



INSTRUCT-ERIC
GENDER
EQUALITY PLAN

12. April 2022

To whom it may concern,

We, as the new leadership of Instruct-ERIC are fully committed to the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan in all aspects of the organisation to promote gender diversity and equality, enhance work-life balances and foster a respectful, open and welcoming workplace culture at the Hub.

We are also committed to promote gender equality and diversity in Instruct-ERIC's core activities, such as user access, training and research and across its' governing bodies.

This will be achieved through several comprehensive measures including monitoring, training, policies and others, as appropriate to improve gender equality and diversity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Schwalbe'.

Prof. Dr. Harald Schwalbe
Instruct-ERIC Director

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Schumacher'.

Dr. Silke Schumacher
Instruct-ERIC Hub Coordinator

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INSTRUCT-ERIC GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2022-2023

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1. INTRODUCTION

Instruct-ERIC is committed to the principles of diversity and equality. We believe in eradicating discrimination and persecution and redressing the historic imbalances in representation of minority groups and genders in research and management.

This plan presents our ambition and practical measures towards fairer treatment and inclusivity of persons of all genders within Instruct-ERIC, be they members of staff or researchers making use of Instruct-ERIC services.

Definitions:

In this context **gender** refers to the gender identify of a person, not their biological sex, and is a broad spectrum with individuals identifying at any point within.

Instruct-ERIC is a pan-European distributed research infrastructure composed of a number of centres of excellence across Europe coordinated from a central Hub.

Instruct-ERIC provides open user access to cutting edge structural biology, specifically supporting research that uses integrated approaches and technologies. It operates with the following principles: a) scientific excellence is our priority in the services we provide and the research we support; b) transparency, equality and legality is the cornerstone of our operational model. Additionally, Instruct-ERIC offers training and career development opportunities for European scientists.

All necessary organisational and reporting activities to the consortium and the community is performed by the **Instruct-ERIC Hub** acting as the point of contact and administrative centre. The Hub staff is predominantly employed by Instruct-ERIC but some staff members are seconded from other organisations. This gender equality plan (GEP) covers all Hub staff to ensure equal treatment and encourage openness, diversity, and a respectful work environment. The research facilities performing the scientific activities whilst part of Instruct-ERIC are managed by separate organisations which have their own policies in place including for gender equality.

Instruct was designated a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) in July 2017 and the governance structure defined in the Instruct-ERIC statutes. This includes Instruct's **decision-making bodies**, the Instruct-ERIC Council and the Executive Committee. Appointment of new delegates in both bodies is outside the remit of the Instruct-ERIC staff and therefore not included in this GEP.

To tackle the challenges of gender equality, Instruct-ERIC formed a **Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG)** from Hub staff members. This group performed a gender equality audit, prepared the GEP and will monitor the impact of the plan going forward. All challenges identified as well as the goals and measures set out in this GEP were discussed with the Instruct-Hub leadership Harald Schwalbe (Director) and Silke Schumacher (Hub Coordinator) who will ensure that all outlined actions are taken to improve Instruct-ERIC's gender diversity and equality.

2. METHODOLOGY

To start assessing the status quo in Instruct-ERIC, a gender equality working group (GEWG) was formed to perform a gender equality audit. This included the review of existing gender equality policies and measures, and conducted surveys in Instruct-ERIC decision-making bodies as well as a gender equality survey among the Hub staff.

2.1. Audit of existing policies and measures promoting gender equality

Existing internal measures to promote gender equality, to enhance work-life balance, and improve the workplace culture were reviewed. These policies include:

- Bullying & Harassment Policy
- Personal Harassment Policy and Procedure
- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Equality & Diversity Policy

Additionally, standard operating procedures (SOPs) and award criteria for research visits, internships, R&D awards and training courses were reviewed. These SOPs reviewed include:

- SOP_Internship applications_v1.0
- SOP_R&D applications_v1.1
- SOP_Training applications_v1.1
- SOP_Call setup up process_v1.0

Award criteria reviewed included:

- Access review criteria
- R&D award evaluation criteria
- Internship award evaluation criteria

2.2. Audit of existing process to monitor gender equality

Before 2021, Instruct-ERIC had no regular monitoring of the Hub staff gender distribution in place. Application for research access in ARIA requires gender information but only male/female are the available option which is not sufficiently inclusive. Training attendees, internship and R&D candidates can provide gender information on a voluntary basis in their ARIA profile (options – male/female). As the information is not required for application to Instruct-ERIC those instruct activities, any information on gender diversity in training is incomplete.

2.3. Gender Distribution and Equality surveys

To establish the baseline status of gender equality in Instruct-ERIC, two surveys were conducted.

To assess the gender distribution in Instruct's decision-making bodies, a short survey was performed in July/August 2021. The survey was private and confidential, and offered the options man/woman/non-binary/prefer not to say.

Additionally, in February 2022 a more extensive Gender Equality survey was prepared by the Instruct-ERIC GEWG and completed by all Hub staff. This survey was fully confidential and did not request or record the responders name or other identifying characteristics. Due to the small Hub team size (14 members) and predominantly unique job titles it was not possible to collect gender information in relation to career stage or salary whilst maintaining confidentiality. Therefore, this type of data was not gathered in the survey.

The survey results (Annex 6.4) were analysed by the GEWG to identify relative strength and weaknesses (see Challenges, Annex 6). This gender equality analysis forms the basis of the goals and measures outlined in this GEP (see section 3 and annex 6.2.).

3. GOALS AND MEASURES

As of February 2022, the Instruct-Hub consisted of seven women and six men (0 non-binary; 0 prefer not to disclose) which considered Instruct-ERIC committed to gender equality (10 Yes, definitely; 3 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all). To maintain this and further improve the gender equality in Instruct, areas of weakness (see Challenges 6.1) were identified and will be addressed in five different areas (see 3.1-3.5. and 6.3).

3.1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

A healthy work-life balance and a respectful, open, and welcoming organisational culture are essential to advance gender equality. Overall, the Hub staff are satisfied with their current work-life balance at Instruct-ERIC (7 Yes, definitely; 6 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all) and feel that Instruct-ERIC offers enough flexibility for them to undertake their work (9 Yes, definitely; 4 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all). To maintain this and further improve the organisational culture (Challenges 1-3) annual staff training on gender-equality rights, policies, and measures will be provided (Goal, Measure 1.2).

3.2. Measures against gender-based harassment and violence

Gender-based harassment and violence is unacceptable in any environment including the workplace. Instruct-ERIC has standards of work behaviour as well as a harassment policy and complaints procedure in place to protect employees. All Hub staff consider Instruct-ERIC to have a culture of zero tolerance toward gender-based harassment and violence (8 Yes, definitely; 5 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all). Nevertheless, areas of improvement were identified (Challenge 4) which will be addressed by annual staff training on gender-based discrimination and harassment (Goal 2, Measure 2.1) and updates to the bullying and harassment policy (Goal 2, Measure 2.1).

3.3. Gender balance in leadership and decision making

The gender distribution survey in Instruct's decision making bodies revealed a significant imbalance in the Executive Committee membership which was also noted by the Hub staff in the internal survey (Challenge 6). As the selection of Council and Executive Committee members is outside the remit of the Instruct-ERIC Hub, limited direct actions for improvement by the Hub staff are available. A comprehensive list of qualities to be represented in a committee will be prepared, and recommendations made when a position becomes open to which qualities should be preferred in a candidate to achieve diversity, including gender diversity (Goal 3, Measure 3.1). This list will also be made available to all chairs of sub committees (Goal 3, Measure 3.2).

3.4. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

The Hub staff feel that Instruct-ERIC is an equal opportunity employer with gender-equal opportunities for career advancement at Instruct-ERIC (9 Yes, definitely; 4 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all). However, areas of improvement were identified (Challenge 7) which will be addressed by a review and update of the Equal Opportunities Policy, the use of gender-neutral language in vacancy advertisements, mixed-gender recruitment panels and staff training on unconscious bias (Goal 4, Measures 4.1-4.4).

3.5. Gender diversity in research and training

Gender diversity in research and training is essential to perform excellent science as well as further the career of underrepresented genders. In the structural biology research community women and non-binary persons are underrepresented. Instruct-ERIC also aims to increase the gender balance in its access, training, internship and R&D users. Gender information on research access user, internship and R&D candidates is incomplete as it only includes male/female options and for some call only provided on a voluntary basis and (Challenge 8). To gather this data in a inclusive and consistent manner in the future an update to the ARIA profile will be made which will collect gender information on all applications (Goal 5, Measure 5.1).

Additionally, award criteria will be reviewed and updated to include and promote gender diversity (Goal 5, Measure 5.2).

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In January 2023 the Hub Coordinator will review and ensure that the measures to be undertaken in 2022 (Measures 2.1, 3.1, 4.1, 5.2) are complete and in place. Additionally, the GEWG will review the progress on the continually-monitored indicators to identify any issues with the monitoring process, implementation or evaluation.

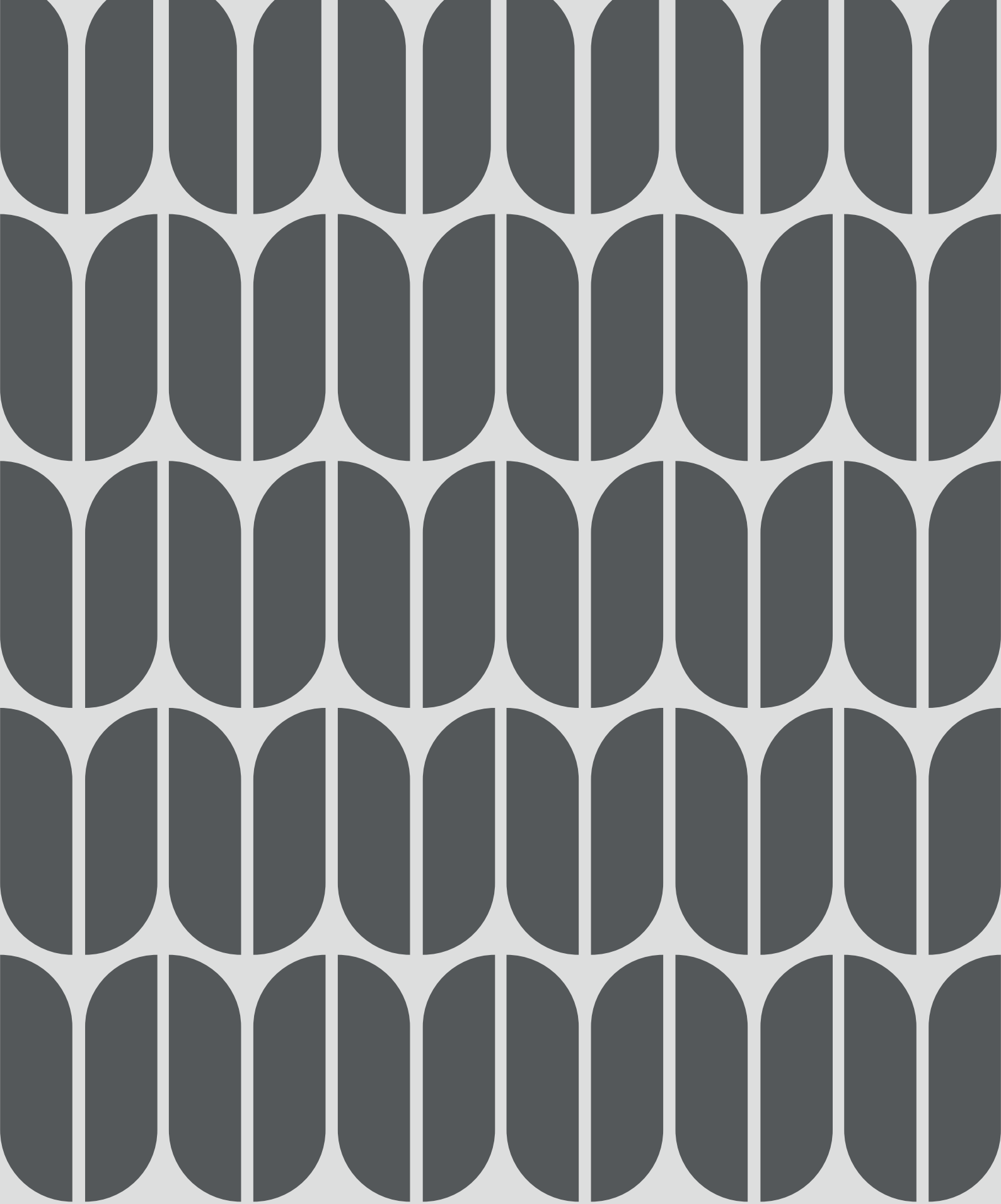
The next Gender Equality Survey will be prepared by the GEWG and presented to all Hub staff in September 2023. The survey results will then be analysed in October 2023 together with the other targets and indicators set out in this GEP (see 6.2). This will allow for the next GEP [2024] to be prepared by the GEWG and to be reviewed by the Instruct-ERIC management in December 2023 before coming into effect on 01.01.2024.

5. RESOURCES

From April 2022 – December 2023 Instruct-ERIC will dedicate 4PM to implement the GEP and sufficient funds for a staff training course on unconscious bias by an external expert. The person month will be split between the members of the GEWG, HR staff, the Hub coordinator and IT personnel as necessary to implement the measures outlined in 6.2.

6. ANNEX [CONFIDENTIAL]

The annexes to this GEP are confidential and available from the Instruct-ERIC Hub with a valid request.



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