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Gender and diversity action plan

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DISSEMINATION LEVEL		
PU	Public, fully open	X
CO	Confidential, restricted under conditions set out in Model Grant Agreement	
CI	Classified, information as referred to in Commission Decision 2001/844/EC	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of this plan is to improve gender balance and diversity in the project. This will be done through the following activities:

- promoting understanding among researchers and other project personnel on the “gender and science” issue and make them more sensitive towards the gender dimension of/in science;
- including the gender dimension throughout the research project;
- indicating how to design a more gender sensitive project;
- helping to eliminate gender bias in the research project;
- showing why it is important to create a gender-balanced research team;
- making research results more relevant for society.
- To some extent also:
- Enabling researchers to write more competitive proposals in future;

The tasks to be conducted are:

- Availability of resources
- Building awareness within the consortium
- Appointment of personnel
- Mentor network
- Monitoring gender and diversity actions

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1. Introduction

Background

The gender dimension plays a role in how INTAROS will involve scientists in the project and how stakeholders will be engaged from local communities, decision and policymakers, and private sector. We will involve both genders in workpackages, tasks and events organized by the project. The exploitation of the project results will be targeted to both genders, for example results regarding community development (business, infrastructure, environment) and environmental monitoring. The project will follow the guidelines established for EU project see http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/gendered-innovations/index_en.cfm?pg=home

Gender balance was a criterion when the INTAROS consortium was established. In the leader team the deputy coordinator, 3 of 7 work package leaders and 3 out of 6 members of the Executive Board are females. The Consortium agrees to promote and ensure gender equality throughout the project. The Consortium is aware of the importance of attracting more female researchers into polar research and exploitation of research for the benefit of society.

The project will act upon the EC recommendations listed in the “Gendered Innovation” to stimulate and promote career development for women in science, innovation, and technology. The Consortium aims to improve a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the project, including at supervisory and managerial levels (ref. Art. 33 of the Grant Agreement). The project management team will follow up the implementation of the Gender and Diversity Action Plan, but all beneficiaries are responsible for promotion and monitoring of gender equality of the personnel involved throughout the project. The status of the Gender and Diversity Action Plan will be reported to the steering committee and in the periodic reports..

Art. 33 from the grant Agreement reads:

“ARTICLE 33 — GENDER EQUALITY

33.1 Obligation to aim for gender equality

The beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

33.2 Consequences of non-compliance

If a beneficiary breaches its obligations under this Article, the *Agency* may apply any of the measures described in Chapter 6.” Rejection of costs – reduction of costs – recovery – penalties – damages – suspension – termination – force majeure”

Definitions

Gender sensitivity refers to the aim of understanding and taking account of the societal and cultural factors involved in gender-based exclusion and discrimination in the most diverse spheres of public and private life. It focuses mainly on instances of structural disadvantage in the positions and roles of women.

For full definitions of all related terms, refer to Appendix

2. Objectives

The aim of the Gender and Diversity Action Plan is to improve gender balance and diversity¹ in the project by

- promoting understanding among researchers and other project personnel on the “gender and science” issue and make them more sensitive towards the gender dimension of/in science;
- including the gender dimension throughout the research project;
- indicating how to design a more gender sensitive project;
- helping to eliminate gender bias in the research project;
- showing why it is important to create a gender-balanced research team;
- making research results more relevant for society.
- To some extent also:
- Enabling researchers to write more competitive proposals in future;

Specific goals:

- to improve gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the project, including at supervisory and managerial levels (ref. Art. 33 of the Grant Agreement)
- to improve gender balance and diversity in the science and technology activities in the project
- to take the gender dimension into account when INTAROS approach stakeholder groups including communities, decision and policymakers, and actors in the private sector
- to ensure that committees and boards in the project to have minimum 40% of the least represented gender, for advisory groups 50%

3. Work plan

The tasks specifically assigned to the implementation of the Gender and Diversity Action Plan are the following activities, organized under WP8.1 Project management:

Task 1: Availability of resources

Resources on gender issues within the consortium as well as external competence will be identified and relevant documents will be compiled and made available for the beneficiaries (e.g. http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/gendered-innovations/index_en.cfm?pg=home

¹ The description here is only on gender balance. The same principles adhere to race, age, disability etc

Task 2: Building awareness within the consortium

We will distribute documents (this plan and the referenced documents) on gender related issues to all participants in INTAROS (contact persons, task leaders and wp-leaders committee members). The gender plan will be communicated through the internal project webpage. Short gender sessions during general assembly and other project meetings will be held. Topics for these sessions will include

- gender sensitive science and technology issues in the project
- gender sensitive issues when approaching stakeholder groups including communities, decision and policymakers, and actors in the private sector

Task 3. Appointment of personnel for project work and participation in committees

Beneficiaries are responsible for the gender and diversity balance in employment of personnel to carry out the work as defined in the DoA, including presentations at workshops, conferences and membership in committees. WP-leaders, task-leaders and others with responsibility for engaging scientists and other personnel need to oversee and report on the gender and diversity action.

Task 4. Mentor network

A mentor network will be established by the Scientific Committee to support up to ten young scientists in building their scientific career. The SC will select the young scientist who are active in INTAROS based on gender balance and recommendations from the partner institutions.

Task 5. Monitoring gender and diversity status

A set of parameters (suggested in the template of the periodic report) will be monitored each year and reported to the Steering Committee. The Steering Committee can suggest measures to improve the gender and diversity balance.

Task 6: Reporting to the EC

The gender related information will be provided as mandatory parts of the periodic and final reports to the Commission according to the guidelines

4. Organization and resources

Decision: Executive Board

Management: The Steering Committee will monitor and follow up the GDAs.

Resources: part of the tasks performed by the Executive Board and the Steering Committee

5. References

European Communities, 2009. Toolkit. Gender in EU funded research.

6. Appendix

A. Definitions

Gender: Gender refers to cultural attitudes and behaviors that shape "feminine" and "masculine" behaviors, products, technologies, environments, and knowledges. "Femininities" and "masculinities" are multidimensional and can be practiced in different ways by biological females or males; gender does not necessarily match sex. Gendered attitudes and behaviors are not binary but slide along multiple continua.

http://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/gendered-innovations/index_en.cfm?pg=home

Gender Norms are produced through social institutions (such as families, schools, workplaces, laboratories, universities, or boardrooms) and wider cultural products (such as textbooks, literature, film, and video games.)

Gender norms refer to social *attitudes* about what behaviors, preferences, products, professions, or knowledges is appropriate for women and men, and may influence the development of science and technology.

B. Lessons learned from the INTEGER project

The following is quoted from the INTEGER project <http://www.integer-tools-for-action.eu/en/resource/lessons-learned> and provide a guide to acquiring of effective knowledge and ensuring that beneficial information is factored into planning, work processes and activities:

Evidence driven actions

Actions must be data-driven. A key initial task is to build reliable, gender-disaggregated databases that can feed into the decision-making process and facilitate ongoing monitoring. Data can be quantitative (key indicators/ratios/gender-pay gap/workload) and qualitative (culture/environment/satisfaction).

Gender-neutral

Actions should be designed to be gender-neutral and not for women only (e.g. paternity leave and post caring/sick leave can apply for sabbatical term off teaching...)

Implementation Team Structure

Teams at local and institutional levels drive actions that can be tailored to the micro or macro environment in which they operate. Implementation Teams should gather junior/senior staff, academic/non-academic staff (management, administrative and technical)...

Engage men

It is extremely important and beneficial to involve men as champions/active participants in the transformational change process, as well as to have gender balance on all teams.

Align with core values

The actions should be strategically designed to align with the institution's core values (e.g. funding and research excellence).

Importance of social events

Hold social events as well as functional meetings – to build team spirit/buy in and involve family members.

Benchmarking against ‘Good Practice’ Institutions

This allows for the gathering of good practice and assessment of ‘what might work here?’ The learning process was also accelerated by ‘Exchanges of Experience’ in each INTEGER partner institution.

Communication Strategy

An active communication strategy is vital to communicate on the actions and their benefits, to the widest possible community of stakeholders. This can include media training.

Public lectures

Widely-disseminated events using high-profile speakers can help to draw in audiences, gain buy-in, and increase the profile of project activities and efforts.

Support of senior management – commitment and buy-in

Head of the institution needs to be committed and to demonstrate this visibly (interviews, videos...)

Involve other HEIs – Sectoral approach

Cross-sectoral collaboration is fundamental to facilitate benchmarking and the piloting.

Build Alliances

- internally within your institution (e.g. via existing women’s networks)
- externally by engaging key stakeholders, such as national funding bodies and policy drivers

Inputs to policy formulation

Work with key allies (e.g. Human Resources and Equality/Diversity offices) to influence gender-related policy.

Dedicated office to oversee the Transformational-Gender Actions

Experience shows that there has to be an institutional driver to: navigate the process towards gender equality; capitalise on gains; and ensure a legacy for future GAPs.

Make use of existing training/development opportunities

Avail of external and internal programmes to build capacity amongst women researchers and directly-engaged project actors, e.g. leadership training programmes for women, media training, mentoring.

Not everything is achievable in a 2-3 year timeframe

Some actions (e.g. those involving broader, structural changes) will take longer. Focus on achievable actions in the short term to maintain momentum, while working on long term ones.

Prioritise Unconscious Bias Training

Addressing inherent unconscious biases at all levels within an institution is essential to furthering the achievement of gender equality and diversity.

Identify support but prepare for some resistance

Support may come from unexpected quarters, and anticipated allies can sometimes not engage as hoped. Some resistance is inevitable, but emphasising the evidence base for good practice, and the benefits to the broad institutional community, will help to maximise support.

Ensure support from top level

Support from top level enables the recognition of the working teams and the creation of decision-making committees/ teams that will later enable a strong institutionalization, sustainability and allow changes in policies & procedures.

For example, the creation of the “*Comité de pilotage pour l’égalité entre femmes et hommes au CNRS*” & of the « *Stride Like Committee* » shaped to bring support to the MPDF for the elaboration and adoption of the pluriannual action plan and to guarantee political and operational support.

It is also important to keep in mind that support from senior leadership will provide the needed financial resources to implement the identified actions.

Besides top level representative’s participation to meetings shows the commitment of the institution and can possibly increase the general turnout.

Systematize regular meetings and ongoing communication

The horizontal exchanges and regular meetings are very important as they ensure that actions are widely adhered to. Regular communication is essential to ensure that weaknesses are identified early and addressed. Also, planning and taking decisions in cooperation will avoid later rejection.

Assessment, training sessions, and unconscious bias workshops

Sensitization can also influence other senior management members within the organization, and allow positive communication to all staff.

Respond to local context and specific needs

When trying to introduce change within an institution, acting at the institutional level is not enough. Transformation of culture is the most crucial element of enacting change as change can only be enacted in its local context to have impact and be embedded.

When comparing the physics, mathematics, chemistry or Human Sciences within the INTEGER project, one can notice they all have a different culture. Because it is important to recognize these local contexts, the consortium has chosen the model of exploring both actions at the centralized and local levels.

Improves autonomy & implication of the teams

Autonomy allows the creation of tailored actions that can be adhered to as well as the achievement of “bottom-up” actions that will bring various perspective and answer to specific needs, e.g.: Parity Charter, tailored training for the mathematic community and the physic community...

To this end, it is important to gather contextual information via surveys and assessment of local environment.

Set a well-defined local structure for implementation, with key personnel.

To avoid turnover, teams should not be reliant on any single person, and have a specific and durable leading structure, e.g. MPDF, WISER...

Pay attention to the “unintended consequences”

It is important to use actions as a support not only for the “target” groups but for the entire institution, to build a more flexible and productive environment. It is important to consider the concept of equality in general and keep in mind that a measure that could seem beneficial for a portion of the target group will not be necessarily for the other portion.

One of the solutions is to examine how the measures may affect all personnel and not only focus on those who have family responsibilities.

For example, the scheduling of meetings from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm benefits as much to somebody who does not fall within the “target group” (child or dependent ...) and would want to devote more time to the private sphere.

Likewise, intervention of a woman to speak at conferences/seminars is added to an existing workload. If some women will be mobile and available to participate in these networks (seminars, meetings), others will not.

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INTAROS

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