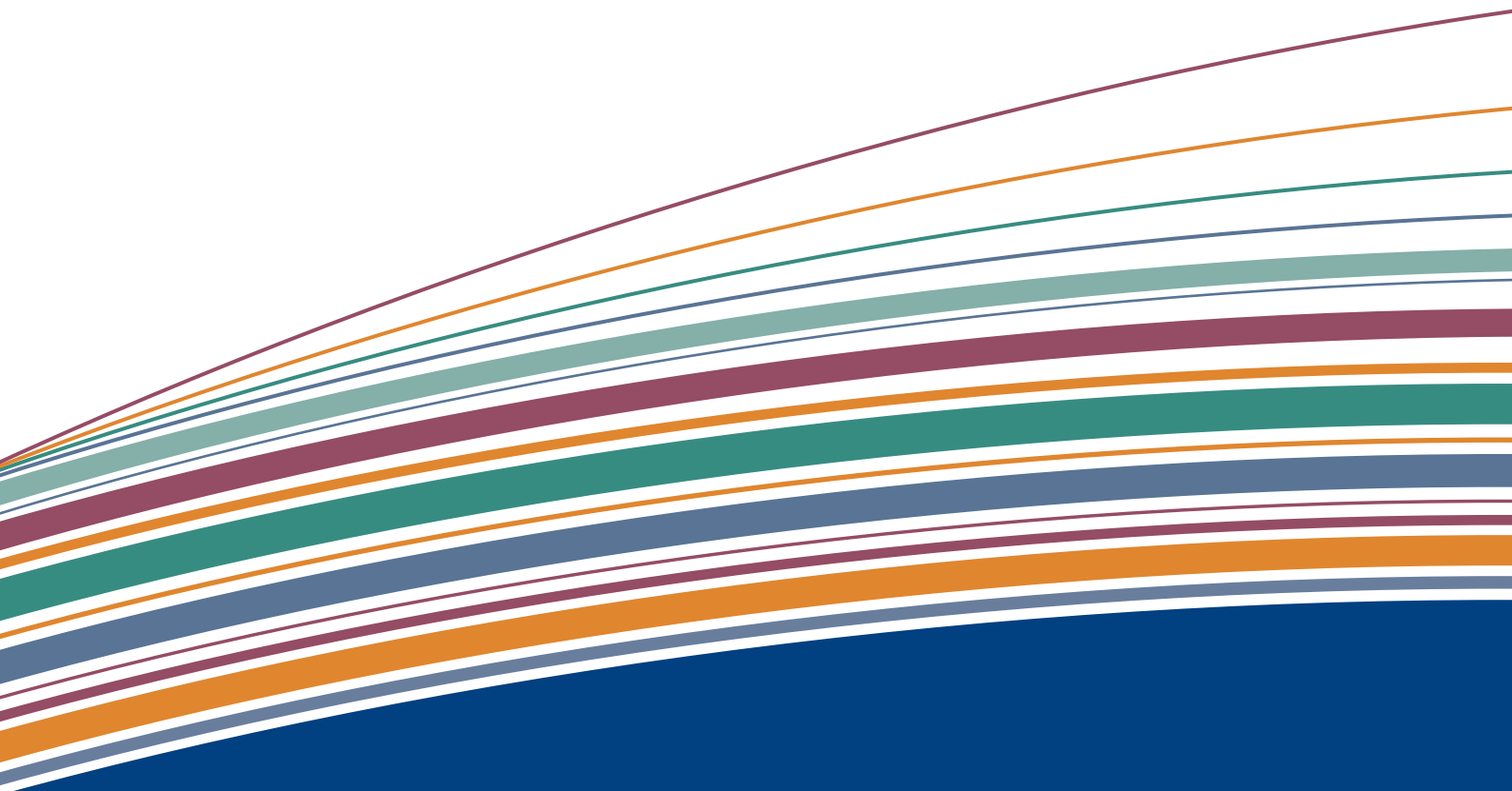


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Gender Equality Plan 2024–2028

Leibniz Institute for Science and
Mathematics Education

Imprint



This Gender Equality Plan was developed by the Leibniz Institute for Science and Mathematics Education under the leadership of the Gender Equality Officer in a participatory, internal process. The implementation of the measures and initiatives outlined in this plan is guided by the research-oriented equity and diversity standards of the German Research Foundation (DFG) as well as the guidelines on equal opportunities within the Leibniz Association.

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Kiel, February 2024



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FOREWORD

The Leibniz Association adopted its five gender equality standards in 2016. These relate to increasing the proportion of women in executive management positions, to gender equality as a consistent management principle in the Leibniz Association's institutions, to the unrestricted support of gender equality officers, to the compatibility of work and family life for women and men and to the requirement to be certified accordingly as an institution. The aim of implementing the standards is to create real equality of opportunity between women and men. The IPN – Leibniz Institute for Science and Mathematics Education is committed to the five gender equality standards and has taken many measures in recent years to move closer to the goal of real equality. The entire Board of Directors of the IPN welcomes and supports the Gender Equality Plan presented by the Gender Equality Officer. It sets ambitious goals, especially with regard to the appointment of qualified women to leadership positions. However, it also aims to further develop the entire management culture and awareness of discrimination against different groups at the IPN. Only in an atmosphere of equal treatment and mutual respect can the talents that employees bring with them to pursue their work on mathematical, scientific and computer science education processes at the highest level be developed. In the spirit of recognizing the diversity of its employees, the IPN is therefore committed to accessibility as well as opposing all forms of discrimination and violence. With the newly created position of Gender Equality, Diversity and Promotion of Early Career Researchers Officer, the permanent audit berufundfamilie certificate, the signing of the Diversity Charter, the "Awareness" service agreement, which is directed against any kind of abuse of power at the IPN, and finally the current Gender Equality Plan, the IPN demonstrates how important it considers equal opportunities and diversity in an appreciative, supportive and encouraging working and research environment.

Prof. Dr. Olaf Köller, Mareike Bierlich
Institute Management



1 BASIS FOR THE PREPARATION OF THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

The IPN is committed to promoting equity and equality of opportunity and to valuing and utilizing diverse talents and qualities.

In accordance with Section 11 of the Act on Equal Opportunities for Women in the Public Service of the State of Schleswig-Holstein (GstG) and Section 12 of the Act on Equal Opportunities for Women and Men in the Federal Administration and in the Federal Courts (Federal Gender Equality Act – BGleiG), institution-specific Gender Equality Plans must be drawn up every four years. These plans must be revised after two years. The objectives of the laws cover the promotion of equality throughout the public service in Schleswig-Holstein. One focus here is on creating working conditions that ensure an optimal work-life balance. A further aim is to reduce discrimination against women in working life and to ensure the fair participation of women in all wage, remuneration and salary groups as well as in committees. In addition, the IPN acts to promote equality on the basis of the implementation agreement to the GWK agreement on the equality of women and men in joint research funding (AV-Glei)¹, which in turn is based on the Federal Gender Equality Act (BGleiG).

To increase the proportion of women in science and research, the Pact for Research and Innovation (PFI IV) was adopted in 2019. A key instrument for implementing this goal is the cascade model, which aims to achieve specific target quotas for all career levels. The Leibniz Association recommends setting realistic and ambitious target quotas that also consider the fluctuation rate. Attention should be paid to the development of the proportion of women in scientific leadership positions. Deputies are not counted and target quotas should be set for the first half of the term of PFI IV until 2025, without annual adjustments. When setting the target quota, the expected fluctuation and the proportion of women at the reference level should be considered. Target quotas can be set at 50% once gender parity has been achieved. Before being anchored in the program budgets, the target quotas should be adapted to institution-specific circumstances.

Furthermore, it is noted that the Gender Equality Officers of the Leibniz institutions form a working group on the topic of "Equal Opportunities and Diversity" (AKCD). They elect a council of spokespersons and organize annual conferences for networking and further training with financial support from the Leibniz Association. A professionalization program for gender equality officers offers three further training modules each year on the conceptual and legal foundations of gender equality work.

1 https://www.gwk-bonn.de/fileadmin/Redaktion/Dokumente/Papers/AV_Glei.pdf [German only, 18.06.2026]

The Gender Equality Plan analyzes the current situation and formulates clear goals and measures to promote equality between women and men. In laws and regulations, the equality plan is emphasized as a central instrument of the institute's management for personnel planning to achieve equal opportunities and targeted gender equality. To emphasize the necessity and importance of equality, equality was integrated into the IPN's statutes (Section 7(9)) in 2018 as a responsibility of the management.

The primary objectives are aimed at overcoming the inadequate representation of women in specific status groups at the Leibniz Institute. The focus here is on promoting women's careers within the institution. At the same time, we strive to create conditions that enable an improved balance between work and family commitments. A further aim of gender equality work at the IPN is to establish and strengthen protective mechanisms against discrimination and sexualized harassment. Our goals reflect the desire not only to promote gender equality, but also to ensure an inclusive and safe working environment for all employees at our institution.

This Gender Equality Plan replaces the previous Gender Equality Plan from 2018 and is valid until 2028.

2 STATUS QUO

The assessment shows the current situation at the IPN in December 2022. It shows the proportion of female and male employees. The following data are recorded:

Proportion of women and men

- in different remuneration groups
- in leadership positions
- in part-time and full-time employment
- by type of contract (fixed-term or permanent)
- in the promotion of early career researchers/further qualification
- according to qualifications (doctorates, appointments)
- in committees
- on parental leave.

A total of 188 people were working at the IPN in December 2022, 120 of whom were women (64%) and 68 men (36%). Of a total of 96 people working part-time, 73 were women (76%) and 23 men (24%). There were 43 women (56%) and 34 men (44%) in 77 permanent positions.

Of the 188 employees, 63 worked in the administration and support service, of which 40 were women (63%) and 23 men (37%). Of the 30 people who were employed part-time in the administration and support service, 24 were women (80%) and 6 were men (20%). Of the 54 employees made permanent positions, 33 were women (61%) and 21 men (39%). The administration and support service mainly comprised the TV-L E9 salary groups.

In addition, the IPN employed 125 scientific staff in December 2022, 80 of whom were women (64%) and 45 men (36%). A total of 66 people were employed part-time in the scientific field, including doctoral students, of whom 49 were women (74%) and 17 men (26%). Of the 54 part-time academic employees, 33 were women (61%) and 21 men (39%).

9 people were employed in the C4/W3 grade, of which 3 were women (33%) and 6 men (67%)². There were 3 full-time employees in the W2 grade, one of whom was a woman (33%) and 2 of whom were men (67%). One man was employed in the W1 grade. The professors in salary groups W3 and W2 are without exception permanent, the W1 professorship is fixed-term, but with a tenure option (W2).

The other academic employees are paid according to TV-L E13 to TV-L E15. Of the 125 academic staff, 38 people were employed in a postdoc position in accordance with the German Academic Fixed-Term Contract Act (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz) (30%). Of these, 28 were women (74%) and 10 men (26%). There were 9 people in part-time employment, 8 of whom were women and one of whom was a man.

In total, there were 41 doctoral students, 29 of whom were women (71%) and 12 men (29%). They all worked part-time for a limited period.

75% of the members of the Scientific Advisory Board are women and 25% are men. 71% of the members of the Staff Council are women and 29% are men. 80% women and 20% men are involved in the berufundfamilie audit.

In the period from 2020 to 2022, 24 doctorates were successfully completed, 12 of them by women. 14 external appointments were made to IPN employees, 9 of which were women.

In the years between 2012 and 2022, parental leave was taken predominantly by women (83%) and to a lesser extent by men (17%). If only the last three years are considered (2020–2022), the difference is even greater, with 93% of women taking parental leave and only 7% of men. This aspect will be monitored and discussed in the audit berufundfamilie in the future. The number of months will also be recorded.

² It should be noted that three female professors hold 2.5 Full-Time Equivalents (FTE). This results in the following breakdown: 6 FTEs are held by men (71%) and 2.5 FTEs are held by women (29%).

The following tables can be found in the appendix:

- Employees according to the areas of administration and support service and science
- Employees who are involved in committees
- Employees according to their pay grade
- Employees in externally funded positions or budget positions by status group
- Parental leave per year, broken down by women and men
- Successful doctorates and appointments to the IPN as well as the number of those appointed away in the years 2020 to 2022
- Trainees

All tables also show the proportion of part-time employees and employees with permanent contracts.

The data collection reflects a binary understanding of gender and is therefore carried out in the categories of women and men. The IPN is aware that there are other genders. However, this gender diversity cannot yet be recorded. Possibilities for a more comprehensive and fairer representation are being sought.

Monitoring

Once a year, the Human Resources group provides the Gender Equality Officer with the relevant figures for the assessment. The cut-off date is December 31.³ This data is discussed annually with the management; every two years it is also discussed with the Board of Directors. In addition to the gender-related figures, the development of gender equality measures is also discussed at these meetings.

Additional data was collected for this Gender Equality Plan compared to previous plans:

- the number and volume of third-party funds
- the number of allowances/bonuses and
- the number of publications (first authorship),

broken down by gender in each case.

³ These data are requested annually as part of the program budget.

These are to become an integral part of annual monitoring at the IPN in order to initiate measures to promote women where necessary. These figures will be discussed in more detail in the interim evaluation of the Gender Equality Plan (2026).

The data on employees in science was also broken down by department. This will be continued in order to take account of differences between departments. Nevertheless, it should be emphasized here that due to the small number of employees in the respective status groups, individual changes (e.g. a new hire) have a noticeable impact on the percentage figures in the area of employees.

3 FORECAST OF PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

Budget and third-party funded positions in the academic field

At the level of fixed-term positions in the academic field (postdoctoral and doctoral level), positions will become vacant in the coming years. At the same time, the low growth in the core budget combined with significant wage increases (TV-L collective agreement in December 2023) will lead to job losses. Jobs financed from the core budget are particularly affected by this and will be reduced where necessary. The current gender ratio is to be maintained when filling the increasingly scarce positions. However, core budget funds should also continue to be used for the extension of doctoral positions (to complete a doctorate) or to extend contracts after maternity/parental leave.

Leadership functions

Positions with an academic leadership function (W salary) are filled in joint appointments with the CAU and other universities.

At the moment, only three W3 professorships are held by women. Although this is a good quota for the Leibniz Association,⁴ in view of the high number of female early career researchers at the IPN, the number of female professors, especially female department directors (W3), must be increased. The W2 professorship in Didactics of Physics could be filled by a woman in 2023. For two currently vacant W3

4 According to the 'Guidelines for Establishing Target Quotas for 2025 to Increase the Proportion of Women in Science and Research within the Leibniz Association,' the current rate stands at 22 % and is projected to rise to 33 % by 2025.

professorships,⁵ the IPN aims to fill both with a woman. Currently (January 2024), two women have been appointed. Two further W3 professorships will be reappointed in 2027; two more will be appointed in 2029. The IPN will make every effort to fill as many of these professorships as possible with excellent women.

If deputy departmental directorships (W2) become vacant in the coming years, applications from women will be given special support and preferential treatment as far as legally possible. This includes the **active recruitment** of qualified women supported by the CAU, in that the IPN (for W2 positions the Department Director, for W3 positions the Managing Scientific Director) generally invites three qualified women to apply. The existing form for the active recruitment of female postdocs is used for this purpose. The Gender Equality Officer will be informed of the invitation to apply.

The existing cooperation agreement between the IPN and the CAU is to be amended. In future, the Gender Equality Officer of the IPN should be given the opportunity to be a member (with guest status) of the appointment committees that decide on IPN professorships (all W salary groups). The Gender Equality Officer of the IPN works in close cooperation with the Gender Equality Officers of the CAU, but nevertheless increasingly represents the interests of the IPN in filling professorships with excellent women. She advises the Managing Scientific Director and the Department Director on active recruitment and is continuously involved and informed by them.

Individual W1 positions are to be filled during the term of the Gender Equality Plan as far as the IPN's budget situation allows. Here too, the gender equality instrument of active recruitment and the promotion of internal candidates should be used.

The Board of Directors discusses the Leibniz Women Professors Program annually and actively supports applications from internal female researchers. The result is communicated to the Gender Equality Officer.

If positions (at executive management level) in the administration and support service are to be filled during the term of the Gender Equality Plan, internal applications are welcomed and preferred. If appointments are foreseeable over a longer period of time, IPN employees with suitable skills are specifically prepared for the vacant position through further and advanced training. Qualified women who work part-time should also be able to hold leadership positions. To make this possible, the concept of tandem leadership is facilitated and actively supported by the management at the IPN.

⁵ In 2024, the following new professorships will be filled: a W3 professorship in Teaching and Learning in the Digital World with a focus on Learning Analytics and Machine Learning, and a W3 professorship in Educational Sciences with a focus on Digital Education (a joint appointment with the University of Flensburg).

Early career scientists

Women are currently slightly overrepresented among early career scientists (post-docs and doctoral students). This higher proportion is welcomed, as it correlates with the various efforts to increase the proportion of women in senior positions in the coming years. According to the IPN self-evaluation report as part of the external evaluation by the Senate of the Leibniz Association (2023), the proportion of women at the level of scientific staff without leadership tasks, including doctoral students, is 69 %. The proportion of women among academic staff with leadership responsibilities is only 44 %.

Positions in the administration and support service

Women are much more strongly represented than men in the administration and support service. This is particularly true for the lower salary groups. Applications from women for higher pay grades are expressly welcomed and given priority within the scope of legal possibilities.

Furthermore, women tend to work part-time in this area. In order to enable them to work almost full-time, part-time vacancies are initially advertised internally with the aim of further increasing working hours. Only if no suitable internal employee can be found will the part-time position be advertised externally. The same procedure is used for positions for which an internal promotion is possible through an internal application. In order to have an overview of the need for an increase in weekly working hours and for higher-value activities on the part of employees, there is a job pool for non-scientific employees, which is updated annually by the Human Resources group. Requirements are determined by means of a regular survey at least every twelve months.

To promote employees in the administration and support service, the existing annual staff development meetings with the relevant supervisor are used specifically to discuss future prospects. This also includes a joint discussion of the desired and necessary further and advanced training as well as an assessment of requirements.

4 GENDER EQUALITY GOALS

The Gender Equality Plan includes qualitative and quantitative goals. Measures are presented to achieve these goals, which are to be evaluated after two or four years and adjusted as necessary.

4.1 Qualitative goals

- Continued funding of early career research group leader positions for female researchers from core budget funds
- Gender-equitable personnel and organizational development
- Promotion of female early career researchers in science
- Protection against and prevention of sexualized harassment and violence
- Gender and diversity dimensions in research and teaching
- Compatibility of career and family

4.2 Quantitative goals

The IPN continues to support female early career researchers and strives to increase the proportion of female professors. In the long term, the following percentages and participation rates are to be achieved or maintained where they are already above 50%:

- At least 50 % women in doctoral positions and at least 50 % of completed doctorates
- At least 50 % women in postdoctoral positions
- At least 50 % women in permanent academic positions
- At least 50 % women in junior professorships
- At least 75 % women in new W2/W3 appointments
- At least 50 % female speakers in the institute colloquium
- Increase the proportion of women in all areas with underrepresentation, especially in leadership positions
- Expansion of monitoring

5 MEASURES TO ACHIEVE THE GENDER EQUALITY GOALS

5.1 Gender-equitable personnel and organizational development

In 2021, at the request of the management, a comprehensive survey was conducted among all employees as part of the psychological risk assessment at the IPN. The "Gesundes Institut" working group developed various measures based on the results. The Gender Equality Officer is involved in the implementation of the measures in

various processes. Examples include the onboarding of new employees and the revision of personnel development and status review interviews. The Gender Equality Officer works to ensure that these processes are gender- and diversity-sensitive.

Important interfaces in gender-equitable personnel development are transparent and gender-equitable personnel selection procedures, which should be as free of gender stereotypes as possible in their evaluation criteria and assessments.

Job advertisements

The Gender Equality Officer is extensively involved in all job advertisements at an early stage. As in the past, job advertisements will be drafted in a gender-conscious manner so that they address all genders equally in all parts. In areas in which women are underrepresented, they are specifically encouraged to apply in the job advertisement as far as legally possible. Networks and special databases are used to specifically invite qualified female applicants to apply in the event of underrepresentation. Suitable female candidates are actively recruited at postdoc level. This applies to positions in departments where there is an under-representation. A pre-prepared letter is used for this purpose. The process of active recruitment is documented in the personnel selection procedure. This must be available before invitations to interview are issued. Responsibility for active recruitment lies with the person issuing the job advertisement; the Gender Equality Officer is involved in this process.

There are already clear differences in the ratio of applicants from department to department. For example, only a few women apply to the Department of Physics Education. The Human Resources group records the number and gender of applicants and invited candidates in a table. In areas where few female applications are received, active recruitment is therefore also used below the postdoc level.

Personnel selection process

Gender-equitable personnel selection procedures take place at the IPN, which follow the guidelines for recruitment procedures of the Staff Council. Every two years, training courses are offered for people involved in the process, in which the topic of unconscious bias is dealt with, among other things. The transparent and structured procedures together with the training courses offer a high level of quality assurance.

When assessing the quantity of professional achievements (e.g. number of publications) or the completion of individual qualifications (e.g. 2nd state examina-

tion), delays are not interpreted to the disadvantage of the applicant if they are due to the care of children or relatives in need of care or are attributable to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Job interviews

The committee consists of at least 3 people. For the scientific positions, the members of the committee should be from at least two different status groups. Care should be taken to ensure gender parity. During the interviews, all candidates are asked the same questions in order to ensure comparability. Candidates will be evaluated on the basis of the interviews and the degree to which they meet the specified criteria. Hiring managers are asked to consider a weighting of the optional criteria before the interviews begin. This can then only be deviated from in justified exceptional cases and with the agreement of the committees involved. The Gender Equality Officer participates as a member and ensures the fairness of the procedure and points out possible unconscious bias. In the case of postdoctoral positions, the Gender Equality Officer asks a question on the subject of gender equality. This emphasizes the importance of the topic of gender equality: both internally (for the members of the committee) and externally (for the candidates). In the case of rejected candidates, the possibility of personal feedback is considered: this is about empowering female scientists/students, which is in line with the mission of the IPN.

Membership of committees

The internal committees (e.g. audit berufundfamilie and science committee) should have gender parity representation. Gender parity in the composition of committees is the basis for the appropriate participation of women in decision-making and organizational processes. In recent years, the situation has arisen at the IPN where women are heavily involved in committees and the same women hold several positions. The IPN therefore offers compensation measures for female scientists who are particularly active in committees (e.g. by approving additional research/student assistant positions or hours). The decision lies with the management; the Gender Equality Officer has an advisory role here. Men are specifically encouraged to get involved. The aim is also to achieve balanced participation depending on the department or working group.

5.2 Promotion of female early career researchers

Women are still underrepresented in leadership positions in science. The diagrams (Figure 1) illustrate this underrepresentation.

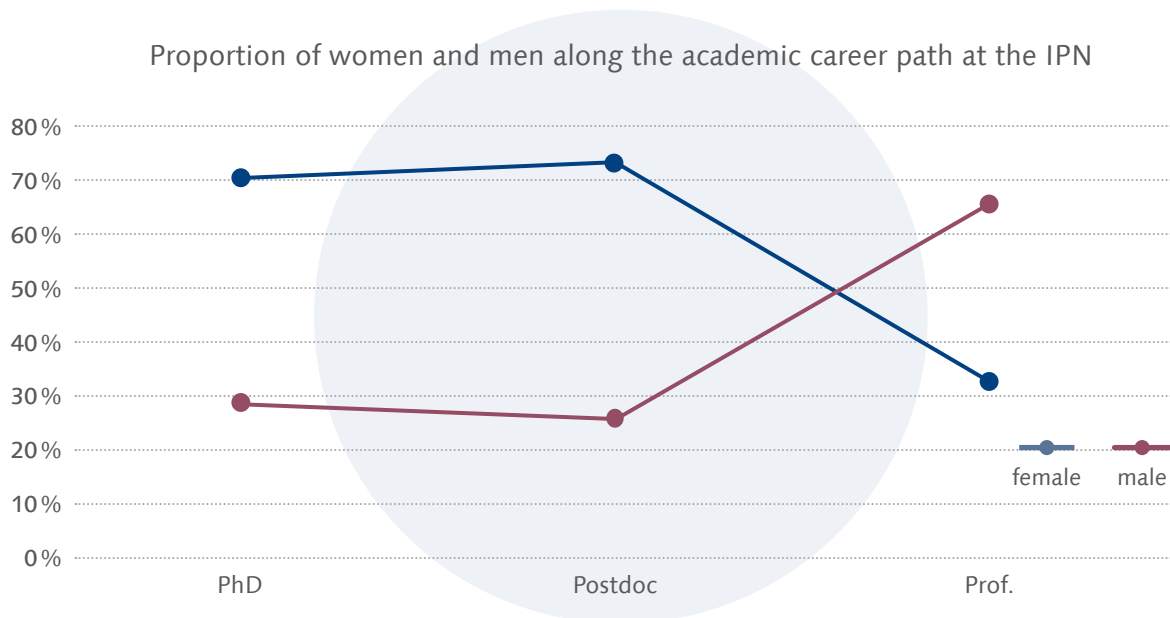


Figure 1: Classic gender gap at the IPN: The proportion of women decreases the more highly qualified the position.

The point in the qualification and career path at which women leave academia becomes clear. At universities, this is often the case after the doctorate. The IPN succeeds in retaining a high number of women for the postdoc phase or recruiting new ones. One reason for this is the good working conditions and the contract perspective: the successful model 2+5. In this model, the doctoral employee receives an initial contract of 2 years (100%, TV-L E13), with the possibility of an extension of 5 years after a successful evaluation.

The IPN consistently supports its female scientists and strongly encourages them in their professional development. This can be done, for example, by expanding their specialist tasks and/or by giving them more responsibility, for example in the leading of project or working groups. In addition, female postdoctoral researchers at the IPN are encouraged, especially in discussions with their (deputy) department directors, to participate in the mentoring program of the Kiel University (via:mento and via:mento_international, two places per round) and the mentoring program for female early career researchers of the Leibniz Association.

The establishment of an alumni network is intended to facilitate exchange between IPN employees and former employees. The network will also serve to record the career paths taken by IPN employees. Career talks are to be established for female

IPN scientists, to which alumnae working outside of science will be invited.⁶ They should talk about their work and how they got there. This measure is intended to show perspectives outside of science and thus improve career planning. In a further format, female professors are invited to talk about the compatibility of an academic career and family commitments.

The Gender Equality Officer works together with the Scientific Committee, the elected representative body for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers at the IPN, to develop a suitable offer for the promotion of female early career researchers. Career peer coaching is offered for female doctoral students, while individual coaching sessions for career planning (5x) are offered for postdocs as required.

The W1/W2 Open Topic professorship, which will be advertised as soon as possible for six years and as a measure to promote women, is a new innovative equality measure in this Gender Equality Plan. Preferred subject areas for this professorship are gender, diversity and educational equity in the natural sciences, mathematics and computer science and in relation to research at the IPN. The professorship will be endowed with a doctoral position and a postdoctoral position.

Another successful and proven measure is the establishment of two female early career research group leaders. Both positions are to be filled during the term of the Gender Equality Plan. One position is to be filled internally, the other externally.

Three external expert opinions will be consulted in the application process for the criteria-based evaluation of the female applicants. The early career research group leader is initially appointed for four years. An extension for a further two years is envisaged following a positive evaluation. The remuneration of the junior research group leader is based on the TV-L E14 plus function allowance and will be provided with at least one and, if possible, two doctoral positions, administration and support service capacity and research funding.

In order to reconcile career and family, a tandem leadership for early career research groups will be sought wherever possible. These newly created positions are intended to enable employees with family responsibilities to combine qualifications within academia and management tasks with part-time employment.

To improve their career opportunities, female early career academics will be given more opportunities to gain further professional qualifications, e.g. by attending conferences, summer schools and workshops and thus gaining access to networks (e.g. College for Interdisciplinary Educational Research). Needs assessment is carried out in the annual staff development interviews. A guideline for conducting these interviews has been developed. The Gender Equality Officer and other interest groups

⁶ Initially, these talks will be anchored within the established 'Postdoc Café' format, organized by the Science Committee.

can be consulted during the interviews. During the interviews, the conferences, further and advanced training courses to be attended and medium-term career planning are discussed. Goals for the coming year are also set together. In the event of difficulties arising from the family situation (e.g. unsecured childcare during a conference visit), viable solutions are sought together and support is offered. The IPN offers, for example, reimbursement of childcare costs for children (and persons in need of care) during business trips and events.

Making female scientists visible

In cooperation with the press and public relations department, attention is always paid to making female IPN scientists and their research visible. The aim is to ensure that female scientists are sufficiently visible on all communication channels – e.g. website, social media, media reports – and to see in what form this takes place. Formats are being considered that present or portray the female scientists. The topic of making excellent women in science visible has become increasingly topical in recent years. One example of a successful implementation is the project by science photographer Gesine Born, who is portraying female scientists from the present and past as part of a Creative Fellowship at KielSCN, an interdisciplinary research center for science communication, using AI, among other things.⁷

In addition, the number of women invited to the IPN as guests or for guest lectures and the number of female scientists visiting external institutions will be monitored annually.

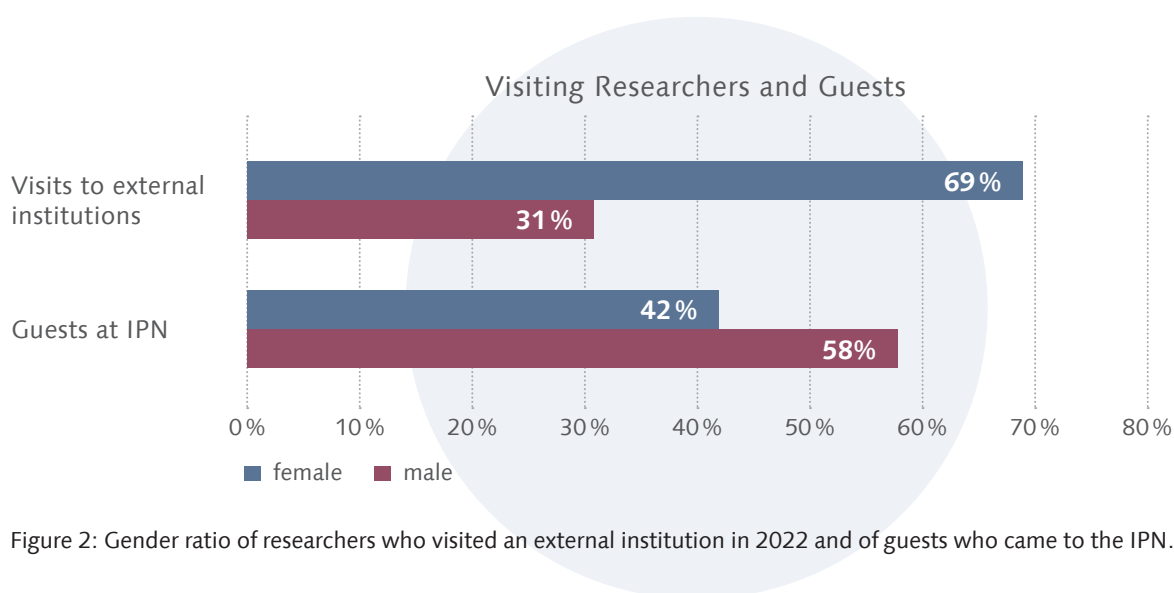


Figure 2: Gender ratio of researchers who visited an external institution in 2022 and of guests who came to the IPN.

⁷ <https://www.kielscn.de/en/2023/07/kielscn-creative-fellowship-for-gesine-born/> [18.06.2026].

In order to counteract the underrepresentation of women as lecturers at the IPN, the Institute Colloquium should include at least

- one early career female scientist (thematically close to research at the IPN) and
- a female scientist from the scientific field of gender equality.

In the last three years, there has been an underrepresentation of women as speakers at the institute colloquia (44 %), which can be explained in part by the COVID-19 pandemic and in part by the vacancy in the office of Gender Equality Officer.

5.3 Protection against and prevention of sexualized harassment and violence

In 2023, the IPN joined the alliance “Together Against Sexism”. This is intended to set an example against sexism in the workplace and raise awareness of the issue at the IPN. Joining is a first step towards putting the issue on the IPN agenda. This will be followed by a survey of employees and colloquia at the institute on the topics of sexualized harassment, discrimination and violence (SBDG).

In collaboration with the Gender Equality Officer, the Staff Council at the IPN has also drawn up a service agreement entitled “Awareness: Dealing with discrimination, sexualized violence and bullying”. This came into force on January 1, 2024. The aim of this service agreement is to raise awareness among all employees and to outline measures for prevention and procedures for intervention. The diversity officer at Kiel University, the anti-discrimination office of the state of Schleswig-Holstein and the Antidiskriminierungsverband Schleswig-Holstein (advsh) e. V. were consulted during the development of this service agreement.

An accompanying letter with various advice centers lists possible internal and external advice centers with their respective focal points. This is because the people concerned often do not know who they can turn to in confidence. The Gender Equality Officer is a possible internal advice center and is constantly undergoing further training on the subject to be able to offer professional advice.

5.4 Gender and diversity dimensions in research and teaching

The promotion of gender equality in practice and the improved consideration of the gender dimension in research and teaching are closely linked. Both are in mutual, productive exchange.

From the perspective of concrete gender equality work, the increased integration of the gender and diversity dimension in teaching is relevant. This should gain in importance and visibility at the IPN, e.g. through a broad discussion about it. The Gender Equality Officer provides materials that show how gender-equitable and diversity-sensitive teaching can be implemented. This also includes the use of gender-equitable language. An updated handout on gender-equitable language for internal and external written and verbal communication is being developed.

Gender-equitable and diversity-sensitive projects

National (e.g. DFG) and international (especially EU) third-party funding bodies expect gender to be considered as a cross-cutting issue in project proposals and explicitly recognize it as a quality feature of research. The gender dimension can be relevant to many research questions. Accordingly, one of the basic principles and standards of good scientific practice is that scientists examine the significance of gender for their research projects. According to Horizon 2020, an EU funding program for research and innovation, three points are essential:

- a balanced gender ratio in the research team
- a balanced gender ratio in management and leadership positions
- the consideration of sex and gender dimensions in research and innovation

Since 2022, the IPN has had a project management office that provides administrative support and structure for project applications and implementation. The Gender Equality Officer is involved in new project applications and works to ensure that all projects are conceived in a gender-equitable and diversity-sensitive manner from the outset.

Research at the IPN that takes the gender dimension into account is presented as such on the website and should serve as an example for other research projects. A checklist for the implementation of the gender dimension in research will be made public.⁸

⁸ Sex and Gender Equity in Research (SAGER) Guidelines:

<https://ease.org.uk/communities/gender-policy-committee/the-sager-guidelines/> [18.06.2026].

5.5 Compatibility of career and family

Audit berufundfamilie

The audit berufundfamilie group at the IPN aims to contribute to a modern and future-oriented work-life balance. As a family- and lifestyle-conscious employer, the IPN takes an in-depth look at the needs of employees throughout their entire working lives – from the moment they join to the moment they leave.

The audit berufundfamilie group is concerned with the general acceptance of employees with families and family members who need care. Career paths for employees with family responsibilities should be kept open, particularly in the academic field (e.g. via stays abroad, conferences, contract extensions). The high degree of flexibility in terms of time and the sovereignty in the organization of work locations that prevails at the IPN form the best possible basis for this. This is also reflected in the “Position paper on family- and life-phase-conscious working at the IPN”, which was agreed with the management and is aimed at all persons with management responsibilities as well as all employees in order to clarify how family- and life-phase-conscious working should be practiced and exemplified at the IPN. Family is understood broadly as relationships in which people care for and support one another, regardless of legal kinship.

As part of the corona pandemic, the audit berufundfamilie group has advocated, among other things, that the effects of the pandemic be addressed in scientific job advertisements. This emphasizes that the IPN, as a family- and life-phase-conscious institute, is aware of the various challenges posed by the corona pandemic. Applicants are therefore invited to explain the impact on scientific activities.

IPN-Sprotten – Childcare at the IPN

The IPN-Sprotten offer childcare for IPN employees with five places for children under the age of three to improve the compatibility of work, career and family. Located close to the workplace in the IPN's main building, the childcare facility enables parents to return to work quickly after parental leave, travel short distances and organize their working hours flexibly. This also increases the attractiveness of the workplace and is an important location factor for attracting new specialists and retaining employees.

Care Café

A monthly Care Café is offered for IPN employees, providing low-threshold information and exchange on care-related topics. The event is offered alternately in person

in the main building and digitally, the former is primarily for personal exchange and clarification of individual needs, the latter takes place across all locations with invitations from (internal) experts on topics such as care and family time, explanations of the term care work and contact options for contact persons (at the workplace and regionally). It is very clear here that it is becoming increasingly important to make the topics of care and care work visible.

Certification

In 2023, the IPN successfully participated in the re-audit of the berufundfamilie audit and received confirmation of the renewed permanent certificate for the compatibility of work, career and family in September. As part of this, a new action program has been developed and confirmed by the management, which sets out measures to further optimize work-life balance and consolidate the family and lifestyle-conscious culture of the institute. This involves achieving a balance between professional and family requirements, good framework conditions for reconciling academic qualifications with family needs and thus also a high level of understanding of compatibility issues among all employees. At the same time, the great influence of managers is seen in ensuring that these framework conditions are adhered to and established. Great value is placed on participation, and ideas from employees are readily accepted and implemented.

The four goals of the action program for the next three years are specifically concerned with a) the family-friendly design of working (time) conditions with the possibility of adjusting the position of working hours during the day and the scope of working hours. One challenge here is the compatibility of "management and family". To this end, existing and future managers should be supported in dealing with different challenges, skills development should be promoted, moderated management feedback should be introduced and the lateral exchange of future managers should be facilitated. Part-time management roles (top sharing) are also an ongoing topic. Furthermore, b) a good approach to working in presence vs. remotely is to be ensured, which, in addition to time autonomy, enables a high degree of flexibility in the place of work and good cooperation between all employees at all IPN locations. In order to carefully counter the risks of a lack of social cohesion, dissolution of boundaries and isolation, "rules of the game" for dealing with each other should be developed and cultivated in a guideline.

Two further objectives from the previous action program are continued and confirmed, firstly c) transparent and structured (internal) communication on compatibility issues, so that these are further established as a natural part of working together and a lived culture. This involves regular information and the clear positive posi-

tioning of the “must” for the use of opportunities that support compatibility. To this end, the topic is to be integrated into the annual staff development meetings for all employee groups and into the onboarding process. Raising awareness of care tasks reduces inhibitions. And finally, it is (continuously) about the challenges of reconciling (scientific) career and family. Two (main) aspects play a role here: dealing with the realistic planning of qualification work and advice on career options in and outside academia, but also raising awareness of the “gap” that opens up due to temporary restrictions due to family requirements and will widen even further due to the delayed post-pandemic effects.

With these goals and the corresponding measures to be developed, the IPN's career-conscious family policy will continue to be modeled, supported and encouraged in order to further expand the good framework conditions for reconciling (scientific) performance and family responsibilities.

6 THE CHALLENGE OF CULTURAL CHANGE

At the IPN, we see gender equality as more than just achieving and maintaining quotas or promoting women. Rather, we also see it as a culture to be lived – at the institute and in science in general. For us, this also means that all employees live gender equality as a cross-institute topic in their day-to-day work.

Staff awareness of gender equality should be raised, for example, by setting up a workshop program on topics relevant to gender equality at all levels (doctoral candidates, postdocs, professorships and administration and support service). The Gender Equality Forum will be increasingly used to discuss gender equality issues together. Since 2023, the traditional women's plenary assembly has been renamed an equality forum and opened to all genders. This is in recognition of the fact that gender equality is a cross-cutting issue that affects everyone and that gender equality is the responsibility of all employees. Nonetheless, one part of the event will remain reserved for FLINTA* staff only,⁹ so that there is still a protected space. This solution was developed during the women's plenary meeting on December 7, 2023 in a discussion round.

The good cooperation between management and the committees and interest groups (GB, PR, SBV, audit berufundfamilie, WA) enables us to jointly drive forward gender equality work as a cross-cutting issue.

The newly created position of Gender Equality, Diversity and Promotion of Early Career Researchers Officer in 2023 clearly demonstrates the desired dovetailing of

⁹ The acronym FLINTA* stands for women, lesbians, intersex, non-binary, trans, and agender individuals.

the topics. These areas should be considered together, interact with each other and lead to new innovative solutions. The new website section on diversity and inclusion presents the latest developments in the above-mentioned areas at the IPN, such as the “Awareness” service agreement and the inclusion agreement. The IPN is increasingly focusing on intersectionality in order to highlight the interplay of discrimination at different levels. For gender equality work, this means that not only the promotion of the female gender is central, but that attention is also paid to multiple discrimination (due to age, disability, origin, etc.).

7 GENDER EQUALITY OFFICER AND THEIR DEPUTIES

In mid-July 2023, a Gender Equality, Diversity and Promotion of Early Career Researchers Officer was appointed at the IPN. By virtue of her office, she is also the IPN’s Gender Equality Officer. This is a welcome novelty, because the long-term perspective (100% TV-L E13; permanent) and the time frame (50% FTE) enable the promotion of professionalized gender equality work that is appropriate to the size of the institute.

The Gender Equality Officer is supported by two deputies (one from academia and one from administration and support service). The female employees of the IPN have the right to nominate deputies. The proposals are elected at the annual Gender Equality Forum (in the section reserved for FLINTA* persons). The election is announced before the meeting and nominations for candidates are requested. The election will be conducted by the incumbent Gender Equality Officers. The proposals are collected at the meeting, followed by a secret ballot. The result of the election is then communicated to the management, which makes the appointment. The deputies are appointed for two years. Re-appointment is possible. Both the Gender Equality Officer and her deputies are not subject to instructions in their work. They can set up a body (council or committee) to advise and support them.

The deputies of the Gender Equality Officer shall be released from other official duties to the extent necessary for the proper performance of their duties. The Gender Equality Officer and her deputies shall be provided with the necessary personnel (e.g. an assistant) and equipment. In order to fulfill her duties, the Gender Equality Officer receives an annual budget which she can freely dispose of. The amount of the budget is based on the measures planned for the year in question. The professionalization of the Gender Equality Officer and her deputies takes place through further training and participation in equality-relevant networks and conferences.

8 CONCLUSION

The Gender Equality Plan is a forward-thinking management tool. This Gender Equality Plan was developed on behalf of the management and under the leadership of the IPN's Gender Equality Officer and her deputies with the contribution of the members of the audit berufundfamilie working group. The Staff Council was involved in accordance with the Co-Determination Act.

The Gender Equality Plan is signed by the management and is therefore valid and binding. It is published on the IPN website and also presented at internal events for all members of the institute.

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