

Gender Equality Plan of the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences - University of Applied Sciences Braunschweig/Wolfenbüttel

A Gender Equality Plan is required for participation in the European research framework programme Horizon Europe. It has been mandatory at EU level for public institutions since 2022.

The gender equality plan must include four elements:

1. Publication, a document or a compilation of several documents signed by the management and published on the website of the institution,
2. Resources, i.e. firmly budgeted human resources and gender expertise to implement the planned measures,
3. Data collection and monitoring with staff and student data broken down by gender,
4. Training for staff and managers to raise awareness of gender equality and unconscious bias.

In addition, it is recommended that the Gender Equality Plan cover further areas and provide them with concrete goals and measures:

5. Work-life balance and organizational culture,
6. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making,
7. Gender equality in hiring and career progression,
8. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content,
9. Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment.

Legal framework of the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences (UAS)

In accordance with the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act, the Ostfalia promotes the implementation of equal opportunities for women and men, works towards the elimination of existing disadvantages (equality mandate) and contributes to the promotion of gender research (Section 3 (3) NHG). To this end, the Ostfalia senate has adopted a "Directive for the Implementation of the Equal Opportunities Mandate under the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act", which is binding for all activities of the University of Applied Sciences.

According to the Lower Saxony Equal Opportunities Act, the Ostfalia must create an equal opportunities plan. This has been implemented from 2008 onwards in the form of gender equality concepts for the federal and state female professor programme. Our gender equality concepts have been positively evaluated and repeatedly enabled us to successfully participate in the aforementioned programme. Within this framework, we have also implemented several "additional gender equality measures" to attract and promote young female academics and achieved the goal set at the time in the funding context of filling six professorships with women.

A new gender equality plan is in preparation. Until this plan is adopted, the Ostfalia will be guided by the last equality concept.

Strategic Orientation of the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences

Ostfalia strives for gender equality in all areas. This is also anchored in our diversity concept¹. As a signatory of the "Charter Family in Higher Education", we also continuously consider and promote the compatibility of family, career and studies. In our "Strategy Concept 2030", which is to be published in 2023, gender equality is also a strategic focus:

"We systematically include gender and diversity aspects as cross-sectoral issues in all projects and decisions. In this way, we exhaust the entire creative potential of the university of applied sciences and contribute to more equal opportunities in society. We continuously develop our concepts and measures in order to realise the principles of gender mainstreaming for all genders, to make it easier to balance family and studies or work, and to promote all university of applied sciences members equally in their diversity."
(Draft version, adoption to follow).

The strategy concept will also contain concrete measures for implementation.

With the following overview, we present how Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences currently fulfils the requirements for the Gender Equality Plan.

Requirement	Implementation
1. Publication	<p>Equality Concept https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/bfg/service/publikationen/ > Gleichstellungskonzept</p> <p>Directive for the implementation of the equal opportunities mandate according to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act Richtlinie zur Umsetzung des Gleichstellungsauftrages nach dem Niedersächsischen Hochschulgesetz an der Ostfalia Hochschule für angewandte Wissenschaften</p>
2. Resources	<p>Fixed human resources Equal opportunities office with full-time central equal opportunities officer, equal opportunities referent, administrative employee, student assistants.</p> <p>Material resources Facilities (equal opportunities office), budgets for equal opportunities work and childcare facilities.</p> <p>Gender expertise Is available through the Equal Opportunities Officer and referent.</p> <p>Ostfalia is involved in the Braunschweig Centre for Gender Studies as a cooperating university of applied sciences. The centre advises and supports the Ostfalia in the integration of gender aspects in research, teaching and transfer. It offers academics opportunities for networking. http://www.genderzentrum.de/</p>

¹ The diversity concept contains an overarching goal that we want to create a gender-equitable university culture with equal participation of the sexes. (<https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/ostfalia/ziele/> > Diversity concept PDF, p. 8).

<p>3. Data collection and monitoring</p>	<p>Regular compilation of statistics on the proportion of women and men among staff and students, as well as annual internal reporting. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/bfg/gender-diversity-portal/gender-statistik/</p> <p>Annual target achievement reports on the implementation of the target agreements with the Ministry of Science and Culture with the status of the implementation of the planned gender proportions of professors, employees, students and graduates. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/hl/zielvereinbarungen-mwk/ (Intranet)</p>
<p>4. Training</p>	<p><i>„The training of gender competence and gender justice as the ability to take a gender perspective in subject-related tasks is integrated into the further training offers for managers, for lecturers and students. The implementation of gender trainings that sensitise for the perception of different gender perspectives is supported by the university of applied sciences.“</i> (3.4 of the Directive for the implementation of the equal opportunities mandate according to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act, link see above)</p> <p>Ostfalia's diversity concept also states that the development of gender diversity competence among managers should be a focus of management development. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/ostfalia/ziele/ > Diversity concept, p. 8</p> <p>Corresponding further training is being carried out and is to be further expanded:</p> <p>In human resources development events, gender-sensitive issues are also addressed in the area of soft skills. In March 2021, the workshop "Diversity-conscious and gender-competent leadership" was offered.</p> <p>At the "Centre for Successful Teaching and Learning", gender diversity is integrated and taken into account as a cross-sectoral issue in counselling, workshops and semester-long job shadowing for teachers.</p>
<p>5. Work-life balance and organisational culture</p>	<p>The compatibility of work, study and family responsibilities is pursued and promoted. Ostfalia successfully has undergone two audits as a family-friendly university of applied sciences in 2008-2014. In 2014, it signed the "Charter Family in University" and has since been actively involved in the "Best Practice Club Family in University". Goals have been agreed for this. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/familie/ > „Die aktuellen Ziele der Ostfalia [...] hier“; and https://www.familie-in-der-hochschule.de/verein/mitgliedshochschuleneinrichtungen > Ostfalia Hochschule für angewandte Wissenschaften).</p> <p>The directive for the implementation of the equal opportunities mandate according to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act also contains goals and measures for the compatibility of studies/work with family responsibilities (> "2. Work-Life Balance", link see above).</p> <p>The service agreement regulating working time for employees includes framework conditions for mobile work, which also enable activities in the home office (intranet).</p>
<p>6. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making</p>	<p>At Ostfalia, we strive for a gender balance in leadership and decision-making.</p> <p>The proportion of women and men in the university of applied sciences management is currently 50 %. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/hl/</p> <p>The UAS Council currently has four female and three male members. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/gremien/hochschulrat/</p> <p>When appointing members to bodies, committees and commissions that are not elected, at least 40 % of the voting members shall be women.</p> <p>In the case of election proposals, at least 50 % of the candidates shall be women.</p> <p>(Directive for the implementation of the equal opportunities mandate according to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act at the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences > 1.3 Appointment to committees, link see above).</p>

<p>7. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression</p>	<p>The full-time Equal Opportunities Officer and the decentralised Equal Opportunities Officers accompany appointment procedures and are involved in staffing procedures. They continuously work towards reducing under-representation and increasing the proportion of women in management and decision-making positions. (Directive on the implementation of the equal opportunities mandate according to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act at Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences > 1.2 Appointments, see link above).</p> <p>Representatives of Ostfalia participate in the Dialogue Initiative Gender Equitable University Culture and contribute the knowledge gained there in the university of applied sciences. https://www.lakog-niedersachsen.de/dialoginitiative-geschlechtergerechte-hochschulkultur</p>
<p>8. Integration of gender dimensions into research and teaching content</p>	<p>The topics and results of gender research should be an integral part of study, teaching and research at Ostfalia.</p> <p>To this end, measures have been defined in the directive for the implementation of the equality mandate according to the Lower Saxony Higher Education Act (> "3. Integration of Gender Studies in Studies, Teaching and Research", link see above).</p> <p>Implementation is supported by the Braunschweig Centre for Gender Studies, advisory services and previous guest professorships.</p> <p>In teaching, gender diversity is integrated both as a cross-sectoral topic and taught in special modules.</p> <p>The Equal Opportunities Office, in cooperation with the Career Service, regularly offers workshops for students on gender diversity as a key competence in professional practice.</p>
<p>9. Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment</p>	<p>At Ostfalia, no one may be discriminated against, disadvantaged or belittled on the basis of gender or sexual orientation. More details on the principles, forms of sexual discrimination and harassment as well as the procedural regulations can be found in the directive against sexual discrimination and harassment. Richtlinie gegen sexuelle Diskriminierung und Belästigung</p> <p>The first points of contact are the Equal Opportunities Office and other contact persons. https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/bfg/die-gleichstellungsarbeit/ ; https://www.ostfalia.de/cms/de/gesundehochschule/fuer-beschaefigte/sozialberatung/</p>

Decided by the Presidential Board on December 15th, 2022

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Rosemarie Karger

President of the Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences