Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of St. Anna Children's Cancer Research Institute (CCRI)

1. Introduction

(Gender) Equality and diversity are important values of CCRI. At CCRI, we value diversity and are committed to providing a work environment of mutual respect to everyone regardless of ethnicity, religion, national origin, age, gender identity or expression, disability, or any other characteristic protected by applicable laws, regulations and ordinances. (Gender) Equality and diversity benefits research and innovation by improving the quality and relevance of research, generating more ideas and bringing awareness to overlooked scientific questions, attracting and retaining more (international) talent, and ensuring that every employee at the institute can maximize their potential.
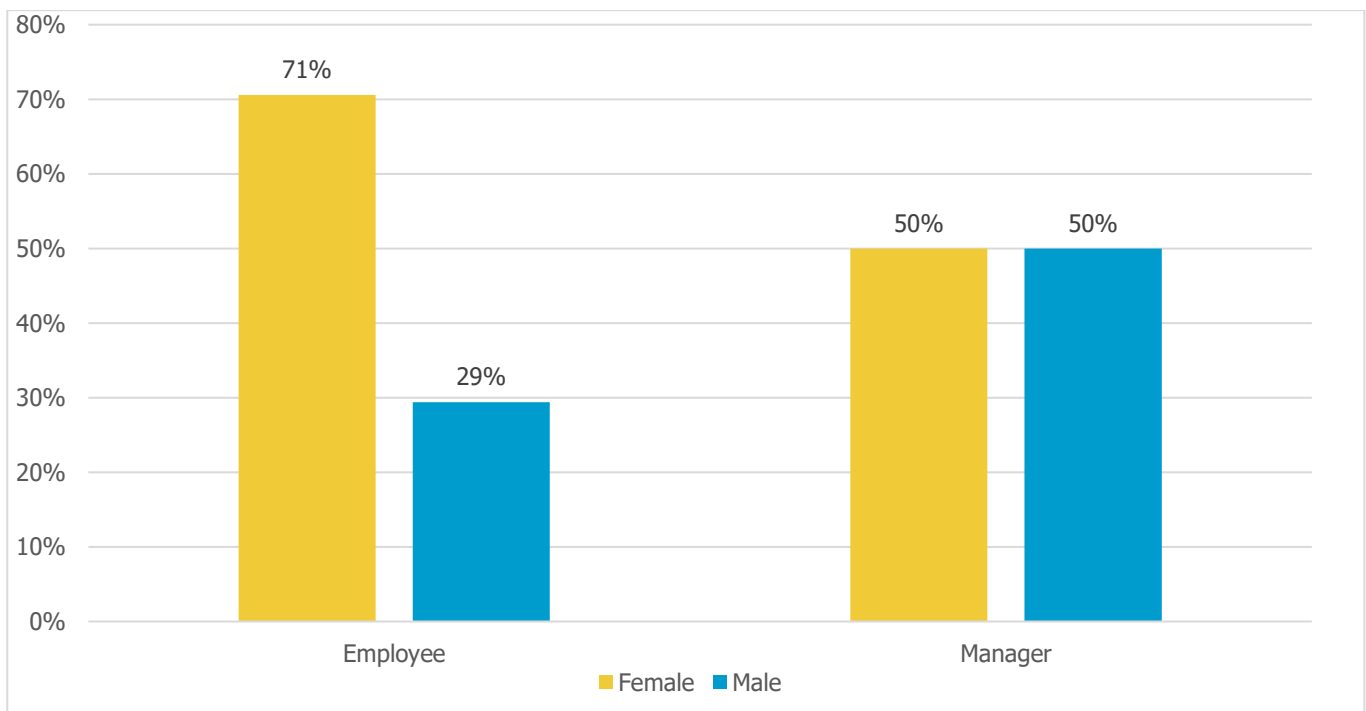
A GEP is a **set of commitments and actions** that aim to **promote gender equality** in an organisation through a process of structural change. GEPs aim to promote gender equality through the sustainable transformation of organisational processes, cultures and structures that produce and sustain gender imbalances and inequalities. GEPs should address not only an organisation's visible structure and practices (such as policies and procedures), but also consider how to evolve espoused values (what people say they believe) and underlying assumptions (unconscious bias, thoughts, and feelings), including in the production of knowledge and its applications. [1]

In terms of the content, it is recommended by Horizon Europe that a GEP addresses the following **5 thematic areas**, using concrete measures and targets:

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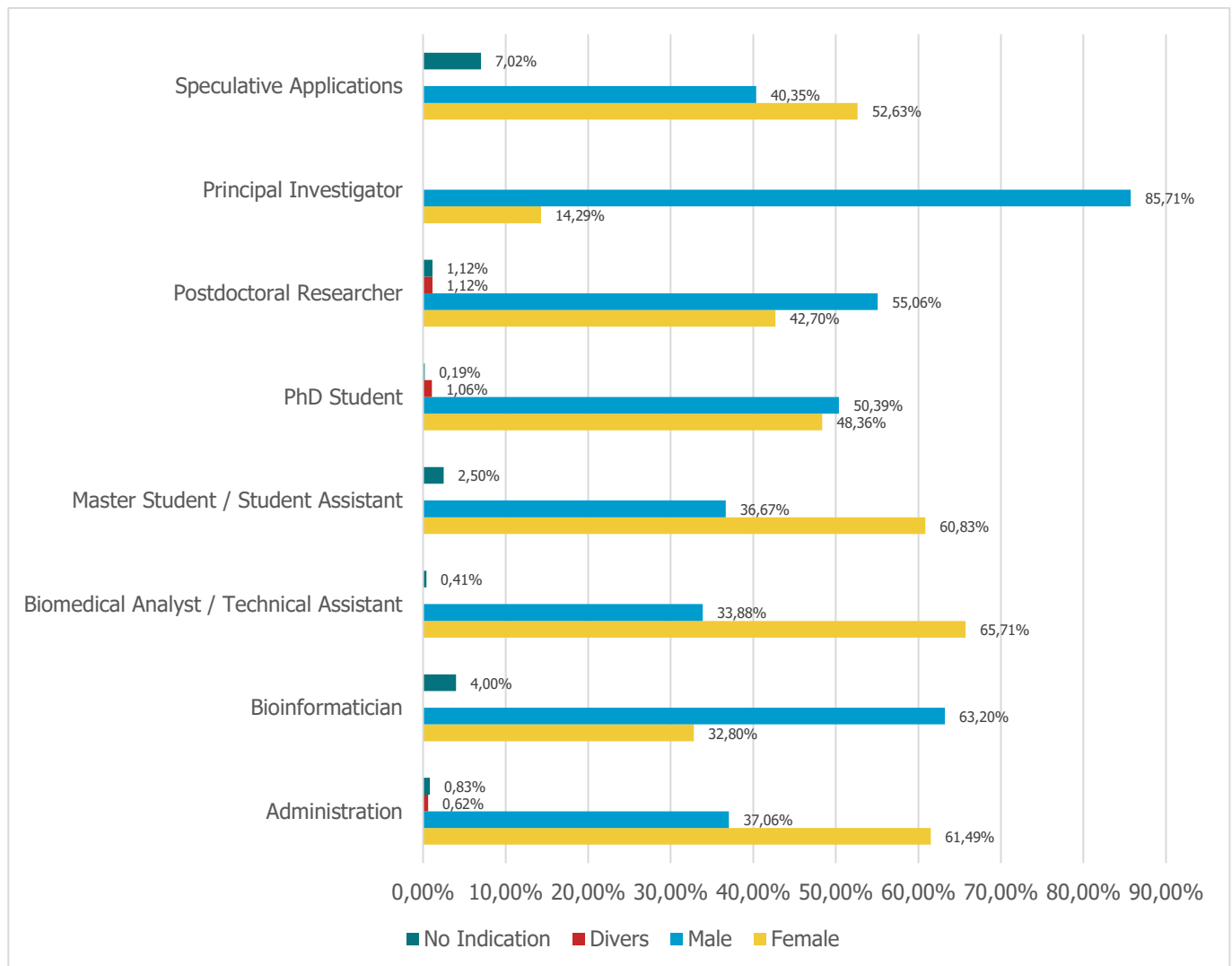
2. Data and metrics

Gender distribution of employees as of September 2021

Bar chart: Employee — Female 71%, Male 29%; Manager — Female 50%, Male 50%. Legend: Female, Male.

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[1] https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-232129669

Gender distribution of applicants per position in the period of May until November 2021

Chart: Gender distribution of applicants per position (May–November 2021)

- **Speculative Applications**: No Indication 7,02%; Male 40,35%; Female 52,63%
- **Principal Investigator**: Male 85,71%; Female 14,29%
- **Postdoctoral Researcher**: No Indication 1,12%; Divers 1,12%; Male 55,06%; Female 42,70%
- **PhD Student**: No Indication 0,19%; Divers 1,06%; Male 50,39%; Female 48,36%
- **Master Student / Student Assistant**: No Indication 2,50%; Male 36,67%; Female 60,83%
- **Biomedical Analyst / Technical Assistant**: No Indication 0,41%; Male 33,88%; Female 65,71%
- **Bioinformatician**: No Indication 4,00%; Male 63,20%; Female 32,80%
- **Administration**: No Indication 0,83%; Divers 0,62%; Male 37,06%; Female 61,49%

Legend: ■ No Indication ■ Divers ■ Male ■ Female

3. Gender equality measures

A committee, consisting of male and female managers, employees, members of the works council and HR with the support of a publicly funded advisory program on gender equality, developed the gender equality measures in two workshops in November 2021.

The following measures aim to ensure gender equality in respect of all genders, including, but not exclusively binary, non-binary, diverse, trans- and interpersons. KPIs and measurement are derived from the fact that currently only applicable data for male and female genders are available. We don't currently have enough data about other genders but we hope that the following measures will ensure gender equality for all genders and not just male and female.

Thematic areas	Measures	KPIs and measurement
Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Making sure, **job announcements** are **equally attractive for all genders, respectively** by training HR staff in how to write job announcements and compiling job announcement guidelines / templates.	• Documentation of the training that took place • Proportion of people trained in HR • Existence of guidelines / templates and regular updates • Number of applicants by gender per position

	Making sure, the **career page** is **equally attractive and understandable for all genders** by revising the career page and the presented content (especially pictures an videos) in collaboration with the PR department and presenting a realistic picture of CCRI as an employer (including benefits of working at the CCRI, videos of employees, presenting diversity data).	• Women and men are presented in an equal frequency and with equal responsibility (eg female and male managers not only male managers) in all picture and video content • Stereotypical postures in pictures and videos avoided • Gendering in language
	Proactively identifying and contacting external **accomplished female candidates** for leading positions.	• Number of suitable candidates by gender for position • Number of candidates by gender for position • Number of positive and negative feedbacks from approached candidates by gender (including reasons)
	Implementing **clear and transparent recruitment and hiring procedures** and make sure they are transparently communicated internally and externally.	• Existence of the guidelines and regular updates • Publication of detailed guidelines internally • Publication of summarized procedures on career page
	Making sure to have **gender balanced hiring committees** in all hirings at CCRI and giving the committees the opportunity to give unbiased feedback through a **standardised feedback** form. If gender balance in the hiring committee is not possible, this has to be justified and documented accordingly. In addition to streamlining the process, HR has the function of considering the gender focus.	• Include in recruitment and hiring guidelines • Number of women and men in hiring committees • Usage of feedback form • HR included in every hiring process
	Inviting a balanced number of male and female candidates (where possible) to hearings. This process is a shared responsibility of the hiring manager and the HR department.	• Number of potential candidates by gender on the market • Number of applications by gender received • Number of candidates by gender invited to interviews • Number of candidates by gender getting an offer
	Making sure to have **transparent, unbiased and consistent communication** with all applicants, regardless of gender through the HR department and training hiring managers if they are taking over the communication with applicants.	• Communication only via application management tool (Prescreen)
	Proactively inform applicants about work-life balance aspects, childcare facilities, social benefits, career opportunities etc. during the recruitment process.	• Available information on career website • Keeping information up to date
	Monitoring gender balance at each stage of the recruitment process by the HR department.	• Number of potential candidates by gender on the market • Number of applications by gender received

		• Number of candidates by gender invited to interviews • Number of candidates by gender getting an offer
	Informing and **training hiring committee members** in responsible and fair selection processes.	• Documentation of the training that took place • Proportion of people trained • Feedback from participants
	Making sure to **assess cultural fit** in all hiring processes to make sure, we hire people with the right and unbiased gender and diversity mind-set.	• Include in standardized feedback form • Exit interviews
	Diversity is not to be forced but it will be **highly encouraged and promoted** in all areas.	• Qualitative measurement through HR interviews with staff • External appearance (visual language, videos on website, gendering in language)
	Evaluating the market for specific positions to make sure we know an estimated number of how many male and female candidates we could have per position.	• Number of potential candidates by gender on the market • Number of applications by gender received
	Proactively inform employees about vacant positions at the institute so they can forward the information to their network. Also, point out the opportunity to apply internally, if someone is interested.	• E-Mail for every new vacancy to all employees
Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	Having **leadership trainings** and including the topic of (gender) bias in these training sessions to make managers aware of their unconscious biases and teach them how to deal with them. Also, train managers in making informed and transparent decisions as well as how to deal with potential (gender) biases within their teams.	• Documentation of completed trainings • Number of participants by gender
	Implementing **360° Feedbacks** for managers to help them realize their potentials and support them in being better leaders. First trial of this measure in 2022.	• Documentation of the 360° feedbacks carried out • Number of participants by gender
	Offering **individual coaching** to managers and employees and encourage them to make use of this offer also for (gender) bias related topics. The sessions are confidential and can be organized via HR. In order to make use of the offer of coaching paid for by the institute, the person concerned must present and document an appropriate justification. The decision whether a coaching is paid by the institute or not is taken for every individual case.	• Amount of individual coaching sessions carried out • Number of participants by gender
	Implementing **qualitative and quantitative performance management** structures as well as standardised feedback procedures. Making sure to have **unbiased and standardised forms** provided for managers and train managers and employees accordingly in how to use these tools.	• Revision of existing documents on employee appraisal (HR & works council)

	Implementing standardised and transparent procedures for salary increases, bonuses and promotions and publish them in a way so they are accessible for all employees, driven by HR and the works council.	• Documentation of step-by-step conversion and implementation • Availability of information internally
	Making sure to **have general structures and procedures in place** and **prevent too many case-by-case decisions** by the leadership in order to have transparent and equal treatment of staff.	• Documentation and justification in case of deviations from the standardized process
	Aim at having an **equal number of men and women** in all **decision-making processes** and **committees** by having specific guidelines in place.	• Availability of guidelines internally • Number of men and women in decision making processes and committees • Designation of one person with (gender) diversity competence per committee
Work-life balance and organisational culture	**Inform employees transparently** and **comprehensively** about options like care leave, parental leave, "Papamonat", sabbatical etc. via different channels like intranet, newsletter, emails.	• Availability of information internally
	Identify role models and present them to employees in order to give information and to promote the different models and processes internally. This informs employees about all (legal and organisational) possibilities and things like parental leave, care leave etc. can be organised. In addition, this provides insights how other people deal with the different opportunities and/or challenges.	• Availability of information internally • Availability of parts of this information on the career website
	Keeping in touch during parental leave and other potential leaves of absence through inviting the respective persons to institute wide events / seminars and lab meetings, having regular points of contact (eg baby café) and offering minor employment opportunities during parental leave. It is important to certify that these are optional opportunities and the participation is not obligatory.	• Availability of information internally • Exit & re-entry interviews • Written agreement on touchpoints during leave • Documentation of touchpoints during leave
	Making **optional/voluntary training** and **development opportunities during parental leave** (eg via eLearning or seminars) possible upon request to ensure the offer of professional and personal development opportunities and keeping in touch. The responsibility for this offer lies upon the direct supervisor. The employee is at no time obliged to provide workforce at any point within his/her parental leave.	• Availability of information internally • Documentation of exit & re-entry interviews • Written agreement of touchpoints during parental leave between the line manager and the employee • Documentation of touchpoints during leave
	Ensuring support especially for **female researchers during pregnancy,** as they are not allowed to actively work in the lab for safety reasons, by offering extensive support by	• Official regulations on pregnancy, parental leave and parental part-time work available internally

	Technicians or Students in the lab who can continue experiments during the absence from the lab. Also making sure to have **valuable and fulfilling tasks** as well as an **adequate workplace outside the lab** during pregnancy for female researchers.	• Written agreement between the person concerned, HR and the responsible manager
	Offering **Home Office** to every employee in the institute to give as much flexibility as justified.	• Home Office agreements
	Offering flexible working hours ("Gleitzeit") to all employees and ensuring the applicability to everyone/every position. Also, ensuring openness about and offer **part-time options where possible and needed** (eg part-time Postdoc with the support of a Technician). This also means ensuring that the leadership team has an open mind about part-time employment and offers/facilitates the needed flexibility.	• Company agreement on flexitime available internally • Inclusion and documentation within the framework of the annual appraisal interview
	Making sure to have backups and/or **deputies for essential positions/persons** at the institute to ensure that the work is done even if in the absence of the main responsible person.	• Official list of deputies
	Offering personal development opportunities and/or **trainings to employees** (not only management) to make sure, they know how to deal with difficult situations and communicate to their manager what they need.	• Number of offered training initiatives • Number of participants by gender
	Offering anonymous health counselling by occupational health physicians to all interested employees. It is important to offer this in a non-bureaucratic and easy way.	• Number of participants by gender
	Actively support employees with caring responsibilities through eg informing about care leave, promoting internal family networks, improving pregnancy safeguard measures, promoting personal return plans to be arranged before leave, promoting re-entry support after leave periods.	• Availability of information internally • Number of role models by gender • Number of requests for mentoring by gender • Number of mentoring / counselling couples • Documentation of exit & re-entry interviews • Where needed - written agreements between the person concerned, HR and the responsible manager
Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content	**Increasing awareness of the importance of sex and gender aspects of research** by disseminating case studies of role models at the institute.	• Availability of internally
	Incorporating information / trainings / videos / e-learnings on gender dimension for all employees in research.	• Documentation of availability of information / trainings / videos / e-learnings
	Developing internal best practices on how to consider the sex and gender dimension in experimental setup and data analysis.	• Documentation of best practices • Availability of information internally

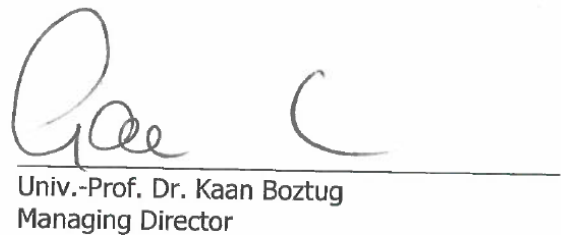|		
	Keeping in dialog with national and local funding bodies as well as universities and other research institutes about gender aspects of research in life sciences.	• Documentation of touchpoints and results
	Identifying national and international expert organisations and **keeping in touch with them** to learn more about the gender dimension in research and ensuring up-to-datedness.	• Documentation of touchpoints and results
	Screening internal documents, publications, presentations etc. for gender-unfairness and change them accordingly.	• Documentation of changes • Consideration of suggestions from employees
Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	**Implementation of clear and transparent policies** on sexual harassment and other forms of gender-based violence as well as mobbing and discrimination in general (as part of the general HR policy).	• Existence of HR policy • Availability of the policy internally
	Specific training for managers and employees on gender-based violence and sexual harassment.	• Documentation of all completed trainings • Proportion of people trained by gender
	Having a clear process for victims to report gender-based violence or similar. Also, defining trusted representatives (HR, works council, occupational health physician) to talk to anonymously and to get help. In addition, clear responsibilities have to be defined for all involved parties.	• Existence of the policy • Availability of the information internally
	Proactively including the opportunity to talk about gender-based experiences and similar topics in the exit interviews during the offboarding process.	• Documentation of exit interviews
Monitoring and reporting	**Regular monitoring** of KPIs and successes as well as **annual reporting** to the managing directors. Also, **annual evaluation of implemented measures** and, if necessary, implementation of adjustments.	• Number of potential candidates by gender on the market • Number of applications by gender received • Number of candidates by gender invited to interviews • Number of candidates by gender getting an offer • Gender distribution of applicants per position • Number of participants in trainings, coaching and mentoring by gender • New hires by gender • Gender pay gap • Duration and frequency of paternity leave by gender • Duration and frequency of care leave by gender • Duration and frequency of sick leave by gender • Gender distribution of employees

		• Length of employment by gender
		• Employment extend by gender
		• Limited and unlimited contracts by gender
		• Origin of employees by gender

4. Targets for 2022

- Aim at keeping at least a 30/70 split in leadership positions (considering planned and unplanned fluctuation in the leadership team)
- Increase number of female applicants for positions in the area of bioinformatics and PI positions
- Increase number of male applicants for Biomedical Analyst / Technical Assistant positions
- Offer at least one (gender) specific leadership training to every supervisor
- Create needed standardized procedures and publish them accordingly
- Set up annual management reporting on (gender) diversity

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