

Equal Opportunities Plan

Max Planck Institute for Human Brain and
Cognitive Sciences



Version of 1 October 2017
Addendum of 10 January 2019

Greeting from the Managing Director

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased to present to you today our institute's updated Equal Opportunities Plan, "Individual Paths to Scientific Excellence".

It is of great importance to us as the Directorate to promote and strengthen awareness of equal opportunities and at all levels. One of our directors, MPS Vice President Angela D. Friederici, leads in this sense, the MPS presidential commission on "Equal Opportunities". We all understand contemporary gender equality policy to mean the anchoring of organisational and structural mechanisms at the institute level, which facilitate the development of career perspectives and their successful implementation. We want to focus equally on women and men. Our goal is to offer women and men equal career development opportunities, including the promise of care activities in the company.

The action goals developed in dialogue with the equality officers of our institute and laid down in this equality plan tie in with the current and past equality work of our institute. We would like to briefly highlight the following examples:

- In order to support our employees with regard to the compatibility of research and family, it is possible to secure childcare for children up to 3 years of age via our cooperation partner Fröbel gGmbH. The Institute has a childminder offering five childcare places primarily for the children of our employees. Together with our cooperation partner pme Familienservice, we can also provide assistance in the search for babysitters, holiday care, elder care, as well as short-term emergency care. Last year, our **newly furnished childcare room** was greeted with great enthusiasm by our employees and has already been used extensively.

Gesa Hartwigsen, an outstanding scientist from our institute, was successful in the newly established Lise-Meitner Excellence Programme at the MPS and will be setting up her research group from 2019 onwards. Since 2018, the MPS has established up to ten Lise-Meitner groups per year in order to recruit and promote exceptionally qualified female scientists. For this purpose, a multi-stage, competitive selection process takes place, in close communication with interested Max Planck Institutes. The Lise-Meitner groups are supported for their entire five year duration with their own resources.

- Three female scientists from our MPI were selected in a competitive selection process to participate in the MPS career program known as **"Sign Up!"**. This enabled them to prepare themselves for management tasks in modern science in an one-year qualification and networking programme.

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- Within the framework of the workshop "21st Century Leadership Style - How to successfully manage evolving research projects", which was organized by the Equal Opportunities Officers, the participants of all professional groups of our institute were able to reflect and develop their leadership style in the academic-scientific field. Svenja Neupert, speaker, coach, trainer, organizational consultant and expert for the leadership of the future, Kompetenzia International, Berlin, was invited as speaker.
 - Since 2003, our institute has held an annual **Girls' Day** to promote enthusiasm for science and the spirit of research from an early age. In order to convey our research work in a realistic way, on Girl's day our employees give lectures and offer practical exercises to approximately 25 girls aged 15 to 17. . This tradition of promoting young talent is proving to be a formative impulse for a career in science. Several of our doctoral students who have been awarded performance scholarships quote their former participation in Girls' Day as an important motivation for their professional orientation.

The consistent implementation of the goals we have set for ourselves in this equality plan is one of the most important central common interests of our institute. We cordially invite you all to actively contribute to the achievement of these goals and thus to maintain and further develop equal working conditions for the employees of our institute.

Prof. Dr Nikolaus Weiskopf

Introduction

What do we mean by the term "equality" at our institute?

Our institute strives to support all employees regardless of gender, nationality, religion, disability, age, cultural background or sexual identity. To achieve this, it is essential to create conditions that support employees' careers and ensure that family and career can co-exist. We are aware that it is only possible to recruit and retain excellent employees if there is constant effort to improve conditions. By improving the equal opportunities at our institute we increase our attractiveness as a scientific institution.

In accordance with the goals of the Max Planck Society, we are actively involved in creating conditions so that career paths in science can be pursued for all scientists without obstacles.

Why are we developing an equality plan?

A equality opportunities plan is an essential instrument for the implementation of gender equality policies. It should enable us to document our work and serve as a guide for all actors on the way to providing equal opportunities. The equality plan records the current equality situation at our institute. It serves to identify the fields of action and should name concrete, institute-specific, gender equality measures. All employees can participate in the equality plan and actively shape its implementation and continuation.

What topics does the equality plan cover?

The present equality plan covers the following fields of action:

- Support in combining research and family
- Recruitment and promotion of female scientists
- Increase gender awareness
- Continuation of the idea of equality

How long has this plan been valid? When it will be evaluated and adapted?

The present equality plan is from July 1, 2017, and together with the supplement of January 10, 2019, is the first plan of our institute. It is to be evaluated and updated every two years with the participation of all parties involved. The evaluation process is described in more detail at the end of the plan.

Who is responsible for the plan?

This Equal Opportunities Plan was developed in cooperation with the Directorate, the Research Coordinator, the Head of Administration, the Equal Opportunities Officer and her Deputy.

Structural Embedding of Equal Opportunities

What are the objectives regarding equal opportunities?

It is of fundamental importance to create an awareness, in all areas and hierarchical levels of the Institute, that all employees and applicants are provided with the same opportunities, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, disability, age, cultural background and sexual identity. Only by guaranteeing equal opportunities can we expect diversity. Excellent research, for which the Max Planck Society and our Institute stand, thrives on diversity: an essential component for the further development of our cutting-edge research.

On which legal bases or principles of the MPS are equal opportunities work based?

Our work is based on the following legal and internal guidelines:

- Federal Equality Law (Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz [BGleG], as of 24 April 2015)
- Principles for equality between women and men in the Max Planck Society (Principles of gender equality)
- General works agreement of the Max Planck Society (as of 15 April 2008)
- Code of Conduct

The Equal Opportunities Officers of our Institute have been given their own expenses account for the performance of their duties. This can be used to invoice expenses for the organisation of workshops, the Girls' Day, and information events. The Equal Opportunities Officers in our institute work on an honorary basis.

Fields of Action and Objectives

➤ Support in combining research and family

Operational objective:

Current childcare measures will be continued and further expanded in accordance with the legal principles and guidelines of the MPS.

Measure 1:

The cooperation with our partner FRÖBEL Bildung und Erziehung gemeinnützige GmbH, Region Sachsen, for day care of children between 0 and 3 years will be continuously maintained.

Target group: all employees of our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: regular yearly meetings with the cooperation partner

every year in August contractual conditions are screened

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer and the head of administration

Measure 2:

The need for childcare places for children from 3 to 6 years (kindergarten) has grown in recent years. An extension of the existing cooperation agreement to include the care of children aged 3 to 6 is therefore being sought.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: September 2019

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer and head of administration

Measure 3:

The existing cooperation with our partner FRÖBEL Bildung und Erziehung gemeinnützige GmbH, Region Sachsen, is to be extended and optimised.

Target group: all employees of our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: negotiations regarding the contractual conditions (conditions are flexibly adapted (if possible) to the wishes of our employees)

starting October 2017, then taking place every year

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer and the head of administration

Measure 4:

The cooperation between pme Familienservice GmbH and our institute has been extended. Pme Familienservice GmbH offers agency services in the areas of childcare and elder care.

Target group: all employees of our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: initial meeting of pme and equal opportunities officer was in 2017

continuous – yearly meetings

yearly information event at the institute, starting in autumn 2017

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

Measure 5:

In order to continue their work, parents at our institute will be given access to a short-notice and short-term childcare solution in the event of a breakdown in their regular childcare.

Target group: all employees at our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: opening of a parent-child-office by the end of 2018

Responsibility: management, head of administration, equal opportunities officer

➤ Recruitment and Promotion of Women Scientists

Operational objective:

The promotion and support of female scientists at our institute will be continued and expanded.

Measure 1:

At our institute we offer information and training events related to career development.

Target group: all female scientists of our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: workshop once a year

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

Measure 2:

Our institute intends to once again nominate one or more candidates for the next round of the SignUp! Program.

Target group: excellent female scientists of our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: nomination by directors in November 2018

Responsibility: research coordinator and the directors

Measure 3:

To support female scientists on their career path, our institute provides information on mentoring programs on the "Equal Opportunities" website.

Target group: all female scientists of our institute

Implementation / Time Plan: regular updating of the website

Responsibility: research coordinator and the equal opportunities officer

Measure 4:

In order to generate interest in our research at an early stage and to develop human resources for the future, our institute participates in Girls' & Boys' Day as well as Future Day.

Target group: pupils of the 5th to 12th class from Leipzig and the surrounding area

Implementation / Time Plan: yearly participation

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

➤ **Increase Gender Awareness**

Operational objective:

In order to achieve equal opportunities in all areas concerning our institute, it is important to increase gender awareness among all employees at the institute.

Measure:

At our institute information and further training events are offered with the aim of increasing gender awareness.

Target group: all employees of our institute

Implementation / Time plan: workshop / talk implemented in 2018

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

➤ Continuation of the Idea of Equality

The idea of equality is anchored in our institute. In order to develop and fulfil equality objectives, in line with those of the Institute, we will work on the further consolidation of the concept of equality.

Measure 1:

In order to make our projects in equality work more visible to our employees, we have drawn up this equality plan, which will be continued and published on our Equal Opportunities website.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: yearly revision and online publication on the institute's webpage

Responsibility: management, head of administration, research coordination, and equal opportunities officer

Measure 2:

At the directors' meeting the equal opportunities officers will regularly report on their work.

Target group: management, head of administration, research coordination

Implementation / Time Plan: yearly

Responsibility: management, head of administration, research coordination, equal opportunities officer

Measure 3:

In order to increase the visibility of the equal opportunities officers and their areas of responsibility, and thus the equal opportunities concept of the Institute, an information brochure is being prepared.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: starting in October 2017

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer, management, research coordination, graphics department

Measure 4:

In order to increase the visibility of the equal opportunities officers and their areas of responsibility, and thus the Institute's concept of equal opportunities, an office with office hours will be set up for the equal opportunities officers.

Target group: all employees at the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: summer 2018

Responsibility: management, head of administration, equal opportunities officer

Measure 5:

In order to better implement the idea of gender equality and to increase the visibility of equal opportunities officers and their tasks, an information board will be provided at the cafeteria to provide information on equal opportunities.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: summer 2018

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

Measure 6:

In order to promote the idea of equality in all areas of our institute, an equal opportunities commission will be formed from representatives of different interest groups and hierarchical levels.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: summer 2018

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

Measure 7:

In order to implement measures for equal opportunities, a functioning cooperation between different actors is required at the institute level.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: ongoing meetings and discussions

Responsibility: management, research coordination, head of administration, all service units of the institute, equal opportunities officer

Measure 8:

The equal opportunities officer from the Institute participates in the exchange at the equal opportunities science network Leipzig under the patronage of the Department for Equality of the City of Leipzig.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: networking meetings 2 times a year

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer

Measure 9:

The Equal Opportunities Officers participate in the annual meeting of the Max Planck Society's Equal Opportunities Officers for the purpose of mutual exchange and further training. She is also responsible for taking advantage of further training opportunities offered by the Max Planck Society for her area of responsibility.

Target group: all employees of the institute

Implementation / Time Plan: yearly annual meeting, training at least once a year

Responsibility: equal opportunities officer