Gender Equality and Diversity Plan 2024-2030

Committee

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Preamble / Introduction

At the Digital Engineering Faculty (DEF) and the Hasso Plattner Institute for Digital Engineering gGmbH (HPI), we prioritize fostering a welcoming and respectful culture and strive for continuous improvement, both for individuals and institutionally. The joined Gender Equality and Diversity Plan (GEDP) of the DEF and the HPI serves as a tool for accountability, transparency, and for promoting a safer and more inclusive environment.

We aim to realize equal opportunities for all students, employees and campus visitors, promoting gender equality, family friendliness, and the elimination of discrimination. We strive to enable equal participation across all genders in every aspect of academic and institutional life while also developing supportive and family-friendly study, research, and working conditions.

We are committed to eliminating all form of discrimination including those based on gender, disability, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, faith, political beliefs and age. We seek to compensate for existing disadvantages and ensure equal opportunities in professional and personal development.

Currently, individuals from FLINTA* groups (a German acronym encompassing women, lesbians, intersex, non-binary, trans and agender people with the asterisk representing all non-binary gender identities) are underrepresented at our faculty, accounting for 19% of bachelor's students, 23% of master's students and 17% of professors. Gender disparities may also contribute to higher attrition rates among FLINTA* members of our community. Therefore, a key focus of this plan is to increase the representation of underrepresented groups and to foster an environment welcoming to everyone.

Our GEDP is designed to cultivate a productive and inclusive academic environment and addresses the compatibility of studying or career and care work responsibilities. As a research and educational institution, we are committed to integrating equity and antidiscrimination into our organization, ensuring they guide our daily practices.

This commitment enhances our innovative power, excellence, and future viability. Our objective extends beyond mere numerical diversity; we strive to cultivate an environment where everyone feels welcome, valued, and included.

Prof. Dr. Mathias Weske
Chair of the Faculty Council
Digital Engineering Faculty

Prof. Dr. Tobias Friedrich
Managing Director
Hasso Plattner Institute

Legal and Higher Education Policy General Conditions

According to the §7 of the Brandenburg Higher Education Act (BbgHG), the University of Potsdam (UP) is obliged to promote the actual equality of women and men, to work towards the elimination of existing disadvantages and the actual compatibility of career, studies, family and care work and to take gender-specific effects into account in all decisions. Decentralized equality plans are to be drawn up with the aim of reducing the underrepresentation of women. The Gender Equality Concept of the DEF is defined in this Gender Equality and Diversity Plan.

The Gender Equality and Diversity Plan of DEF/HPI supports the catalog of measures of the cross-university Gender Equality Concept (*Gleichstellungskonzept*), which was developed by the Coordination Office for Equal Opportunities (*Koordinationsbüro für Chancengleichheit*) within the framework of the Professorinnen-Programms III.

Scope of Validity

The following Gender Equality and Diversity Plan applies to the DEF at the University of Potsdam and the HPI academic operations for a period of five and a half years. It comes into force with the resolution of the Faculty Council (*Fakultätsrat*) and is to remain valid until 31.12.2030.

Current Situation and Analysis

Initial situation

On April 1, 2017, HPI and University of Potsdam founded the joint Digital Engineering Faculty. It is the first privately funded faculty at a public university in Germany. The faculty currently offers:

- Bachelor's degree in IT Systems Engineering (DE)
- Master's degree in IT Systems Engineering (DE)
- Master's degree in Digital Health (ENG)
- Master's degree in Computer Science (ENG)
- Master's degree in Cybersecurity (DE) - phasing out
- Master's degree in Data Engineering (DE) - phasing out
- Master's degree in Software Systems Engineering (ENG) - phasing out
- PhD Programs

In this document, the individual status groups are evaluated based on available data regarding gender and nationality distributions. The status groups considered are:

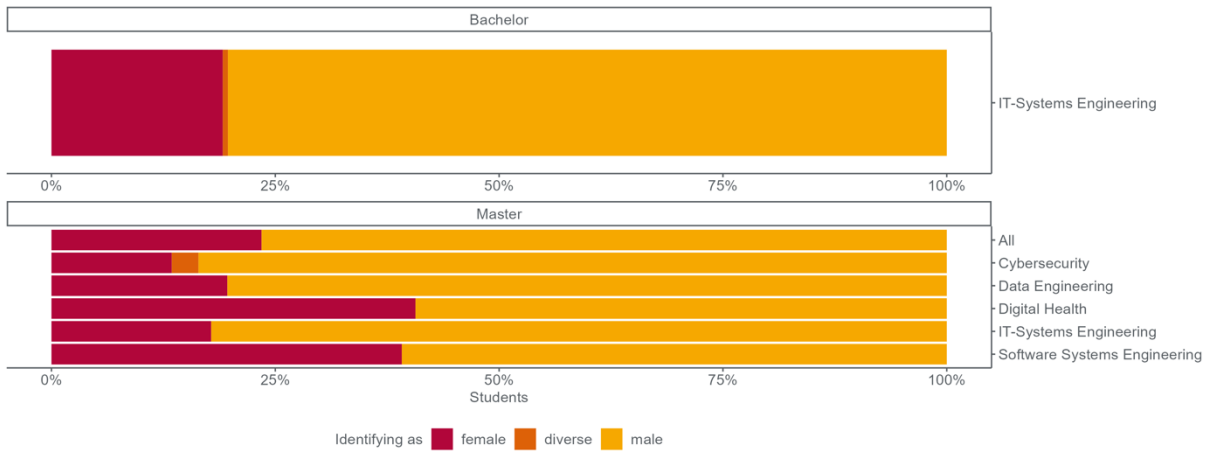
1. Students
2. Scientific Employees (doctoral and habilitation candidates, academic and research support staff)
3. Professors
4. Technical and Administration Employees

Analyses

Current student data

Gender distribution amongst students in B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees

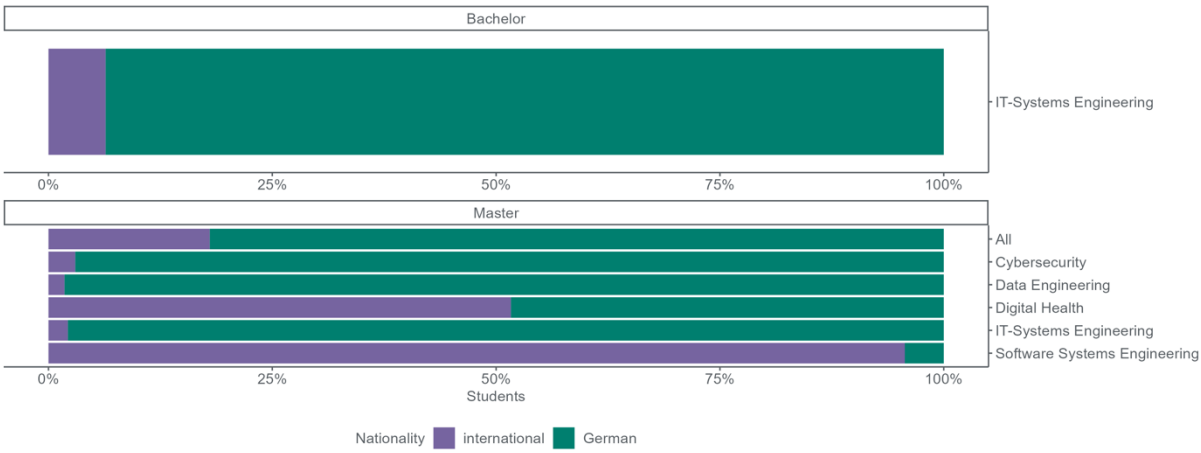
The student body at the DEF/HPI consists of 20% FLINTA* students in the B.Sc. degree, while the M.Sc. degrees consist of 23% FLINTA* students. The higher proportion of FLINTA* students is predominantly brought on by the higher rates of FLINTA* students in the two English degree Programs Digital Health and Software Systems Engineering with 41% and 39% FLINTA* students, respectively.



Gender distribution amongst students divided by B.Sc. and M.Sc. and individual degrees.
Summer Semester (SoSe) 2024 - as of April 1, 2024

Distribution of nationality amongst students in B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees

The student body is made up of 13% international students (as of April 1, 2024). With 6% in the bachelor's degree, the master's degree (18%), and specifically the two degrees offered in English with 52% and 96% of international students, drive the international diversity amongst the students.

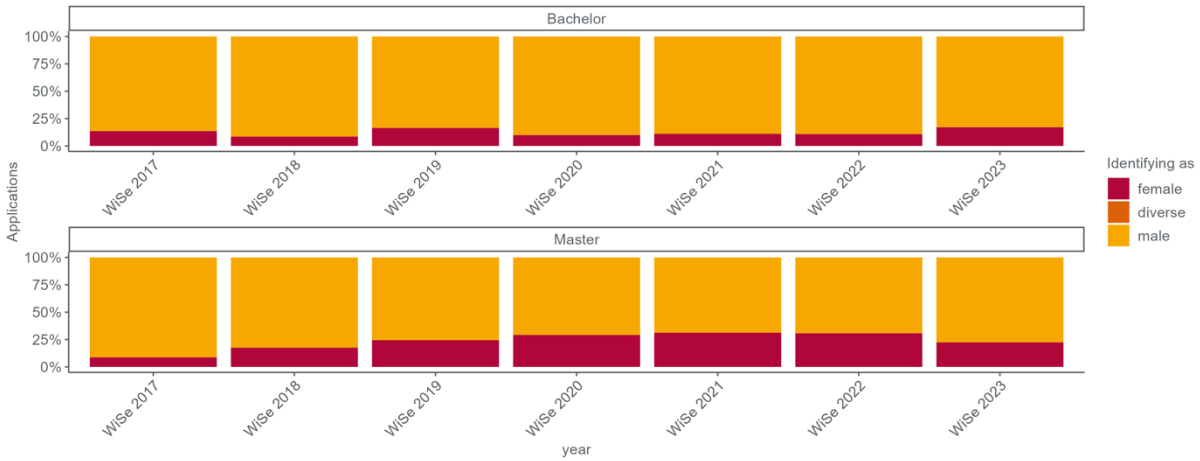


Distribution of nationality amongst students divided by B.Sc. and M.Sc. and individual degrees. Summer Semester (SoSe) 2024 - as of April 1, 2024

Applications

Gender distribution amongst applications for B.Sc. and M.Sc. degrees

With the student body consisting of 20% FLINTA* students in the bachelor's degree and 23% FLINTA* students in the master's degrees, an increase of FLINTA* students compared to the applications is apparent. The application rates of FLINTA* students for the bachelor's degree range between 9% and 17% for the years between 2017 and 2023. A contrary tendency can be seen in the applications of FLINTA* students for master's degrees. An overall increase from 9% to a consistent above 30% rate of applications from FLINTA* persons between 2017 and 2023 highlights a drastic and welcome increase of applications from this underrepresented group. Taking the higher rate of FLINTA* students in the international master's degrees into account, an overall enrichment of acceptance of FLINTA* student to the degree programs can be seen. The changes to the trends based on the switch to the English master's degree in Computer Science are yet to be seen.

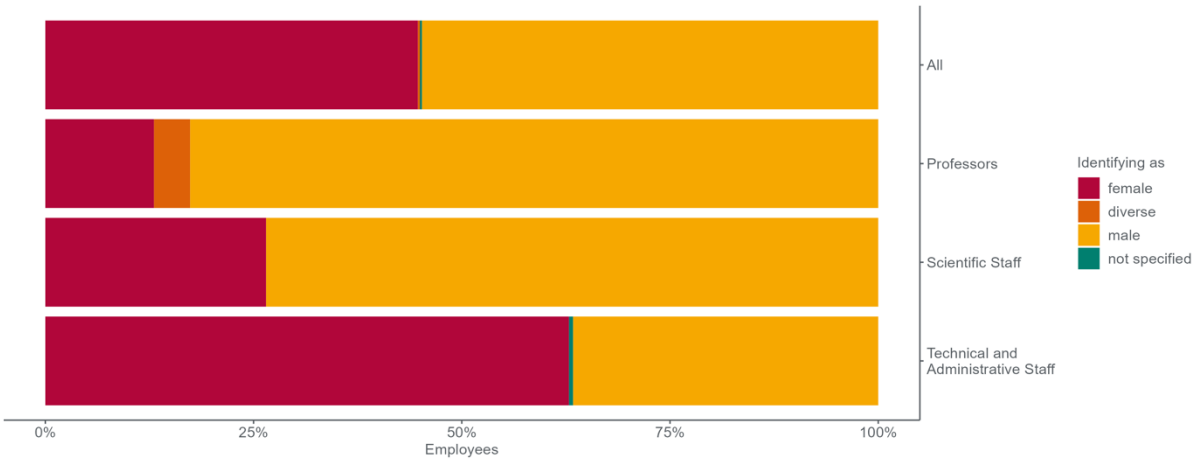


Gender distribution amongst applications divided by B.Sc. and M.Sc. Winter Semester (WiSe) 2017 through Winter Semester 2023 - as of April 1, 2024

All employees and professors

Gender distribution amongst employees and professors

The unique setup of the DEF and HPI requires a closer look at data across the faculty and the employees at HPI. The technical and administrative staff at HPI is in stark contrast with the scientific staff and professors at 66% to 25%. Even among the scientific staff and the professors there is still a distinct underrepresentation of FLINTA* personnel with 27% and 21%, respectively. However, through recent hiring committees two new FLINTA* professors will join the DEF and HPI in autumn 2024, which will bring the ratio of FLINTA* professors up to 23%. This highlights the recent targeted advertising and drive to garner more applications for professorships from FLINTA* persons. Overall, this also highlights an inversion of the common loss of FLINTA* persons from students through the academic funnel to an enrichment of FLINTA* persons along the journey within academia (20% at B.Sc. level, 23% at M.Sc. level, 27% at scientific employee level, and 23% at professor level). Though an equal representation at 50% across all levels requires additional work.



Gender distribution amongst all employees at HPI divided by status groups. Summer Semester (SoSe) 2024 - as of April 1, 2024

Agreed Targets and Measures

Increase the visibility and awareness of Gender Equiality and Diversity initiatives.			
Eliminate negative experiences on campus by fostering a **safe, inclusive, and supportive environment** for all students and staff.	Increase and retain the **FLINTA* individuals** in academic environment to achieve 30%	**Create awareness about unconscious bias** through education, training, and systemic changes in policies and practices within the institution.	Implement comprehensive **support systems for individuals** engaged in care work to enhance their well-being and academic/ professional opportunities
Develop and establish process to access the data to ensure transparency and informed decision-making.			

1. Prevention of Unconscious Discrimination

Code of Conduct

Description: We want to develop a Code of Conduct (CoCo) in collaboration with all status groups that is then widely communicated. The CoCo should establish clear guidelines, offering examples of both the positive behaviors we should strive for on campus and the undesirable behaviors to avoid, along with the corresponding consequences for any violations. There will be one CoCo for the DEF/HPI with short, summarized versions for different use cases.

Action items and metrics:

- It should be made sure, that all status groups are heard and fairly represented in the creation process.
- CoCo is created.
- CoCo is published across all DEF/HPI channels.
- We encourage lecturers/professors to integrate the CoCo into their lectures, e.g. with a few slides at the beginning of a lecture.
- The evaluations done with EvaP should include a section to ask if the CoCo was communicated and practiced in the lecture.
- All events organized at HPI should clearly communicate the CoCo as part of their communication materials.
- Reference to Incident Response System (IRS) in case of breach is included in the CoCo.

Trainings and workshops offered by DEF/HPI for all status groups

Description: We aim to promote inclusivity by conducting a semesterly open workshop on discrimination. Additionally, a diverse catalog of training offers on Gender Equality and Diversity topics will be provided for all status groups.

Action items and metrics:

- Conduct at least one open workshop on the topic of discrimination each

semester, e.g. unconscious bias or communication workshop
- Offers in the training catalog specified for status groups

Awareness team at events

Description: Our goal is to ensure that trained awareness teams are integrated into events with more than 150 participants at DEF/HPI to offer support and enhance safety.

2. Discrimination Counseling

Implementation of Incident Response System (IRS) for discrimination, harassment and violence

Description: We prioritize a welcoming, respectful culture and continuous improvement. To this end, the IRS serves as a response system for discrimination, accountability, and fosters a safer, inclusive environment for all status groups.

Action items and metrics:

- Functioning technical solution
- IRS team obtains appropriate training
- Information is available on campus and online
- Consequences are clearly communicated and executed
- Reference to Code of Conduct as a set of rules for harmonious interaction

Introduction of chaperone service

Description: We aim to provide a Chaperone Service to ensure the safety and well-being of students, staff, and visitors by offering escort support around the campus.

3. Communication and Networking

Publicly available list of all support offers

Description: There are various support offers available for students and staff. This includes, but is not limited to, a psychological support hotline, trusted advisors and an Incident Response System (please, refer to *Implementation of Incident Response System (IRS) for Discrimination, Harassment and Violence*). It is important to ensure that everyone at DEF/HPI is aware of these offers.

Action items and metrics:

- There are posters around campus and in every bathroom advertising the different support offers.
- There is a website and Confluence page with a comprehensive list of all available support offers, which can be easily accessed.
- Lecturers are encouraged to advertise the support offers at the start of their lectures.

Offers for FLINTA*

Description: The Diversity Management and decentralized Equal Opportunity Officers (*dezentrale Gleichstellungsbeauftragte*, dGBA) will offer weekly office hours. They will also organize 1-2 FLINTA* networking events per semester (at least one at the beginning of each semester) as well as organize events for the queer community at HPI. We would also like to encourage everyone at the DEF/HPI to use gender inclusive language (see Appendix 1). DEF/HPI will use gender inclusive language in public communication.

4. Family and Care Work Support

Child care

Description: We want to support people with childcare responsibilities as best as we can and meet German Research Foundation (*Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft,* DFG) standards.

Action items and metrics:

- We aim to develop a comprehensive "Child-at-Workplace" policy that should offer parents the chance to bring their children to work, with designated parent-child offices (including suitable furniture for parents) available on campus.
- Evaluate the possibility to build a playground on campus
- We aim to provide support for parents in finding childcare/daycare spots.
- We aim to establish a fund for people engaged in care work (PhD and Postdoc).
- Evaluate remote work options enabling flexible working for those with caregiving responsibilities, where the job or task does not require presence

Centralized communication of care work support resources

Description: To ensure that all care work support opportunities are easily accessible, we aim to establish a dedicated website displaying available resources and practical examples. This platform will centralize information for researchers and staff with caregiving responsibilities, making it easier to find relevant support. We recommend including information on application websites about care work and family planning support offers. In the internal and external communication, we aim to showcase parenting examples (including fathers) from all status groups.

Family funding for work-related travel

Description: We aim to create methods for individuals engaged in caregiving to request funding to bring children on work-related travel or have them cared for during that time.

Action items and metrics:

- Research the care costs for work-related travel
- Collaborate with employees to find ways to manage family needs during work-related travel
- Explore option to allow funding for care costs through the travel costs form
- Establish childcare travel fund for work-related travel

Comprehensive care work audit

Description: We want to consider a care work audit if we find one that helps accomplish and evaluate our goals to support people with care work responsibilities. This audit aims to thoroughly evaluate the various categories of care work across all status groups within the organization. By covering a broad spectrum of caregiving responsibilities, the audit aims to ensure that support systems are inclusive and effectively address the needs of all employees and researchers.

Advisory services for employees with fixed-term contracts

Description: We want to analyse current processes as well as the need for and, if feasible, offer advisory services, so employees with fixed-term contracts or scholarships (e.g. scientific employees) can obtain information about opportunities in the context of caregiving responsibilities.

5. International Students and Employees

Relocation support

Description: We aim to provide support for everyone relocating to Potsdam/Berlin to study/work at the DEF/HPI to help them manage the workload of moving more easily. Currently, HPI provides support for the Visa application process for staff.

Action items and metrics:

- Evaluate options that DEF/HPI provide support for apartment searches
- Onsite/Remote German courses are available for all current and future DEF/HPI students/employees
- Develop a roadmap, so that DEF/HPI administrative processes are also available in English (as they are currently mostly available in German)
- Organize networking events for international students at least twice per semester

6. School Students

Continue and develop Education Klub and Youth Academy activities with FLINTA* role models

Description: As the Youth Academy serves as a crucial first contact for many applicants to HPI, it represents a significant opportunity to attract diverse talent and to bring them together with FLINTA* role models. To maximize its impact, the formats should be continuously evaluated and optimized with regard to the questions *Do we provide diverse role models for the students?* or *Do our formats address FLINTA* in terms of content?* to address the needs of underrepresented groups effectively.

Action items and metrics:

- Assess and enhance the Youth Academy program
- Track participant demographics
- Increase outreach efforts to promote the Youth Academy among diverse groups

Explore idea of introductory semester

Description: We want to evaluate the feasibility and value of offering an introductory semester to people who have completed secondary education. Such a program would allow prospective students to experience the Bachelor program at DEF/HPI before committing to enrolling. Such a program could allow us to encourage prospective FLINTA* students to consider studying at DEF/HPI. To explore this idea, we want to take inspiration from other such programs, such as MINTGrün at TU Berlin. If it is found to be possible, we want to perform test runs of the program.

7. First-Year Students

First-year student onboarding/culture workshop

Description: To foster a positive and inclusive community from the start, we aim to offer a workshop that introduces available support offers, aspects of performance

pressure and gender equality and diversity at HPI to new students. This workshop will also raise awareness of discrimination, stereotypes, and biases, while encouraging students to be mindful of their behavior and promote a supportive environment for one another.

8. Students

Expanding existing programs to include gender equality and diversity topics

Description: We want to expand our offer (e.g. professional skills) with new courses and workshops covering a variety of topics related to diversity and communication.

Action items and metrics:

- Workshops concerning how to work and communicate inside of project teams before/as part of larger group projects such as the Bachelor's project
- Professional skill courses about diversity, equity, ethics and anti-discrimination in both winter and summer semesters organized by DEF/HPI
- Explore possibility for students to count courses of University of Potsdam related to these topics as professional skills modules
- Promote the University of Potsdam certificate for Interdisciplinary Gender Studies
- Invite at least one speaker that holds a talk about a topic related to gender equality and diversity for the Professional Skills Colloquium each year

Care work-friendly study program organization

Description: Our study programs should be accomplishable by students with care responsibilities. To achieve this, a more flexible way to time-manage one's study plan is necessary.

Action items and metrics:

- Explore alternate exemplary course of studies for students engaged in care work
- If possible, plan mandatory lectures in family-friendly time slots

- Encourage possibility for remote participation and/or recordings for all courses where feasible and academically appropriate

Encourage flexibility and anonymity during courses

Description: In case of uncomfortable situations happening, we want to encourage systematic support to address the problem quickly or anonymously.

Action items and metrics:

- Encourage the permission for changes in project groups in cases of students feeling discriminated, harassed or the like in their group constellations
- Encourage and communicate possibility for students to submit questions anonymously (for example by activating the feature in Moodle)

FLINTA* role models for students

Description: It is important to showcase a wide variety of career paths in computer science achieved by different people. We want to encourage a study degree including FLINTA* role models.

Action items and metrics:

- Invite FLINTA* role models into lectures and as speakers for events to present their work or teach crucial topics in our field
- Showcase role models that go beyond opportunities just for management
- Encourage FLINTA* role models via mentorship programs

Pronouns as voluntary data field of students

Description: To promote inclusivity and respect for gender identity, we plan to integrate pronouns as a voluntary standard data field for all students. This initiative will help ensure that pronouns are properly acknowledged in academic and administrative settings.

Action items and metrics:

- Explore the possibility that student lists for seminars include pronouns for students who listed them
- Explore the possibility to integrate pronouns into the campus management system as voluntary option and list where information will be used

9. Teaching Staff

Enhancing inclusive teaching practices

Description: Ongoing training opportunities of teaching staff in Gender Equality and Diversity to ensure a more inclusive academic environment. This involves regular professional development opportunities, workshops, and resources aimed at enhancing awareness, skills, and practices related to teaching. These opportunities, workshops, and resources should be tailored to the specific needs of the status groups of teaching assistants, scientific employees, and professors.

10. Employees and Scholars

Creation of anti-discrimination workshops

Description: We aim to offer anti-discrimination workshops for interested employees and scholars to promote inclusivity and equity in our community.

11. Professors

Active recruitment

Description: To secure the representation of FLINTA* individuals, we continue to keep our recruiting processes inclusive and transparent. This involves setting goals for diverse applicant pools and maintaining detailed data on candidate diversity.

Action items and metrics:

- Active recruitment involving external agencies
- Communicate internally the data on the gender diversity of candidates throughout the recruiting processes

12. Support for Gender Equality and Diversity Initiatives

Support for individuals regarding further training and workshops

Description: We want to support individuals who want to expand their gender equality and diversity knowledge via training and workshops. We want to provide financial aid and support in finding fitting workshops.

Action items and metrics:

- Set up a budget to provide for travel and attendance costs
- Offer a guidance service to help individuals find suitable training based on their needs
- Advertise this opportunity

13. Data Monitoring and Quality Management

Internal gender equality and diversity dashboard

Description: To analyze and track Gender Equality and Diversity at DEF/HPI, we plan to create an internal diversity dashboard that provides up-to-date insights based on the data collected. The dashboard should be internally available for all status groups to monitor progress and trends in Gender Equality and Diversity within the organization.

Regular evaluation of policies and measures

Description: To monitor our progress, we aim to regularly evaluate the impact of the policies and compare them with the established metrics. This will allow us to reassess and adjust policies as necessary.

Action items and metrics:

- Evaluate metrics using up-to-date data, e.g. number of FLINTA* in the different status groups, qualitative polling of the student body/employees
- Reassess policies as needed

Evaluate gender equality and diversity workshops upon conclusion

Description: We aim to enable workshop participants to evaluate and provide feedback after the workshops' conclusion. This feedback will be used to improve future workshops.

Action items and metrics:

- Develop survey blueprint
- Implement evaluation via EvaP

Develop and establish effective metrics to track gender equality and diversity progress

Description: To understand the various factors influencing Gender Equality and Diversity, we aim to develop a set of robust metrics that will allow us to comprehensively analyze our progress.

Action items and metrics:

- Review existing equality and diversity metrics and their application to DEF/HPI
- Create list of metrics and establish accessible methods for future use

Set up an external diversity audit

Description: We want to consider an external diversity audit into DEF/HPI if we find one that helps accomplish and evaluate our goals for Gender Equality and Diversity. This would allow us to gain important new perspectives on diversity and ensure compliance with any regulations we might not have considered.

14. Infrastructure and Accessibility

Provision of menstrual products

Description: Ensure that menstruation products are readily available in all campus buildings to support individuals.

Action items and metrics:

- Install dispensers for menstruation products in every campus building
- Regularly monitor and replenish supplies to ensure availability

Unisex toilets availability

Description: To provide unisex restrooms in all campus buildings to accommodate diverse needs and promote inclusivity.

Action items and metrics:

- If possible, ensure that every campus building has at least one unisex restroom
- Clearly label unisex restrooms and make them easily accessible

Safe spaces

Description: We want to offer safe spaces for everyone on campus. These serve for relaxation and retreat as well as a place to inform and educate yourself further on topics of Gender Equality and Diversity.

Action items and metrics:

- Continue communicating the availability of FQ-Lounge as a safe space
- Necessary equipment adjustments and improvements in dedicated rooms

Accessibility mapping and improvements

Description: We want to enhance campus accessibility by creating comprehensive accessibility maps, improving existing facilities, and ensuring specific support for individuals with disabilities.

Action items and metrics:

- Develop and update an accessibility map highlighting all barrier-free areas on campus
- Increase the number of barrier-free facilities in the campus, with a focus on Campus 3
- Explore the possibility of a dedicated accessibility officer to address and support the needs of individuals with disabilities

Project Management and Reporting

To effectively implement and monitor Gender Equality and Diversity Plan, a robust project management and controlling framework is essential. This framework will ensure that progress is tracked, and all status groups are kept informed.

- Timelines and Responsibilities
    - An internal document with timelines and responsibilities will be created to provide a general overview, outlining which team will implement aspects of the plan and the corresponding timeframe.
    - An annual project plan needs to be prepared, outlining the goals planned for this year.
    - The plan should prioritize actions based on impact and time to ensure rapid and effective progress towards the goals.
- Controlling and Transparency
    - The Faculty Council will be responsible for monitoring progress and ensuring clear communication with representatives from all status groups.
    - Project teams for targets will be responsible for implementation and reporting progress.
- Evaluation and Adaptation
    - An annual report must be presented to Faculty Council about the progress of the plan.
    - All updates must be documented and incorporated into the annual project plan for the upcoming year.

This structured approach ensures effective project management, accountability, and transparency, thereby advancing progress toward achieving Gender Equality and Diversity goals within the institution.

Appendix 1: Recommendations for Gender-Inclusive Language at the University of Potsdam

https://www.uni-potsdam.de/fileadmin/projects/gleichstellung/Dokumente/KfC-Empfehlung_zum_geschlechterinklusiven_Sprachgebrauch_WEB1.pdf