

FWF Strategy for Gender Equality and Diversity of Researchers (2019-2020)

1. Vision:

The FWF supports equal opportunities and the gender equality of researchers within the national research community by means of fair, transparent processes and the balanced participation of women and men in its decision-making bodies. The FWF Strategy incl. Action Plan (2019-2020) defines relevant future actions whose aim, among others, is to significantly increase the number of applications from female researchers in accordance with the respective potential.

2. Background

The Austrian Research, Technology and Innovation (RTI) Strategy¹ sets out a series of actions to be taken by 2020 in order to promote gender equality in research: 1) gender budgeting² in all research funding activities, 2) career development for women in basic and applied RTI young researcher programmes and their field of work and 3) actions to improve the reconciliation of work and family life.

The recommendations of the former Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) as the supervisory authority of the FWF were based on a policy mix regarding the gender equality policy in Austria. These, in turn, reflect the three-pronged approach to gender equality in accordance with the aims of the ERA (European Research Area)^{3,4,5}.

- 1) Balanced gender ratio in all areas and hierarchical levels
- 2) Reduction of structural barriers

¹ https://bmbwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/forschung/FTI-Strategie.pdf

² <http://www.imag-gmb.at/cms/imag/subcoverpage.htm?channel=CH0597&lang=en>

³ Council of the European Union (2012). Conclusions on a reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth. Available at: http://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/intm/134168.pdf

⁴ Council of the European Union (2015). Advancing gender equality in the European Research Area - Council conclusions. Available at: <http://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-14846-2015-INIT/en/pdf>

⁵ ERAC Opinion on the European Research Area Roadmap 2015-2020 https://era.gv.at/object/document/1845/attach/ERA_Roadmap_st01208_en15.pdf

3) Firm establishment of the gender dimension in research and research-oriented teaching

In addition, EU reports⁶ have identified the need to incorporate gender equality policy objectives and their implementation into the organisational strategy. Strong support on the part of the organisation's management paves the way for the implementation of the strategy and the attainment of its objectives. Clear external communication also helps to achieve these effects.

The legal basis of the FWF's activities is the Research and Technology Funding Act (FTFG), which defines, in §2b⁷, one of its duties as being the promotion of scientific and scholarly research projects by any appropriate means for one or several natural or legal persons. The principles and standards described below, as well as the Action Plan for 2019-2020, are designed to help the FWF establish specific institution-wide objectives regarding the equal treatment and gender equality of researchers. This important step in the FWF's research policy complements its previous activities⁸ on this topic.

3. FWF Principles on Gender Equality and Diversity

- The FWF is committed to gender equality and thus equal opportunities⁹ for women and men in research. The FWF strives to achieve the balanced participation of women and men in the FWF's decision-making bodies, its functions, its decision-making processes and in its programmes whether as applicants or principal investigators. The diversity of researchers will be considered from an intersectional approach^{10,11} where necessary.
- Furthermore, the FWF supports research that specifically includes, in addition to the adequate participation of women in the research team, the gender dimension in the research approach where relevant.
- The FWF defines gender equality as a cross-sectional task and implements this in all areas of the FWF (gender mainstreaming and [FWF gender equality standards](#)).
- The implementation of gender equality is one of the primary management responsibilities of the FWF Executive Board.
- The FWF takes gender equality and diversity into consideration in the composition of the its decision-making bodies.
- The FWF sets gender quality objectives and regularly monitors the attainment of them (e.g., participation and success rates of women and men in the different programmes).

⁶ https://ec.europa.eu/research/science-society/document_library/pdf_06/structural-changes-final-report_en.pdf; <http://www.gender-net.eu/spip.php?article55&lang=en> (D.2.8)

⁷ <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-the-fwf/legal-foundation/>

⁸ <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/about-the-fwf/gender-issues/>

⁹ Strategic Plan 2017 -2020 <https://www.fwf.ac.at/en/news-and-media-relations/news/detail/nid/20161212-2222/>

¹⁰ <http://portal-intersektionalitaet.de/theoriebildung/ueberblickstexte/walgenbach-einfuehrung/>

¹¹ [FWF in-house workshop on "Diversity and Research Funding," 27 November 2015, Vienna](#)

- The FWF develops fair and transparent processes¹² with appropriate checks and balances in order to avoid unconscious bias towards applicants.
- The exchange of information with research policy initiatives on the national and international level promotes mutual learning about structural and process-related barriers for subgroups of applicants, among other things.
- The FWF mainstreams gender into its internal and external communication as part of its public image. The FWF is particularly interested in making female researchers visible as part of its funding activities.
- In order to achieve gender equality, specific actions will be taken where necessary to compensate for existing disadvantages.

4. FWF Action Plan on Gender Equality and Diversity (2019-2020)

The following actions shall be increasingly implemented in 2019-2020:

- Expansion of equal opportunities monitoring (quantitative and qualitative)
- Annual discussion and publication of outcomes (in the annual report and in the FWF's decision-making bodies)
- Further development of the programmes and specific actions to increase the number of female applicants
- Project-specific support in the area of further training and skills development, among others
- Target figure of 50% women on the FWF Board
- Quality assurance in FWF processes (information on dealing with unconscious bias)
- Raising awareness and skills development among the FWF Board (in terms of integrating the gender dimension into the research approach)
- GENDER research cost centre in FWF programmes
- Evaluation of the outcomes
- Draft of a new action plan for 2021-2023

¹² https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1725985