

Gender Equality Plan

Approved Nov. 30th, 2021

BEST Bioenergy and Sustainable Technologies follows the **three objectives** of the European Commission's strategy on gender equality in research and innovation policy:

- *Fostering equality in scientific careers;*
- *Ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies;*
- *Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content, i.e. considering the biological characteristics and the social features of women and men.*

To do so, the management continuously supports and facilitates the realization of gender equality measures also ensuring an intersectional approach as diversity management shall focus on but not be limited to gender. In this document some of the efforts are presented that are already implemented or planned. Since 2008 there has been constant effort in 5 dedicated projects which were accompanied by external gender experts to enlarge and foster gender competence and to detect blind spots.

The overall share of women at BEST is 31 % and rather high within the energy sector, whereas the share of women within the scientific staff is 25 %. Since 2016, 90 projects were led by women, which corresponds to about 32 % and is in line with the overall share. Still the center wants to increase the share of women within the scientific staff and in leading positions and to improve the career opportunities of women in the long term. Therefore, regular consultation meetings with general management, human resources, working council, and the equality representative are held. In these meetings objectives are set, tasks are distributed and current processes are evaluated. The latest concrete objectives and measures were defined throughout 2021 and some highlights are indicated in the boxes below.

Institutionalization

Diversity Management has been institutionalized within the center through several measures:

- *Equality principles (embedded in our organizational manual)*
- *Equality representative (with a site in the company's intranet)*
- *Working council*
- *Gender sensitive language on website, in templates and forms etc.*

Human Resources

In the scope of the human resources development e.g. a number of company agreements was elaborated together with the working council with a benefit for the entire center:

- *Flexitime*
- *Career models*
- *Travel (time) compensation*
- *Telework*
- *On-call standby*
- *Parental leave*
- *Family Time*

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Furthermore, a uniform salary scheme could be agreed upon and a broad range of training and qualification offers has been elaborated.

Gender competences

Multiple training opportunities¹ have been completed by the equality representative and key personnel. Trainings will continue to be developed to tackle gender equality issues at all levels.

Personnel in leading positions will be obliged to attend a workshop on gender equality every year starting from 2023.

Recruitment

The recruitment has been changed to an online format that is standardized and therefore mitigates the influence of certain biases. The language and wording in job postings has constantly been improved in terms of gender equality.

For future recruitment processes (starting in 2022) the following has been decided:

- *Internal checklist: what has to be considered in terms of gender equality?*
- *Vacant positions will be advertised full and part time*
- *A list of gender sensitive recruitment platforms will be compiled*
- *During recruitment processes the equality representative will always be involved in addition to human resources*
- *The share of women within the scientific staff will be raised from 25 to 30 % and kept stable by spring 2027.*

Research & Development

An uptake of the ideas of "Gendered Research & Innovation" by Londa Schiebinger has been realized in a first project – MotivA. The equality representative frequently supports project teams when it comes to gender aspects.

Since fall 2021 each and every project (idea) is scrutinized for gender aspects with the aid of 2 specific check lists^{2,3}.

¹ E.g. „Gender & Diversity Competences for Scientists” – a 6 modules course at the TU Graz.

² http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/methods/engineering_checklist.html

³ <https://tc.tugraz.at/main/course/view.php?id=1932>

Leadership

The first Shared Leadership couple in the Area Management has started in 2021 and the model is further being developed and rolled out. Leadership principles have been amended in terms of gender equality related aspects in 2021.

Their implementation by group leaders and Area Managers is planned to be evaluated within performance reviews and considered for salary increases starting in 2022.

Sexual Harassment

The internal code of conduct contains a chapter on social responsibility and equal treatment. There is a clear statement that any kind of sexual harassment will not be tolerated at the center. Concrete anti-harassment-guidelines or consequences of misbehavior will be elaborated in 2022.

Work Life Balance

A concept was elaborated for the entire center in 2021 based on a survey on the actual state in 2020. Workshops on nutrition or healthy leadership are offered, parent ship and part time is supported and tailor-made solutions for the needs at certain locations are searched for.

A survey on psychological stress related to work, which was carried out in 2020, will regularly be repeated – next in 2022.

Frequent updates on equality measures can be found on our [website](#).

The management hereby confirms that the above described plan and measures are constantly analyzed and evaluated, new objectives are defined and measures adapted and extended according to the results of analyses.



Dr. Walter Haslinger
CEO



Dr. Roman Schmid
CEO

Graz, 30. November 2021