



The International Centre of Biodynamics
Gender Equality Plan

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2024- 2025



International Centre of Biodynamics
Bucharest - Romania
www.biodyn.ro



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Foreword

According to the Agreement between UNESCO and Romanian Government, the International Centre of Biodynamics-ICB has been established through the decision No. 1378/2000 of the Romanian Government, under the aegis of UNESCO, as a non-profit organization of general interest and public utility to pursue graduate training, research and development initiatives in the field of Biodynamics and related areas.

The International Centre of Biodynamics (ICB) is a flexible, highly dynamic structure, active on the national and international research areas. It initiates and coordinates basic and applied research related to noninvasive, sensitive and cost-effective methods to analyze and control biosystems' dynamics. The applicative domains span BioMedicine, Food Industry & Ecology and Security (e.g. fast detection of Chemical and Biological Threats).

Regrettably, gender discrimination remains a global challenge. In response to the Gender to this problem, a set of measures has been developed with the aim of preventing any form of discrimination during recruitment processes, as well as within the team, that will be detailed in the present document.

Introduction

Discrimination is the unfair treatment of individuals or groups based on specific characteristics like race, gender, age, religion, nationality, disability, or sexual orientation. Gender discrimination remains, unfortunately, one of the serious problems of the modern society. Some of the key points regarding gender discrimination are: unequal pay, biased hiring and promotion practices, stereotyping, career limitations, pregnancy and family responsibilities.

ICB takes the problems regarding gender equality seriously and ensures a safe and comfortable working environment, free from all forms of discrimination and harassment. Consequently, within the ICB serious measures have been implemented to prevent any type of discrimination, including gender discrimination.

The measures already implemented within the ICB, along with those forthcoming, aim to prevent gender discrimination, respectively to establish a fair recruitment process, as well as a comfortable and inclusive work environment that embraces new cultures and ensures equal opportunities for employee development and promotion. Furthermore, the measures aim to facilitate a balance between personal and professional life of ICB's employees.

Objectives. Principles and courses of action

ICB's „Gender Equality Plan” aims to maintain an inclusive perspectives among employees and in the interactions with institutional partners. The measures adopted within the present Gender Equality Plan aim to:

- Promote mutual respect and ensure equal opportunities for ICB employees;
- Recognize differences as a potential source of development and growth, at both individual as well as organizational level, and to promote and enhance diversity;
- Adopt positive measures meant to prevent inequalities, promoting values that ensure equal opportunities.

In order to ensure equal rights and opportunities, ICB has assumed and implemented the following set of principles:

- **Inclusion** - providing an inclusive culture based on respect for dignity, equality, differences, and on the fight against stereotypes, discrimination, harassment and violence (in any form).
- **Diversity** – promoting and ensuring mutual respect and a framework that integrates cultural, religious or ideological differences.
- **Gender equality** – ensuring practices and policies that ensure a balanced representation at all levels of decision.
- **Equality** - ensuring equal opportunities, as well as equal and efficient access one's career in the institution (from recruitment to career development).
- **Work-life balance** - promoting individual or collective measures that reconcile family life with professional life
- **Transparency and integrity** - development of practices to ensure institutional transparency by applying the principles of excellence, equal opportunities and diversity.
- **Freedom** - developing and encouraging critical and creative thinking by protecting freedom of expression; promoting a healthy and safe working environment.
- **Personal development** - supporting the achievement of individual potential by promoting personalized measures.

Proposed measures

In response to the gender discrimination problems, ICB had established the following courses of action:

- Human resources:
 - Recruitment and selection process
 - Working conditions and reconciling family and professional life
 - Career progress
- Sexual/moral harassment
- Innovation ecosystem

➤ Human resources

Recruitment and selection process

- **Timeframe**
 - September 2024 – December 2025
- **Proposed measure**
 - Developing an informative kit with specific instructions regarding ways to tackle gender discrimination and recognize and prevent stereotypes in the recruiting process.
- **Objective**
 - Provide support to recruiting experts so as to enhance their awareness with regard to the stereotypes that may intervene in the selection process.
- **Secondary objectives**
 - To raise awareness in ICB regarding any possible discrimination that could affect the recruitment process;
 - To improve institutional commitment to gender equality;
 - To better communicate the measures regarding gender sensitive recruitment protocols.
- **Activities**
 - Applying the best practices regarding gender sensitive recruitment protocols;
 - Developing a first draft of the informative kit;
 - Organizing a training with the recruitment experts and HR department in order to present the measures included in the informative kit;
 - Informing all ICB staff about the updates on the recruitment protocol;
 - Evaluate the recruitment experts' knowledge on the means to ensure gender equality in the selection process.
- **Performance indicators**
 - **Short term:** >90% of all staff should be aware of the existence of gender sensitive recruitment protocols;
 - **Medium term:** when evaluated >80% of the recruitment experts should be able to tackle any kind of situation that can lead to discrimination;
- **Outcomes:**
 - One informative kit;
 - One training session.

Human resources

Working conditions and reconciling family and professional life

- **Proposed measure**
 - Back-to-work training.
- **Timeframe**
 - September 2024 – June 2025
- **Target audience**
 - Employees returning from parental leave.
- **Objective**
 - To help employees returning from parental leave to get accustomed to the recent developments in the institution and the projects they were previously working on.
- **Secondary objectives**
 - To reduce the period needed by an employee recently returned from parental leave to readjust and have the same work efficiency as before leaving;
 - To reduce the possible stress that an employee has to face due to the fact that when returning he/she is dealing with two simultaneous different situations: regaining their work competences and being a parent.
- **Activities**
 - Training sessions with the department managers on how to implement support measures;
 - Information sessions among employees about the importance of the transition period and on the means to offer support;
 - Developing specific trainings for each department;
 - Evaluation of the employees.
- **Performance indicators**
 - **Short term:** raising awareness about the importance of work life balance;
 - **Medium term:** increase employees' work efficiency and professional satisfaction by 50% in the first 3 months after their return from parental leave;
 - **Long term:** when evaluated, more than 80% of ICB's employees see an improvement in their work life balance.
- **Outcomes:**
 - Training session for all ICB's department managers and employees.

Human resources

Working conditions and reconciling family and professional life

- **Proposed measure**
 - Soft skills training
- **Timeframe**
 - September 2024 – June 2025
- **Target audience**
 - Employees returning from parental leave.
- **Objective**
 - To increase work efficiency and improve work life balance for employees returning from parental leave.
- **Secondary objectives**
 - More than 80% of the employees returning to work improve their soft skills needed in order to have a healthy work-life balance;
 - Increase time management skills for more than 70% of the employees returning to work.
- **Activities**
 - Developing and organizing training sessions and an informative kit on the topic;
 - Evaluating the result of the training session.
- **Performance indicators**
 - **Short term:** raising awareness about the importance of developing soft skills among employees;
 - **Medium term:** when evaluated more than 70% should be able to indicate precise soft skills improved or developed following the trainings;
- **Long term:** >70% of trained employees see improvements in their daily work routine and in their work life balance
- **Outcomes:**
 - Training session for all ICB's employees.
 - More than 70% trained.

Human resources

Career progress

- **Proposed measure**
 - Mentoring student employees to finish their studies.
- **Timeframe**
 - September 2024 – July 2025
- **Target audience**
 - All student employees
- **Objective**
 - To increase the number of employees acceding to PhD title.
- **Secondary objectives**
 - To increase by 50% the number of employees that become aware of their skills following the mentorship programme.
 - To increase by 50% the employees fit finish a PhD programme.
- **Activities**
 - Developing a “shadowing” program.
 - Development of personalized coaching & mentoring program for the student employees.
- **Performance indicators**
 - **Short term:** raising awareness about the importance of mentoring programs;
 - **Long term:** former mentees become mentors for future generations of employees.
- **Outcomes:**
 - More than 50% of student employees finish their current studies.

➤ Moral and sexual harassment

- **Proposed measure**
 - Developing an informative kit regarding sexual and moral harassment.
- **Timeframe**
 - September 2024 – January 2025
- **Target audience**
 - All employees
- **Objective**
 - Raising awareness on sexual and moral harassment, on how to recognize abuse and the means to identify and differentiate between the various types of abuse, defining limits and concepts
- **Activities**
 - Internal research for best practices and case studies regarding sexual or moral harassment informative kits;
 - Developing the informative kit;
 - Organizing a training on the content of the informative kit;
 - Evaluate the knowledge gained by employees following the training session.
- **Outcomes**
 - One informative kit - one training session
- **Performance indicators**
 - More than 90% employees informed;
 - When evaluated more than 80% of the employees should be familiar with the concepts and types of sexual/moral harassment, able to identify different types of harassment and indicate what further actions should be taken.