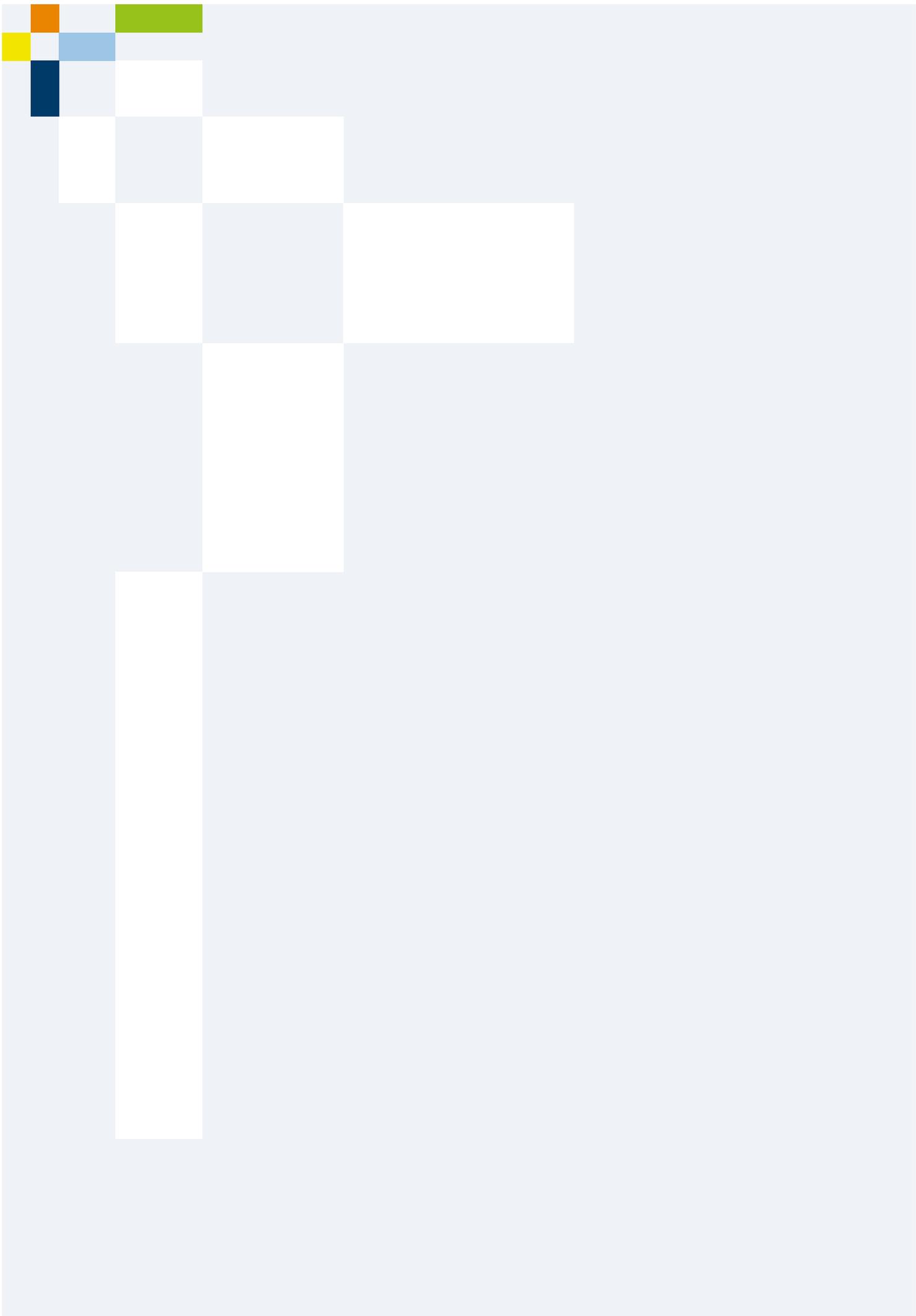




Gender Equality Report and Action Plan for the acatech Office

acatech (Ed.)



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1 Objectives

In its **"Principles for Gender Equality at acatech"**, the Academy established the general goal of equal treatment of women and men. Since 2018, it has published separate Gender Equality Action Plans for the acatech Office and the Academy every two years, reviewing progress towards the relevant targets, evaluating the measures that have been implemented and updating the plans as necessary. As well as complying with the relevant federal and regional gender equality legislation, this reflects acatech's conviction that it is necessary to consider as broad and balanced a range of perspectives as possible in order to promote technology in Germany in a manner that is in the public interest and in particular to strengthen public understanding of the importance of leading-edge technologies, as stipulated in acatech's **statutes**.

As the National Academy of Science and Engineering, acatech is strongly committed to ensuring that technology is both inclusive and shaped by appropriate values. Accordingly, acatech believes that it is imperative for technology development to be informed by European values right from the outset, in keeping with a "values by design" approach.¹ This approach naturally includes gender equality, an issue on which acatech is guided by the **EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025**.² The EU strategy pursues a dual approach of gender mainstreaming combined with targeted actions and intersectionality.

In 2022, the EU also published a paper³ in the context of the European Green Deal that underlines the social dimension of sustainability measures. This illustrates the fact that social inequality cannot be tackled separately from sustainability and other strategic issues – all of these matters must be addressed together in an integrated manner:

"There are strong inter-relationships between equal opportunities and climate change, and hence strong links between equal opportunity strategies and green-deal type strategies are to be expected."

It is thus evident that, rather than being treated as a peripheral issue, the gender and diversity dimensions should form an integral part of the methods, work programme and objectives of research projects and policy advice.⁴

In its guidelines, the Academy commits to providing policy advice that reflects the scientific state of the art. This includes following the German Research Foundation (DFG) guidelines for safeguarding good research practice, which explicitly state that **gender and diversity** should be taken into account in research practice. **In 2022, the DFG published new gender equality and diversity standards⁵** aimed at promoting both gender equality and **diversity in research**:

"But outstanding research is characterised by the structural integration of diversity both in the development of research ideas and in the composition of working groups. [...] The aim is to create an 'integrated gender equality and diversity strategy'."

According to this approach, gender equality and diversity should be addressed together. This will also support efforts to tackle intersectionality, i.e. overlapping aspects of inequality. Gender equality in research remains an important priority for equal opportunities policy. As far as acatech is concerned, this means that the topics chosen for the Academy's projects and the processes used while working on them will continue to take the gender dimension into account.

In addition, the acatech Office will create a new diversity officer role to make sure that other dimensions of diversity are reflected more strongly going forward.

The principles outlined above translate into ongoing concrete objectives for acatech's Office. Firstly, the proportion of women in leadership roles should be further increased and equal opportunities and work-life balance should be promoted and strengthened through flexible working models at every level of the organisation. Furthermore, staff awareness raising measures such as a code of conduct and gender equality seminars should be implemented in order to prevent discrimination on the basis of gender or other

1 | See Kagermann, H./Wilhelm, U.: *European Public Sphere. Gestaltung der digitalen Souveränität Europas* (acatech IMPULS), Munich 2020.

2 | See Europäische Kommission: *Strategie für die Gleichstellung der Geschlechter 2020–2025*, Brussels 2020.

3 | See European Committee of the Regions/Martinos, H./Tödting-Schönhofer, H./Jeffrey, P.: *Equal Opportunities and Responsibilities in the Implementation of the European Green Deal*, Brussels 2022.

4 | See Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft: *Guidelines for Safeguarding Good Research Practice. Code of Conduct*, 2022.

5 | See Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft: *Die Forschungsorientierten. Gleichstellungs- und Diversitätsstandards – Zusammenfassung und Empfehlungen 2022*, Bonn 2022.



attributes. Secondly, the acatech Office should incorporate the gender perspective even more systematically into the advice provided to policymakers and the public and progressively include diversity issues in these activities.

Accordingly, the measures set out in this document are geared towards ending existing inequalities as soon as possible and continuing to leverage the potential of a diverse, mixed-gender

workforce to ensure the ongoing excellence of the Academy's work and policy advice. To help identify and prioritise targeted measures for increasing the percentage of women, Chapter 2 provides an overview of the latest figures on the percentage of women at acatech and the changes that have been achieved to date. Chapter 3 offers a critical evaluation of these changes. Finally, Chapter 4 discusses a series of concrete measures for implementing equal opportunities at acatech.

2 Review of the current situation

2.1 acatech's structure and working methods

acatech sees itself as a flexible working academy comprising a network of members from the scientific and business communities. It is composed of various bodies, each with its own structure: the committees, the Executive Board, the Board of Trustees, the General Assembly, the Senate and the acatech Office. The mission of the Academy as a whole is to add value for citizens by providing policymakers and society with independent advice that is in the public interest, promoting cooperation between science and industry, representing the technological sciences at home and abroad and fostering young talents in the STEM subjects. A broad spectrum of different perspectives is key to the provision of balanced advice, and acatech has followed this principle in the composition of its project groups and networks ever since it was founded.

The first pillar of the Academy comprises the scientific Members, who are invited to join acatech because of their outstanding scientific achievements and high professional reputation. They are drawn from the fields of engineering, the natural sciences and medicine, as well as related fields in the humanities and social sciences. New Members are invited to join acatech with the specific aim of bringing fresh ideas and perspectives to the Academy. The second pillar of the Academy is the Senate, whose members are leading figures from technology companies and organisations, as well as the major science organisations. acatech's Members and Senate work on an unpaid basis in thematic networks and project groups. Meanwhile, different stakeholders from civil society are represented on the Academy's management and supervisory bodies (the Executive Board and Board of Trustees). The acatech Office supports the voluntary work undertaken by the Members, assisting with the development, execution and management of the Academy's projects.

2.2 Gender distribution in the acatech Office

The following data refer to the acatech Office, which coordinates the voluntary work carried out by acatech's Members and Senate and communicates the themes addressed by the Academy to interested members of the public. These figures are also included in the report of the Joint Science Conference (GWK) on the percentage of women in science and research.

Pay grade (valid as of 31.10.2022)	women	men	% women
Employees covered by collective agreement			
Equivalent to senior civil service grades			
E15	4	13	23,5 %
E14	30	25	54,5 %
E13	29	15	65,9 %
Total	63	53	54,3 %
Equivalent to higher intermediate civil service grades			
E12	8	1	88,9 %
E11	3	1	75,0 %
E10	3	1	75,0 %
E9b	14	1	93,3 %
Total	28	4	87,5 %
Equivalent to intermediate civil service grades			
E9a	9	1	80,0 %
E8	5		100 %
E6			0,0 %
E5	2	1	50,0 %
Total	16	2	88,9 %
Total all pay grades	107	59	64,5 %

Figure 1: Gender distribution in acatech Office by civil service collective agreement (TVöD) pay grades (figures valid as of 31.10.2022)

In 2022, women accounted for 64.5 percent of all staff at the acatech Office (Figure 1). This is the same as the figure for 2019 (also 64.5 percent). The number of staff employed by the acatech Office has almost doubled in the last five years, from 88 in 2017 and 110 in 2019 to 166 in 2022.

As a family-friendly employer committed to supporting work-life balance, acatech has a successful and well-established flexible working time system (Figures 2a + b). Women make significantly more use of part-time working arrangements. While similar



numbers of women and men took parental leave, women took it for longer periods. The proportion of part-time employees at acatech has increased compared to 2019. While 26 out of a total

of 110 employees worked parttime in 2019 (23.6 percent), the proportion of part-time staff rose to 27.1 percent in 2022, out of a total of 166 employees.

Pay grade (valid as of 31.10.2022) Employees covered by collective agree- ment	Part-time employees		Employees on leave	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Equivalent to senior civil service grades				
E15	1	1		
E14	7	2	3	1
E13	10	4	1	
Total	18	7	4	1
Equivalent to higher intermediate civil service grades				
E12	3			
E11	1	-		-
E10			1	
E9b	11	-	-	
Total	15	-	1	-
Equivalent to intermediate civil service grades				
E9a	5	-	-	
E8	-	-	-	
E6		-	-	
E5	-	-	1	
Total	5	-	1	-
Total all pay grades	38	7	6	1

Figure 2a: Number of women and men who were working part-time or were on leave as of 31.10.2022 (either for a few months or the entire year)

		No.	Person months
Part-time parental leave	women	8	65
	men	7	12
Elternzeit in Teilzeit	women		
	men	2	4

Figure 2b: Breakdown of parental leave at acatech Office in 2022

3 Evaluation of progress towards acatech's gender equality targets

We are pleased to report that between 23 percent and 27 percent of leadership roles (pay grade E15) were occupied by women in recent years. The proportion of women on pay grade E15 was 23.5 percent as of 31.10.2022. While this is a slightly lower percentage than in the last report (27.3 percent), the actual number of women in leadership roles (4) has risen.

This means that the explicit gender equality target of thirty percent women in leadership roles established in the last Action Plan has not yet been fully met. Efforts to increase the proportion of women in leadership roles to thirty percent should therefore be continued going forward.

The percentage of women and men on pay grade E14 is almost the same, while women account for just under two thirds of employees on pay grade E13.

44 of the 50 employees on the pay grades below E13 are women, meaning that women are significantly overrepresented in these roles compared to the average percentage of women in the population.



4 Measures

The acatech Office is pursuing two overarching goals. Firstly, it is striving to increase the percentage of women in leadership roles, in particular by enabling a better work-life balance. And secondly, it is endeavouring to reflect the gender dimension in all areas of the Academy's policy advice work. The acatech Office supports the Academy's efforts to increase the percentage of women involved in policy advice and is committed to incorporating the gender dimension into the content of the advice provided.

The creation of a new diversity officer role will ensure that existing measures incorporate diversity aspects and are productively aligned with new measures to promote diversity.

4.1 Measures to increase the percentage of women in leadership roles in the acatech Office

Although the overall percentage of women in the acatech Office is high (65 percent), the proportion of women in **leadership roles (E15)** is just 23.5 percent. This falls short of the target of at least thirty percent women in these positions. The achievement of this target could be supported by ensuring that people in leadership roles are also included in further measures to facilitate work-life balance (see 4.2). For instance, the option of flexible working arrangements could be actively highlighted when advertising positions. The experience of flexible working hours and locations accumulated during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic should be built on and working arrangements of this kind formalised.

In order to further increase the percentage of women in leadership positions at the acatech Office, more should also be done to promote and advertise the **part-time leadership role** model. Existing barriers to the implementation of this model should be identified and removed. Just one man and one woman on the E15 pay grade currently take advantage of this opportunity (as of 31.10.2022, see Figure 2a).

The gender distribution across all pay grades (i.e. pay grades equivalent to senior, higher intermediate and intermediate civil service grades) continues to be monitored in order to ensure that the progress achieved so far is maintained and that problematic instances of inequality continue to be addressed. With this

in mind, the gender distribution of job applications should be monitored and targeted measures taken to encourage people of the underrepresented gender at each pay grade to apply for the relevant positions.

In addition, the panels for all job interviews at the acatech Office should continue to comprise equal numbers of women and men, and the Equal Opportunities Officers should also be present where relevant.

4.2 Work-life balance

acatech aims to be an attractive employer and offer employees and job applicants in different personal situations and at different stages in their lives the opportunity to combine high performance at work with a fulfilling private life.

More must be done to gain an even better understanding of what people want in terms of work-life balance and the associated barriers and specific needs profiles. This will enable the development of more precisely tailored position profiles and working time models.

For instance, the most recent employee survey revealed that just one in four current acatech Office employees is a carer. While this relatively low percentage is partly a reflection of the staff age structure, it also highlights the potential to recruit employees from currently untapped groups by tailoring positions to their needs.

acatech does not tacitly expect the majority of its employees to work full-time or regard other working time arrangements as unsatisfactory deviations from this norm. Each working time model is seen as one among many equally valid options. If an employee wishes to change their working time arrangements during the course of their employment, this is regarded as a standard practice rather than a breach of contract, and is supported.

4.3 Employee survey and code of conduct

As well as gathering information about mobile working during the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic, the 2020 survey also asked employees about their experience of gender discrimination.

The survey was completed by almost two thirds of the 153 employees who received it. 19.8 percent of respondents reported occasionally being treated differently because of their gender by other colleagues within the Academy, including their superiors. The figures for men (21 percent) and women (25 percent) were similar, with the percentage of women reporting this behaviour being marginally higher. The overall figure for projects involving external partners is slightly higher: 21.3 percent of respondents reported occasionally being treated differently because of their gender by external project partners. However, there was a noticeable difference between men and women in this context, with two women reporting this behaviour for every man.

Employees were also asked whether they were sometimes belittled or patronised because of their gender. Of the twelve percent of employees who said this had happened to them internally, 25 percent were women and three percent men. Just 5.4 percent of respondents reported being belittled or patronised because of their gender in situations involving external project partners. However, it is noteworthy that only women and no men reported this behaviour.

Another employee survey on unequal treatment on the basis of gender and other forms of discrimination will be carried out in 2023 in order to update the findings and explore additional aspects.

In response to the fact that some participants in the 2020 survey reported gender discrimination, there are plans to draw up a code of conduct for the whole Academy. The **code of conduct** will establish rules governing the behaviour of all co-workers at acatech. It will set out how employees must conduct themselves in order to comply with the law and with ethical and social standards. Its aim is to prevent discrimination and create a respectful working environment. As well as improving employee satisfaction, the code of conduct will also enhance the Academy's image as an employer and send a strong signal to acatech's target audience in government, industry and civil society.

4.4 Internal communication of gender equality measures

The rising percentage of women in the Academy and the progress achieved with regard to the public visibility of female experts bear witness to acatech's success in raising awareness among its Members and acatech Office staff. Nevertheless, the lessons

learnt from the first Action Plan point to the need for continuous communication in order to achieve both the short-term targets for the next evaluation and the longer-term goals.

Once the Gender Equality Action Plan has been approved by the Executive Board, its goals and measures are published and communicated both internally and externally. Accordingly, the findings and measures were presented by the Equal Opportunities Officers at the full staff meeting in December 2022. After approval by the Executive Board, the final Gender Equality Action Plan is also published on the acatech website. At acatech's 2023 in-house conference, there will be an in-depth discussion about how the Gender Equality Action Plan's targets and measures can best be implemented in the acatech Office.

The bodies and functions in the Academy and the responsible members of the acatech Office who are key to meeting the Gender Equality Action Plan's targets receive ongoing support with their efforts and are kept informed of the progress achieved. The acatech's Office staff receive assistance in implementing the gender equality targets at the operational level.

A basic awareness and knowledge of gender equality action throughout the entire acatech Office will be key to the long-term implementation of the Gender Equality Action Plan's targets. Accordingly, the first step should be to raise basic awareness of gender equality among the acatech's Office staff. To this end, the Equal Opportunities Officers should hold at least one workshop a year for all employees on this topic, with the support of the management team.

The guidelines on the composition of project groups will now specify that women must be specifically sought for leadership roles and included as members of the project groups.

4.5 Incorporating the gender dimension into policy advice

Following on from these staff awareness raising activities, the next step is for employees at every level to reflect the gender and diversity dimensions in the project groups, with a view to ensuring that the DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) Guideline on research design is implemented in the Academy's policy advice. This will require the significance of these dimensions to be specifically investigated for each of the Academy's topics and, where relevant, reflected in the outputs.



Data for gender-sensitive policy advice should continue to be identified, analysed and communicated across the Academy's different topics. The relevant guidelines should be incorporated into the quality management handbook.

4.6 Overview of the acatech's Office gender equality measures from 2023

The table below provides an overview of the different categories of gender equality actions.

Gender distribution in the acatech Office	Incorporating the gender dimension into policy advice
Meet 30 percent target for women in leadership roles	Identify gender-sensitive issues in topics addressed by the Academy
Continue and step up gender distribution monitoring across all pay grades (i.e. pay grades equivalent to senior, higher intermediate and intermediate civil service grades) and take measures to address unequal opportunities	Provide gender-sensitive data
Monitor gender distribution of job applications (as permitted by data protection regulations)	Help Academy to meet its gender equality targets (e.g. guidelines for project groups; guidelines on percentage of female candidates)
Survey on flexible working arrangements and gender discrimination	Invite more female experts to give interviews and sit on Academy's bodies
Further improvement of work-life balance at every level of the organisation	

Table 1: Overview of the acatech's Office gender equality measures from 2023

4.7 Incorporating diversity aspects

The gender equality measures described above aim to achieve equal treatment of women and men. In the course of efforts to promote gender equality, it has become clear that other personal attributes such as sexual orientation, age or where a person is from interact with gender in multiple ways. Consequently, these attributes must be taken into account in order to ensure effective gender equality actions that are aligned with modern values. They must also be addressed as independent factors in the creation of a modern working environment.

This wider understanding of gender equality will be operationalised through the creation of a permanent diversity officer role at the acatech Office. Initially, this role will involve determining employees' implicit knowledge of diversity issues and making this knowledge explicit. This can then be used for strategic development, to identify diversity opportunities and challenges, and ultimately as a basis for concrete measures.

The report and action plan on gender equality in the acatech Office were approved by the acatech Executive Board on 24 November 2022.



About acatech – National Academy of Science and Engineering

acatech advises policymakers and the general public, supports policy measures to drive innovation, and represents the interests of the technological sciences internationally. In accordance with its mandate from Germany's federal government and states, the Academy provides independent, science-based advice that is in the public interest. acatech explains the opportunities and risks of technological developments and helps to ensure that ideas become innovations – innovations that lead to greater prosperity, welfare, and quality of life. acatech brings science and industry together. The Academy's Members are prominent scientists from the fields of engineering, the natural sciences and medicine, as well as the humanities and social sciences. The Senate is made up of leading figures from major science organisations and from technology companies and associations. In addition to its headquarters at the acatech FORUM in Munich, the Academy also has offices in Berlin and Brussels.

For more information, please see www.acatech.de.



Editor:

acatech – National Academy of Science and Engineering, 2023

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Recommended citation:

acatech (Ed.): *Gender Equality Report and Action Plan for the Academy*, Munich 2023.

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Layout concept: Groothuis, Hamburg

Conversion and typesetting: Heilmeyer und Sernau Gestaltung

The original version of this publication is available at www.acatech.de.

