

**INSTITUTE
OF BIOCHEMISTRY
AND BIOPHYSICS**
POLISH ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES



GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2022 | 2024

Foreword

Dear Employees,

We present to you the Equality Plan of the Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences (PAS). It is intended to be one of the instruments that the Institute will use in its efforts to promote equality in the workplace.

Everyone should have the opportunity to develop professionally according to their own abilities and preferences, regardless of gender, nationality and ethnic origin, sexual preference or religion. We want to create an environment in which male and female employees and PhD students feel safe enough to respond to all, even potential, incidents they have experienced or witnessed. We must oppose prejudices and stereotypes that can lead to, often unintentional, manifestations of discrimination.

We make strenuous efforts to minimise all forms of discrimination. However, given the historical background and the current social situation, the prevention of gender discrimination must be an important part of such a Plan. We emphasise, however, that there is no place for any form of discrimination at the Institute. It is also necessary for all of us to reflect on our own prejudices and their possible impact on others. This applies not only to those in managerial positions (Directors, Heads of Departments, Heads of Laboratories and Scientific Departments), but to all male and female employees and PhD students at the Institute and others associated with it.

A. Content and objectives

This Equality Plan provides an analysis of the current situation of male and female employees and PhD students at the Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences (hereinafter the Institute). It has been prepared as a result of consultation and analysis of data on the structure of employment in scientific and non-scientific positions as at November 2021. The financial aspect of projects carried out at the Institute with male and female managers was also analysed. The results of the analysis have made it possible to develop an action strategy to implement mechanisms for monitoring and securing gender equality at the Institute.

By taking action to establish and implement the Plan, we contribute to the European Commission's priorities promoting gender equality in research and innovation and ensuring equal opportunities in the workplace. We also meet a key eligibility criterion for research institutions applying for funding under Horizon Europe. Fulfilling the above determinant, this Plan contains four obligatory elements: it is a public document, it defines and sets specific objectives, it provides for data collection and monitoring, and organisation of training and capacity building for the Institute.

The long-range objective of the Plan is to make all employees, PhD students and students aware of the importance of equality issues and to promote positive attitudes towards diversity.

B. Legal basis

The Equality Plan of the Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics of the Polish Academy of Sciences is based on the following legal regulations:

1. **Constitution of the Republic of Poland**, Article 32 (in Journal of Laws 1997, No. 78, item 48, as amended, Journal of Laws 2009, No. 114, item 946, 21 October 2009);
2. **Directive 2006/54/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council** of 5 July 2006 on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, as amended (Official Journal of the European Union L 204 of 26 July 2006);
3. **Communication from the Commission** to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions - A Reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth (COM(2012) 392 final);
4. **Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans (GEPs)**, 2021;
5. **Act of 3 December 2010** on the implementation of certain EU regulations concerning equal treatment (Journal of Laws of 2010, No. 254, item 1700);
6. **Code of Ethics of the Polish Academy of Sciences**, 3rd edition.

C. Persons responsible for the implementation of the Equality Plan

- 1. Institute's Management:** responsible for the implementation, execution and monitoring of the application of the Institute's Equality Plan.
- 2. Equal Opportunities Officer:** a delegated employee of the Institute. Defines and implements specific equality objectives. Participates in decision-making processes related to the equality policy. Advises the Institute's male and female employees and PhD students on career planning and work-life balance issues. Is the contact person for equality issues. Provides information on special promotional programmes for women in science. In the case of foreigners, provides advice on possible cultural differences, including those related to gender perceptions. Provides support in cases of workplace bullying, abuse of power or sexual harassment. If necessary, participates in mediation.
- 3. Equal Opportunities Ombudsman:** elected every four years by the Institute's employees. Cooperates with the **Equal Opportunities Officer**. Participates in decision-making processes related to gender equality. Participates in the work on the report on the state of implementation of the Equality Plan to support the evaluation of the state of implementation of the Equality Plan. Such a report is prepared every two years by the **Equal Opportunities Officer, and the results are presented to the Institute's Management, the Scientific Council and the Institute's Council.**
- 4. Equal Opportunities Committee:** The members of the Committee are elected every 2 years in general elections, one person represents the administrative division, five persons the scientific division (PhD students, technicians, assistants, assistant professors, professors) and two persons in leadership positions. The Committee meets at least twice a year. The Committee assists the Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman in identifying and preventing manifestations of discrimination at the Institute. It submits a report of the meeting to the Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equal Opportunities Ombudsman.

D. Status Quo as at 1 November 2021

1. Employment structure

The Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics of the PAS has a total of 255 employees of 7 nationalities. Among the 123 male and female PhD students, there are 32 foreigners representing 13 nationalities. 63% of the Institute's employees are women. The analysis of the data presented in Table I leads to the conclusion that the **highest proportion of women is in the administrative division, while the lowest is in the case of employees posted to the Henryk Arctowski Station.**

	Women	Men	Total	Proportion of women
Administrative Division	45	11	56	80%
Henryk Arctowski Station	5	7	12	42%
Scientific Division	189	121	310	61%
Total	239	139	378	63%

The differences observed are statistically significant ($\text{chisq}=10.5$; $\text{df}=2$; $\text{p}=0.01$). The over-representation of men among the Station's employees can be linked to the particular type of work based on job characteristics (technical positions, based on physical strength), the availability of candidates applying in the recruitment process, working conditions based on isolation in the extreme environment. Similar disparities in gender representation are also observed at other research stations. As far as the administrative division is concerned, there are significant disparities between the different departments: for example, in the Procurement Department the majority are men, while in the Accounting and Finance Department there are only women. A more detailed analysis of this phenomenon is not possible at present, mainly due to the size of the individual departments. However, it should be noted that the feminisation of administrative staff appears to be a widespread phenomenon. In particular, it was reported in an analogous study conducted at the University of Warsaw¹.

As far as the scientific division is concerned, the gender proportions of staff remain similar regardless of the stage of their career – from doctoral studies or

1. The Gender Equality Plan for the University of Warsaw. Equality Action Plan for 2020-2023, 2020.

doctoral school to the academic title of professor. Thus, the Institute does not experience the unfavourable phenomenon of a discriminatory disparity between women and men in the course of their scientific careers. At the Institute, the proportion of women in all scientific positions reflects the proportion of those employed at the Institute (61%), and the differences presented in Table II are not statistically significant ($\chi^2=1.4$; $df=5$; $p=0.93$).

	Women	Men	Total	Proportion of women
PhD students	75	48	123	61%
Technician	47	29	76	62%
Assistant	23	14	37	62%
Assistant professor	23	19	42	55%
Institute's professor	10	4	14	71%
Professor	11	7	18	61%
Total	189	121	310	61%

Proportional gender representation is also observed at the level of Heads of Laboratories and Scientific Departments in relation to all researchers holding the title of professor or with a post-doctoral degree ($\chi^2=0.064$; $df=2$; $p=0.81$).

	Women	Men	Total	Proportion of women
Heads of Laboratories and Departments	29	18	47	62%
Researchers holding the title of professor or with a post-doctoral degree	44	30	74	59%
Total	73	48	121	60%

An analogous relationship is observed for employees in the administrative division. Four of the five main departments are headed by women, which accurately reflects their proportion among administrative staff (80%).

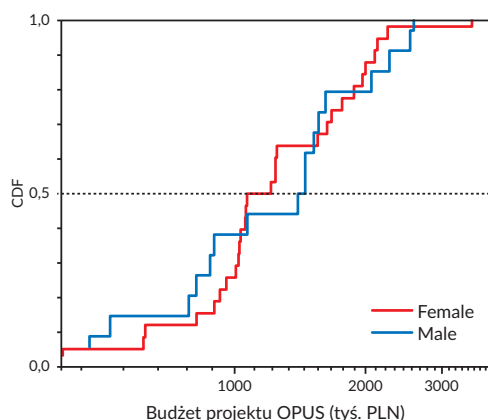
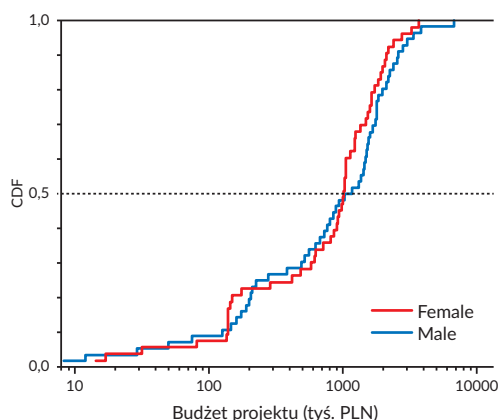
As for the management staff, of the five-person management (Director, Director of Scientific Affairs, Director of General Affairs, Director for Administration, Chief Accountant), 60% are women, which corresponds to the proportion of the Institute's staff (62% women).

2. Scientific Council of IBB PAS

The Scientific Council is composed of 23 women and 27 men. It is apparent that the structure of the SC does not reflect the proportion of independent researchers at the Institute (44 women and 30 men). However, it should be noted that the observed deviation is at the limit of statistical significance ($\text{chisq} = 2.17$; $\text{df} = 1$; $p = 0.14$). Moreover, in the case of the 34 Council members who are employees of IBB PAS, the gender representation exactly matches the proportion of employment for independent researchers ($\text{chisq} = 0.12$; $\text{df} = 1$; $p = 0.76$).

3. Professional activity and gender

Neither the number nor the amount of funding for grant projects carried out by the Institute's employees show any differences due to the gender of the grant leader. It should be noted that this is qualitatively different from the statistics presented e.g. by the National Science Centre, which report lower success rates for women (especially in competitions for advanced researchers), as well as lower amounts of grants awarded.



Values of projects carried out at IBB with a female (red) and male (blue) leader. As of 30/11/2021.

E. Objectives of the Gender Equality Plan for IBB PAS:

1. To raise awareness of the importance of equality issues and to strengthen positive attitudes towards diversity

Action	Responsibility (person/department)	Indicators	Timeframe
Appointing the Equal Opportunities Officer, Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Equal Opportunities Committee.	Institute's Management	Establishing dedicated posts	Q2 2022
Making the Plan public on the Institute's website as a pdf file.	Institute's Management	Making the document available and disseminating it to the Institute's community	Q2 2022
Organising events to support the Institute's organisational culture, with the aim of drawing attention to the existing diversity within the Institute's community – also as part of the <i>Welcome to IBB Center</i> project.	IBB Center	Organising a minimum of one event per year, including online events, films	From 2022
Informing about events dedicated to gender equality.	Equal Opportunities Officer and Equal Opportunities Ombudsman	Making gender equality content available on the website	From 2022
Raising the profile of work for gender equality and prevention of all forms of discrimination by reporting annually to the Scientific Council.	Equal Opportunities Officer, Equal Opportunities Ombudsman, Equal Opportunities Committee	Publishing reports	Annually
Organising anti-discrimination training taking into account the recognition of violence, including acts of sexual harassment, micro-aggression and learning how to respond to them.	Equal Opportunities Officer, Equal Opportunities Ombudsman	Number of individuals trained	From 2023
Introducing an electronic form to ensure that cases of discrimination and sexual harassment can be safely reported.	Institute's Management	Launching an electronic means of communication for reporting	Q4 2022
Conducting quantitative surveys on working conditions at the Institute with particular emphasis on discrimination and equal treatment.	Human Resources Department	Conducting a survey	Q4 2022

2. To support the development of scientific careers of women and men, especially those in the early stages of their scientific careers.

Action	Responsibility (person/department)	Indicators	Timeframe
Implementing networking and mentoring, also using the Institute's social networks and email.	Heads of individual units	Number of individuals involved, measured by attendance at dedicated events	From 2022 onwards periodically
Collecting data on doctoral dissertations pursued and defences of doctoral theses, taking into account the gender ratio.	Equal Opportunities Officer	Report on the percentage of female and male PhD students	Annually
Conducting quantitative surveys (questionnaires) related to individual perceptions of discrimination experienced by male and female researchers.	Heads of individual units	Reporting survey results using a mailing list	Annually
Monitoring the participation of women and men in projects and grant competitions.	Research and Scientific Projects Department	Number of projects and grants taking into account the gender ratio	Annually
Monitoring salaries of women and men in the same positions.	Payroll Department	Creating pay gap reports	From 2022
Sensitising those starting work/new students at the Institute on gender equality issues through training or workshops.	Human Resources Department	Raising awareness on gender equality	From 2022

3. Gender balance in the recruitment of male and female staff and students in doctoral schools

Action	Responsibility (person/department)	Indicators	Timeframe
Introducing routine monitoring of gender-sensitive HR statistics.	Human Resources Department	Annual report submitted to the Equal Opportunities Committee	From 2022
Reaching the widest possible range of potential male and female applicants with information about the competition.	Individuals responsible for recruitment in individual units	Increase in the number of job applications submitted	From 2022
Monitoring applications for the post and recruitment results by gender of male and female applicants.	Individuals responsible for recruitment in individual units	Annual report on applications submitted by applicants by gender	From 2023 annually
Implementing internal guidelines for conducting the recruitment process in a neutral manner.	Human Resources Department	Developing a code for a neutral recruitment process	From 2023

4. Work-life balance of employees

Action	Responsibility (person/department)	Indicators	Timeframe
Maintaining contact with those on parental leave.	Heads of individual departments and laboratories	Carrying out internal consultations	From 2022 on a regular basis
Diagnosis of the needs of those returning to work at the Institute after parental leave.	Heads of individual departments and laboratories	Carrying out consultations and submitting results to the Equal Opportunities Committee	From 2022 on a regular basis
Introducing an optional provision in the periodic appraisal form: "caring commitments". Such a provision would make it possible to indicate that circumstances relating to the care of a child or other family member have affected the ability to achieve the stated scientific objectives.	Institute's Management	Introducing changes to the periodic appraisal form	Q3 2022
Extending the course of study for male and female PhD students.	Institute's Management	Introducing a provision in the regulations of the Doctoral School	From 2022
Introducing the possibility of remote or hybrid working.	Institute's Management	Introducing an amendment to the Institute's Regulations	From 2023
Diagnosis of needs and support in time management for those with caring responsibilities (taking care of a child, disabled family member).	Heads of individual departments and laboratories	Conducting surveys	From 2023
Collecting data on allowances and loans granted by the Social Committee, broken down by gender.	Social Committee	Annual report submitted to the Equal Opportunities Committee	From 2023

5. Balanced gender representation in departmental management, the Scientific Council, management staff and expert teams

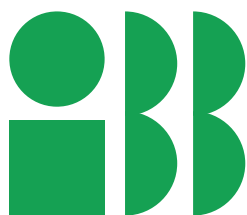
Action	Responsibility (person/department)	Indicators	Timeframe
Monitoring data on the percentage representation of women and men in these bodies.	Institute's Management	Annual report submitted to the Equal Opportunities Committee	From 2023

6. Entry into force and duration

This Equality Plan enters into force on the date of publication and will be reviewed after 2 years by the Equal Opportunities Officer and the Institute's Management. This is the minimum period for evaluation of the actions resulting from the stated objectives. Its results will be the basis for any changes. The Institute's community will be informed on a continuous basis of the progress made towards achieving the stated objectives. The report will be made available by electronic means of communication.

7. Co-authors

The following individuals contributed to the preparation of the current Equality Plan: Anna Czeczotko, Agnieszka Kruszewska, Anna Krzywonos, Anna Muszewska, Anna Płochocka-Youssef, Roman Szczęsny.



**INSTITUTE
OF BIOCHEMISTRY
AND BIOPHYSICS**
POLISH ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES

www.ibb.edu.pl