

Gender and Inclusion Equality Plan

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1. Introduction

CTS as a research center intends to establish a Gender and Inclusion Equality Plan (GIEP) towards creating strategies to mitigate the gender imbalance and potential forms of discrimination associated to HR management, decision-making, research programmes and funding schemes.

Although in terms of professional contracts, the gender policy is regulated by the general rules of the country and by the regulations of the main affiliation institutions with which CTS researchers have a contract, CTS intends to promote an equality policy in relation to achieving gender and inclusion equality and endorsing justice, fostering an inclusive research and innovation environment.

In this regard, CTS defines a set of principles and internal policies resulting in a Gender and Inclusion Equality Plan (GIEP), that contributes to strengthen the perception that identical conditions merit equal treatment, and therefore raise awareness among its research community. This can be done and achieved at the organisational level and at a researcher's and individual level. Moreover, the GIEP shall be aligned with the United Nations 2030 agenda for the Sustainable Development Goals, namely the sustainable development goal 5¹ for gender equality and goal 10² for reduced inequalities.

Furthermore, considering the EU context, Member States are encouraged to create an environment that promotes not only the removal of barriers associated with recruitment, but also the retention and career progression of female researchers, especially early career researchers, complying with the European Union legislation on GE (Directive 2006/54/EC).

In this line, this GIEP is intended to complement of the NOVA's Gender Equality Plan³ in Higher Education and R&I and similar plans that might exist in the institutions that employ CTS researchers, focusing on:

- Outlining the importance of maintaining protocols and pursue initiatives that ensure sustained funding for research projects aimed to deepen the scientific knowledge on gender, social relations, and policies for gender equality; and
- Strengthen and build partnerships that promote respect for gender equality, diversity, and inclusion, engaging researchers in such processes.

For the ongoing implementation of the GIEP and its continuous monitoring, CTS will follow the methodology developed in ETHNA System⁴ project (in which Uninova is a partner).

¹ <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/gender-equality/>

² <https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/inequality/>

³ https://www.unl.pt/sites/default/files/gep_web_v5.pdf

⁴ <https://ethnasytem.eu/>

2. Commitments and Measures

2.1 Commitments

To achieve effective equality of opportunity and treatment between genders, foster general inclusion, and promote collaboration based on researchers' competences, CTS commits to:

- Strongly oppose and contest discrimination and human rights violations based on gender or any form of exclusion.
- Challenge stereotyping and unequal power relations between women and men.
- Not tolerate practices that may result in gender-based discrimination, exclusion or inequality based on gender or other forms of identity.
- Promote equal research opportunities.
- Recognizes that quality and excellence depend on inclusive policies focused on equality between men and women, diversity, and gender-based non-discrimination.
- Foster an organizational culture that embraces commitment towards gender equality and inclusion, supporting its staff and researchers in the adoption of good practices.
- Implement its strategic plans focusing inclusion, equal opportunities, and diversity.

2.2 Measures

Following EU and national guidelines to ensure a gender-equitable environment and general inclusion principles, CTS will pursue measures to support such environment with the purpose of implementing a plan for gender and inclusion equality that embraces an ethics governance system for the use of responsible research and innovation (RRI). Such measures can be divided into (but not limited to):

- Structural integration and policies:
 - **Integration of Data. Evolution of CTS gender representatives.** Marking the starting point for data collection and establishing the goal for monitoring and progress follow-up of the different phases of implementation of this GIEP.
 - **Encourage and foster balanced composition of all bodies** (boards, teams, committees, etc.), taking into account the membership of the center (which is based on voluntary adhesion).
 - **Creation of a Gender and Inclusion Committee** for implementation and monitoring of GIEP measures.
 - **Creation of dissemination and communication actions** for GIEP.

- Career advancement, support, and maintenance:
 - **Provide Mentoring and Empowerment** actions to improve visibility, self-confidence, negotiation, and leadership skills, focused on the underrepresented gender.
 - **Share career development good practices** – role models (women scientists, researchers, and academics).

- Equal treatment:
 - Creation and development of **mechanisms focused on raising awareness and encouraging equal participation** of men and women in research teams.
 - **Provide / create working conditions** so that everyone has access to equal opportunities to study and to work.
 - Creation of **guidelines for equal opportunities of access** to resources (e.g., funding, equipment, lab space, etc.).

- Work-life balance:
 - Availability of **flexible working-time arrangements**, from part-time to remote working.
 - **Stimulate teamwork and cooperation** between different CTS research areas.
 - Support initiatives of **leisure and healthcare events**.
 - Make reasonable efforts to **consider special needs and/or limitations** of researchers due to impairments, religious or cultural principles.

- Gender dimension on research processes and establishment of work teams:
 - **Identification of possible gender stereotypes, inequalities, and gender biases** in the research and innovation processes.
 - **Address the realities** of women and men at all stages of the research and innovation cycle (design, proposal, research, evaluation, and dissemination).
 - **Foster the leadership** of women researchers in research teams, with a special focus on **STEM** (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) areas.
 - Create **gender-balanced** work teams, as much as possible, considering the center's membership and taking into account that being member of CTS is a voluntary decision.
 - Train researchers in **gender and inclusion-sensitive methodologies**.

This plan will be revised and adjusted periodically.