

Gender Equality Plan



Towards equity in our working
environment, research design
and clinical care



Champalimaud
Foundation

2021–2024

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Ensuring equity in the Champalimaud Foundation working environment, research practice and provision of clinical care

Background and Scope

The Champalimaud Foundation was established in 2005 as a worldwide reference for research and clinical practice. At the Champalimaud Centre for the Unknown, in Lisbon, hundreds of researchers, support staff, physicians, and other healthcare professionals work together to investigate fundamental biological processes and search for effective solutions to alleviate the burden of oncological and neurological diseases, while providing excellent state-of-the-art healthcare.

Gender Equality is a central theme in frontier research. Portugal appears to be on the right track, leading the EU in a range of parity indicators¹, including the total share of women researchers in science, technology, engineering and mathematics fields (48% overall, with parity reached in the life and health sciences²) and the share of authors of scientific publications. Still, we are aware that the situation can and should be improved, as we observe progressively fewer women scientists in positions with increased leadership responsibilities and decision-making power. We see a similar trend in clinical practice, with a majority share of highly qualified women overall but not in the most senior positions³. We must therefore define and implement strategies to promote gender equality and impede persistent gender gaps in research and healthcare, which requires sustained structural and context-dependent measures and a cultural shift. Such measures must be materialised as concrete actions, to be implemented, duly evaluated and monitored.

As well as institutional measures towards ensuring equity for personnel in our environment, it is paramount that we proactively consider sex and gender dimensions in our research design and clinical approach. This need is most obvious in clinical research where the stratification of medical data is essential to ensure medical interventions are fit for purpose. However, this also permeates many fields of fundamental research where this is not so immediately obvious (e.g., genetics of cells,

¹ [Gender in the Portugal Research Arena: A Case Study in European Leadership 2021.](#)

² [The Researcher Journey Through a Gender Lens 2020.](#)

³ [Relatório Social do Ministério da Saúde e do Serviço Nacional de Saúde \(2018\)](#)

gender bias in algorithm training, hormone-related effects on physiology, etc.). As researchers, our responsibility to ensure a representative research foundation is what funders and society are calling to action.

At the Champalimaud Foundation, our core values – independence, rigor, integrity, dedication and creativity – also govern our organizational culture and underpin how we design and implement strategies - as a participatory and data-driven co-creation process, involving our community members. This Gender Equality Plan is thus informed by a community-wide gap analysis conducted by a nominated Working Group of staff members with diverse experiences using gender-disaggregated baseline data collected across all staff categories. This plan draws on international policy and evidence-based effective practices, contributing to Goal 5 (Gender equality and empowerment of all women and girls) of the United Nations’ 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development⁴ and the Portuguese National Strategy for Equality and Non-Discrimination 2018-2030.

⁴ [Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.](#)

Statement of Commitment

The Champalimaud Foundation commits to

- **Conduct training to raise awareness** within our community of biases and inequalities in research and healthcare
- **Implement institutional level strategies** towards defined and measurable gender equality goals
- **Invest expertise**, and resources to effectively and sustainably effect change
- **collect and monitor disaggregated community data** and report these data annually

With this document — which constitutes a work in progress — we assume our commitment as agents of change towards equity, diversity and inclusion.

Maria Leonor Beleza

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Focus areas

To deliver on our objectives, and based on our community gap analysis, we define the following focus areas for intervention:

A – Mission and organisational culture

B – Attracting talent

C – Leadership and career progression

D – Personal-professional life balance

E – Gender-based violence and harassment

F – Sex and gender in research content and healthcare

Strategies

A – Mission and organisational culture

Goal	Action	Responsible (R) and Accountable (A)	Implementation Timeline				Monitoring Targets (T) and Indicators (I)
			2021	2022	2023	2024	
Commit publicly to the promotion of gender equity in research and healthcare	Publicise this Gender Equality Plan on the primary external website	Board of Directors (A) Communications, Events and Outreach (R)	X				T&I: Gender Equality Plan published, communicated externally and updated as necessary
	Participate in international awareness campaigns (e.g., International Day of Women and Girls in Science ⁵), championing internal women scientists and clinicians; join and support networks promoting equality in research and healthcare environments	Communication, Events and Outreach (A, R)	X	X	X	X	T: At least one gender equality-focused awareness campaign / year I: Number of awareness-raising campaigns; evaluation of campaign reach and impact

⁵ [International Day of Women and Girls in Science, February 11th](#)

	Develop an events policy with gender balance in organising committees, invited speakers and participation , and awareness-raising within the event that questions should be selected from a balanced pool of attendees.	Communication, Events and Outreach (A, R)		X			T&I: Events gender balance policy published on internal site and shared directly with all event organisers / chairs T: 50% of invited speakers women T: 50% of questions asked by women I: Share of invited speakers I: Share of questions asked by women
	Program specific networking sessions alongside major conferences hosted by the institute prioritising issues faced by women scientists and clinicians (careers, inclusivity) ⁶	Communication, Events and Outreach (A) Event Organising Committees (R)	X	X	X	X	T: One networking session per year I: Number of networking sessions; number of attendees at each session
Increase institutional awareness of persistent gender gaps in international research and healthcare environments	Include this Gender Equality Plan and links to relevant legal information (up-to-date and translated) in the welcome pack for onboarding new staff and students	HR (A, R)		X	X	X	T: All new employees made aware of Gender Equality Plan I: Share of new employees receiving this plan ; annual survey results (all staff)
	Run data / journal club on equitable practices in international research and healthcare	Communications, Outreach and Events (A) Working Group (WG) (R)		X	X	X	T: Six data clubs per year I: Number of journal clubs, attendance at clubs

⁶ [Women can benefit from female-led networks. Nature Career News. 2018](#)

	Expand this GEP to a multidimensional equity, diversity and inclusion institutional plan, including gender intersection with other categories towards non-discrimination ⁷	HR (A) WG (R)			X	X	T: Plan and strategies developed I: Plan published, responsibilities and resources allocated
	Organise workshops on implicit bias and gender-based discrimination in the workplace and inclusive language in PT and ENG	HR (A) Communications, Events and Outreach (R) WG (R)		X	X	X	T: Two workshops / year, 20 attendees / year I: Number of workshops, registrations, attendees
Promote the use of gender-inclusive language in internal and external (science) communication	Develop external communications inclusivity regulation, in PT and ENG	Communication, Events, and Outreach (A, R) WG (R) Ethics Council (A)		X			T: Regulation developed and employed in all communications T: Inclusive language in informed consent forms I: Regulation published and made available to all staff on intranet and / or another platform I: Share of (random sample) of external communications employing inclusive language
Ensure sustainable and comprehensive internal gender expertise	Create a staff Working Group with defined responsibilities and conditions to enforce and monitor implementation	Board of Directors (A) Communications, Events and Outreach (R)		X			T: WG receives Directorial mandate I: WG composition and conditions visible on the institutional website

⁷ There is still a way to go in the implementation of strategies towards diversity and anti-discrimination beyond the issues of gender equality between women and men covered by this initial plan, We thus indicate here an action to elaborate a multidimensional Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy.

	Ensure regularity in the WG contact with access to meet with Board of Directors and guarantee conditions for GEP implementation	Board of Directors (A, R)		X			T: Two meetings/year with Board of Directors I: Number of meetings / year T&I: Means allocated as needed
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B – Attracting talent

Goal	Action	Responsible (R) and Accountable (A)	Implementation Timeline				Monitoring Targets (T) and Indicators (I)
			2021	2022	2023	2024	
Reach gender balance in senior positions	Adapt HR system to collect (voluntary) gender and other demographic information from applicants	HR (A, R)	X research	X clinic			T: Form implemented and used for all research recruitment calls T: Form implemented and used for all clinic recruitment calls I: Percentage of calls collecting data; percentage of applicants providing their gender information and qualifications

	Communicate explicitly the welcoming of applications from women and include direct link to Gender Equality Plan in recruitment calls ⁸	HR (A) Direction Support (Research) (R) General Secretary of the Clinic (R) Search and Selection Committee (R)	X	X	X	X	T: 10% increase in the number of women candidates for senior positions I: Number of women candidates for senior positions T: All call advertisements for senior (R3/R4 researchers, senior clinical staff) that declare welcoming of women applicants I: Percentage of call advertisements that declare welcoming of women applicants
	Actively target international women candidates for senior positions (R2/R3/R4 independent researchers, senior clinical staff) directly inviting them to apply	Search and Selection Committee (A, R)		X	X	X	T: 10% increase in the number of women candidates for senior research and clinic positions I: Number of women candidates for senior research and clinic positions
	Encourage candidate shortlist quotas for senior positions	Board of Directors (A) Research and Clinical Direction (R)		X	X	X	T: At least 2 women shortlisted for senior positions (R3 / R4 researchers, senior clinical staff, application pool permitting) I: Gender distribution of candidates and hired personnel
	Make available implicit bias training for any employee participating in a selection committee	HR (A) Direction Support (Research) (R) General Secretary of the Administration (Clinic) (R)	X	X	X	X	T: All selection committee members have undertaken implicit bias training I: Share of selection committee members with training

⁸ [LIBRA Recruitment Handbook, 2nd Edition](#)

Ensure equitable pay for equal function	Ensure that salary offers to be based on standard guidelines relevant to defined categories and where sex/gender is not a factor; keep negotiation to a minimum unless the possibility is explicitly advertised in the call ⁹	Board of Directors (A) Financial Director (R) HR (R)	X	X	X	X	T&I: Selection committee provided with guidelines T: All new staff receive equitable base salary offer(s) where sex and gender is not a factor I: New staff survey of process I: Staff annual survey
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C – Leadership and career progression

Goal	Action	Responsible (R) and Accountable (A)	Implementation Timeline				Monitoring Targets (T) and Indicators (I)
			2021	2022	2023	2024	
Ensure gender balance in decision-making bodies	Guarantee at the institutional level to ensure i) women and men are sufficiently represented in high-level committees and decision-making bodies and ii) women are not overburdened with low-level committee responsibilities	Board of Directors (A) Research and Clinical Direction (R)			X	X	T: No more than 2/3 single gender per decision-making body T: Leadership representative of wider population I: Share of women per decision-making body (all levels)
Ensure access to appraisals and appropriate professional development opportunities for all staff categories	Develop appropriate standard appraisal processes for all staff categories (to include professional development plan construction/review, identification of concrete future training goals)	Line Managers (A) Direction Support (R) Nurses Working Group (R)				X	T: Appraisal processes (re)developed I: Appraisal processes shared by line managers to staff

⁹ [Bowles, HR, Babcock, L. How can women escape the compensation negotiation dilemma? Relational accounts are one answer](#)

	Implement appraisal procedures with predictable frequency and records stored centrally (appraisal date, latest professional development plan)	Research and Clinical Direction (A) Line Managers (R) HR (R)				X	T All staff appraised / pre-defined period T: All staff have access to relevant appraisal-defined training / pre-defined period I: Number of staff undergoing appraisal/pre-defined period I: Number of hours of training per employee per pre-defined period
Ensure equal access to career-boosting training and teaching opportunities	Make available management training for staff in mentorship/supervisory roles	Research and Clinical Direction (A) HR (R)		X	X	X	T: 50% of managers with training I: Share of managers who have access to training
	Mobilise means for soft skills training (e.g.: negotiation, leadership, people management, conflict management, stress)	Board of Directors (A) Communications, Events and Outreach (R) WG (R)		X	X	X	T: 50% of staff have access to soft skills training (with particular focus on priority target groups, such as nursing staff) I: Share of staff with soft skills training
	Open internal formal and informal calls to recruit e trainers / teaching assistants (TA) opportunities	Communications, Events and Outreach (A, R) Graduate Studies (A, R)	X	X	X	X	T: 50% of trainers / TAs women I: Share of trainers / TAs women

D – Personal-professional life balance

Goal	Action	Responsible (R) and Accountable (A)	Implementation Timeline				Monitoring Targets (T) and Indicators (I)
			2021	2022	2023	2024	
Inform international staff of existing rights in Portugal for international staff (e.g., parental leave and cover, breastfeeding time, caring leave)	Update internal institutional information in ENG and PT	HR (A, R)		X			T: All employees aware of their rights I: Staff annual survey results
Promote the use of existing institutional family support facilities (e.g., breastfeeding room)	Update internal institutional information in ENG and PT	HR (A, R)		X			T: All staff requiring these facilities can access them I: Staff annual survey results
Promote flexible working hours and location	Co-create Parental Leave Plans with supervisor and employee taking leave, detailing how they plan to structure ongoing work	Line Managers (A, R)		X			T: All employees planning to take parental leave benefit from a defined plan I: Number of employees with a plan in place
	Encourage line managers to pair team members (e.g. PhD student with postdoc) to ensure short-term continuation of research projects in the event of parental leave			X	X	X	T: The work / experiments of employees planning to take parental leave do not suffer unreasonable negative consequences due to absence I: Staff annual survey results

E – Gender-based violence and harassment

Goal	Action	Responsible (R) and Accountable (A)	Implementation Timeline				Monitoring Targets (T) and Indicators (I)
			2021	2022	2023	2024	
Ensure availability of mechanisms to report incidents of inappropriate conduct, discrimination, (sexual and non-sexual) harassment, bullying and/or power abuse	Install and empower Ombudsperson	Board of Directors (A, R)		X			T&I: Ombudsperson named T&I: Independent email address / mailbox
	Develop accessible and confidential staff complaints pipeline	Ombudsperson (A); Ethics Council (R)		X			T: All staff empowered to register an issue and receive feedback I: Process and contact details disseminated to all staff
Clarify acceptable and non-acceptable behaviour in the CCU working environment, staff rights and responsibilities	Develop institutional Codes of Conduct	Ombudsperson (A); Ethics Council (R)		X			T: All staff aware of rights and responsibilities I: Staff annual survey results

F – Sex and gender in research content and healthcare

Goal	Action	Responsible (R) and Accountable (A)	Implementation Timeline				Monitoring Targets (T) and Indicators (I)
			2021	2022	2023	2024	
Ensure personnel are aware of sex and gender dimensions in their research studies and clinical practice and have access to necessary training and resources	Offer training on sex and gender dimensions in research studies and clinical practice	Board of Directors (A) Research and Clinical Direction (R) WG (R)		X	X	X	T: All researchers have access to adequate training I: Number of researchers with access to adequate training I: Staff annual survey results
	Build internal webpage with tools to self-analyse research projects for potential sex and gender dimensions to develop better research and care; provide link to site from relevant internal units	Research Directors (A) Communications, Events and Outreach (R) WG (R)		X			T&I: Webpage published and disseminated T&I: Relevant workshop available for offline access T: 100% of new research projects explicitly consider sex and gender dimensions I: Share of extramural funding proposals submitted through the pre-award office for sponsored programmes which mention the words “sex” and or “gender”
	Integrate a sex and gender dimension into Ethics Council submission procedure	Ethics Council (A, R)		X			T&I: Submission documents for Ethics Council updated T&I: Dimension integrated into submission platform

	Integrate sex dimension into animal research project proposal form	ORBEA (A, R)		X			<p>T: All new animal research projects explicitly consider sex dimension</p> <p>T: All of publications specifically mention sex of animals used in described experiments</p> <p>I: Inclusion of a dedicated field in ORBEA animal project submission form</p> <p>I: Use of dedicated field in ORBEA project submission form to include the sex as well as number of animals</p> <p>I: Number of publications from CF that include sex of animals used in described experiments in methods</p>
	Prepare reports on sex of animals used in research and gender of experimentalists with responsible researchers	ORBEA (A) Vivarium (R)		X	X	X	<p>T: All responsible researchers acknowledge the possible existence of biases in their own work</p> <p>T: One mid-term report per licensed animal experimentation project shared with researchers</p> <p>I: Number of mid-term reports shared</p>
Promote understanding of the value (economic, social, innovation) of considering sex and gender dimensions in research and clinical care	Include a specific module for first-year PhD students on research design	Education Committee (A) Graduate Studies (R)		X	X	X	<p>T: Module included in teaching content for new students</p> <p>I: Number of students attending module</p>

	<p>Organise satellite workshops / sessions alongside main scientific events highlighting sex and gender dimensions in that field of research and / or clinical care</p>	<p>Research and Clinical Direction (A)</p> <p>WG (R)</p> <p>Communications, Events and Outreach (R)</p>		X	X	X	<p>T: One event / year with a session on sex and gender dimensions in that field</p> <p>I: Number of events with additional sex and/or gender dimension session</p>
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Impact Assessment

Data Collection and Monitoring

The Working Group (WG) with the support of the administrative units, will routinely collect the key indicator data identified for each strategy item (disaggregated by gender). We commit to conducting an **annual community-wide evaluation** to complement data collected at the institutional level, inviting employee feedback on the perceived implementation and effectiveness of the above measures. Responses will inform future strategy and future survey adaptations whilst permitting effective year-on-year comparison. We commit to annually analyzing and reporting stratified institutional data.

Revision

We commit to undertaking a **formal revision of this plan at least every three years** to ensure it continues to meet community needs and meet international best practices.

Contributors

We are grateful to the following community members for their valuable input. In the list below we indicate the EURAXESS research profile (R level) descriptors where relevant¹⁰

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¹⁰ [EURAXESS researcher profile descriptors.](#)

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