



**INTERDISCIPLINARY  
RESEARCH CENTRE**  
for Technology, Work and Culture

IFZ

# Gender Equality Plan

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## Our vision of gender equality at IFZ

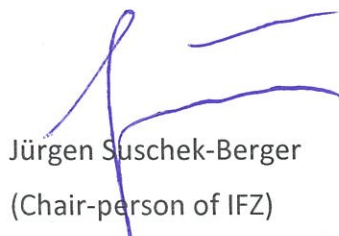
The Interdisciplinary Research Centre for Technology, Work and Culture (IFZ) is a non-profit scientific association, which was founded in the year 1988 with the objective to address social issues in technology research and engineering education. Right from the founding days, gender and sustainability have been important topics of the institute's research agenda between science and policy and reflection as well as intervention, to contribute to socially and environmentally sound science and technology.

Moreover, IFZ has been aiming at gender equality since its founding, aiming on gender balanced decision-making boards and participatory decision processes. Gender-sensitive language and images have always been the default in the institute's website. Gender in research and teaching have been part of IFZ's portfolio right from the beginning. The research unit "Gender, Science and Technology" (formerly "Women\*, Technology, Environment") exists almost as long as IFZ itself, and carries out gender in science and research projects funded by the European Commission since 2001.

The gained scientific gender knowledge has always been made available to the whole organisation. In workshops and seminars, gender knowledge has been taught explicitly as well as implicitly through discussions in meetings and reflections on organizational practices.

Due to organizational changes in the last years, a need for re-calibration of efforts became apparent. IFZ has high standards of gender equality compared to other research organisations, but can still advance its efforts. IFZ wants to consider various forms of care responsibilities and co-create it's own code of conduct to avoid gender-based violence in all its forms, for research projects as well as for teaching activities.

IFZ aims at social gender justice and at being a good working environment for everybody, regardless of gender, sexuality, age, care responsibilities or disciplinary background.



Jürgen Suschek-Berger  
(Chair-person of IFZ)



Angelika Tisch  
(Deputy Chair-person of IFZ)

## Background

This updated version of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) was written in 2022 by the GEP steering committee at IFZ, comprising the two ombudspersons and the chair-person of IFZ. This committee is also in charge of monitoring the GEP and reporting its status regularly to all members of IFZ at the quarterly assembly meetings.

Since 2006 two elected ombudspersons are dealing – besides employments rights and psychological evaluation of workplaces – with gender equality issues.

In 2013, IFZ implemented a gender action plan within the European Commission funded project [GenderTime](#). In this first version of a gender equality plan, an annual report of gendered data of career-specific and decision-making relevant data had been set up, using employments' records and data and based on a cultural survey on Athena Swan indicators and items. Inequalities did not happen on a deliberate but on an implicit level, resulting from intersections of inequities like gender plus seniority (which is not automatically connected to competencies or academic achievements) or differences in handling academic and parental leaves in the salary scheme.

In consequence, between 2013 and 2016 IFZ implemented co-created career development options for administrative and research staff, measures to optimize work-life balance of all employees, guidelines for diversity-sensitive and inclusive organization of events, and a gender-fair and parent-friendly salary scheme.

For many years IFZ had a close connection to University of Klagenfurt. Between 2017 and 2018 a re-organization process at University of Klagenfurt re-shaped IFZ. The former Graz Unit of University of Klagenfurt was transferred to Graz University of Technology, and IFZ became a fully independent research organization without technical, organizational or personnel connection to those universities. Some former colleagues stayed members of the research organization IFZ, and with the Graz University of Technology a cooperation contract arranges synergies, like the annual STS conferences hosted by both organizations, and the IAS STS, an institute for international academic fellows and guest scholars, who are temporarily part of IFZ, and share working places with colleagues from Graz University of Technology.

However, the re-organization process led to a reduction of employees and different contracts for some IFZ colleagues. Furthermore, the career possibilities at University of Klagenfurt, including membership in decision making boards and working groups ended.

This re-organization process shaped not only the identity of IFZ, and had economic consequences, but changed organizational hierarchies, decision making boards, and career opportunities.

## Gender data

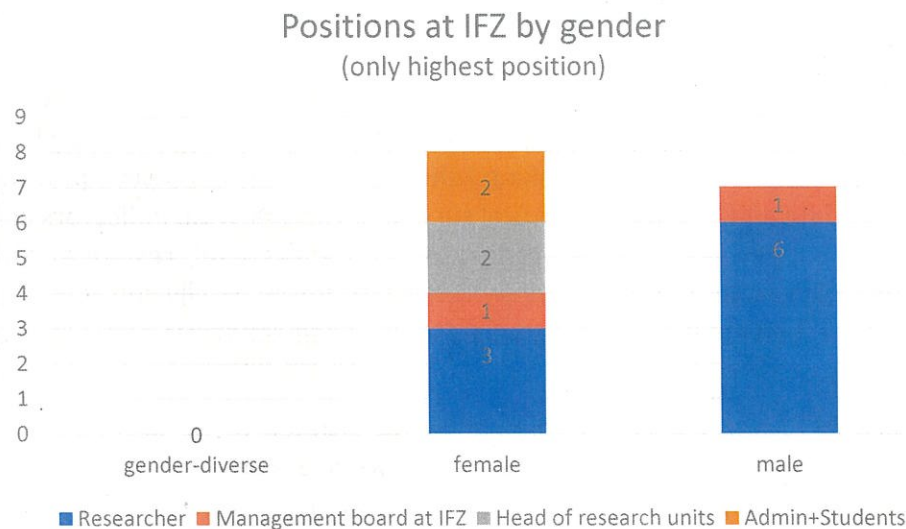
Currently, in June 2022, 15 persons are part of IFZ. As IFZ is a scientific association, these persons can be members<sup>1</sup> of the association and/or employees. IFZ is led by a management board of two persons, a chair-person, and the deputy chair person, who is in charge of finances. Additionally, currently four research units at IFZ have heads, who are coordinating

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<sup>1</sup> Employees with unlimited contracts can become members of IFZ after one year of employment. The membership allows to participate in regular assembly meetings and to vote for budget and organizational decisions of the organisation. Former employees, who still contribute to the aims of the association, either with projects or with honorary work, can stay members of IFZ. Currently only three employees are not members yet, as they are within their first year of employment at IFZ.

small teams – in the current constellation, two of them are at the same time in the IFZ management board. From the 15 persons, one is working in an admin position, all others have researchers' positions, one without a master's degree, 4 with additional (middle) management positions.

The gender distribution of those positions at IFZ is the following:



Overall, the team of researchers at IFZ is gender balanced (8 females, 7 males).

Female employees and members of IFZ have a greater diversity of roles, from students and admin personnel to the management board position. As only the highest position in the organisation is counted, two heads of research units (one female, one male) are not visible, as these are currently also the chair-person and the deputy chair-person at IFZ.

At the time of this analysis (spring 2022) all employees and members identified as females or males, further gender-diverse identities are optional categories, which might apply for future gender reports.

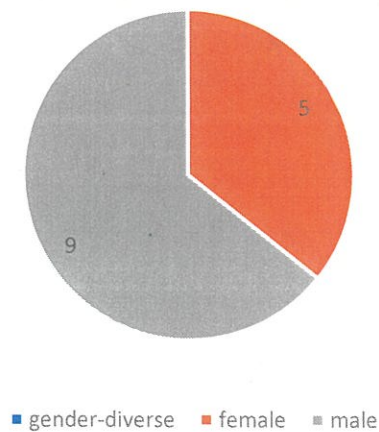
Within the research projects operated at IFZ, female and male researchers are almost equally distributed. At the time of the last IFZ gender report, female researchers worked in 12 projects as members of the research time and males in 10 projects.

Researcher roles by gender



In the analysis of project management – principal investigator's (PI) –roles resulted in a gender difference, which will be further analysed in thematic area 3 of the gender equality plan "Gender equality in recruitment and career progression":

PI roles by gender



Another topic, which will be discussed in the future are the fewer working hours of females at IFZ. Working part-time is the standard model of employment at IFZ, not only due to care responsibilities and other jobs (teaching, etc.), but also because of the dependence on third-party funds which often cannot be planned exactly. However, it has to be analysed, whether PI roles and working hours are structurally gendered at IFZ.

## Co-creating gender equality knowledge at IFZ

When the European Commission funded project [CHANGE](#) began in 2018 at IFZ (which is the coordination institution), IFZ was already experienced, with an already implemented gender equality plan, accounting decades of experience with gender sensitive teaching and research. However, it became clear that the re-organization of the institute made a re-thinking process necessary. How can careers in a research organization apart from well-known higher education tenure tracks or industrial expert careers look like? How can the uncertainties of third-party funded research be handled in a non-profit research organization so employees' well-being and work-life-balance are in focus? This specific situation of IFZ makes a customized GEP necessary, which considers the needs and also the experiences of its employees and members.

Furthermore, due to longstanding scientific gender knowledge, IFZ wants to address now one topic systematically, which had been only marginally introduced in the original gender action plan in 2013. Gender-based violence and sexual harassment were part of the first employees' survey in 2013, however rather superficial. Now, IFZ wants to co-create a code of conduct to communicate clear rules for the working environment, research and teaching, with special regards to power relations with early career researchers, students and various stakeholders of IFZ research activities.

Co-creating gender equality knowledge is also at the heart of this GEP because IFZ has a long tradition of transdisciplinary, participatory research, with expertise in responsible research and innovation ([RRI](#)). This is why the IFZ GEP steering committee will include members and employees of IFZ in all implementation steps, which started on June 29<sup>th</sup> by formally agreeing on the following IFZ GEP in the assembly meeting.

## The IFZ GEP

This is the updated version of the IFZ GEP, based on

- the gender action plan implemented between 2013 and 2016 (incl. a gender-fair salary scheme, guidelines for inclusive events, peer mentoring, and several work-life balance measures, etc.), and
- several long-standing gender equality measures in research, teaching and communication (gender-sensitive language etc.) since IFZ's founding in 1988.

The monitoring of the measures is part of the tasks of the GEP steering committee at IFZ, which reports on the current status of measures in the quarterly member assemblies of IFZ, using the concrete performance indicators of each activity as well as the gender report<sup>2</sup> of IFZ. The thematic areas of the GEP are organised along the [recommended areas of the European Commission](#).

Thematic area 1: Work-life balance and organizational culture				
<i>Identified problems</i>	<p>Research jobs at IFZ are more self-dependent, than in other research organisations. Job insecurities and a high level autonomy lead to high pressure of individuals to acquire new research funds while working on several on-going projects.</p> <p>Covid and the increase of home-office-hours has amplified this effect, by reducing team communication in the office and blur the boundaries of work and private lives.</p>			
<i>Envisioned goals</i>	<p><i>Co-creation of an IFZ work culture (and in case corresponding formal rules), which prevents individuals from exhausting work practices, and strongly varying scope of employment. This implies the following goals:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>staff working during fixed work times (deviations only in exceptional cases); flexibility of max. XX% of the scope of employment</i></li> <li>• <i>to reduce times of heavy work load (e.g. by fostering team work)</i></li> <li>• <i>measures to ensure basic scope of employment (e.g. backbone projects)</i></li> <li>• <i>balance efforts in acquisition (coordinated acquisition, know-how &amp; knowledge exchange/transfer to the younger generation)</i></li> <li>• <i>compensation for work currently performed on a voluntary basis</i></li> <li>• <i>distribute knowledge in regard to areas of responsibility in key positions (knowledge transfer)</i></li> <li>• <i>create a shared commitment for basic values, such as gender equality, the institute's work is based on, within all IFZ members</i></li> </ul>			
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Indicator(s)</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Work-life-balance workshop	May 24 <sup>th</sup> , 2022	Ombudspersons	Workshop documentation	Max. 20 hours
Systematic evaluation of	2023-2024	Ombudspersons + management	Interview/workshop results (evaluation tool)	Max. 20 hours

<sup>2</sup> Since 2013 IFZ has a gender report comprising gender segregated data of positions, salaries, etc. connected to other relevant categories like age, disciplinary background, care responsibilities, disability status etc. These data are confidential, and only available for IFZ employees and members.

psychological stress				
Implement measures based on systematic evaluation	2023-2026	Management + Ombudspersons	Concrete stress management measures	Max. 40 hours

### Thematic area 2: Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

<i>Identified problems</i>	IFZ went through a major organisational transformation process in the last 10 years. IFZ was the Graz Unit of the Faculty for Interdisciplinary Research and Further Education at University of Klagenfurt. After a re-organisation of the university, all Graz based university employees went to Graz University of Technology, while all IFZ employees stayed at IFZ, but without the (organisational, technical, financial) support of the university. The remaining team members took responsibility for tasks, without considering gender balance consequently.			
<i>Envisioned goals</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all boards and committees at IFZ are gender balanced resp. representing the diversity of employees</li> <li>• raising awareness and commitment of all board members to gender equality &amp; diversity issues</li> <li>• transparency in decision making processes and related criteria</li> <li>• clear rules in regard to gender budgeting &amp; proper/transparent documentation and evaluation of the use of resources</li> <li>• distribute knowledge/know-how about tasks in key positions (temporary tandems?)</li> </ul>			
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Indicator(s)</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Evaluation of gender balance in all boards and committees at IFZ	2022-2023	Ombudspersons	Results discussed in the members' assembly	Max. 10 hours
Update of decision matrix IFZ	2022-2023	Ombudspersons	Updated document	Max. 25 hours
Gender budgeting (time and money spent from and for IFZ)	2023-2026	Management + Ombudspersons	Updated controlling tools	Max. 80 hours
Succession management IFZ	2023-2026	Management	Succession of the management board has been clarified	Max. 80 hours

Thematic area 3: Gender equality in recruitment and career progression				
<i>Identified problems</i>	As stated before, IFZ went through a major organisational transformation process in the last 10 years. This re-organisation led to personal changes, cuts in finances, and increased efforts to recruit new team members and expand fields of expertise. In this course previously established rules and procedures have been softened-up.			
<i>Envisioned goals</i>	<i>Co-creation of rules &amp; measures for:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>equal recruitment procedures including the salary scheme ("Vordienstzeit-Anrechnung")</i></li> <li>• <i>a just &amp; gender-fair salary scheme</i></li> <li>• <i>individual career development – considering also specific private circumstances (e.g. care work)</i></li> <li>• <i>(transparency on) equal career development possibilities at IFZ considering also specific private circumstances (e.g. care work) and alternative career models</i></li> </ul>			
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Indicator(s)</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Recruitment strategies and transparent processes	2023-2026	Ombudspersons	Co-created recruitment rules set up (document accessible to all staff) and approved by members' assembly	Max. 50 hours
Evaluation and update of gender-fair salary scheme	2023-2024	Ombudspersons + management	Updated salary scheme approved by members' assembly	Max. 40 hours
Info document for (new) employees ("Institutsinfo")	2022-2023	Management	Updated document	Max. 40 hours
Re-introduction of buddy-system for new employees	2022-2023	Ombudspersons	Each new employee has a buddy, with whom s_he regularly exchanges	Max. 10 hours
Regular feedback system ("appraisal interviews")	2022-2023	Ombudspersons	Guidelines for RFS; proof of regularly implemented feedback activities	Max. 20 hours
Development possibilities at IFZ	2023-2026	Management + Ombudspersons	Interviews analysed; possible career	Max. 80 hours

			paths at IFZ outlined/depicted	
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#### Thematic area 4: Gender in research and teaching

<i>Identified problems</i>	IFZ has gender as a research focus and teaching topic since its founding. However, gender knowledge has not been equally distributed. While some research units might not realise the full potential of gender topics in research and teaching, others' gender expertise and efforts might not be visible.			
<i>Envisioned goals</i>	<i>Evaluation of gender as a topic in existing research and teaching activities. Knowledge transfer of gender equality expertise to colleagues with fewer experience, co-creation of future teaching and research activities implementing gender as cross-cutting issue.</i>			
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Indicator(s)</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Gender in research training	2022-2023	Gender research unit	Workshop documentation	Max. 20 hours
Overview of projects with gender-sensitive research approach and/or gender as research content	2022-2023	Ombudspersons + management	All research projects with gender dimension are made visible with a hyperlink at <a href="http://www.ifz.at">www.ifz.at</a>	Max. 20 hours
Overview of courses with gender as teaching content and/or gender-sensitive teaching approach	2022-2023	Ombudspersons + management	All courses with gender dimension are made visible with a hyperlink at <a href="http://www.ifz.at">www.ifz.at</a>	Max. 20 hours
IFZ Jour Fixe as a regular networking activity for joined project acquisition (incl. gender as cross-cutting issue)	Since April 2022	Management + Ombudspersons	Meetings every 6-8 weeks	Max. 5 hours

#### Thematic area 5: Measures against gender-based violence

<i>Identified problems</i>	The last evaluation of discrimination and gender based violence (GBV) happened during the first GEP implementation (2013-2017), in the
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	meantime a re-organization process led to personal changes. New team members have never been introduced to the concept of GBV. IFZ lacks current data and a code of conduct.			
<i>Envisioned goals</i>	<i>Co-creation of a code of conduct (IFZ as working environment, our research and our teaching; power relations – students etc.)</i>			
<i>Activity</i>	<i>Time frame</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Indicator(s)</i>	<i>Resources</i>
Basic Training in gender-based violence	2023	Gender research unit	Workshop documentation	Max. 30 hours
Survey on discrimination and gender-based violence	2023-2024	Gender research unit	Survey results presented in gender report	Max. 80 hours
Further training based on survey results	2023-2024	Gender research unit + external expert	Workshop documentation	Ca. 800 Euro
Co-creation of code of conduct	2024-2026	Management + Ombudspersons	Published document on website	Max. 80 hours