates, can gradually reduce historical pay differences.

Conversely, the marked reversal in the **Assistant** category — from a 4% advantage for women in 2023 to a 5% advantage for men in 2025 — points to how relatively small personnel changes in a given year can significantly shift averages in smaller employment groups. This underscores the importance of monitoring not just structural pay policy but also the gender composition within



each category, particularly in early-career positions that form the entry point to academic progression.

The slight widening of the gap in the **Adjunct/Post-doc** group likewise suggests that postdoctoral mobility, grant-based employment, and replacement contracts can subtly alter pay averages even without any change in institutional policy.

Overall, while the salary differences remain relatively small and within the expected range of normal statistical variation, these shifts reveal that maintaining gender pay parity is not a static achievement but an ongoing process. Continuous monitoring, combined with transparent promotion and recruitment practices, is essential to ensure that structural pay adjustments and staffing changes do not inadvertently create or reinforce disparities over time.

› **Awards and distinctions**

Each year, the Institute grants the Director's Prizes for scientific activity, based on objective criteria derived from self-reported achievements in annual scientific accomplishment surveys completed by employees. This mechanism ensures that awards are grounded in verifiable research output and applies uniformly across all scientific and technical categories.

When examining the gender distribution of recipients in the context of the overall staff structure, the results reveal both areas of strong female representation and categories where recognition remains male-dominated.

- › In the **Professors' category**, where women represent only 15% of the staff, their share of awards rose from 25% in 2023 (1 of 4 awards) to 50% in 2024 (2 of 4 awards). This increase indicates that female professors are achieving recognition at a rate higher than their proportion in the group, suggesting equitable – and in 2024, above-proportional – acknowledgement of their work.
- › In the **Habilitated Doctor/Assistant Professor category**, women are absent from the staff structure, and correspondingly, both 2023 and 2024 awards went to male researchers. This reflects a structural absence rather than a disparity in recognition.
- › At earlier career stages, the patterns vary. In the **Assistant/Adjunct category** in 2023, women comprised 29% of assistants and 29% of adjunct/post-docs combined, yet received 40% of the awards (2 out of 5 recipients), showing proportionally strong performance. The **Young Scientist Award** went to men in both years; given that men outnumber women in the assistant group and dominate postdoctoral positions, this outcome is consistent with the current staff composition, though it highlights the need to strengthen pathways for promising female early-career researchers to attain such distinctions.



- › In the **Chemists – technical staff** category, women form a majority (71% in 2025) and received both available awards in 2023 and 2024 (100%). This complete alignment suggests that recognition here reflects the gender composition of the group.
- › For **Doctoral Students**, women's share of awards exceeded or matched their representation: in 2023, with women making up 49% of PhD candidates, they received 50% of the awards (1 of 2), and in 2024, with the same 49% staff representation, they received 67% (2 of 3). The introduction in 2024 of the **Award for Outstanding Defended Doctoral Thesis** went to a male researcher, reflecting the distribution of doctoral graduates in that cycle rather than an imbalance in selection.

The award data, when adjusted for the actual gender composition in each employment category, indicate that recognition is generally equitable and, in several cases, disproportionately favourable to women relative to their share in the staff structure – notably among professors, assistants/adjuncts, chemists, and doctoral students. The areas of persistent male dominance in awards (Habilitation Doctor, Young Scientist) correspond directly to categories where female representation in the workforce is minimal or absent. These findings suggest that the main barrier is not bias in the award process but the underlying structural gender imbalance in certain career stages, underscoring the importance of long-term measures to increase the pool of eligible female candidates in senior and early-career competitive categories.

› **Recruitment processes**

Between March 2023 and March 2025, IOC PAS conducted multiple recruitment rounds across scientific and support positions, including six open calls for the Doctoral School. The analysis of these processes reveals several key patterns relevant to gender equality in hiring outcomes.

Postdoctoral researcher positions were the most frequently recruited group, with **33 recruitment processes for 36 available positions**. A total of **513 applications** were received, including **108 from women (21%)** and **405 from men (79%)**. In the second stage of selection (typically interviews), **116 candidates** were invited – **30 women (26%)** and **86 men (74%)**. Ultimately, **33 candidates were hired** (3 processes closed without a selected candidate), including **8 women (24%)** and **25 men (76%)**. While these proportions are consistent with the gender ratio in the applicant pool, they also reflect the continued underrepresentation of women in postdoctoral applications, despite no apparent gender bias in the selection process itself. As part of the Gender Equality Plan, in May 2023 changes were introduced to the recruitment regulations for academic positions, stipulating that when candidates from an underrepresented gender receive comparable evaluation scores,



they must also be invited to interviews, which has slightly increased the number of women invited (26%) compared to their share in the applications (21%).

For **adjunct, one recruitment process** was conducted, which resulted in the selection of a male candidate. No applications from women were received. Similarly, in the single recruitment process for a **professor position** and another for **lab manager**, no female candidates applied, and both roles were filled by male researchers. These cases highlight a structural issue – limited representation of women in applicant pools for senior or managerial scientific roles – rather than bias at the selection stage.

In contrast, **six recruitments were held for assistant positions**, which yielded more balanced outcomes. A total of **60 applications** were received – **20 from women (33%)** and **40 from men (67%)**. Eleven candidates were interviewed (5 women and 6 men), and **six individuals were offered positions** (4 women, 2 men). The data suggest a relatively equitable selection process and a promising level of interest among women in early-stage academic roles.

Regarding **doctoral school recruitment, six rounds were conducted** during the reporting period:

- **May 2023:** 65 applications (43% women), 5 admitted (4 men, 1 woman)
- **July 2023:** 100 applications (29% women), 5 admitted (4 men, 1 woman)
- **December 2023:** 74 applications (39% women), no admissions
- **May 2024:** 82 applications (35% women), 8 admitted (5 men, 3 women)
- **July 2024:** 80 applications (35% women), 6 admitted (5 men, 1 woman)
- **December 2024:** 125 applications (33% women), 4 admitted (2 men, 2 women)

Across all six rounds, a total of **526 applications** were submitted, including **184 from women (35%)** and **342 from men (65%)**. Of the **28 admitted doctoral students, 9 were women (32%)** and **19 men (68%)**. The outcomes align broadly with the gender ratio of applicants, but also indicate that **men continue to dominate both in number and selection**, despite ongoing institutional efforts to encourage women to apply. As a result, men now constitute 61% of the current doctoral student cohort, whereas in March 2023 the gender ratio for this position was nearly balanced.

Overall, the recruitment data from 2023–2025 suggest that **gender proportions in hiring largely reflect applicant pool composition**, rather than biased selection. However, in many scientific categories – particularly at senior levels – the **low number of female applicants** significantly limits the potential for balanced outcomes. This underlines the importance of long-term, proactive measures aimed at **increasing the participation of women in science**, especially in advanced academic stages. Encouragingly, more equitable results are observable at the assistant level, where



women remain active and competitive candidates, offering a hopeful foundation for future change in the academic pipeline.

3. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN IN THE IOC PAS

In the period from March 2023 to March 2025, the Institute continued the systematic implementation of the adopted Gender Equality Plan (GEP), introducing new measures and strengthening existing initiatives to promote equal opportunities and inclusivity in the academic environment. The most significant actions undertaken during this period include:

› **Amendments to recruitment regulations for academic positions**

In May 2023, the Institute introduced formal amendments to its recruitment regulations aimed at fostering gender balance at all stages of the selection process. The revised rules stipulate that the list of candidates invited to the second stage of recruitment must take into account the need to maintain gender balance. This principle does not apply only in cases where:

- a) no applications are received from candidates of a given gender; or
- b) the scores obtained by candidates of a given gender are significantly (at least 1 point) lower than the score of the top-ranked candidate.

Furthermore, when candidates of different genders receive a comparable total evaluation score from the Selection Committee, the candidate representing the underrepresented gender for the given position should be recommended for appointment. These changes have already led to a slight increase in the proportion of women invited to interviews compared to their share in the applicant pool.

› **Inclusion of career interruptions in the four-year periodic staff evaluation**

As part of the four-year periodic staff evaluation conducted at the end of 2024, employees were given the opportunity to indicate significant interruptions to their scientific work (e.g. maternity, paternity or caregiving responsibilities) that affected the actual time devoted to research activities. This adjustment ensures that the evaluation process reflects the effective research time rather than the entire calendar period, thereby creating a fairer assessment framework.

› **Specialist lectures and trainings on equality and intercultural communication**

As part of the Institute's efforts to raise awareness, build competencies, and embed inclusive practices into everyday scientific work, two dedicated training events were organised in the period from March 2023 to March 2025, offered to all Institute employees as well as to all PhD students of the Doctoral School.



- **Training on intercultural communication (November 2023)**

The training offered to all PhD students of the Doctoral School was led by **Dr. Magdalena Żadkowska** (sociologist, researcher, trainer) and **Prof. Natasza Kosakowska-Berezecka** (DI and Gender Equality expert, motivational speaker, trainer, HR consultant and mediator). During the webinar, participants learned about:

- acculturation and why integration is the most effective acculturation strategy for individuals and organisations,
- understanding cultural differences through academic case studies,
- intercultural communication in challenging situations,
- the benefits of building a conscious and competent host community.

- **Specialist lecture on gender equality in science (March 2025)**

Delivered by gender equality expert **Dr. Monika Ryndzionek**, the lecture focused on how to effectively integrate the gender perspective into scientific research and why such integration is crucial. The session addressed both the broader importance of gender equality in science and its tangible impact on research quality, competitiveness, and societal relevance. Particular attention was given to the practical application of gender-sensitive approaches in the preparation of research proposals, with examples relevant to both European and national funding schemes. This made the event especially valuable for researchers seeking to strengthen their grant applications.

Both events provided practical knowledge and skills, directly supporting our strategic goal of promoting gender equality, intercultural understanding, and inclusive excellence in science.

› **Update of the gender equality section on the Institute's website**

The gender equality section on the Institute's main website has been updated and now contains comprehensive information on the Institute's Gender Equality Plan and its implementation. The section, available in both Polish and English, includes:

- the full text of the GEP,
- periodic reports on its implementation,
- information on relevant national and European documents and initiatives,
- resources such as the Family-Friendly Policy document and details of the programme supporting replacement positions during long-term absences,
- announcements and summaries of lectures and events related to gender equality in science.



The page serves as a central point for accessing both internal policies and external resources, ensuring staff and visitors have up-to-date information on gender equality measures at the Institute.

› **Development of a Family-Friendly Policy**

The Institute prepared a comprehensive document outlining the rights and benefits available to parents in Poland, covering both those arising from national policies and those offered specifically by the Institute. This resource is particularly valuable for international employees unfamiliar with Polish regulations. The policy also serves as a reference point for staff planning career and family responsibilities, and is publicly accessible on the Institute's website.

› **Introduction of a co-financing programme for replacement positions during long-term absences**

In parallel with the Family-Friendly Policy, the Institute established a programme to fund additional research positions in cases where research group leaders or grant holders take extended leave, particularly related to parenthood. This measure aims to maintain the continuity of research projects during such absences, ensuring that teams remain operational and project deadlines are met without compromising scientific output.

› **Visiting Women Professors Programme**

The programme "*Visiting Women Professors*" was planned for implementation in 2023. However, in practice no female professors were invited that year, resulting in 0 women among 25 guest speakers (0%). The situation improved in 2024, when 5 out of 25 invited guests were women, corresponding to 20%. The invitation of female professors will continue to be a priority in the coming years. It should be noted, however, that the overall representation of women in chemistry at the highest levels of academic careers is estimated at around 30%. For this reason, sustaining a high proportion of female guest professors remains challenging, yet the Institute is committed to strengthening their representation whenever possible.

The above measures reflect the Institute's ongoing commitment to systematically implementing the GEP, addressing both structural and cultural aspects of gender equality. The actions taken between March 2023 and March 2025 not only respond to identified needs but also contribute to creating a more inclusive and supportive environment for all staff, regardless of gender or personal circumstances.



4. UPDATED GENDER EQUALITY PLAN – GEP (2025 – 2027)

The following section provides a consolidated overview of the actions included in the Gender Equality Plan (GEP), presenting their current status and recommendations for the future. In addition, based on the analysis of progress and challenges observed after three years of GEP implementation, a set of new actions has been proposed. These measures are intended to further strengthen the Institute's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion by enhancing staff engagement, increasing the visibility of gender equality issues, and embedding them more effectively into everyday scientific practice.

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

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators
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
STATUS: Implemented on time, the GEO has been active since 2022 and prepares monitoring reports. <i>Recommendation: continue the role with stable resources and visibility in 2025–2027.</i>			
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
STATUS: Implemented and regularly updated (policy documents, reports, events). <i>Recommendation: maintain updates and add more dynamic content such as interviews or best practices.</i>			



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
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STATUS: Only partially implemented; communication activities exist but irregular.
Recommendation: establish a fixed schedule (e.g. biannual newsletters or seminars).

External trainings and seminars on gender equality and anti-discrimination –

conducted by specialists in the field, obligatory for all employees of the IOC PAS

- › 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

STATUS: Implemented partially – two trainings have been organised so far (in 2023 and 2025), which shows progress but does not yet meet the requirement of annual implementation.
Recommendation: introduce a fixed schedule to ensure at least one mandatory training every year, with tailored sessions for PIs and doctoral candidates.

NEW ACTION! International Day Visibility

– short communication actions and awareness campaigns organised around key international dates related to equality and diversity (e.g. International Day of Women and Girls in Science – 11 February, International Women’s Day – 8 March). Activities may include:

- › posts on the Institute’s website and social media,
- › short info-mail or newsletter to staff with a fact or inspiring example,
- › displaying a poster or infographic in the Institute’s common spaces.

Gender Equality Officer

2025-2027 (each February/March)

Two communication actions organised in total: one in 2026 and one in 2027

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

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators
Creation of the Family Friendly Policy – a document specifying internal regulations which facilitate work-life balance. The document will explain:	Deputy Director, HR Department	III-IV 2022	Family Friendly Policy available and disseminated among employees



- › conditions of maternity/paternity leaves
- › possibilities of flexible working hours, home office, part-time work, unpaid leaves etc.

STATUS: Implemented, published in 2025 including replacement positions. *Recommendation: review and update the policy every two years to keep it effective.*

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

STATUS: Implemented as a recommendation and already in practice. *Recommendation: maintain the rule of family-friendly hours (e.g. 9:00–16:00) and continue monitoring compliance.*

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

STATUS: Implemented in 2024, interruptions are now considered. *Recommendation: ensure evaluators are trained on applying this fairly and monitor its impact.*

Consultations with employees regarding infrastructure needs to facilitate childcare on the premises of the Institute. Discussing possibilities of creating a breastfeeding room, child care room etc.

Gender
Equality
Officer

2022 –
2023

Opinions enabling
future actions
collected by the
end of 2023

STATUS: Consultations were held in 2023 and 2024 as informal discussions. It was concluded that dedicated childcare rooms are not required. To support the combination of professional and private responsibilities, employees who face unexpected care needs may bring their child to the administration building, where the child can stay while the parent completes work duties. In addition, remote work is always possible whenever necessary and compatible with the proper performance of tasks, in line with the Polish remote work law introduced in 2023. Therefore, this action has been removed from the updated plan.

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

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators
Establishing the programme: “Visiting Women Professors”	Board of	IIQ 2022	Number of
Women Professors will be invited to give lectures at the IOC PAS and inspire young scientists by their own achievements. Lectures will be	Directors, Secretariat	– IVQ 2023	lectures given by women professors



combined with discussions to allow PhD students to make professional connections with established researchers.

STATUS: Delayed; no women in 2023, 5/25 (20%) in 2024. *Recommendation: continue with a realistic target of $\geq 20\%$ women annually, aligning with the $\sim 30\%$ global share at senior level.*

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.

Director of
the Institute

I-IIQ
2023

Number of PIs
taking part in
the programme

The programme is expected to make it easier for women to combine developing their scientific careers with building families.

STATUS: Implemented – the programme was introduced in March 2025 and is already available to Principal Investigators taking extended leave.

Recommendation: Monitor the actual demand and usage of the programme to assess whether it effectively addresses researchers' needs. Regular evaluation will help determine if adjustments are required and ensure that the programme remains a meaningful form of support.

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

STATUS: Not implemented. *Recommendation: The Gender Equality Officer should monitor available networking initiatives for young female scientists (both national and international) and inform IOC PAS PhD students and researchers about them through the newsletter.*

NEW ACTION! Establish clear and transparent criteria for academic promotions – prepare and publish a document outlining the requirements and procedures for promotion to each scientific position at IOC PAS. The criteria should be specific, measurable, and communicated to all staff in order to increase transparency and predictability of career progression. This measure will also help reduce the risk of unconscious bias in promotion decisions.

Board of
Directors,
Scientific
Council

III-IVQ
2026

Document with
promotion
criteria officially
adopted and
accessible to all
employees



GOAL 4: Ensuring gender equality in recruitment processes

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators
Appointment of an Impartial Observer who will be present during each recruitment process. 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 all recruitment processes since 2023
STATUS: Not implemented so far, mainly due to difficulties in identifying a person who could dedicate sufficient time to act as an Impartial Observer during recruitment procedures. <i>Recommendation:</i> As a pilot in 2026, the Gender Equality Officer will participate in several recruitment processes to test the feasibility and usefulness of this role. Based on the outcomes, a decision will be made on whether to institutionalise the practice in the following years.			
Introduction of internal recommendations for the selection of candidates: <ul style="list-style-type: none">› 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
STATUS: Implemented; preference given to underrepresented gender in case of equal score. <i>Recommendation:</i> monitor outcomes annually to assess real impact on recruitment balance.			
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
STATUS: Partially implemented. Since 2023, the Institute has significantly increased the publication of job advertisements through social media channels such as Instagram and Facebook. Particular attention is paid to ensuring gender-neutral language and visual presentation in all announcements. These actions have broadened outreach and improved visibility of openings, but so far they have been limited mainly to general platforms.			



Recommendation: In the next period, efforts should be strengthened by actively promoting job advertisements via dedicated networks such as Women in Science and the European Platform of Women Scientists. In addition, job postings should explicitly include a statement encouraging both genders and candidates from underrepresented groups to apply. This dual approach will help reach a more targeted audience and increase the likelihood of attracting a more balanced pool of applicants.

NEW ACTION! Bias Awareness Card for Selection Committees – prepare a short, one-page checklist for recruitment committee members with examples of common unconscious biases (e.g. undervaluing CVs with career breaks, gendered stereotypes in evaluating leadership potential). The card will be distributed to each committee member before interviews begin, serving as a quick reminder to ensure fair and gender-sensitive assessment.	Gender Equality Officer	I-IIQ 2026	Bias Awareness Card prepared and made available in 2026, distributed in 100% of recruitment processes from mid-2026 onwards
NEW ACTION! Gender-Balanced Job Images – include photos or graphics in job advertisements (on the Institute's website, EURAXESS, social media etc.) that depict both women and men in scientific roles. This provides a clear visual message that candidates of all genders are equally welcome.	HR Department, Social Media Officer	2026–2027, for every job advertisement	All job advertisements accompanied by at least one gender-balanced visual

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

Action	Responsibility	Timeline	Indicators
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	Representation of women in decision-making bodies at least at the level of 35% by 2027
STATUS: Implemented partially. While women remain significantly underrepresented in the Scientific Council and among Principal Investigators – areas where achieving balance will necessarily take longer due to the structural composition of senior academic staff – the situation in committees is more favourable. On average, women constitute around 33% of members of			



recruitment committees, and in some cases their share reaches as high as 66%. Importantly, at least one woman is always included in every committee. In the most influential committees, such as the Committee for Doctoral Proceedings and Education (28% women) and the Committee for Scientific Staff Evaluation (33% women), female representation is also ensured. This indicates progress in committee participation, even if overall institutional parity is not yet achieved. *Recommendation: Further efforts should focus on steadily increasing the share of women in all committees, with particular emphasis on key decision-making bodies. Monitoring these proportions annually will help track incremental improvements and maintain inclusive representation across different levels of governance.*

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

STATUS: Although formal focus groups were not organised, informal discussions were conducted by the Gender Equality Officer with female professors who most frequently participate in various committees and are also members of the Scientific Council. Their feedback was very positive – they reported no problems with being heard, their opinions are respected, and overall they assess the atmosphere in decision-making bodies as inclusive.

Recommendation: No corrective measures are required at this stage; continue maintaining open channels of communication to ensure that this positive situation is sustained.

NEW ACTION! Rotating meeting chairs – introduce an informal system of rotating the role of chairperson in Institute meetings and committees (including smaller working groups), to ensure that both women and men regularly take on leadership roles. This will allow more balanced visibility, help develop leadership skills among a wider group of employees, and prevent concentration of influence in the hands of a few individuals.

Board of
Directors,
Gender
Equality
Officer
(monitoring)

2025-
2027

Rotation of
chairing duties
introduced in at
least three
committees by
2027