

The International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory

Gender Equality Plan

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(Professor Lars Montelius)

Summary

This document demonstrates the commitment of the International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL) to achieve gender equality with clear goals, detailed actions, and measures. Data regarding gender distribution at INL as well as INLers' perception of gender equality have been collected and analysed. These data constituted the basis for establishing the objectives, targets, indicators, and continuous progress evaluation of this gender equality plan (GEP). The GEP promotes actions to foster the development of gender competence and tackle unconscious gender bias among staff, leaders, and decision-makers, establishing working groups dedicated to specific topics and raising awareness through workshops and communication activities.

The GEP starts with a diagnosis of gender balance at INL. We examined the gender distribution in the different departments and highlight male-female representation in leadership positions. Data shows that the overall gender distribution at INL can be considered balanced - at 45% female to 55% male. However, gender distribution in leadership positions is not, with 20% female to 80% male. At a closer look, the scientific area of INL and its corporate services show nearly identical gender distributions.

The four main areas of intervention of the GEP were identified as: *Organizational Culture, Leadership and Decision Making, Recruitment, Selection & Career Development, and Work-Life balance*. These were chosen based on a SWOT analysis following a survey on the perceptions of gender equality where all INLers were invited to participate.

Here, we propose an Action Plan with clear objectives within each area of intervention. Each objective is acted upon by one or more concrete measures. In addition, we defined indicators to help monitor the effectiveness of each measure. All goals have got clearly defined targets, which will be monitored by a gender equality committee together with different INL entities, bodies or groups.

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1. Glossary

AEMIS – Advanced Electron Microscopy, Imaging and Spectroscopy

BSR – Business & Strategic Relations

CAO – Chief Administration Officer

CBSRO – Chief Business and Strategic Relations Officer

CCM – Corporate Communications & Marketing

CFO – Chief Financial Officer

CIPO – Chief Intellectual Property Officer

CQM – Coordination & Quality Management

CSMO – Chief Site Management Officer

DDG – Deputy Director General

DG – Director General

ESM – Estate and Services Management

GEC – Gender Equality Committee

GEP – Gender Equality Plan

HESM – Health, Environment & Safety Management

ICR – Indefinite Contract Review

ICS – Information & Communication Systems

ICSM – Information & Communication Systems Manager

INL – International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory

IP – Intellectual Property

LO – learning Organisation

LSM – Legal Services Manager

M&I – Maintenance & Installation

MP – Members of the Personnel

MPA – Associated Members of the Personnel

MPE – Employed Members of the Personnel

P&L – Procurement & Logistics

PFMO – Project Finances Management Office

PI – Principal Investigator

PMO – Programme Management Office

R&I – Research and Innovation

RTG – Research & Technology Groups

RTI – Research, Technology and Innovation

STEM – Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics

UNESCO – United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organisation

2. Introduction

From the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948, through the 1979 convention on the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, gender equality has been on the global agenda. Gender equality crosses all of the seventeen United Nations' sustainable development goals, and goal number 5 – “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls” – is specifically dedicated to this fundamental human right. Gender equality is also a prioritised area on a European level. The European Institute of Gender Equality (EIGE), founded in 2006, has a central role in promoting equality between men and women. The European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 explicitly fosters gender equality in research and innovation, e.g. through its new research and innovation funding programme Horizon Europe.

The International Iberian Nanotechnology Laboratory (INL) is an intergovernmental organisation dedicated to interdisciplinary research on nanotechnology, which aims to be an inclusive organisation, committed to promoting equality and preventing discrimination in all its operations. Located in Portugal, the INL was founded in 2007 by its two member states, Portugal and Spain. Today, the organisation comprises staff from around 40 nationalities, making it a genuinely intercultural meeting point. We believe that this inherent diversity is a major asset that can be used and developed to conduct world class science for the benefit of society. For a better understanding of the INL internal structure, we direct the reader to **Figure 1**, which shows a simplified organigram of the various corporate services and research units. For acronyms, please refer to the glossary on page 4.

A Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is an essential tool to facilitate the conscious efforts that are needed to develop and monitor work on gender equality. A GEP simplifies the systematic preventive work against discrimination, and works as a means to spread knowledge and information within the organisation - addressing unconscious gender bias.

The INL GEP defines four areas of intervention relevant to our organization. They include:

- Organizational Culture
- Leadership and Decision making
- Recruitment, Selection and Career development
- Work-life Balance

The areas of intervention were identified through an analysis of available sex-disaggregated data, a survey, and a SWOT-analysis. Section 4 describes the methods used in more detail. The four areas are interdependent and somewhat intertwined, which indicates the need for a holistic view pervading the Gender Equality Plan, its measures and targets. It also points at the need for *everyone* within the organization to take joint responsibility for the work on gender equality.

The GEAR Tool¹ developed by EIGE was used as a guide and source of inspiration in our work on GEP. Other examples used can be found listed as references 2-4²⁻⁴.

The INL institutional organigram

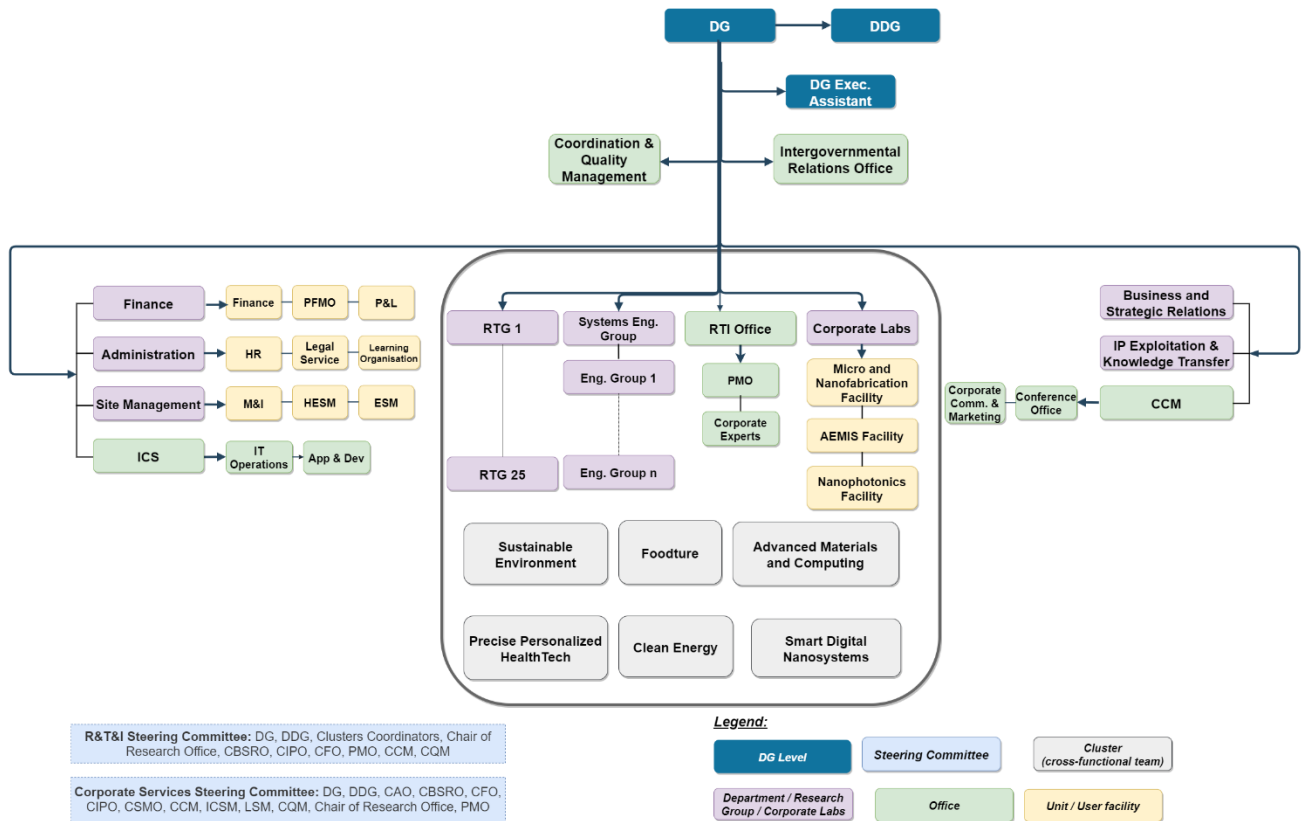


Figure 1 - The INL institutional organigram depicting the various INL corporate services and research groups as of May 2021.

3. Diagnosis

Knowing where the institution stands at present is essential to plan for the future. Here, we show a set of data that provides a diagnosis of Gender Equality at INL. The data was selected by the authors of this GEP and shows what we believe to be the key indicators of gender equality at INL as of the 16th of April, 2021. The data shows the overall gender distribution within the whole institution (Fig. 2A), employed and associated members of personnel (Fig. 2B), contract type (Fig. 2C), leadership and supervisory positions (Fig. 3), as well as within research clusters (Fig. 4A-B) and essential organisational committees and bodies (Fig. 4C-D). Supplementary data on gender balance at INL has been added as an appendix to this document (Appendix A).

Some key figures from internal surveys run on *Creating a Gender Equality Plan at INL*, *The Psychosocial Working Environment at INL* and, *Remote Work* are also shown (Fig. 5). The surveys were disseminated through all members of personnel, completed online and answered anonymously. All data was analysed and treated using Microsoft Excel and GraphPad Prism v9.1.1.

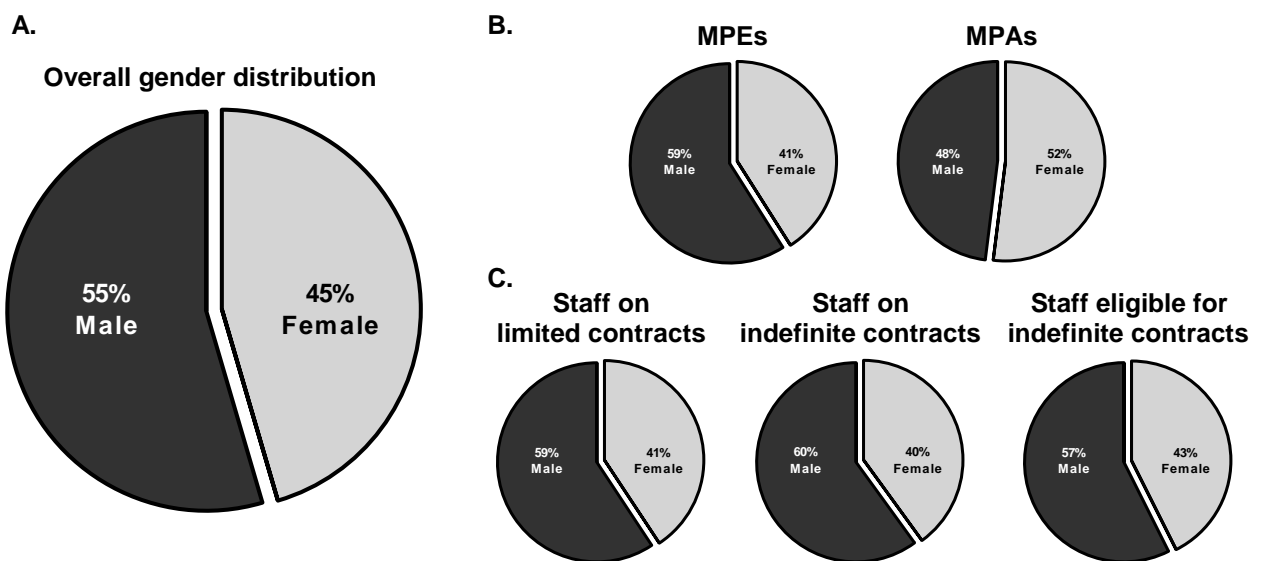


Figure 2 – Overall gender distribution within INL staff (A), including the gender distribution within employed (MPE) and associated (MPA) members of personnel (B), and the gender distribution per contract type (C). Data from 16th April 2021 representing 374 INLers.

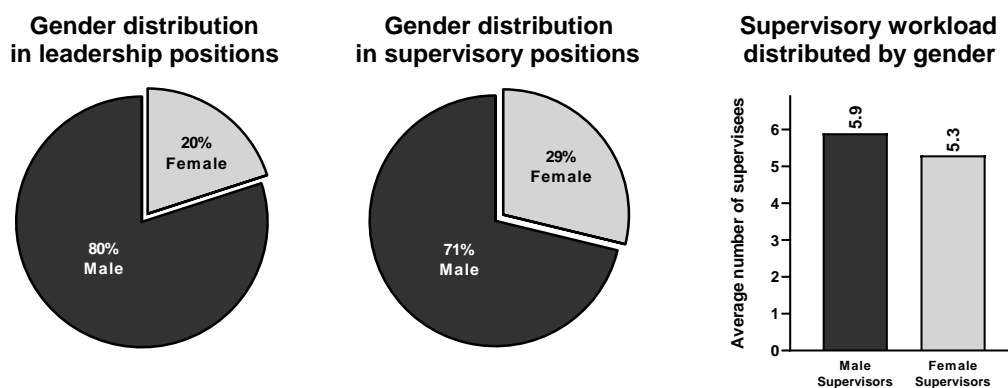


Figure 3 – Gender distribution within leadership and supervisory positions at INL (pie charts). The bar chart denotes the supervision workload distribution as the average number of supervisees per supervisor by gender, where male supervisors on average supervise 5.9 INLers and female supervisors 5.3 INLers. Data from 16th April 2021 comprising 40 leaders and 66 supervisors.

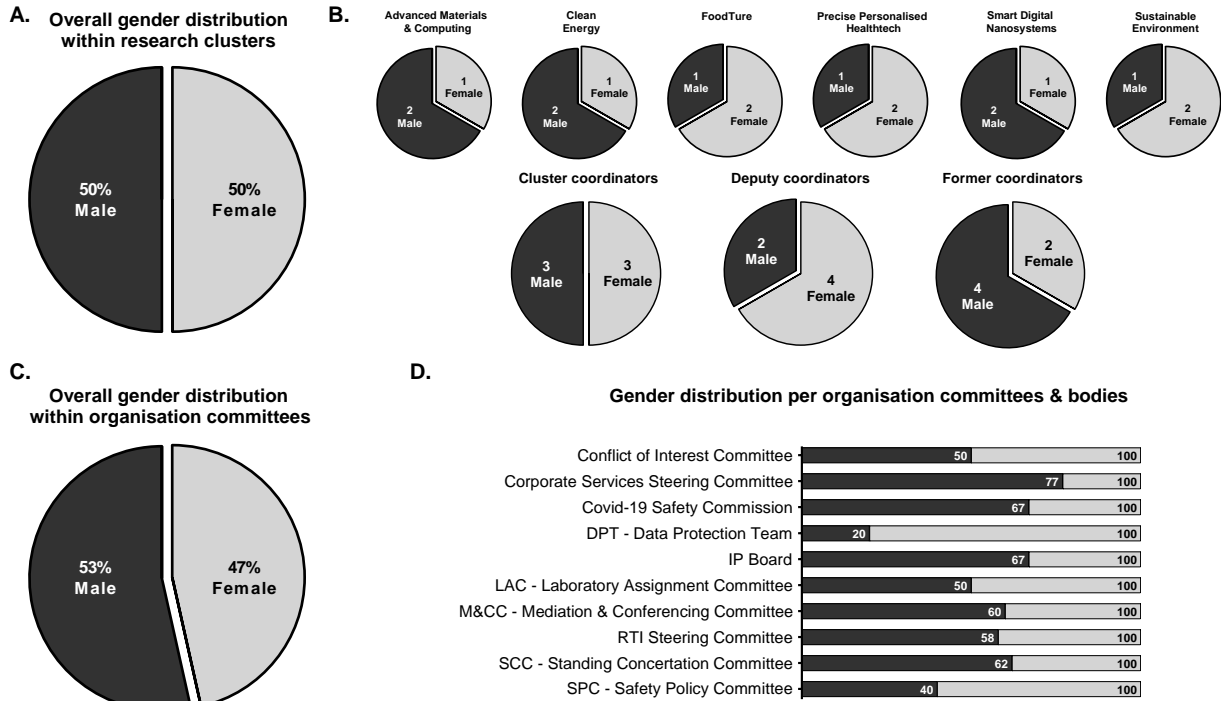


Figure 4 – Overall gender distribution within the INL research clusters (A), including detailed distribution within the 6 clusters and per coordination role (B). (C) shows the overall gender distribution within INL organisation committees and bodies; and (D) shows the gender distribution within individual committees and bodies. Note that some positions within different committees may be occupied by the same individual. Data from 16th April 2021.

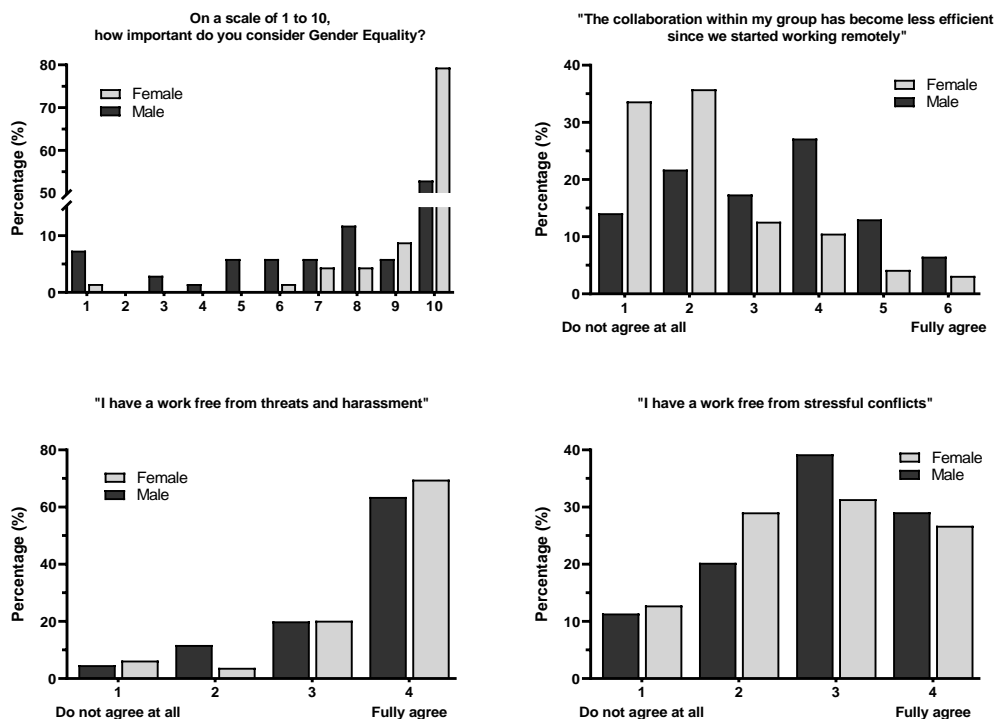


Figure 5 – Gender-disaggregated data from questions of surveys run on “Creating a Gender Equality Plan at INL”, “The Psychosocial Working Environment at INL” and “Remote Work”. The surveys were disseminated through all members of personnel and the data shows the results from 137 responses (68 male respondents, 68 female respondents, and one ‘prefer not to say’) for the survey on gender equality; 187 responses (92 male, 95 female) for the psychosocial survey; and 165 responses (79 male, 86 female) for the survey on remote work.

4. Areas of Intervention

The main areas of intervention of this GEP were identified following a survey entitled “Creating a Gender Equality Plan at INL” where all staff at INL were invited to participate and a follow-up SWOT analysis. The results from previous surveys on leadership, psychosocial working environment and remote work were also considered. This led to the identification of four areas, here listed:

1. *Organizational Culture*
2. *Leadership and Decision Making*
3. *Recruitment, Selection, and Career Development*
4. *Work-Life Balance.*

The first defined intervention area – **Organizational Culture** – is by definition characterised by the fundamental values, vision, beliefs and ways of interaction that contribute to the social and psychological environment of the organisation. The objectives within our action plan (section 5 of this document) intend to positively impact topics such as harassment policies, gender-sensitive communication, learning activities and gender diversity within teams. It also comprises possibilities for introducing gender perspectives in current research. The results from a survey on “The Psychosocial Working Environment at INL”, conducted in February 2021, show gender differences in statements about “harassment” and “stressful conflicts”, reiterating the importance of including the topic in this GEP.

Closely connected to the *Organisational Culture* is leadership. The data presented in section 3 clearly shows the gender imbalance within the hierarchical leadership at INL. Thus, the second area of intervention, **Leadership and Decision Making**, is a high priority for INL and a central part of our GEP. The analysis of the results from a leadership survey conducted at INL in June 2020 confirmed this and pointed at a gender imbalance within the group of senior staff – only 20% of the highly experienced staff are women. The results from the leadership survey also showed gender differences regarding how the ‘most important leadership skills’ were ranked. “Communication” and “Team orientation” were rated higher by women indicating a need to shift towards a more communicative and team-oriented leadership at INL. Leadership education activities for young staff members (of the under-represented gender), the use of role models and monitoring appointments are examples of measures suggested to level out the present imbalance.

An inventory of the decision-making bodies at INL shows that members of the bodies well reflect the gender distribution within the organisation. However, the number of female chairpersons leading the bodies would have to double to be representative. This further motivates the choice of **Leadership and Decision Making** as one of the key areas of intervention.

Research organisations and academic institutions hosting scientists from the natural sciences and engineering have typically an unbalanced gender distribution. Historically, the imbalance could be explained by fewer women entering STEM education, but today, when women dominate higher education also in the STEM subjects³, the explanation for the male dominance must be found elsewhere. Taking a closer look at statistics makes it obvious; this is a consequence of the high proportion of females choosing *not* to pursue a career as scientists after their education, see **Figure 6** and reference 5 of this GEP⁵.

Time-limited contracts and low job security, unlimited working hours, and demand for mobility have long been listed as reasons for women’s drop-out from scientific careers. But the fact that women have to fight bias and stereotypes when applying for research positions might play an even more significant role⁵. As shown in Section 3, INL has a reasonably balanced gender distribution as a whole – 46% female and 54% male. Thus, the conditions for e.g. gender-balanced *Recruitment and Selection Committees* are excellent. The survey run on Gender Equality also showed that men and women at INL agree that gender equality is important. However, on the question “On a scale from 1 to 10, how important do you consider Gender Equality?” women rated at an average of 9.5 while men rated at 8.0. These numbers may look good, but a closer look revealed that 18% of men rated the importance at 5 or lower, while <2% of women did the same.

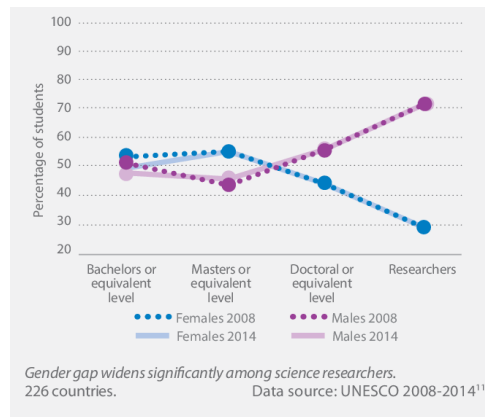


Figure 6 – Proportion of women and men in higher education and research (science), world average. Data from UNESCO³.

Thus, **Recruitment, Selection and Career Development** is an obvious choice as the third area of intervention of this GEP. Recruitment and selection processes at INL promote equal opportunities and equal access. Critical actions within this area of intervention should include:

- Promoting gender-sensitive communication in job announcements;
- Securing a higher representation of the under-represented gender in selection committees;
- Translating the good practices defined in our policies and regulations to career development activities.

Through surveys on Remote Work run during the Covid-19 pandemic, we mapped important gender differences among staff concerning how to deal with work-life balance. Our SWOT analysis confirmed this and thus, **Work-Life Balance** was chosen as the fourth area of intervention.

Globally, the concept of work-life balance has changed due to the digital transformation. Especially during the COVID-19 outbreak, the culture of being “always on” has blurred the line between home and office. Therefore, the concept of work-life balance needs to be analysed beyond the balance between “time at home” and “time at the office”.

By including this as an intervention area, we aim to increase the possibility for people to spend time outside work in activities like family responsibilities, personal relationships, personal interests, and hobbies, independently of their gender or hierarchical position. To achieve this, we need to start breaking the gender bias on, e.g., family responsibilities, and defining policies that will give people the autonomy to manage their time and effort including the *INL Flexible Work Arrangements* already in force.

5. Action Plan

The director general will invite members of INL personnel to form a gender equality committee (GEC), which should be nominated by the end of the third quarter of 2021. This will constitute the very first action of this GEP. The GEC will revise this GEP and will be responsible for monitoring the progress of the various actions and the accomplishment of each target according to the indicators defined in sections 5.1 to 5.4. The units and groups defined as responsible for the objectives listed in this action plan should be considered recommendations, pending validation by the to-be-formed GEC and by the chiefs/managers of each functional unit.

5.1. Organisational Culture

Objectives	Measures	Indicators	Targets	Responsibilities
1.1 Establishment of a Gender Equality Committee (GEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Members of personnel will be appointed to form the GEC, which will monitor and ensure compliance with the GEP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yearly internal resolution indicating the constitution of the GEC 	GEC formed by the end of Q3 2021	DG to appoint GEC
1.2 To promote gender equality as part of the individual and organisational culture at INL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation of regular workshops & training sessions in Gender Equality to create co-ownership of the GEP Search for funding opportunities to develop Gender Equality activities at INL 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of registrations at GE workshops Number of employees contributing to the GEP 	Yearly increase	LO BSR
1.3 To ensure a safe environment free from harassment and discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation of a transparent harassment policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of harassment reports Number of actions resulting from harassment reports 	All reports leading to corrective or preventive actions	LSM
1.4 To ensure gender-sensitive internal and external communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creation and implementation of communication guidelines to ensure the use of gender-neutral language Creation of a revision process of organisation texts, images, website materials, etc. Creation of a regulation to ensure gender perspectives in the organisation of conferences and events Promotion of gender-balanced networks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of external complaints and internal warnings regarding gender-biased communications Gender ratio among keynote and invited speakers, scientific and organising committees, collaborators etc. 	Zero complaints. General use of “singular they”. Zero-vision for gender-stereotype images. 40/60 target on gender balance among keynote and invited speakers, scientific and organising committees, etc.	CCM
1.5 To highlight the relevance of gender within different fields of research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction of Gender Equality as a topic for yearly discussions within research groups Encourage the participation of the under-represented gender as Principal Investigator in R&I projects Introduction of gender perspectives into nanotechnology research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proportion of research applications including a gender perspective Gender ratio within applicants as PIs in R&I projects Gender balance within supervisors 	Yearly increase/improvement	RTI PMO BSR
1.6 To ensure gender diversity in teams	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of interdisciplinary teams, cross-border, and cross-cluster collaborations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of cross-cluster collaborations 	Yearly increase	RTI PMO

5.2. Leadership & Decision Making

Objectives	Measures	Indicators	Targets	Responsibilities
2.1 To promote gender balance in leadership positions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use role-models of the under-represented gender • Education activities in gender perspectives for leadership positions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender ratio within supervisors/managers 	Yearly improvement of gender balance within supervisors and managers	PMO RTI LO
2.2 To promote gender balance in decision-making bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointments to be made with a 40/60 perspective 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender-ratio in research clusters, INL bodies & committees 	Yearly improvement of gender balance within research cluster, INL bodies & committees	DG GEC

5.3. Recruitment, Selection & Career Development

Objectives	Measures	Indicators	Targets	Responsibilities
3.1 To ensure gender-sensitive recruitment and selection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational activities in gender perspectives for recruitment & selection committees All job announcements to include references to the “under-represented gender” To ensure gender balance within job selection committees 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender ratio within job applicants Gender ratio in selection committees 	<p>Yearly improvement in gender balance within job applicants</p> <p>40/60 perspective in the appointment of selection committees</p>	HR
3.2 To ensure gender-sensitive career development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Career good-practices to be shared through role-models of the under-represented gender Education in gender perspectives for ICR committee Inclusion of gender perspectives in career development activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of activities to encourage good career practices shared by role models Gender ratio in leadership positions 	Yearly improvement of gender ratio in leadership positions	LO HR

5.4. Work-life Balance

Objectives	Measures	Indicators	Targets	Responsibilities
<p>4.1 To promote a work-life balance for all individuals within the organization</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guarantee the availability of organisational support to childcare, family members w/ special needs, older family members, etc. • Promoting remote and part-time work to be regarded as an opportunity rather than a threat • Promoting the inclusion of family members at INL social activities • Set up guidelines to foster a meeting culture responding to the needs of work-life balance • Set up an internal organisation warning in Outlook for members trying to send e-mails outside regular working hours. • To discuss possible strategies to reduce the difference between parental and maternal leave 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of meetings outside regular working hours and or meeting-free days • The proportion of ‘work from home’ days taken at INL Hub • E-mails and communications made outside regular working hours and days • Number of activities organised by the Social Committee 	<p>Yearly reduction of meetings outside regular working hours/days</p> <p>Zero e-mails sent outside regular working hours/days</p> <p>Regular social activities for INLers</p>	<p>Social Committee ICS HR LSM</p>
<p>4.2 To promote the safe participation of the under-represented gender in family responsibilities</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Automatic extension of employment contracts due to long-term sick leaves, maternity and paternity leaves • Encouragement for family members of the under-represented gender to take the full parental leave period 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of extensions and long-term leaves • Number of days taken for parental leave 	<p>An equal number of extensions and long-term leaves taken.</p> <p>Yearly increase of average parental leave taken by the under-represented gender</p>	<p>HR</p>

6. References

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4. Global Gender Gap Report 2020 | World Economic Forum Available at: <https://www.weforum.org/reports/gender-gap-2020-report-100-years-pay-equality>. (Accessed: 25th May 2021)
5. Moss-Racusin, C. A. *et al.* Science faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. U. S. A.* **109**, 16474–16479 (2012).

Appendix A



Figure A-1 – Overall gender distribution within INL Research, Technology & innovation groups and Corporate Services. Data from 16th April 2021.