

The Wuppertal Institute's Gender Equality Plan

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The Wuppertal Institute sees itself as a leading international think tank for sustainability research focused on impacts and practical application. The organisation's activities are centred on developing transformation processes aimed at shaping a climate-friendly and resource-efficient world.

The overriding goal of the Institute's work is to help to respect the planetary boundaries. This is represented in the guiding vision of a "climate-neutral and resource light society" by 2050.

The following are key characteristics of the Institute's research:

Interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary

Building on the foundations of traditional scientific work, focused on individual disciplines, an interdisciplinary approach is taken to addressing sustainability problems. The Institute pursues science on a transdisciplinary basis: rather than being merely an observer, the scientific community plays an active part in the transformation processes. Transformative research (transition research) and work in real-world laboratories constitute the Institute's conceptual framework.

Stakeholder-oriented

The Wuppertal Institute's research projects focus on the stakeholders who are actively involved on the ground and are usually conducted in close cooperation with them. The Institute sees itself as an intermediary between the worlds of science, industry and politics. Therefore, it takes the future application of its research into consideration in order to ensure that the findings are of great practical benefit to decision makers.

Innovative

All of the Institute's research projects are highly innovative. Its work is also concerned with analysing the effectiveness of innovations in regards to achieving the climate protection and resource efficiency goals. Innovations that facilitate systemic advances (next-level innovation) are of particular interest. They would appear to be essential to achieving the core Sustainable Development Goals in good time; however, they are often associated with intentional and sometimes unintentional structural changes.

Integrative

The research carried out by the Wuppertal Institute is integrative in many respects. On the one hand, it takes a holistic approach by interlinking climate, energy and resource objectives. Economic and institutional considerations are combined with cultural and social concerns. On the other hand, the Institute's activities are multiscale, meaning that it performs analyses at micro (local level, individual businesses, households), meso (regional level, industries and associations) and macro levels (national, European and global analyses).

Looking at the Wuppertal Institute's innovative and integrative approach in terms of research, it goes without saying that the Institute does also apply these principles to its work ethics and code of conduct. Equal opportunities for all employees are a given and the diversity of all people is appreciated. Same as in the research areas, the Wuppertal Institute would like to be a pioneer in the fields of gender equality and intersectionality and be a role model for other institutions and organisations.

Why does the Wuppertal Institute need a Gender Equality Plan?

The aim of the Wuppertal Institute's Gender Equality Plan (GEP) – which is endorsed by the Institute's scientific and administrative management – is to ensure equal opportunities for all employees. The Institute proceeds from the principles of gender equality in all its activities without compromising on competence and quality. Supporting all employees, irrespective of gender as well as sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, origin, and other individual characteristics, and believes that the support of the employer will benefit all staff and set a standard.

This GEP is intended to show which positive developments have taken place at the Wuppertal Institute, which processes are already up and running, but also to make clear which areas can still be improved. The Institute is constantly striving to evolve and to adapt to and help shape positive developments in society. Therefore, it ensures that important specifications are adhered to, internally and in its research,

and set as clearly defined tasks, so that the most goal-oriented work possible can be carried out, also with regard to equality and diversity.

In addition to its own commitment in the form of the Equal Opportunity Commissioner and her work on gender equality, diversity guidelines and developments, the GEP demonstrates that the Institute is moving with the times, not only in its academic work but also in its stance.

The Institute's GEP can also be a signpost for potential employees and partners to get a clear impression of the Wuppertal Institute's values in addition to the research content. Not to mention a GEP with its aspired goals will lead to an increase of employees' level of satisfaction followed by a rise in effort at work, the desire to stay with the company and the general improvement in the performance of the workforce. The staff will be more content all over.

The Wuppertal Institute's goal is to provide a pleasant and respectful workplace for all its employees.

Current state of gender equality at the Wuppertal Institute

During recent years, the Wuppertal Institute was able to increase the proportion of female employees considerably thanks to ambition and efforts. Today, the share of women working at the Institute is more than 60 per cent. Although the Institute can score with a high quota of women in the area of team leaders, there is still a gender discrepancy in the research unit heads and directors that the Institute would like to overcome.

In October 2021 the Wuppertal Institute appointed an Equal Opportunity Commissioner to be able to deal with gender equality questions more precisely and professionally.

The Wuppertal Institute values the importance of the compatibility of studies, career and family. It actively supports staff members to keep their studies, job and family lives in harmony. Flexible working time accounts, flexible schedules, flexible part time jobs and mobile working are available to enable employees to achieve a healthy work-life balance. The possibility of remote work was officially laid down in a company agreement in 2021. All permanent employees have the option to spend up to 40 per cent of their contractually agreed working hours in a mobile office. In 2021, a mobile nursery was purchased to allow staff members to take their children to the office in case of child care shortages.

Caring for the social integration and health of its staff is a given for the Wuppertal Institute. Naturally, it provides a company pension scheme. To top it all off, workshops on a healthy work-life balance are offered regularly in cooperation with pme-Familienservice. Furthermore, there are several sport clubs or classes such as soccer, yoga and beach volleyball that staff members established and organise independently.

The Wuppertal Institute not only emphasises the equality of opportunity but also encourages diversity. Therefore, each employee is supported, trained, and promoted individually. By means of specific human resource development, each employee is offered customised training, internal and external group workshops as well as the opportunity to attend conventions and conferences.

The "WIN_achwuchsförderungsprogramm" is offered as a development programme for senior researchers. In addition to the management programme, it is a measure to recognise and facilitate potential.

In accordance with § 4 of the "Landesgleichstellungsgesetz NRW" - LGG (translates as: State Equal Opportunity Act of North Rhine-Westphalia), the Institute considers the realisation of equal linguistic treatment of women and men in internal and external communication to be an important component of equality and has internally published a set of rules for gender-appropriate spelling which were explained in an internal workshop.

The job advertisements demonstrate the Institute's efforts towards gender equality, which also takes into account the compatibility of family and career, to the outside world. Human resources managers are encouraged to give priority to the underrepresented gender in personnel selection procedures. This applies to all positions and employment relationships. All positions, including those with supervisory and managerial responsibilities, are also advertised for part-time appointment, provided there are no compelling work-related interests to the contrary.

Equal Opportunity Commissioner

The Equal Opportunity Commissioner looks after the area of equality and diversity at the Wuppertal Institute. She reports to the management. The Equal Opportunity Commissioner supports the Wuppertal Institute in ensuring equality between all genders. The aim is to promote and ensure equal rights, equal treatment and equal opportunities for all employees with regard to gender and diversity outside the Institute and also internally.

An Equal Opportunity Commissioner is a female employee who is responsible for supporting the institution in ensuring equality between men and women. She is involved in personnel measures as well as in organisational and social matters. At the Wuppertal Institute, the Equal Opportunity Commissioner performs her duties in accordance with the "Landesgleichstellungsgesetz NRW" (LGG). The aim is to promote equal rights, equal treatment and equal opportunities for all employees with regard to gender and diversity at the Wuppertal Institute. Referring to § 15 par. 2 LGG, this task is performed exclusively by women.

Equality work includes the gradual creation of employment and working relationships that guarantee equal opportunities and equal treatment by the employer for the benefit of the employees. The goal is to enable employees to be able to develop better in their work and to pursue it in such a way that they do not

encounter or even have to challenge unjustified gender or body-specific stereotypes. Measures are set up to promote equality and also deal with the issue of better compatibility of family and work and to find solutions to reduce the underrepresentation of women (if any).

Originally, gender equality work primarily serves the equality of women and men in order to counteract structural disadvantages or discrimination based on gender (primarily related to women). However, the Wuppertal Institute is working towards a general improvement of gender equality and to promote diversity and equal opportunities for all employees of the Institute. Nonetheless, the topic "equality" should give men in particular the assurance that no position has been created to favour women or, even more so, to discriminate against men. Equality work concerns all employees who feel discriminated against on the basis of gender, sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, or origin in comparison to other colleagues (cf. General Equal Treatment Act - AGG).

The Equal Opportunity Commissioner is bound by confidentiality in all respects and has the right of secrecy. Incoming and outgoing emails are not hosted on the Wuppertal Institute's own server and therefore can only be viewed by the Equal Opportunity Commissioner. The Equal Opportunity Commissioner's mobile phone line is also managed externally, so that the call history cannot be backtracked by the Institute, assuming that incoming calls are not made via the WI's own telephone system.

Complaints Office

At the Wuppertal Institute, the Complaints Office according to the German General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) is located at the Equal Opportunity Commissioner.

§ 13 AGG grants employees the right to complain to the competent department if they feel discriminated against a cause mentioned in § 1 AGG (ethnic origin, gender, religion, ideology, disability, age, sexual identity), in association with their employment relationship by the employer, superiors, other employees or third parties. Each complaint will be examined thoroughly and the outcome will be communicated to the employee making the complaint.

Goals towards gender equality at the Wuppertal Institute

1. Guaranteeing a work-life balance

The Wuppertal Institute guarantees a healthy work-life balance for all staff.

Each employee's individual family and lifestyle plans are supported. Therefore, flexible working hours and the option of switching to a part-time job when needed are offered wherever possible. The mobile children's room may be borrowed by all

staff in the event of childcare bottlenecks in order to look after the children at the office if personal attendance cannot be avoided.

After returning to work after a parental leave, employees may increase their working hours steadily or even get back to work on full time earlier than planned if desired after consultation with the management.

Whenever employees feel that they do not have a healthy work-life balance in their lives, the Wuppertal Institute's superiors as well as the HR team is available to them for counselling and will help them to find a solution.

2. Raising awareness about gender equality

The Institute has already taken several steps to create an environment in which each employee can feel included no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

In 2021 two email groups were established, one in regards to women's issues, the other related to LGBTQIA+ topics, which any employee interested in the matters may join and exchange information, ask questions and chat.

In the same year, the Wuppertal Institute updated its guideline on gender-sensitive spelling introducing the genderstern. The guideline is binding for all employees. This ensures equal linguistic treatment of women and men in internal and external communication, rather than using the generic masculine in the German language. Apart from including the female and male genders, the genderstern acknowledges the existence of more than two genders and includes all of them.

In the future, the Wuppertal Institute will continue working on raising awareness about gender equality. To achieve this goal, the Equal Opportunity Commissioner will send out newsletters on this topic to all employees in regular intervals. Furthermore, a lecture about gender equality shall be organised. Participation may be mandatory for all employees. Other than that, the Institute will update its event guidelines to update the section about diversity with regards to speakers and guests.

3. Achieving a gender balance in leadership positions

The Wuppertal Institute is striving to achieve a gender balance in leadership positions in order to overcome the current discrepancy.

In order to reach this goal in the long run, the Institute will try to empower and encourage female employees to apply for higher positions, ensuring them that family responsibilities (if any) are no obstacle. The Institute will examine the possibilities of providing individual support for women interested in taking on leadership roles, strengthening their self-confidence and possibly offering workshops, seminars and lectures for all interested parties.

The Equal Opportunity Commissioner will monitor the sex/gender disaggregated data on personnel (including students and doctoral candidates) collected by the HR department on an annual basis. The colleagues are informed about the findings in a newsletter.

4. Spreading awareness about sexual harassment at the work place

Led by the Equal Opportunity Commissioner the sensitive topic of sexual harassment at the work place will be addressed at different levels and through different channels in order to raise awareness for its significance and to make sure that sexual harassment does not happen at the Wuppertal Institute.

As a first step, a poster campaign is planned. The posters will be put up on all notice boards in the Institute and sent out as pdf documents to all staff. It is supposed to explain the appearance of sexual harassment and what can be done if employees experience or witness such forms of abuse at the Wuppertal Institute.

As a second step, a seminar on sexual harassment shall be held at the Wuppertal Institute to create awareness and understanding of the topic. Attendance will be mandatory for all staff.

5. Satisfaction survey

To measure the level of satisfaction among the staff the Equal Opportunity Commissioner will conduct an annual survey. Participation is anonymous and voluntary. Topics of the survey will be among others:

- General level of satisfaction working at the Wuppertal Institute
- Level of work-life balance
- Sense of belonging
- Feeling of equality
- Level of inclusion
- Effectiveness of the poster campaign about sexual harassment