

Gender Equality in Academia and Research

Step 6: What comes after the gender equality plan?

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A gender equality plan (GEP) will be concluded at some point. However, this is not 'the end' of promoting gender equality in your organisation. It is important to understand that a GEP is also a quality assurance model in the organisational change process. This further development of the organisation in the direction of gender equality is never finished.

You are entering a new cycle now. Based on the findings from the evaluation of the GEP, it is possible to draw conclusions regarding the progress made towards achieving gender equality in the organisation. During the development and implementation of the GEP, the course should have already been set for a sustainable anchoring of gender equality work in your organisation. You should have appointed those responsible for gender equality work and anchored gender equality in the budget of your organisation by now. It is likely that the sustainability of some measures and procedures is already ensured, while others may still require further action.

Be aware that structural and cultural change is a long-term process that requires continuous and repetitive efforts and measures to avoid a throwback to former practices and behaviour. Some measures and activities will need to be implemented throughout several GEP cycles; of course, you should consider improving these measures based on your monitoring and evaluation results.

In addition, the final evaluation may have identified new areas that require attention. This is the point where you decide how to continue the efforts undertaken so far and what a new GEP should address.

Take into consideration the lessons learnt from the previous experience(s).

Revisit the results of the status quo assessment conducted in step 2. Which issues were identified but not addressed in the GEP because other issues were more important? Is it

relevant to include them in the next GEP?

Revisit the results of the monitoring and evaluation. What further need for action do they indicate? Does the evaluation cover all possible fields of action or should further data be collected?

Benchmark what other organisations have done or are currently doing (and adapt their measures to your own context).

Discuss with the management and the implementation team whether the framework conditions in your organisation have changed and whether there is a need for new action.

Continue to engage (new) stakeholders.

Think about how to make your measures sustainable.

Take the opportunity to make your work and the progress visible throughout your organisation.

You might also want to think about new topics in which to integrate gender equality in your organisation and in your funding cycle, and strategies to do so.

Gender budgeting

Why think about gender in a budgeting process?

The way that a funding budget is allocated cannot be considered as neutral; rather, it reflects the existing distribution of power in society between women and men. As nicely pointed out by the project 'Leading towards sustainable gender equality plans in research performing organisations' (LeTSGEPs), budget cycles and procedures were designed mainly by men in the past, when women did not have access to public institutions, education systems or research organisations, and are thus an expression of the male scale of values, principles, main issues and priorities. Research funding mainly addresses research fields dominated by men, while disciplines with a majority of women researchers receive lower budgets.

Gender budgeting is about identifying ways to redistribute resources to make management and financial decisions gender-responsive, ensuring equal opportunities for all members of the organisation, regardless of their gender. According to the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) [gender budgeting toolkit](#), gender budgeting involves conducting a gender-based assessment of budgets, incorporating a gender perspective at all levels of the budgetary process, and restructuring revenues and expenditures in order to promote gender equality. In short, gender budgeting is a strategy and a process with the long-term aim of achieving gender equality goals.

The aim to integrate more women researchers into the science system and to enable them to have better careers can also be addressed by reflecting on which research or research fields are prioritised in the funding budget and which disciplines or fields women do research in. Funding gender research and fostering interdisciplinary research or research topics with a higher share of women researchers are potential approaches.

For funding bodies, allocating public money to various target groups is a core process. In this context, gender budgeting means **gender-fair funding budgeting**.

When looking at that allocation process from a gender perspective, two issues are relevant: first, how the overall funding budget is allocated to different funding programmes / grants, taking into account the share of women researchers, women applicants and women grantees there, and, second, how the budget is allocated within a grant, so that success rates are equal, and how much budget is requested by women and men grantees. In addition, other gender measures can be included in the work on gender budgeting of research bodies.

Good to know

Gender budgeting allows for a more targeted and efficient allocation of financial resources.

Gender budgeting requires the participation of a broader range of stakeholders. It leads to a closer analysis of the revenue and expenditure side of budgets.

The result is a win–win situation: a transparently and efficiently managed funding body that simultaneously promotes gender equality through gender-sensitive funding.

The [gender budgeting in academia toolkit](#), developed in 2016 by the EU-funded project 'Gendering the academy and research: combating career instability and asymmetries' (GARCIA), recommends the following steps to start, which have been adapted slightly for funding bodies for this purpose.

Map the activities of the funding body. It can be helpful to have an overview of possible activities and targets in place for gender-fair funding budgeting. This method can provide a starting point for the project.

Examine equality initiatives. What has been done regarding equality work? What was the outcome of that work? Was it successful? If so, identify what worked well and what could be useful in further equality work. If it was not successful, identify the setbacks. Here you might address activities aiming for equal success rates of all genders, increasing the share of women applicants, etc.

Consider the activities of the institution in more detail. What activities might contain gender inequality traps in raising and allocating resources? Speak informally to people in different ranks to see what they perceive as the weak spots within the system. Where might gender inequality be created and maintained? Talk at the level of each funding programme and at the level of your funding body's overall budget. Calculate how much money in total goes to women grantees and how high the average funding amount is for each gender.

Set out the project. Choose which activities to examine further. Draft an action plan with objectives and the process of gender-fair funding budgeting work. What does the institution need to do in order to organise its gender budgeting?

If you want to learn more about how to implement gender budgeting in your organisation, visit the [toolkit](#) directly, which provides seven steps on how to apply gender budgeting.

Intersectionality

GEPs include a wider perspective, related not only to sex or gender, but also to other characteristics. For instance, it is important that objectives include further disaggregation within the broad categories of 'women' and 'men', considering additional sociodemographic attributes such as age, socioeconomic background, poverty, race, ethnicity, location (rural/urban), disability, sexual orientation (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and others) and religion. Moreover, all thematic priorities should, ideally, consider an approach that pays attention to intersectionality (i.e. the intersectional characteristics of individuals, and how these interact or intersect to influence gender inequalities).

If GEPs are to address this, they need an intersectional approach:

EIGE defines [intersectionality](#) as an 'analytical tool for studying, understanding and responding to the ways in which sex and gender intersect with other personal characteristics/identities, and how these intersections contribute to unique experiences of discrimination.'

Intersectional analysis thus aims to show the diversity of identities and the different types of discrimination that occur as a result of the intersection of gender and other social characteristics. Intersectionality is not a unique approach, but is embedded in a specific cultural and legal framework, and thus varies between countries: in South Africa, for example, it is mandatory for funding bodies to collect and monitor data on race, while this is legally impossible in a number of European countries. The United States has a long tradition in monitoring social categories such as race, and the [ADVANCE programme](#) reviews all proposals with regard to their intersectional approach throughout the whole project.

The League of European Research Universities (LERU) position paper [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at Universities](#): The power of a systemic approach outlines four key steps to building an equal, diverse and inclusive university, which could be illustrative for funding bodies as well.

Familiarise yourself with the key findings that have emerged from the extensive research on privilege and the impact of bias, which highlight the extent of the problems faced by under-represented groups among staff (and students). By taking the time to look at these findings, you will be better placed to identify effective interventions. In doing so, you send a clear signal to the whole organisation that you are aware of the problems faced by underprivileged groups and are willing to seek solutions. Monitor and measure the present situation and the impact of programmes introduced to bring about change. It is crucial to understand the particularity of the issues in your organisation, using both quantitative data and qualitative information from surveys and individual testimonials. Being empathetic, being open and listening to experiences shared in a safe and respectful environment provide the crucial human dimension to complement the monitoring data, and enrich the narrative drive towards the desired organisational culture.

Develop a formal strategy that can ensure tailored solutions for the various issues and groups, as well as a holistic, synergistic and sustainable approach to inequality and lack of inclusion in university culture.

Communicate the need for change and the potential benefits to the entire organisation of increased equality, diversity and inclusion from the highest levels of leadership. Build a narrative that fits the institutional goals in terms of organisational culture and academic outcomes, one that is compelling and motivating for all.

In order to view **videos and webinars** or further **tools and resources** on the topics discussed in step 6, switch between the respective tabs. Click below to go back to the previous step. You can also download the infographic summarising all steps to set up a GEP.