



Gender Equality Plan

Georg-Speyer-Haus
Institute for Tumor Biology and Experimental Therapy
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This document applies to the Georg-Speyer-Haus – Institute for Tumor Biology and Experimental Therapy (GSH). It came into force with the signature of top management on 2022-03-01 and it is revised every two years. Last update 2024-03-01.

Georg-Speyer-Haus – Institute for Tumor Biology and Experimental Therapy (GSH) pursues the goal of equal opportunities for all its employees. We promote gender equality, diversity, family friendliness, and the reduction of discrimination. We hire diverse talents, strive for the equal participation of everyone in all departments, and we pursue the consistent elimination of discrimination based on a person's gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, age, faith or religious and political beliefs. We insure research and working conditions in a family-friendly environment in all areas, offer training, work and qualification prospects in accordance with equal opportunities and regularly monitor and improve the above.

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1. Legal Framework

According to current European recommendations and national legislation institutions must create and implement an equal opportunity concept.



Gender equality and gender mainstreaming in research have been priorities for the **European Commission**^a, the European Research Area^{bc} and the German Federal Government^{def} with actions on three main areas: (i) promoting gender equality in **careers**, (ii) ensuring gender balance in **decision-making** and (iii) integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation **content** and programs ([She Figures 2021^g](#)).

As of 2022, participation in the new European Framework Programme requires having a **Gender Equality Plan (GEP)** for public bodies, research organizations and higher education establishments^h.

2. Current situation

Founded in 1904 as a private foundation, oncological research is now conducted at the Georg-Speyer-Haus, Institute for Tumor Biology and Experimental Therapy. Situated adjacent to the grounds of the University Hospital of Goethe University Frankfurt am Main, it is linked to the university through cooperation agreements. The foundation was established in 1904 by Franziska Speyer and the associated research institute was opened in 1906. Its first director, Paul Ehrlich, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Physiology or Medicine in 1908. Nowadays, a Board of Trustees advises on the business of the foundation and an Executive Board lead by the scientific director Prof. Dr. Florian Greten manages the institute. A seven-member international Scientific Advisory Board evaluates the scientific progress of the institute annually. About 100 staff members are distributed among eight research groups, the infrastructure management, and the administration.

In the following table, the proportion of women and men in GSH is listed according to reporting criteria defined at national level in Germany as non-academic, academic and decision-making staff. These are similar but not identical to A-D staff groupsⁱ of [She Figures 2021](#) (the EU publication on gender in research and innovation).

^a Gender Equality Strategy. 2020-2025. European Commission. URL: https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en [accessed 2024-02-29].

^b A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth. 2012. European Union. EUR-Lex. URL: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A52012DC0392> [accessed 2024-02-29].

^c Pact for research & innovation in Europe. 2021. European Commission. URL: https://ec.europa.eu/info/law/better-regulation/have-your-say/initiatives/12960-Pact-for-research-innovation-in-Europe_en [accessed 2024-02-29].

^d Nationaler Aktionsplan für den Europäischen Forschungsraum. 2023. Dir Bundesregierung. URL: <https://www.euburo.de/en/era-action-plan-3417.html> [accessed 2024-02-29].

^e German Federal Equality Act Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz (2015-04-24) - BGleig - Bundesamt für Justiz: Gesetze im Internet. URL: https://www.gesetze-im-internet.de/bgleig_2015/BJNR064300015.html [accessed 2024-02-29].

^f Hessisches Gleichberechtigungsgesetz (2015-12-20) - HGIG - Bürgerservice Hessenrecht URL: https://www.rv.hessenrecht.hessen.de/perma?j=GleichstG_HE [accessed 2024-02-29].

^g [She Figures 2021](#). Gender in research and innovation: statistics and indicators. European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (2021-11-24): Publications Office. URL: <http://www.data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/06090> [accessed 2024-02-29].

^h [Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans](#), European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, (2021): Publications Office URL: <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/876509>

ⁱ **A**: The single highest grade / post at which research is normally conducted within the institutional or corporate system; **B**: All researchers working in positions that are not as senior as the top position (A) but definitely more senior than the newly qualified PhD holders (C) (i.e. below A and above C); **C**: The first grade/post into which a newly qualified PhD graduate would normally be recruited within the institutional or corporate system; **D**: Either postgraduate students not yet holding a PhD degree who are engaged as researchers (on the payroll) or researchers working in posts that do not normally require a PhD.



Table. Proportion of women in GSH in non-academic, academic and decision-making positions

Staff	Position	2021 GEP start	2022	2023	Target by 2026
Non-academic (similar to group D of <i>She Figures 2021</i>)	Administration	40.9%	50%	50.0%	Same
	Animal facility	100%	85.7%	77.8%	Lower
	Cleaning services	66.7%	66.7%	75.0%	Lower
	Mean non-academic	69.2%	67.5%	67.6%	Lower
Academic (similar to groups B-C of <i>She Figures 2021</i>)	Doctoral researchers	64.6%	69.6%	78.3%	Lower
	Postdocs	58.8%	53.4%	62.5%	Same/Lower
	Mean academic	61.7%	57.7%	70.4%	Lower
Decision-making (similar to group A of <i>She Figures 2021</i>)	Scientific Advisory Board	28.6%	28.6%	42.9%	Same/Higher
	Board of Trustees	28.6%	28.6%	28.6%	Higher
	Executive Board	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	Same/Higher
	Research group leaders	50%	50%	50.0%	Same
	Mean decision-making	35.1%	35.1%	38.5%	Higher

GSH has attained gender parity in decision-making roles among group leaders, with 50% being female, and demonstrates a substantial representation of women across various positions, including doctoral (78.3%), postdoctoral (62.5%), and non-academic staff (67.6%). While some disparity persists at higher board positions, the overall average for decision-making roles remains commendable at 38.5%. Notably, GSH's statistics surpass European and national averages in research organizations ([She Figures 2021](#))ⁱ.

Building on our accomplishments, our targets include maintaining achievements, addressing remaining disparities, and fostering an inclusive and equitable work environment for all employees. We achieve this through dedicated resources and by adhering to goals and measures outlined in Horizon Europe's guidance on gender equality plans.

- Raise awareness on gender balance among the employees and decision-making bodies
- Implement and adhere to the principles of equal treatment
- Monitor and improve

3. Dedicated resources

Dr. Sandra Schmitz is the GSH representative for equality and diversity. She is supported by Dr. Alina Jurcoane, the coordinator for EU-funded projects and the graduate school at GSH and Franziska Hasslinger-Pajtler, Head of Administration at the GSH. In addition, through a contractually regulated cooperation, GSH finances a staff position in the [Equal Opportunities Office](#) of the Goethe University Frankfurt on a pro-rata basis.

ⁱ While at the European level in 2018 women represented more than half of Bachelor's and Master's students (54%) and graduates (59%) and almost half of academic staff in grade C positions (47%), women's representation decreased at grade B (40%) and grade A (26%) positions (equivalent to full professorship) with little improvement since 2015. Overall, only about one-third of researchers (32.8% in the EU-27) are women and the figures are even lower in Germany (27.9%) [She Figures 2021](#)



4. Goals and measures

4.1 Raise awareness about gender balance among the employees and decision-making bodies

Communication and use of language

GEP is publicly available on the institute's website and is disseminated through institute's newsletter and active communication in internal meetings. The management is working to ensure that the GSH always uses gender-inclusive communication and encourages the use of Goethe University guidelines both for [English](#) and [German](#).

Coach, Train & Inspire

GSH offers personal coaching on gender and diversity related subjects to employees with personnel responsibilities. Seminars on "Communication training for managers" and "Healthy leadership" are organized together with the AOK Hessen.

In our yearly event calendar, alongside research topics, we also incorporate lectures and workshops open to all employees covering subjects like constructive communication and gender dimension. In our choice of speakers, we prioritize those from within the field who are actively involved in research and hold significant roles. Their direct experience and understanding of the academic system lend authenticity to discussions about overcoming female underrepresentation in decision-making roles.

Additionally, the GSH representative for equality and diversity regularly disseminates information about events aimed at raising awareness and promoting female scientists. Female researchers at GSH have access to various opportunities for professional development. They can participate in training sessions, receive individual coaching or travel, develop and network during multi-day workshops such as "Female Excellence in Medicine" or "Female Postdocs to Brussels". They also have the option to join programs like [Mentoring Hessen – Frauen in Wissenschaft und Wirtschaft](#), which prepares highly qualified women for senior positions. Moreover, GSH staff can engage in offers on equality-related topics through the collaboration between the GSH and the [Equal Opportunities Office](#) of the Goethe University Frankfurt. This cooperation is contractually regulated.

GSH organizes annual lectures for high school students. Following these lectures, students are offered the opportunity to participate in week-long internships within the labs of GSH. This initiative aims to provide hands-on experience and exposure to the exciting world of scientific research, fostering interest and enthusiasm of girls and youth for future careers in science.

Another measure we consider implementing is inclusive male advocacy. This involves regularly organizing lectures by top male scientists on *or* that emphasize the value of diverse teams. These sessions will highlight the importance of nurturing all talents while also acknowledging and addressing gender-specific challenges in academia.

Taking a step beyond mere awareness, we will pay attention that our training offers will redirect attention from simply discussing gender imbalances to actionable topics such as experience and strategy sharing from senior staff, such as "personal tips to overcome barriers in natural sciences", aimed at cultivating a culture of proactive support within the organization.



4.2 Implement and adhere to the principles of equal treatment

Recruitment

GSH includes equal opportunity in the processes and procedures of selection of candidates for job vacancies and committees to recruit and employ a greater share of the underrepresented gender. Vacant position announcements are formulated in a way that does not give undue advantage to the overrepresented gender and diversity aspects are considered.

To increase the proportion of women at the decision-making levels, we focus on promoting the interest of female employees with additional offers tailored to individual needs (mentoring, dual career, parent-child workstation, teleworking, etc). At levels where GSH's human resources department has no influence on the hiring process (Board of Trustees and Scientific Advisory Board), friendly recommendations are made by the Executive Board to raise awareness of gender balance.

In addition to striving for an equal gender representation in employing staff, GSH aims for equality in work processes.

Onboarding

New employees are introduced to the institute's administrative structures and rules through a structured "welcome" on the first day of work – an introduction plan, an organizational chart and a list of contact persons. International employees additionally benefit from a dedicated check-list and personalized support for their smooth integration in Germany.

Training

As of summer 2022, GSH has its own structured graduate school, [Paul-Ehrlich Graduate School](#) PEGS. Its goal is to recognize individual potentials and to provide knowledge, skills and qualifications preparing for a successful professional career.



Within the framework of PEGS, a mutual responsibility is established between the Doctoral Researcher and their supervisor for all phases of qualification leading to the doctorate and the development of a personal career plan. Within the program, researchers receive a wide range of technical and scientific support as well as personal assistance which foster young scientists by promoting scientific excellence and personal competence. The program is mandatory for doctoral researchers and optional for postdoctoral researchers.

Throughout the entire stay in the institute of doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, we prioritize self-reflection and offer both formal and informal mentoring opportunities. Senior staff members actively engage in personal meetings with researchers, concentrating on career development and fostering personal growth.

Gender in research content

We support and promote stronger incorporation of the gender dimension in research projects, from planning, implementation to analysis and reporting. Aspects of sex, gender and diversity are especially relevant in the life sciences. We regularly inform our researchers about lectures and seminars developing on gender in research content and we recommend they consult the very user



friendly [guideline](#) published by Goethe University Equal Opportunities Office and the [EU](#) and [DFG](#) related guidelines.

Teleworking

As of March 2020, IT has focused on expanding the GSH's IT infrastructure to enable all employees to work from home. For example, numerous digital workstations have been set up, storage capacity expanded, and VPN access set up (among other things). Supplements to the employment contracts have been developed by the management to generously allow teleworking in all areas where it is possible.

Parenthood – We offer career development schemes that support equal opportunity career management and the promotion of family-friendly organization structures – parent child workstation, “berufundfamilie” (workandfamily) audit – which improve and ensure young researchers' career prospects and achieve a stabilization of women's careers in science.

Parent-child workstation: With financial support from the German Research Foundation (DFG), the GSH was able to set up a parent-child workstation in 2019 that can be used by employees. For this purpose, a room on the ground floor of the GSH was renovated and redesigned. In addition, a multiple docking station and a monitor were purchased in 2020, as well as a telephone, so that a fully equipped digital workplace is available. A printer in the adjoining room can also be used. The offer is advertised on the internet and at institute meetings.



In addition, the management will continue to work with the University Hospital Frankfurt management on a joint concept for the use of the Hospital's **daycare centers** by the children of GSH employees.

Emergency childcare – has been made available at our institute since 2023 through the recruitment of a federal volunteer. This service allows parents to access childcare on an hourly basis during institute events, ensuring they can attend without concern. Furthermore we are customers of a specific commercial provider of emergency childcare.

[Audit berufundfamilie \(workandfamily\) certification](#) – Management and Board of Trustees decided in December 2019 to have the GSH certified in the audit berufundfamilie (workandfamily). The first detailed preparatory activities and workshops for the certification took place in 2020 with a wide range of participants. During 2021-2023 the measures included in the target agreement were implemented and the re-certification took place in December 2023 together with the launching of a new audit period. Already implemented milestones and highlights include introduction of annual employee appraisals, regular information emails on vacation offers for children, AOK Health Day, language courses, emergency childcare or information for new foreign employees. Strengthening and developing these already achieved targets are among the goals for the new audit period.





Further measures that make it possible to combine studies (undergraduate and graduate) and work with parenthood

- Schedule seminars, lectures and meetings that are part of the institute's general agenda so that they do not extend into the evenings.
- Encourage both male and female employees to take parental leave. Offer to stay in touch during parental leave, especially towards re-entry.
- Support parents with staff who will take over work that has to be done outside hours covered by daycare.

Charter of diversity - With the signing of the Charter of Diversity (de: Charta der Vielfalt) in 2021, GSH is committed to an appreciative and bias-free working environment. The Charter of Diversity is an initiative to promote diversity in businesses and institutions under the patronage of former German Chancellor Angela Merkel. We thus send a clear signal for diversity and tolerance in our professional world and express our appreciation for all employees regardless of age, ethnic origin and nationality, gender, religion and worldview, physical and mental ability, sexual orientation, and social background. Measures we already implement in the field of diversity management:



- Fostering an organizational culture characterized by mutual respect and appreciation. We create the conditions for managers and employees to recognize, share and live these values.
- Reviewing and ensuring that our HR processes reflect the diverse skills and talents of all employees as well as meeting our performance standards.
- Making the issues raised in the Charter of Diversity part of our internal and external dialog
- Showcasing our diversity and internationality through newsletter articles written by our employees
- Promoting events that cater to all employees, supporting communication, and supporting culinary options that accommodate diverse tastes and cultural backgrounds.

Zero tolerance of gender-based violence including sexual harassment

Violating/humiliating behavior related to gender includes not only acts of a sexual nature, such as unwelcome physical contact or pressure for sexual activity, but also acts such as stalking, intimidation, or physical and non-physical humiliation.

Investigate and Act

If the head of department/institute learns that an employee is being exposed to sexual harassment or other violations, he or she is responsible for investigating the circumstances and taking any required action to address such violations/humiliations and prevent them from occurring in the future. Reports of such violations are treated confidentially and urgently. The employee is protected against any harassment related to having filed a complaint.

The GSH is committed to the Code for Safeguarding Good Scientific Practice formulated by the DFG (as of February 2020) and has established binding regulations for safeguarding [good scientific practice at the GSH](#) in May 2023. This also details on the secure, anonymous/confidential reporting mechanism of scientific misconduct to the Ombudsperson. The same mechanism can be used also for issues like bossing or psychological violence allowing affected individuals to report misconduct safely, helping to address issues confidentially and effectively.



GSH has appointed an [Ombudsperson and a deputy Ombudsperson](#) who are directly and independently available to all scientists of the GSH in questions of good scientific practice and its violation by scientific misconduct. The Ombudsperson acts as an advisor and mediator and treats all matters in strict confidence without informing persons, institutions or bodies that are not directly affected. The guarantee of confidentiality serves to protect all persons involved in a case and it also applies beyond the conclusion of the matter.

4.3 Monitor and Improve

Statistics

GSH revises its public gender equality plan every two years, accompanied by an annual update of the internal gender equality report (de: Gleichstellungsbericht).

Targets

We consider equal gender division achieved when there is a minimum of 40% representation of both males and females in each category by 2026. All the measures aim to achieve gender equality both directly, by recruitment of new staff, and indirectly by creating an inclusive organizational culture and encouraging staff members of underrepresented genders to apply for openings within the institute. These measures are designed to enhance gender equality by focusing on actionable strategies, fostering a mentorship culture, ensuring safe reporting channels, engaging all genders in advocacy, and leveraging insights from experienced professionals.

Survey - A GSH employee satisfaction survey took place in 2019 and an updated version – including items related to gender equality and diversity - is planned for 2024 as part of the workandfamily (de: berufundfamilie) project. The goal is to find out how the employees themselves perceive their situation, what issues they prioritize and to guide the institute on what to focus on.

Frankfurt am Main, March 4th 2024

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