

IFAAR Gender Equality Plan

Introduction

IFAAR (Genossenschaft IFAA) is since 2001 fully committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace where all employees have equal opportunities for career development and advancement. This Gender Equality Plan outlines our specific goals and actions to achieve and maintain a gender-balanced workforce and address potential gender inequalities within the institute.

EU Regulatory Framework

This plan is aligned with the following key EU regulations promoting gender equality;

EU Directive 2006/56/EC prohibits discrimination based on sex in employment and vocational training.

EU Directive 2014/91/EU strengthens measures to facilitate work-life balance for parents and carers.

European Commission Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025 that sets out key actions to achieve a gender-equal Europe.

Rationale

IFAAR conducted a baseline assessment to understand the current gender distribution across the company. This assessment included:

- Percentage of female members of the board → 50% (31.05.2024)
- Percentage of female employees → 50% (31.05.2024)
- Percentage of female shareholders → 50% (31.05.2024)
- Gender pay gap analysis → 0%
- Identification of potential barriers faced by female employees and scientists in recruitment, promotion, and career development → no barriers identified

Objectives

Based on the initial assessment, we set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) objectives for maintaining gender equality. These objectives have included:

- Keep the 50% representation of women in leadership positions.
- Increase the number of female applicants for positions with equal skills especially in SW development.

Action Plan

To keep our objectives valid, we are implementing a comprehensive action plan that addresses various aspects of the employee life cycle:

Recruitment

- Review and revise job descriptions to ensure they are gender-neutral and attract a diverse pool of applicants.
- Implement still unconscious bias training for recruitment personnel.
- Recruit female interns from universities (IFAAR collaborates with UniNE and EPFL in computer science internship program) with priority

Training and Development

- Provide mentoring and sponsorship opportunities for female employees to connect with senior leaders and Emeriti.

- Support training opportunities relevant to career advancement, such as leadership skills training.

Work-Life Balance

- Offer flexible work arrangements such as part-time work, remote work options, and parental leave policies that benefit both mothers and fathers.
- Promote a culture that supports work-life balance for all IFAAR employees.

Institute Culture

- Implemented anti-harassment and anti-discrimination policies.
- Recognize and celebrate achievements of female employees within the company.
- Encourage open communication and address any gender-related concerns raised by employees and internships and scientific national and international (Horizon Europe, SNF, Innosuisse etc.) projects.

Monitoring and Evaluation

We regularly monitor and evaluate the Gender Equality Plan. This involves:

- Collecting data on progress towards achieving our objectives.
- Conducting employee surveys to assess the company culture and identify areas for improvement.
- Reviewing the action plan and making adjustments as needed.

Communication and Training

The Gender Equality Plan is state of the art and communicated to all employees through various channels.

Conclusion

IFAAR since 2001 is fully committed to creating a work and learning environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and have equal opportunities for success. This Gender Equality Plan provides a roadmap for preserving the IFAAR gender-balanced and inclusive workplace, aligning with our values and with Swiss and EU regulations. We believe that fostering diversity and gender equality as well as female internships and female board members strengthen our institutes culture, attracts top talent, and ultimately leads to a more innovative, balanced and successful Research Organisation, Institute and NGO/NPO.

Bern, 31.05.2025