

# GENDER EQUALITY PLAN OF THE FORSCHUNGS- VERBUND BERLIN E.V.

- adopted by the FVB Executive Board on February 17, 2022 -

## Preamble

The Forschungsverbund Berlin e.V. (FVB) regards the realization of equality and the improvement of the compatibility of family and work as a priority management task.

The present Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is based on the “Agreement on the Promotion of Equal Opportunities” in execution of the Implementation Agreement on Equality (AVGlei) of October 27, 2008 amended by decision of the Joint Science Conference of April 22, 2016 between the Forschungsverbund Berlin e.V. (FVB) and the State of Berlin<sup>1</sup>.

In order to execute the “Implementation Agreement of the Framework Agreement on Research Promotion on the Equality of Women and Men in Joint Research Promotion” of April 22, 2016 and taking into account the DFG’s “Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality” of July 5, 2017, the FVB makes the following provision by way of voluntary commitment:

- The FVB establishes a Central Equal Opportunities Officer with at least 20 hours of weekly working time and allocates a budget.
- The FVB undertakes to report annually to the Board of Trustees on developments in the area of gender equality and the reconciliation of family and work. For this purpose, the Central Equal Opportunities Officer or a representative of the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes/joint administration is granted the right to speak at the Board of Trustees meeting.
- In addition, every two years the FVB submits a report to its funding bodies on the number of women and men among the employees, distinguished by wage groups, full-time and part-time employment, as well as family-related leave of absence and fixed-term contracts, and at the same time reports on the effect and feasibility of the regulations in place.

## 1 Obligation by all employees to promote equality

All employees, especially those with supervisory and management duties, are obliged to promote equality and the compatibility of family and work in their areas of responsibility.

## 2 Attracting applicants

- 2.1 Except in the context of special programs to eliminate underrepresentation of one gender, jobs are not advertised for women or men only, neither within the institution nor publicly. The entire text of the job advertisement shall be designed in such a way that it does not apply to persons of only one gender.

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<sup>1</sup> Vereinbarung zur Förderung der Gleichstellung in Umsetzung der Ausführungsvereinbarung Gleichstellung (AVGlei) vom 27. Oktober 2008 geändert durch Beschluss der Gemeinsamen Wissenschaftskonferenz vom 22. April 2016 zwischen dem Forschungsverbund Berlin e.V. (FVB) und dem Land Berlin

- 2.2 If there is underrepresentation - see AVGLEI - in individual areas, a vacancy should be advertised in order to increase the number of applications from the underrepresented gender. The advertisement is to be made public if this goal cannot be achieved with an internal advertisement.
- 2.3 In case of underrepresentation of women, the job advertisement should include the following gender equality clause:
- “The institute/joint administration is committed to increase the proportion of women in this field, thus applications from women are particularly welcome.”*
- or
- “Applicants are treated equally regardless of gender. Qualified women are particularly encouraged to apply.”*
- 2.4 The family friendliness of the institute/joint administration should be explicitly mentioned in the job advertisement. The job advertisement shall only be published after the participation of the respective Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes or of the joint administration of the FVB.

### 3 Interviews

- 3.1 When filling vacancies in areas where one gender is underrepresented, at least as many women as men shall be invited to interviews or special selection procedures who have the qualifications and aptitudes specified in the job advertisement, provided there are sufficient applications from the underrepresented gender.
- 3.2 Selection committees will be composed of equal numbers of women and men. If this is not possible, the reasons must be filed in written form and the Equal Opportunities Officer must be informed.
- 3.3 All application documents received as well as the list of candidates to be invited to an interview must be communicated to the Equal Opportunities Officer of the respective institute or the joint administration early so that constructive suggestions can be made or reservations put forward. These are to be resolved with the institute management or the managing director in the joint administration before the candidates are invited. This procedure may be deviated from in individual cases with the consent of the Equal Opportunities Officer.
- 3.4 Early involvement means that the Equal Opportunities Officer takes part from the beginning of the decision-making process on the part of the institution and the respective decision or measure has not yet been taken or initiated and can therefore still be changed.

### 4 Selection decisions

- 4.1 In the allocation of apprentice positions, recruitment, employment and professional advancement, the person of the underrepresented gender shall be given preferential consideration if qualifications and suitability are equal, unless reasons inherent in the person of a competitor outweigh these or an election or the involvement of an election committee is prescribed for the appointment.

- 4.2 In the case of joint appointment procedures with a university, the participation of the Equal Opportunities Officer of the participating institute as a guest in the appointment committee should be suggested. If the Equal Opportunities Officer or her deputy of the participating institute are unable to attend, they can name the Central Equal Opportunities Officer as their representative. The Equal Opportunities Officer of the university and the one of the participating institute will coordinate their participation, provided that the Chairperson of the respective committee has agreed to the participation.
- 4.3 If the Equal Opportunities Officer of the respective institute was not involved in the selection process at her own request, the result of the selection process shall be communicated to her upon request.

## **5 Qualification and prohibition of discrimination**

- 5.1 The assessment of qualifications shall be based exclusively on the requirements of the position to be filled, in particular by the training requirements and professional experience. Age, seniority as well as the date of the last upgrading or promotion are only taken into account if they are of significance for the suitability of the applicants or insofar as this is stipulated by law or collective bargaining agreements.
- 5.2 The comparative assessment does not take into account:
- 5.2.1 interruptions in employment, fewer active years of service or employment, reductions in working hours or delays in completing individual training courses due to family responsibilities;
  - 5.2.2 the income situation of the spouse, partner, or companion;
  - 5.2.3 time constraints due to the care of children or relatives in need of care and the intention to make use of the possibility of reducing working hours.

## **6 Advanced training**

- 6.1 Appropriate measures shall be taken to support employees with family responsibilities in taking part in further training. Women and men are taken into account at least in proportion to their share in the respective target group of the training.
- 6.2 Arrangements to ensure the participation of part-time employees and employees with family obligations or the provision of childcare shall be made within the framework of the plan of measures in No. 7.
- 6.3 The Central and the respective Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration of the FVB and their deputies are supported in the performance of their tasks by further training in the specialist areas they are concerned with.
- 6.4 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer organizes awareness-raising and training actions on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for all employees of FVB.

## **7 Measures to promote gender equality in human resources development**

- 7.1 The FVB considers the promotion of equal opportunities as an essential instrument of its human resources management. Its implementation is a special obligation of staff members with superior and management duties.
- 7.2 The situation of female employees in comparison to the situation of male employees is therefore described and evaluated annually as a part of the updating of personnel statistics.
- 7.3 In order to achieve equal opportunities in individual areas, concrete targets and measures are developed in the institutes and in the joint administration of the FVB with the early involvement of the respective Equal Opportunities Officers. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer can play a supporting role here.
- 7.4 The individual institutes develop and implement Gender Equality Plans that contain concrete target agreements, take account of the cascade model and are suitable for monitoring equality within the framework of the Pact for Research and Innovation.
- 7.5 The measures and reports on gender equality-promoting personnel development are published in the institutes and, comprehensively, in the FVB. The FVB Executive Board shall evaluate and update the measures together with the Central Equal Opportunities Officer of the FVB. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer or a representative of the Equal Opportunities Officers of the FVB and the personnel administration shall report to the FVB Executive Board annually on the extent to which the objectives have been achieved or on the reasons for failure. The reports and updates shall be published in the FVB. The FVB Executive Board reports to the Board of Trustees at least every two years.

## **8 Family-friendly working hours and general conditions**

Employees are offered working hours and other framework conditions that make it easier to reconcile family and working life, provided that there are no significant operational concerns to the contrary. This applies in particular to positions with supervisory and management duties.

## **9 Prohibition of discrimination in part-time employment, teleworking and family-related leave of absence**

- 9.1 The prohibition of discrimination against part-time employees according to the Act on Part-Time and Fixed-Term Contracts<sup>2</sup> also applies accordingly to employees in teleworking positions and to those on leave with family obligations; this does not imply regular equal treatment of periods of leave, part-time and full-time employment.
- 9.2 A delay in the professional career resulting from family-related leave must be taken into account appropriately in the event of upgrading. Part-time employment shall not have a negative effect on the assessment.

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<sup>2</sup> Gesetz über Teilzeitarbeit und befristete Arbeitsverträge (Teilzeit- und Befristungsgesetz)

## **10 Central Equal Opportunities Officer**

- 10.1 The FVB Executive Board has established a Central Equal Opportunities Officer. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer must be given at least 20 hours of weekly working time for equal opportunities work. It shall be guaranteed that a part of this work can also be conducted at home.
- 10.2 The procedure for the election of the Central Equal Opportunities Officer (and her deputy) is regulated by appropriate election regulations and published in the FVB. The Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes/joint administration shall be involved in the selection process.
- 10.3 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer is appointed for 4 years by the Spokesperson of the Executive Board. Reappointment is possible.
- 10.4 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer receives an annual budget of €10,000 for
- 10.4.1 travel measures,
  - 10.4.2 training activities,
  - 10.4.3 measures implemented in the framework of the promotion of gender equality aspects (female doctoral students' seminar, alumni meetings).
- Measures that go beyond this and require an additional budget are agreed upon annually with the FVB Executive Board.
- 10.5 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer shall be provided with the possibility to conduct confidential discussions and with a secure, lockable storage area.
- 10.6 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer can be invited to participate in all decision-making processes on organizational and social matters in accordance with No. 13.3 by the respective Equal Opportunities Officer of an institute or of the joint administration.
- 10.7 In case of conflict, the Central Equal Opportunities Officer may act as a substitute for the respective Equal Opportunities Officer of an institute or of the joint administration.
- 10.8 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer advises the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and the joint administration on strategic questions of equality.

## **11 Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration**

- 11.1 An Equal Opportunities Officer shall be appointed at each of the institutes and at the joint administration in accordance with the current election regulations. For each Equal Opportunities Officer in the institutes/joint administration, at least one deputy is to be determined by secret ballot by the female employees of the institutes/joint administration. The Equal Opportunities Officers and their deputies are to be appointed by the respective institute management or the managing director.
- 11.2 The Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration and their deputies are elected for a period of two years. There is the possibility of re-election.
- 11.3 The procedure for the election of the Equal Opportunities Officers (and their deputies) is regulated by appropriate election regulations and published in the FVB.

- 11.4 If no candidate is found or if no candidate is elected after the election, the Equal Opportunities Officer shall be appointed ex officio from among the female employees. This requires the consent of the employee to be appointed.
- 11.5 If the Equal Opportunities Officer retires prematurely or is not only temporarily prevented from completing her tasks, a new Equal Opportunities Officer shall be appointed for the remaining term of office. The same applies to the deputies of the Equal Opportunities Officers.
- 11.6 The Equal Opportunities Officers and their deputies are appointed for the full term of office, provided that both positions are to be newly filled.
- 11.7 The Equal Opportunities Officers and their deputies may not belong to any Works Council and may only deal with personnel matters in their capacity as Equal Opportunities Officers. They are the contact persons for the employees.

## **12 Legal status of Equal Opportunities Officers**

- 12.1 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration and their deputies are not bound by instructions in the performance of their duties and shall perform their duties without any reduction in their previous remuneration or their previous salary.
- 12.2 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and the joint administration may not be impeded in the performance of their duties and may not be disadvantaged or favored in their professional development because of their activities. Like the members of the Works Council, they are protected against dismissal, transfer and secondment.
- 12.3 The Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration and their deputies shall be relieved of other official duties to the extent that is necessary for the proper performance of their tasks in accordance with the nature and size of the institution. They shall be provided with the necessary personnel, premises and equipment.
- 12.4 The deputies have the same rights and duties as the Equal Opportunities Officers only in the event of substitution. In agreement with the deputies, the Equal Opportunities Officers may delegate tasks to them for independent performance. In this respect, the deputies are relieved of other duties accordingly in place of the Equal Opportunities Officers.
- 12.5 The FVB or the institutes must provide the Equal Opportunities Officer with a description of her tasks as proof of her activities upon her request.

## **13 Tasks of the Equal Opportunities Officers**

- 13.1 In the case of personnel, organizational and social measures which are to be decided by the Board of Trustees of the FVB or which require its approval, the FVB Executive Board shall submit the opinion of the Central Equal Opportunities Officer to the Board of Trustees together with its proposal for a decision. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer or a representative of the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration must be heard orally by the Board of Trustees upon their request.
- 13.2 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration have the task of promoting and monitoring equal opportunities

between women and men and the elimination of existing and prevention of future discrimination on grounds of gender in the FVB.

- 13.3 They shall participate in all personnel, organizational and social measures relating to equality, reconciliation of family and work life and protection against sexual harassment at the workplace. In this sense, they also have an advisory and support function for individual employees.
- 13.4 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer serves to relieve the workload of the Equal Opportunities Officers in the institutes and the joint administration, in particular, by taking up general legal, fiscal and other questions or problems of the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and the joint administration, by conducting research and by being the contact person in case of conflicts. She regularly calls the meetings of all Equal Opportunities Officers.
- 13.5 The FVB may provide advice on how to involve and engage the Equal Opportunities Officers in the above measures and may lay down the procedures within the framework of necessary common internal regulations. These procedures are to be discussed and agreed upon with the Central Equal Opportunities Officer and with the respective Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration. The right to participate in meetings and consultations of bodies of the FVB will also be settled.
- 13.6 The Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration may, after notifying the respective management, convene at least one meeting per year and have the right to participate in general staff meetings with the right to speak.

## **14 Information and involvement of the Equal Opportunities Officers**

- 14.1 In order to carry out her tasks, the Central Equal Opportunities Officer shall be informed immediately and comprehensively about equal opportunities-relevant matters of the FVB. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer shall then inform the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration.
- 14.2 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer or a representative of the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration has the right and the duty to speak directly to the FVB Executive Board and is supported by the FVB Executive Board in carrying out her tasks.
- 14.3 In all matters subject to their involvement, the Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration have a right of initiative.
- 14.4 All Equal Opportunities Officers at the respective institutes and at the joint administration shall be given the opportunity to participate in all decision-making processes on organizational and social matters as defined in No. 13.3. Within the scope of their duties, they shall have the right to inspect the parts of personnel files relevant to the decision in question.
- 14.5 The Central Equal Opportunities Officer shall be invited to the institutes' meetings.
- 14.6 The participation of the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and of the joint administration shall be based on a written vote, which shall be kept on file. If the FVB does not follow the vote of the Equal Opportunities Officer, the reasons must be provided in writing upon request.

## **15 Cooperation in conflict situations**

- 15.1 In the event of violations of these regulations or other regulations concerning equal opportunities, the Equal Opportunities Officers of the institutes and the joint administration in the respective institute or joint administration have the right to lodge a written objection with the FVB Executive Board within one week of becoming aware of the violation. The objection has a suspensive effect. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer shall be informed of this procedure.
- 15.2 The FVB Executive Board shall decide on the appeal within a period of one month after receipt. If it considers the objection to be well-founded, the measures and their consequences shall be taken into account and the results of the objection shall be considered for further comparable cases.
- 15.3 If the FVB Executive Board considers the objection to be unfounded, it must explain this in writing to the Central Equal Opportunities Officer. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer shall inform the Equal Opportunities Officer of the institute or of the joint administration involved. Until then, the objection has suspensive effect. The Central Equal Opportunities Officer or a representative of the Equal Opportunities Officers shall report on these cases and, in this context, on the implementation of the agreement reached with the funding bodies to the Board of Trustees at the latest within the framework of her annual report.
- 15.4 For measures which are decided by the Board of Trustees or which require its approval, No. 13.1 shall apply.

## **16 Duration**

This Gender Equality Plan is valid from September 1, 2020 and has a term of five years.

