

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

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PREAMBLE

Employees are the most important capital of any company, especially in times of immense international competition. This is all the more true for a research and technology organisation that assumes a prominent role on the international innovation stage.

Key management tasks include strategically bundling corporate knowledge, channelling know-how into specific research domains and technology markets in a targeted manner and developing scientific personnel with an eye to the future. A successful R&D company must therefore offer employees an inspiring working environment: This can be achieved with a culture of openness, diversity and appreciation as well as with motivational career development opportunities.

Innovations thrive on different approaches, multiple problem-solving perspectives, diverse personal characteristics or a wide range of nationalities. Decisive impulses for this are diverse teams with employees from different cultural backgrounds, age groups and generations, their different attitudes or the equal recognition and promotion of all genders.

Aware of the fundamental importance of an open gender culture for scientific excellence, the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology pursues a comprehensive strategy to support diverse thought patterns and approaches so that different scientific and social skills from different educational contexts and gender-role-specific competences can develop optimally in the interest of the company's mission. This makes it easier to cope with the diverse challenges our society is facing.

AIT GENDER STRATEGY

With the AIT Gender Strategy, the AIT aims to increase the proportion of women in science and research both broadly in society and within the organisation itself, as well as to raise understanding of gender issues among project partners. It is essential to establish fairness across all genders in careers, to sensitise the public to this highly relevant societal topic and to further improve the professional situation of women in everyday life in science. AIT aims to be a pioneer in all areas of diversity and to establish corresponding mechanisms.

With the AIT Gender Strategy, the AIT has set its sights on five key goals:

1. Contributing added value to AIT's core business
 - Contributing to ensuring a competent next generation of personnel
 - Strengthening creativity, innovative strength and problem-solving competence through diversity
 - Contributing to the creation of an open culture of cooperation built on trust
2. Contributing to AIT's brand development as a company with high corporate social responsibility (CSR) standards
3. Sustainable fulfilment of the specific performance targets of the owners, the Federal Ministry for Climate Protection, Environment, Energy, Mobility, Innovation and Technology (BMK) and the Association for the Promotion of Research and Innovation of the Federation of Austrian Industries (IV) with improved innovation dynamics
4. Setting an example for other companies in the Austrian economy by making the AIT Gender Programme available to other companies as an exemplary "blueprint" for the implementation of gender-related measures
5. Contributing to changing the work culture in Austria and incentivising young and highly talented women to pursue careers in STEM fields (i.e. mathematics, computer science, natural and engineering sciences and technology) through a comprehensive approach toward gender.

The AIT Gender Strategy is published as part of the current AIT Strategy on the intranet and can be viewed by all employees at any time. It is the basis for the AIT Gender Equality Plan.

In 2020, the AIT gender equality measures programme was awarded the **equalitA** seal of approval for the internal promotion of women by the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs (see [4.4](#)).

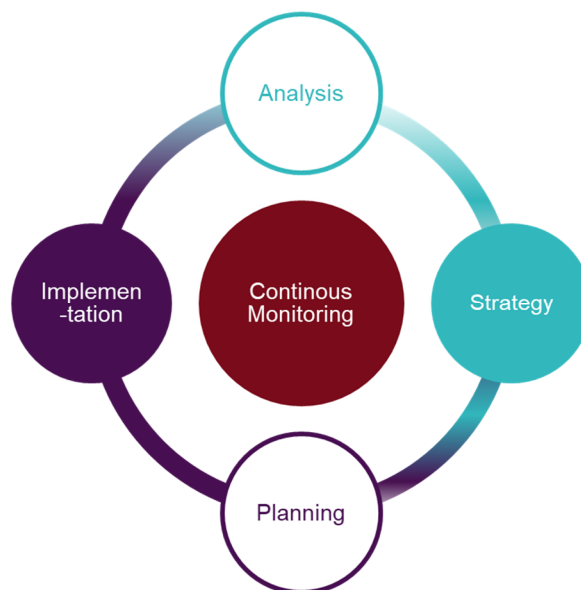
AIT GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

1 OBJECTIVES OF THE AIT GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

- Implementation of structures, institutions and working groups for ongoing discussion and ensuring a permanent gender discourse in the company
- Sustainable provision of resources for gender equality measures in the company
- Increasing the proportion of women in the company through recruiting, personnel development and the provision of adequate work-life balance
- Supporting an appreciative organisational and communication culture through clear positioning and messages to market competitors externally and to all employees internally
- Contributing to gender-sensitive research projects by providing documents and tools for AIT management and staff
- Establishment of equality in the context of an extended and comprehensive view of diversity

2 PROCESS

An iterative process was established to implement the AIT gender strategy and gender equality measures.



This process ensures that:

- the AIT gender strategy is based on quantitative and qualitative analyses,
- equality-oriented goals are formulated in a participatory process,
- measures and instruments derived from these are implemented,
- the efficiency of the instruments and the level of goal achievement are regularly evaluated,
- deviation and cause analyses are developed and
- the results of this evaluation are communicated transparently to the organisation and its employees.

3 PARTICIPATORY ANCHORING

For an effective and continuous implementation of gender equality measures, institutions are implemented that involve the different hierarchical levels and employee groups in the development of gender activities.

3.1 Gender representative and deputy

The gender representative is a management-level employee appointed by the management for a period of 2 years.

The function of the gender representative includes the following tasks:

- Management of the AIT Gender Office
- Management of the AIT Gender Task Force
- Chairing the gender management decision-making panel
- Development of the AIT gender strategy with goals and measures within the framework of the gender equality plan together with the institutions involved and final coordination with the AIT Managing Directors
- Organisation of internal and external events on the topic of gender equality in the fields of research and technology
- Participation in events and representation of the AIT in gender matters
- Communication of gender issues in close consultation with Corporate Communications

The deputy represents the gender representative in all aspects and acts as an alternative contact person. These tasks are taken over by the Head of Recruiting & HR Development, thus ensuring continuity in the monitoring and implementation of gender equality measures in the event of a rotation of the gender representative.

3.2 AIT Gender Office

The Gender Office is responsible for the operational implementation of the measures set out in the Gender Equality Plan. It is composed of a panel of experts and meets as a core team for regular coordination.

The Gender Office is managed by the gender representative, while the organization and implementation of operational measures and initiatives is the responsibility of the gender representative's deputy.

3.3 AIT Gender Task Force

The AIT Gender Task Force acts as a sounding board for the Gender Office and the AIT management for the conception and implementation of gender measures in the company. The Gender Task Force ensures the broadest possible communication of gender activities and measures in the organization and acts as an important source of information for the definition of specific gender measures. The Gender Task Force is chaired by the gender representative and is composed of:

- Gender representative and deputy (= Head of Recruiting & HR Development)
- Representatives of all corporate divisions from different hierarchical levels
- Head of Human Resources & Social Services
- Chairperson of the works council
- Representative from Corporate and Marketing Communications
- Representatives of the AIT subsidiaries

3.4 AIT Gender Management Decision-Making Panel

The AIT gender management decision-making panel consists of the AIT management, the gender representative and his/her deputy and is moderated by the gender representative.

The AIT gender management decision-making panel ensures that

- gender measures are taken as an AIT management decision and communicated and implemented accordingly in the respective organizational units,
- processes are established for the effective implementation of the measures and
- meaningful gender monitoring is carried out.

3.5 Gender & Diversity Works Council Working Group

The Gender & Diversity Working Group of the AIT Works Council meets every six months, or more frequently if necessary, to discuss gender and diversity issues, address internal issues

and initiate any necessary measures. Based on this, the working group contributes to the formulation of gender measures and is thus an important source of information on gender and diversity-related concerns of the staff.

3.6 Working Groups

To support the gender equality plan, working groups are created to discuss different aspects of gender equality at AIT.

- **“Women & Leadership @ AIT” working group:** As part of this initiative, all women at the AIT are invited to discuss which aspects can hinder or support women in terms of reaching or aspiring to senior or leadership positions. Female employees at AIT are invited to exchange and articulate their views by the management.
- **“Gender & Management @ AIT” working group:** AIT executives discuss different aspects that can potentially hinder or support women in terms of reaching or aspiring to senior or leadership positions. The results of the discussion also contribute to the development of measures.
- **“Diversity Thought Comprehensively” working group:** The discussion of empirical values, mechanisms, and ideas for the development of a diverse corporate culture is to be initiated. This includes the identification of barriers and potentials.

The Gender Office initiates these panels and summarizes discussion results in a structured and anonymized form. These results provide an important basis for deriving concrete measures and evaluating ongoing activities.

3.7 AIT Gender Inbox

All employees should have a simple and easily accessible opportunity to speak out on gender issues. Two structures were implemented for this purpose:

- A Gender email inbox: Supervision is provided by the Gender Office
- A “Mailbox” for anonymous suggestions/complaints via in-house mail to the gender representatives or the Gender Office.

4 CONTINUOUS MONITORING

The definition of the objectives of the AIT gender programme, as well as the evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures, are carried out through continuous monitoring by means of various instruments and defined indicators.

4.1 AIT Gender Monitor

The AIT Gender Monitor is compiled annually (since 2017) and published on the intranet, where it is accessible to all employees. It provides the AIT with a useful source of data over time. In addition to the standard parameters, event-related evaluations and analyses are also carried out as required.

Currently, key figures are collected on the following aspects:

4.1.1 Recruiting

- Ratio of female applications to recruitment of female employees
- Proportion of women among young scientists (PhD positions)
- Proportion of female interns

4.1.2 Career development

- Proportion of women by occupation (Science, Research Engineering, Expert Advice, Technical Services, Support, Management)
- Share of women by occupational level (junior, mid-level, senior, management)
- Female project leaders indicator: Proportion of female scientific project leaders to proportion of female scientists
- Leaky pipeline: Development of the proportion of women across the hierarchy levels

4.1.3 Reconciliation of professional and private life

- Career development and employment levels of all employee groups
- Use of (parental) leave option across all employee groups

4.1.4 Training courses

- Participation rate in training on gender in the context of diversity

4.2 Work Environment Survey

The Work Environment survey consists of a legally required portion analysing psychosocial stress in the workplace¹ and AIT-specific portions on aspects of working and leadership at AIT, as well as a focus on gender and diversity. The survey is conducted every two years (since 2016), and in a company-wide process, mandatory measures are to be derived and implemented at the level of the organisational units and reported to the management and Head of Recruiting & HR Development. The results of the employee surveys are available to all employees on the intranet.

4.3 Gender Pay Gap

The Federal Income Report² is collected every 2 years, as required by law, and shows the income differences between women and men. In this way, the median values of the total remuneration are calculated and a comparison made between each remuneration group.

Continuous monitoring allows current developments to be taken into account and integrated into the measures of the AIT Gender Equality Plan. For more detailed information, please contact the AIT works council.

4.4 equalitA seal of quality

In 2020, the AIT Equality Measures Programme received the seal of approval **equalitA**³ for in-house women's advancement from the Federal Ministry for Digital and Economic Affairs.

The equalitA seal of quality is awarded to companies:

- that promote women within the company,
- that ensure gender equality within the company,
- that promote women's careers and make them visible, thus supporting professional equality of all genders both within their own company and beyond.

5 RESOURCES AND BUDGET

The organisation provides the gender representative and the Gender Office with an annual budget based on the action plan as well as the necessary resources (personnel resources, space and material expenses). In addition, the staff members nominated for the various institutions and working groups are enabled to participate in the associated meetings and activities (e.g. training courses, information events).

6 MEASURES OF THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

The measures of the equality plan include the ongoing measures implemented in the organization in previous years ([6.1](#) Measures implemented and ongoing) as well as the measures currently being implemented ([6.2](#) Measures to be implemented 2023-2024).

The measures of the gender equality plan are accessible on the intranet and include details on the individual measures and, in particular, information on the institutions, units and/or groups of people responsible for implementation. This form of presentation provides clarity regarding responsibilities and gives employees the opportunity to actively demand implementation from those responsible.

1

https://www.arbeitsinspektion.gv.at/Gesundheit_im_Betrieb/psychische_Belastungen/Arbeitsplatzevaluierung_psychischer_Belastungen.html

2 <https://www.oeffentlicherdienst.gv.at/fakten/einkommensbericht/index2.html>

3 <https://www.bmdw.gv.at/Themen/Wirtschaftsstandort-Oesterreich/equalitA.html>

6.1 Measures implemented and ongoing

6.1.1 Organisational culture

Objective: Embedding gender equality as part of the organizational culture

A corresponding organizational culture and work-life balance are the key factors for a gender-equal company, which in turn is the prerequisite for innovation, attractiveness as an employer and thus economic success. The following measures therefore support gender-responsive communication and, above all, the creation and maintenance of gender-responsive framework conditions in the company:

- **Gender equality, respect and empowerment are at the heart of our corporate understanding** and are accordingly enshrined in our in-house quality guidelines RL30-AIT AIT Code of Conduct and RL31-AIT AIT Code of Leadership.
- **Gender and diversity issues are part of corporate communication**
 - **Internal gender information platform for effective and transparent communication of AIT gender activities** to AIT staff has been realized. The topics include gender strategy, gender action plan, functions of gender representatives and related institutions as well as announcements and reports on all activities (events, network meetings, ...), rounded off by FAQs⁴.
 - The **use of gender-equitable language in internal and external communication** is anchored in a binding corporate guideline. Gender-sensitive language and image selection is quality assured by Corporate Communications.
 - **Clear rules for dealing with sexual harassment as well as bullying, bossing and staffing** in the workplace and in business relationships are enshrined in the QM system RL30-AIT AIT Code of Conduct and communicated separate company-wide in brochures⁵.
 - **"Women in Research" is dedicated as a separate major communication focus for the top achievements and fields of work of our female experts.** External and internal public relations work go hand in hand here to offer women more space and a stage.
 - **Gender-sensitive employer branding** (see point 6.1.4)
- **AIT Women's Network:** This network is led by a core team and provides networking for all women at AIT on a formal level (knowledge transfer and training opportunities) as well as an informal level. The Gender Office provides organisational support for the activities of the women's network on the basis of an activity plan.

6.1.2 Work-Life-Balance

Objective: Supporting our employees in creating personal work-life balance

The expectations for a work-life balance depend on what stage of life and career someone is in. The models established at AIT make it possible to organize working life according to individual needs and thus achieve an optimal work-life balance.

- **Parental leave:** Special regulation recorded in the collective research agreement
- **"Daddy Weeks":** The possibility of two weeks' leave for fathers on the birth of a child is ensured in a company agreement.
- Support for **paternity leave** and part-time leave for fathers are anchored in a company agreement.
- **Childcare offered** at the main site in Vienna in cooperation with neighboring company (Siemens AG Austria) as well as holiday camps for children.
- **Flexible (part-time) working models:** Possibility to arrange flexible working time adapted to individual needs in terms of extent and location as well as flexibility of the place of work (**Teleworking**).

⁴ FAQs on gender issues

⁵ AIT QM Document RL30-MD01-AIT "Dealing with sexual harassment", AIT QM Document RL30-MD02-AIT "Dealing with bullying"

6.1.3 Gender balance in Leadership and Management

Objective: Gender equality in professional development potential

RL30-AIT **Code of Conduct** details the self-image of the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology GmbH as an organisation in which equal opportunities, fairness, communicative openness, empowerment and committed participation in the design of processes and structures is essential.

The **corporate strategy** of the AIT Austrian Institute of Technology GmbH defines corresponding measures for equal rights and the promotion of women at the AIT. Accordingly, job advertisements for management positions are published on the AIT Job board (both internally and externally). In the spirit of gender equality, women are expressly invited to apply. Benchmarks for management with regard to sustainable career development of women are:

- **Female project leaders indicator:** The indicator shows whether there is equal opportunity when assuming project leadership, so that the percentage of female project leaders would then be equal to the percentage of women among academic/scientific staff.
- **Development Thematic Coordinators:** Yearly appointment of female Thematic Coordinators

6.1.4 Recruiting and Employer Branding

Objective: Increasing the proportion of qualified female applicants for vacancies at all hierarchical levels

- **Gender-sensitive Employer Branding:** The company presents itself as a diverse company with excellent researchers (brand essence, corporate image internally and externally, <https://www.ait.ac.at/karriere/diversity>).
- Women researchers are promoted as **role models**, with a focus on positioning themselves as experts in their fields. Job advertisements are designed in a gender-sensitive way.
- **Internships** for schoolgirls and female students. Female interns are included in the AIT talent pool and targeted for future positions (e.g. for Master's theses, PhD positions).
- **Targeted approach to women** - the AIT presents itself as an attractive employer and in doing so specifically addresses women (for example by being present at specifically women-oriented professional events).
- **Balanced selection process** - Structured interview forms and assessment according to criteria based on requirement profiles which apply equally to all genders, participation of women in the selection process. For hearings (for senior and management positions), the commission is composed of assessors.

6.1.5 Career development and qualification

Objective: Targeted promotion of women at the AIT

- **Gender Programme:** The promotion of women at the AIT is anchored in the organisational structure of the AIT through the gender representative and the associated institutions and is part of the AIT corporate strategy.
- **AIT Female Leadership Programme:** First-time implementation of a development programme for female junior executives or project managers to promote career development, training of special leadership competences and personal competence determination in relation to leadership and project management. Through the involvement of managers and targeted communication, awareness of management culture is raised at the AIT and, as a result, a contribution is made to changing the organisational culture
- **Development talks:** Development discussions are based on the regulations of the collective agreement on research and must be held annually. They are recorded uniformly; the content is the achievement of results as well as specific quality criteria and the agreement of qualification measures. The consideration of leaves of absence is regulated.
- **Career models:** Gendersensitive description of AIT career framework, to motivate female colleagues to move on in their careers.
- **Leave of absence policy:** Policy to ensure smooth transition connected to longer leave of absence, agreement to stay in touch during this period (on a voluntary basis) and a positive return after this period. This includes different forms of leave: parental, education or sabbaticals. The aim is the retention of key personnel, specifically women.
- **Access to all educational measures irrespective of gender** and level of employment: Women and men receive the same amount of training in terms of time and budget.
- **Offering trainings** specifically designed to empower women.

6.1.6 Gender Training

Objective: Promoting a gender-sensitive work culture

- **Mandatory training** on the topic of equality, gender & diversity for managers and staff. The focus is on the legal framework and practice, the implementation of gender and diversity perspectives in management practice, self-reflection with regards to one's own role and dealing with "unconscious (gender) bias". The trainings are carried out by specialists.
- **Seminars offered** at the AIT are reviewed and adapted for **gender-relevant topics**.

6.1.7 Integration of gender dimensions in research

Objective: Integration of gender dimensions in the conception, execution and results of research projects

The integration of gender dimensions is now an obligatory part of European and national research funding schemes. The inclusion of gender dimensions in research and innovation content promotes the development of new ideas, continuously eliminates gender bias and increasingly integrates societal needs.

- **A first basis for a gender guide for project leaders⁶** has been created and supports the gender-appropriate conception, description and implementation of research projects. Gender aspects are taken into account in the composition of the project team and the orientation of the project objectives.
- **Consideration of gender and diversity aspects in AIT research topics:** for example: Molecular Diagnostics (Diabetes), Clinical Diagnostics & Therapy Support (Cardiovascular Diagnostics), Innovation Systems & Digitalisation, Innovation Policy

⁶ AIT document "Gender Mainstreaming – Guideline for taking the gender dimension into account in project proposals"

& Transformation (Transformative Governance), Experience Business Transformation (Capturing Experience), Cyber Security (Cyber Situational Awareness), Data Science for Public Security (E-Commerce), Integrated Energy Systems (Energy markets - flexibility for markets and networks), Urban Resilience & Transformation, Integrated Mobility Systems (Design of Responsive Mobility Systems).

6.2 Measures to be implemented 2023 - 2024

6.2.1 Organisational culture

Objective: Embedding gender equality as part of the organisational culture

Communication focus "Women in Research"

Measure	External and internal public relations work to present the top achievements and fields of work of AIT experts
Responsible	Corporate and Marketing Communications, Gender Office
Implementation period	As of Q1/2023 continued

"Diversity being an internal and external value of the organization"

Measure	Workshops on broadening in the sense of a multidimensional view of diversity; communication on diversity, development of best practices (e.g. projects with mixed teams)
Responsible	Gender Office, Corporate and Marketing Communications
Implementation period	As of Q1/2024

Activities of the AIT Women's Network

Measure	Networking events/Trainings/Workshops according to thematic core topics
Responsible	Core team of the AIT Women's Network, Gender Office
Implementation period	As of Q1/2023 continued

Awareness-Building Unconscious Gender Bias in Science and Technology

Measure	Corporate Wording, Our Values
Responsible	Corporate and Marketing Communications, Management
Implementation period	As of Q3/2023 continued

Mentoring programme

Measure	Evaluation of a (women's) mentoring programme pilot at the AIT. Focus on gender aspects
Responsible	Gender Office
Implementation period	Q3/2023

6.2.2 Work-Life-Balance

Objective: Supporting our employees in creating their personal work-life balance

Exchange with international organisations

Measure	Exchange, international observations
Responsible	Gender Office
Implementation period	As of Q1/2024

6.2.3 Recruiting and Employer Branding

Objective: Increasing the proportion of qualified female applicants for vacancies at all hierarchical levels

Identification of female potential (external)

Measure	Build a culture of recommendation and expand contact with external (women's) networks
Responsible	Head of Recruiting & HR Development, Management
Implementation period	As of Q1/2023 continued

Increasing the proportion of women in middle and senior project management and leadership positions

Measure	Evaluation of the current measures and definition of suitable measures (working group)
Responsible	Executive Board, Management, Gender Office
Implementation period	As of Q1/2024

6.2.4 Career development and qualification

Objective: Targeted promotion of women at the AIT

AIT Female Leadership Development Programme

Measure	Implementation of the development programme for women leaders
Responsible	Executive Board, Management, Head of Recruiting & HR Development Genderoffice, Corporate and Marketing Communications
Implementation period	2024

Addressing the Leaky Pipeline

Measure	Annual discussions between management and Recruiting & HR Development/Gender office to analyse the Leaky Pipeline per organization unit and to derive suitable targets and measures.
Responsible	Management, Head of Recruiting & HR Development
Implementation period	As of Q1/2024

6.2.5 Gender Training

Mandatory further training on the topic of equality, gender & diversity

Measure	Evaluation and update of current gender & diversity trainings, conception of a follow-up training for management, employees who have already completed the AIT Gender & Diversity Training
Responsible	Management, Head of Recruiting & HR Development
Implementation period	As of Q4/2023 continued

6.2.6 Integration of gender dimensions in research

Objective: Integration of gender dimensions in the conception, implementation and results of research projects

Gender guideline for project managers

Measure	Update of current gender guideline based on current needs as well as including a broader diversity aspects
Responsible	Gender Office, Grant Application Experts
Implementation period	As of Q4/2023

Identification of further research opportunities related to diversity

Measure	Selected AIT research fields will be analysed and discussed from a diversity point of view
Responsible	Gender Office, Grant Application Experts
Implementation period	As of Q1/2024

7 7 REFERENCES

The documents listed are available on the AIT intranet.

Wien, 18. August 2023



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