

Leibniz University Hannover Gender Equality Plan

Benefiting from everyone's potential – creating opportunities

Leibniz University Hannover promotes the diversity of its employees and its student body and undertakes ongoing efforts to ensure gender equality. Respect and an accepting attitude towards the diversity of lived realities are the basis of LUH's equal opportunities and diversity policy. To comprehensively counteract structural discrimination, LUH advocates for an intersectional perspective.

Intersectionality refers to the interrelation and interaction of different forms of discrimination. They include gender discrimination; racist discrimination; discrimination due to social origin; age-related discrimination; discrimination due to sexual orientation, world view or religion; and discrimination due to disability or chronic illness. The overlapping and simultaneous occurrence of the different forms of discrimination each person faces results in individual experiences of discrimination.

LUH recognises the diversity of genders beyond binary categories. At the same time, measures to advance women's equality remain a necessary and central instrument at LUH. Historical inequality has led to structural barriers that need to be dismantled. Women continue to be significantly under-represented in management positions and decision-making bodies; the gender pay gap between men and women with the same qualifications and experience still exists; and women are frequently confronted with societal expectations and gender stereotypes.

It is important to LUH to emphasise that the promotion of women's advancement does not contradict efforts to promote and make visible the diversity of genders beyond binary representations. Rather, it is possible to develop comprehensive measures which promote equality for all genders and simultaneously address specific challenges.

Equality can only be achieved if we recognise and jointly counteract all forms of discrimination and their interactions. LUH therefore works to ensure intensive networking and cooperation between the central and departmental equal opportunities officers and the institutions and individuals responsible for dealing with all anti-discrimination matters at LUH.

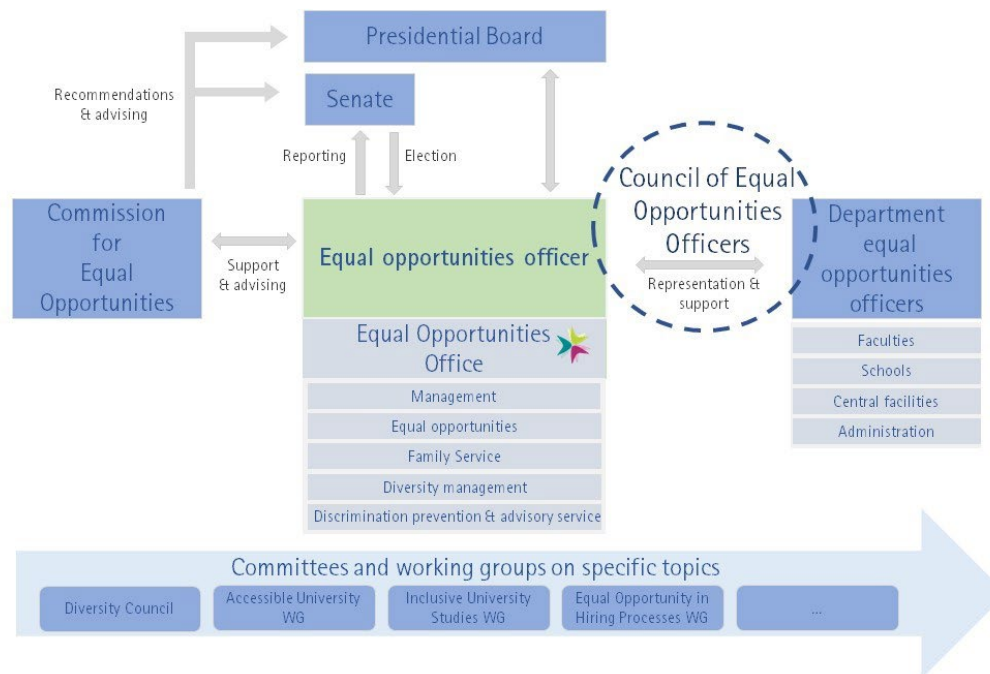
The Gender Equality Plan provides an overview of LUH's strategic equal opportunities policy and serves as a guide for the continued development of equal opportunities goals and standards.



Prof. Dr. Volker Epping
President of Leibniz University Hannover

Human resources and gender expertise

Ensuring equal opportunities is part of the university management's work at LUH. The equal opportunities policy is the responsibility of the Presidential Board and is implemented by a range of units, commissions, working groups and individuals. The joint goal is the ongoing design and development of the academic and university culture in a gender-equal, family-friendly and respectful manner.



The Equal Opportunities Office reports directly to the Presidential Board and is headed by the central equal opportunities officer. In addition to the central equal opportunities officer's position, the Equal Opportunities Office comprises the manager, the representative for gender mainstreaming, the Family Service, the diversity management area and the advisory service, as well as two administrative staff members (total FTEs excluding the central officer: 4.25). It also receives funding for materials and operations.

The LUH Commission for Equal Opportunities develops proposals for the Presidential Board and the Senate regarding measures and actions that will enable the university to fulfil its obligation to promote equality. The Vice President for Education is the chairperson of the Commission for Equal Opportunities. Each status group is represented on the commission by four representatives and deputy representatives appointed by the Senate, alongside the equal opportunities officer and members of management.

In the faculties, institutes, schools and administration, departmental equal opportunities officers represent their respective subject or organisational areas. The departmental equal opportunities officers support the central equal opportunities officer in fulfilling her obligation to promote equality. Together with her, they form the Council of Equal Opportunities Officers. The equal opportunities officers in the departments receive funding to assist in reducing their workload; if they are members of teaching staff, they can apply for a reduction in their teaching duties.

Linkages between the diversity management area and various bodies such as the Diversity Council or the Accessible University working group are also in place.

Data collection and monitoring

Gender-specific data form the basis for the development of measures and goals as part of the equal opportunities work. The commonly used cascade model is applied here. This means that the targets for the percentage of women within each academic career level are drawn from the percentage of women in the qualification level directly below. The monitoring of this data makes it possible both to measure equal opportunities policy successes and to highlight equal opportunities deficits.

LUH's University Development and Controlling office collects gender-related data on the individual status groups. This data is published in the *LUH Statistical Report*. The new *Equal Opportunities Indicator Report* compiles gender-related data on the individual status groups at the central and departmental levels and visually depicts the development of these figures over recent years.

The Equal Opportunities Office monitors the target numbers and equal opportunities activities based on this data. This makes it possible to intervene in and refine existing processes. The Equal Opportunities Plan regularly sets out concrete targets for the percentage of women based on the cascade model and develops new equal opportunities measures.

LUH's data collection capacity currently remains limited to gender representation within specific status groups. The aim is to look at representation from a more intersectional perspective – i.e. taking into account the overlapping dimensions of discrimination. Monitoring which distinguishes between different groups within the genders is the basis for an intersectional equal opportunities policy. The collection of intersectional data is currently a challenge for LUH as it is subject to organisational and data protection stipulations.

Raising awareness about equal opportunities and gender-specific biases

LUH offers awareness-raising courses, coaching and advising on various equality-related issues for employees and students, as well as campaigns on these topics.

Discrimination can result from unconscious biases. Increased awareness of this issue and the intentional examination of one's own prejudices and internalised stereotypes are the foundation for a fair and diversity-friendly LUH. For this reason, introductory and in-depth workshops on *unconscious bias* are offered regularly for employees.

The reduction of unconscious prejudices is also important in ensuring the professionalism of hiring processes. Participants in hiring and appointment procedures receive mandatory training on the topic of *unconscious bias*. As a result of targeted training, appointment committee members are able to reflect on and minimise their biases in the individual phases of the appointment procedure – i.e. the formulation of the job specification and job advertisement, the reviewing of job applications, the interviews and the hiring decision.

The Equal Opportunities Office is where programmes and offers related to *preventing discrimination* are based. The office provides advising on dealing with discrimination, as well as on individuals' rights and potential courses of action.

LUH supports people who have experienced discrimination and provides them with safe spaces where they can discuss their experiences and jointly develop strategies for action. Examples include the regular *Queer Get-Together*, the *A-Team*, the *Mentoring Programme for Doctoral Candidates* and the *Academic Management for Female Professors* programme.

LUH develops strategies and measures to achieve gender equality that extend beyond a binary, heteronormative understanding of gender. The aim is to highlight and strengthen gender diversity at LUH.

Among other measures, the provision of guidelines and advising on gender-neutral language helps promote an awareness of this diversity.

Work-life balance and university culture

LUH wants its students and employees to feel valued and well integrated, regardless of their individual family situations. It therefore provides the Family Service, which is based within the Equal Opportunities Office. LUH supports employees and students in balancing work/university studies and their personal lives via the following measures:

- The possibility of working from home, mobile work and flexible working hours
- Various childcare offers, such as regular childcare, childcare in exceptional situations (e.g. when the regular childcare is unavailable) and childcare at conferences or during school holidays
- Parent-child offices and networking offers for people with families (parent-child café)
- Grants to support the completion of doctoral degrees

The Family Service also supports employees and students who provide care for family members in need of nursing care. Comprehensive advising and information sessions are offered to reduce the burden on those impacted. The human resources department provides information on options for leave or reduced working hours.

The *Dual Career Network* run by the Hannover Science Initiative supports the recruitment of dual-career couples and helps them get settled professionally in Hannover. The service is intended for the partners of newly appointed professors and junior managers in academia and business.

To promote an inclusive university culture, LUH has adopted the *Basic Principles of Diversity*. They clearly stipulate that interactions among all LUH members should be characterised by tolerance and respect. The university has thus committed to a conscientious approach to discrimination, thereby helping to open up power structures in a manner that supports gender equality.

Balanced gender representation in leadership and decision-making

LUH strives to consistently increase the representation of women in academic leadership positions, both centrally and in the individual faculties and institutions. The focus is on increasing the overall percentage of female professors. As long as female academics are under-represented at the professorial level, female professors will be overburdened in terms of their participation in academic self-governance activities.

LUH offers options for female professors who take on multiple roles in academic self-governance to reduce their workload (reduced teaching duties). The reduction is intended to support those professors who face an increased workload due to the legal quotas within governance bodies, committees and commissions. Female professors can also apply for funding to assist with reducing their workload.

Gender fairness in hiring and human resources development

LUH's vision is to recruit the "brightest minds in research and teaching". The appointment of new professors is one of the most important tasks at Leibniz University Hannover and is an effective means of profile development. Factors related to gender and diversity are taken into account at all stages of the appointment process. From the approval request to the appointment proposal, all processes and decisions are reviewed with regard to equality, compliance with gender-inclusive practices, and diversity. Job ad-

advertisement texts, decisions to forgo application procedures, the composition of appointment committees, and appointment proposals require the approval of the equal opportunities officers and the university bodies. To ensure that the equal opportunities obligations are fulfilled, the equal opportunities officers attend all committee meetings in an advisory capacity and support the appointment policy's aim of increasing the proportion of female professors at LUH.

LUH provides a guide on active recruiting which offers instructions for systematic recruiting based on standardised processes. The documentation of recruiting measures is mandatory. In addition, all appointment committee members receive training regarding *unconscious bias*.

An ongoing quality management process analyses relevant aspects of appointment and hiring processes with respect to equal opportunities and develops concrete recommendations for improvement.

LUH's job advertisements are formulated in an open and non-discriminatory manner, with the aim of appealing equally to all potential applicants regardless of gender, nationality, ethnic origin, religion, world view, disability, age, sexual orientation or identity.

LUH carries out gender-inclusive human resources development by offering special support programmes intended to retain highly qualified female researchers at the university. These include the *Caroline Herschel Programme* or *grants to support the completion of doctoral degrees*. Topics relevant to equality, such as *intercultural competence* or a *leadership culture that takes family and life stages into account*, are integrated into training programmes on an ongoing basis.

Integrating gender and diversity in research and teaching

LUH has a long tradition of gender and diversity research in the humanities and social sciences and in architecture and law. The *visiting professorship for gender and diversity* promotes an interdisciplinary perspective and supports the integration of this perspective within the faculties. The visiting professor fosters the communication of current research standards in gender and diversity research, including in subject areas that have so far not had a designated focus in this area. They raise awareness regarding gender representation in the respective subject areas, taking an intersectional perspective into account in doing so.

Gender and diversity research is an integral element of the teaching and research in specific faculties. Numerous measures are in place within the faculties to support this.

Gender and diversity standards are laid out in the LUH Teaching Constitution and are supplemented by practical guidelines for teaching and working together (including the guidelines on *diversity-sensitive teaching* and *gender-inclusive and diversity-sensitive language*).

Protection from sexual harassment and discrimination

LUH promotes the cooperation of all employees and students based on equality and trust. It is committed to guaranteeing a safe environment for work, teaching and study that is free of discrimination and harassment. The university places value on respectful and professional interactions in which all members' personal rights and individual boundaries are recognised and respected. Sexual harassment is a violation of an individual's personal rights and is not tolerated. Digital forms of sexual harassment and discrimination are likewise not tolerated.

LUH's prevention concept includes the advisory offers in the various units and facilities, the president's circular on the issue, the designated representatives in the institutes and facilities, the departmental equal opportunities officers, the student A-Team, the official complaints process under the General Act

on Equal Treatment (AGG), and the discrimination prevention and advisory services offered by the Equal Opportunities Office.