

Gender Equality Plan



MAX PLANCK INSTITUTE
FOR THE SCIENCE OF LIGHT



Preamble

In compliance with the Max Planck Society regulations, the Max Planck Institute for the Science of Light (MPL) is committed to promoting and improving gender equality at all career levels within the institute.

Gender equality aims to prevent discrimination in part by balancing the proportion of the different genders at the workplace, and also maintaining a respectful work relationship to each other without conscious or unconscious gender bias. An essential way to achieve these aims is to ensure a fair and unbiased recruiting process for new employees. For our employees, it is important to guarantee equality in their rights, responsibilities and opportunities, as well as to provide support for professional and career development. Thus, it is important to raise awareness within the institute for gender equality, discrimination and unconscious biases. It is also essential to achieve a fair balance between career and personal life outside the workplace by recognizing the diverse life situations, possibilities and needs for all individuals without stereotypical presumptions.

The following plan has been prepared after a thorough analysis of the statistical figures and the results of an institute-wide survey on the topic of gender equality. This plan is effective for the years 2021-2023 and it defines the framework and the measures that will be followed at our institute. A successful implementation of this plan can only be achieved if all employees commit to it. We therefore invite you to join us in promoting and maintaining the ultimate goal of equality.

Erlangen, 31 March 2021

A blue ink signature of Prof. Dr. Jochen Guck.

Prof. Dr. Jochen Guck
Managing Director

A black ink signature of Prof. Dr. Florian Marquardt.

Prof. Dr. Florian Marquardt
Director

A black ink signature of Prof. Dr. Vahid Sandoghdar.

Prof. Dr. Vahid Sandoghdar
Director

A black ink signature of Dr. Dorothe Burggraf.

Dr. Dorothe Burggraf
Head of Administration

A blue ink signature of Shada Hofemeier Abu Hattum.

Shada Hofemeier Abu Hattum
Gender Equality Officer

A black ink signature of Clarissa Grygier.

Clarissa Grygier
Deputy Gender Equality Officer



Introduction

What does gender equality mean to us at our Institute?

The Max Planck Institute for the Science of Light (MPL) is dedicated to providing support to all staff members, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, disability, age, cultural background or sexual identity. To do so, it is necessary to create conditions for safeguarding careers. We are aware of the fact that an ongoing improvement of framework conditions is vital for recruiting and keeping excellent staff members. By improving equality of opportunities at MPL, we also increase our appeal as a scientific institution.

According to the goals of the Max Planck Society, we actively contribute to creating conditions that allow for career paths to be followed without any gender-related obstacles.

Why do we draw up a gender equality plan?

An essential tool for the implementation of gender equality measures is to draw up a gender equality plan. The purpose of this plan is to allow us to document our work, and to contribute to equality of opportunities in professional advancement.

For how long is this plan valid? When can it be adjusted?

The present Gender Equality Plan 2021 replaces the previous plan dating from 2018. It is valid for three years, until the end of 2023.

Who is responsible?

The Board of Directors, the Head of Administration and the Gender Equality Officer and deputy cooperated to draw up this gender equality plan.

The goals of gender equality

The same opportunities are generally available to all staff members and applicants, regardless of gender, nationality, religion, disability, age, cultural background or sexual identity.

We can only expect diversity, if equal opportunities are ensured. Excellent research, as represented by the Max Planck Society and therefore by our Institute, thrives on diversity. It is an essential component to allow for our cutting-edge research to be developed further. We strive to raise awareness of this across all divisions and levels of hierarchy at the Institute.

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



1. The Federal Equal Opportunities Act (BGleiG, as of December 23, 2016), which aims (translated - originally in German):

- 1. to achieve equality between women and men,*
- 2. to eliminate existing discrimination based on gender, in particular discrimination against women, and to prevent future discrimination, and*
- 3. to improve family-friendliness and the compatibility of family, care and work for women and men.*

2. The principles for equality between women and men in the Max Planck Society, the preamble of which states:

It is the declared aim of the Max Planck Society in making any decision to take account of the differences between and diversity of men and women and to prevent discrimination. It supports the employment of equal numbers of both sexes and the compatibility of family and career. This aim shall be achieved through the application of the Policy for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men at the Max Planck Society (Equal Opportunities Policy) of January 1, 2008. The management of the Max Planck Society and the Central Works Councils shall work together to realize the Equal Opportunities Policy in compliance with this Central Works Agreement.

3. The Code of Conduct of the Max Planck Society, which emphasizes:

The Max Planck Society encourages the maxim of a non-discriminatory culture, in which the variety and diversity of employees are seen as an opportunity and in which all are met with equal respect and shown the same esteem. Neither ethnic origin, descent nor other categories of origin nor sex, gender nor sexual orientation, religion nor world-view, disability nor age may lead to personal or professional disadvantages and influence the opportunities of an individual to access to the organization or to promotion and qualification within the organization.

Status Report

Statistical key figures

As of March 2021, a total of 294 staff members (without guests) were working at MPL, of which 67% were men and 33% were women. In the scientific sector 26.6% of employees are women, in the non-scientific sector 51.3% are women (Figure 1). Comparing the numbers to the ones reported in the previous plan, there was an increase in the total number of female employees from 25% to 33%.



Figure 1: Gender distribution of female and male employees in: the whole institute (top), the scientific staff (bottom left) and the non-scientific staff (bottom right).

As for the career level, the percentage of women in PhD and postdoc positions was 21 and 24, respectively. For research group leader positions, the woman percentage was the highest among all the other levels (39%), for the heads of TDSU it was 33%. However, there is still no female representation among the directors. In the non-scientific staff, despite the equal distribution in gender, the percentage of female employees (36%) in leadership position was lower than that of male employees.

The distribution of the salary groups among the two genders in the scientific and the non-scientific staff was similar. This shows no preference gender-wise to a specific salary group.

Parental leave was taken by 17 people in 2018-2020, 58.8% of whom were women. The length of parental leave differed significantly by gender: All the female employees were on a full parental leave that ranged between 1 and 2 years, while all the male employees were on 2 months (so-called partner months) parental leave.

Results of the survey on the previous equality plan (March 2021)

A total of 98 people took part in the survey on the previous equality plan. This corresponds to around one third of all employees. The survey listed the measures of the last equality plan from 2018 and asked whether the participants felt that these measures had been implemented and were beneficial.

The numbers of female and male participants were almost equal, indicating that a higher percentage of female employees found the subject of gender equality relevant to them and filled the survey (Figure 2 - left). A representative fraction of participants from the different departments or career levels was apparent in the survey results (Figure 2 - right).

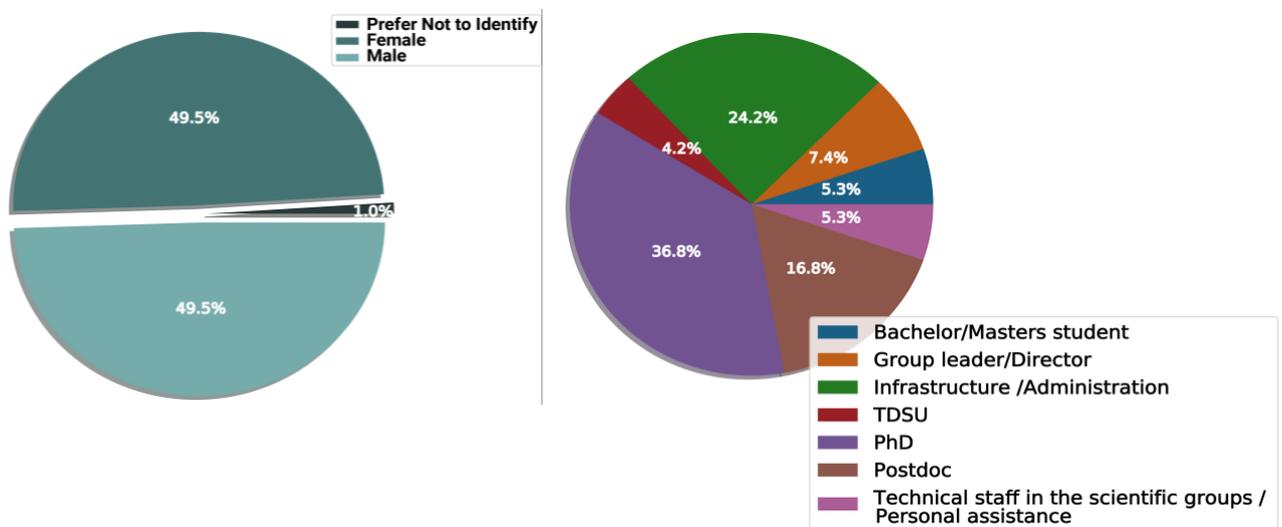


Figure 2 Gender distribution of the survey participants (left) and the fraction of departments and career levels that the participants belonged to (right).

We asked the participants about their familiarity with the gender equality team and the gender equality plan. The majority of the participants knew about the gender equality team but did not know or did not read the gender equality plan of our institute (Figure 3).

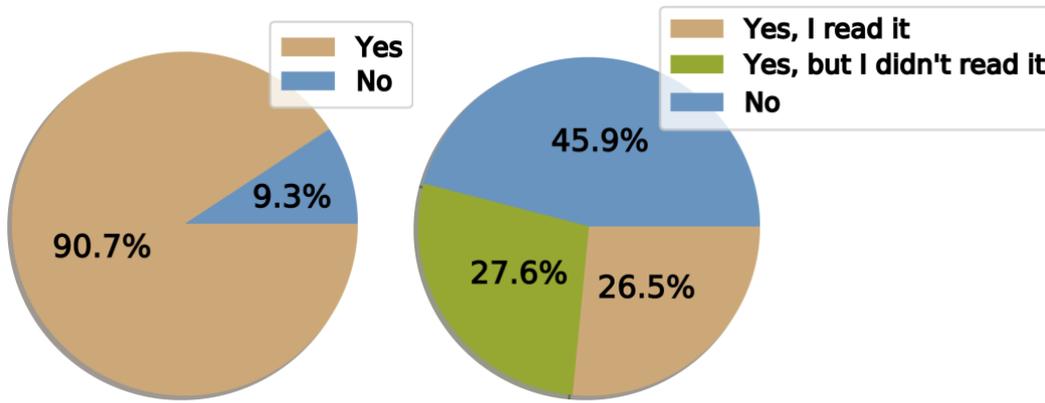


Figure 3 Participant familiarity with the gender equality work at the institute. The answers distribution to: "Did you know about the Gender Equality Team before now?" (left) and "Did you know about the gender equality plan and have you read it?" (right)

Interestingly, the majority of the participants identified the gender imbalance in the number of female and male employees. In addition, three quarters of them thought the opportunities are available equally to everyone at the institute and a quarter had the contrary impression (Figure 4).

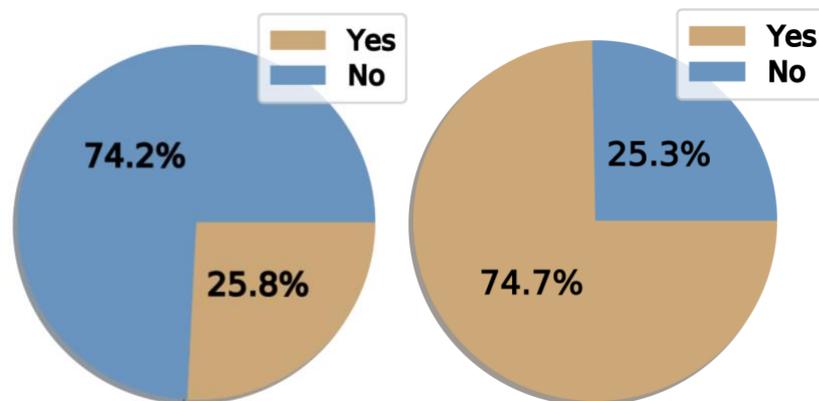


Figure 4 Participant opinions about gender equality and balance. The answers distribution to: "Do you think we have gender balance?" (left) and "Do you think all genders are given equal opportunities in the institute?" (right)

In the area of supporting the reconciliation of work and family, the vast majority of participants rated the existing measures as beneficial. In particular, the option of alternating teleworking was described as very useful by 90 of the participants. Interestingly, with regard to many offers (particularly in the case of the arrangement of kindergarten places and the cooperation with pme Familienservice), the majority of the participants could not assess whether the measure was implemented at MPL or not. This indicates an information deficit.

There were also major information deficits in the area of attracting and promoting female scientists. For example, 78 of the participants stated that they did not know whether the cooperation with the Dual Career Network Nordbayern had been implemented. The measures from this area were considered beneficial by the majority of participants. The regular implementation of information and training events on career development and the institute's participation in Girls' Day received particularly high approval. However, the majority of participants did not consider the career development events in particular to be fully implemented.

In the area of "increasing gender awareness" there was only one measure, the offer of information and training events with the aim of increasing gender awareness. While the majority of participants found this measure very or at least partially beneficial, it was largely rated as only partially implemented or not implemented at all - more than 40 people also stated that they did not know whether the measure is implemented.

In the area of the continuation of the idea of equality, there was once again a large information deficit; in each case, the clear majority of participants could not assess whether the measures had been implemented. In principle, however, a majority of the participants considered all the measures to be beneficial.

Analysis of the measures from the previous gender equality plan (2018)

In the field of action "Supporting the reconciliation of career and family life", the measures from the last gender equality plan were assessed by the majority of the participants in the survey as beneficial and, if known, also largely implemented. The measures are ongoing and will be included in this new plan. In addition, financial support is to be provided for parents of young children who wish to attend conferences or workshops with their children (measure 1.5).

In the field of action "Recruitment and promotion of female scientists", the previous measures were generally assessed as beneficial. Therefore, they are again included in this plan. However, measure 2.1, regular career development events, was not consistently implemented. In future, at least one event per year should take place. Furthermore, the survey among employees made it clear that there is a need for additional measures in this area. Therefore, several additional measures will be taken: The gender equality officer is to be informed about the procedure for all job advertisements in advance of the advertisement and ideally already involved in the formulation of the job advertisement in order to ensure a gender-neutral approach (measure 2.3). The newly introduced Emmy Noether Travel Grant (measure 2.5) is intended to support young female scientists in establishing career networks. In addition, events with information and reports on experiences on career paths



specifically for women in science can be established as part of the annual meetings of female fellows.

In the field of action "Increasing gender awareness", the 2018 gender equality plan contained only one measure: offering information and training events with the aim of increasing gender awareness. The survey results show that this measure is considered beneficial by the majority of respondents, but it was only partially implemented (one single event). In future, there should be at least annual events for the institute here. In addition, the fields of action "Increasing gender awareness" and "Establishment of a gender equality mindset" are combined to form the new field of action "Raising gender awareness at the institute".

The measures from the field of action " Establishment of a gender equality mindset" were also assessed as beneficial by a majority of the participants and will therefore be retained for the most part. In addition, the measures in the area of raising gender awareness at the institute will be expanded. In particular, we are taking up suggestions from the survey: Training on the topic of unconscious bias is to be made available to all employees (measure 3.1). Since it also became clear in the survey that many of the participants knew little about the measures of the last gender equality plan and their implementation, there will be a newly designed, detailed and clear area on the intranet in the future where offers, contact persons and information on gender equality topics will be collected and presented (measure 3.4). In addition, the visibility of women is to be promoted by explicitly emphasising an appropriate representation of women among the speakers at events (measure 3.5).



Fields of action, objectives and measures

Supporting the reconciliation of career and family life

Objective:

In order to continue promoting the reconciliation of career and family life for our staff members, we are maintaining and extending measures relating to childcare, under consideration of legal provisions and the MPG guidelines.

Measure 1.1

To provide for childcare places for young children aged between 0.5 and 6 years, we maintain an ongoing cooperation with Arbeiterwohlfahrt Erlangen-Höchststadt e.V. (AWO). Seven places in crèches and two places in kindergartens are available as contingent places for MPL employees.

Target group:	All employees of our institute
Implementation & timeline:	Implemented and ongoing; annual needs assessment at the institute
Individuals responsible:	Welcome Centre

Measure 1.2

pme Familienservice GmbH provides agency services to assist staff members with finding care services for children and relatives in need of long-term care, as well as in the areas of crisis consulting and preventive health care. Our cooperation with pme Familienservice GmbH will be continued.

Target group:	All employees of our institute
Implementation & timeline:	Implemented and ongoing
Individuals responsible:	Welcome Centre

Measure 1.3



The parent-child room is available for staff members of the institute, in the event that other childcare options are cancelled at short notice. It is also intended to provide guest scientists with the opportunity to visit with their child.

Target group:	All employees of our institute
Implementation & timeline:	Implemented and ongoing
Individuals responsible:	Front office, Head of Administration

Measure 1.4

Alternating telework at MPL enables employees to better reconcile work and family life. Telework in this context refers to any type of work performed based on IT or communication technology that is periodically performed from a workplace outside the Institute. It is granted for one year at a time. There is no entitlement to telework.

Target group:	All employees of our institute
Implementation & timeline:	Implemented and on going
Individuals responsible:	Head of Administration, individual supervisors

Measure 1.5

Employees having children between 0 and 3 years can apply for a travel fund (up to 1500 Euros per application) to pay the expenses of the child and one extra person to accompany them for attending conferences or workshops.

The fund is available for any individual that has been on a parental leave for at least 4 months.

Target group:	All employees
Implementation & timeline:	to be implemented by the end of 2021
Individuals responsible:	Institute Management, Travel Department

Recruitment and promotion of female scientists

**Objective:**

Promotion and support provided for female scientists at our Institute is continued and extended.

Measure 2.1

Information and training events regarding career development are offered at our institute for all female employees (in scientific and non-scientific sectors).

Target group:	All (female) employees
Implementation & timeline:	Once a year
Individuals responsible:	Gender Equality Officer, Head of Administration

Measure 2.2

In order to spark interest in our research work early on, and to open up staff resources of the future, our institute will take part in outreach activities planned for female pupils, such as the "Girls' Day".

Target group:	Female pupils from grades 5 to 12 in school classes from Erlangen and the surrounding region
Implementation & timeline:	Annual participation
Individuals responsible:	Gender Equality Officer, Press and Public Relations Department

Measure 2.3

To assure a fair and unbiased recruitment process, the gender equality officer should be informed about the recruitment process before the job offer is published; most ideally during the writing of the job offer.

Target group:	Group Leaders (recruiters), HR
Implementation & timeline:	Continuously
Individuals responsible:	Gender Equality Team, HR, recruiters in the groups

Measure 2.4



The [Dual Career network for Northern Bavaria \(DCNN\)](#) provides the partners of our new leaders and management staff members with comprehensive advice and support services, to enable them to smoothly continue their career in our region.

Target group: New employees of our institute

Implementation & timeline: Implemented and ongoing

Individuals responsible: Welcome Centre

Measure 2.5

The Emmy Noether travel grant of MPL supports female scientists in their professional development by bringing them together with other female scientists who have already proven themselves in a leading position. The focus is on the network concept. Even after the stay in the host institution, the grant holders should benefit from regular network meetings with one another.

Target group: Female scientists aspiring to leadership positions

Implementation & timeline: 4 grant holders per year. Application until the end of the quarter; once a year a networking event for all grant holders.

Individuals responsible: Gender Equality Team, Institute Management, Head of Administration

Raising gender awareness at the institute

Objective:

In order to achieve equal opportunities across all areas of our Institute, it is important to raise awareness of gender-related issues among all staff members.

Measure 3.1

In order to avoid distorted perception due to unconscious bias, unconscious bias training is available for all employees, but obligatory for recruiters.



Target group:	Recruiters (Group leaders) and HR
Implementation & timeline:	Until the end of 2021, then once a year for new employees
Individuals responsible:	Head of Administration, Gender Equality Officer and HR

Measure 3.2

Information and training events aiming to raise gender awareness are offered at our Institute (for example: movies, lectures and workshops).

Target group:	All employees of our institute
Implementation & timeline:	Once a year
Individuals responsible:	Head of Administration, Gender Equality Officer

Measure 3.3

We have drawn up this gender equality plan to make our intentions in the area of gender equality visible to our staff members. The plan is published on the intranet and subject to ongoing updating.

Target group:	All employees
Implementation & timeline:	As needed, updated by 2023 at the latest
Individuals responsible:	Institute Management, Head of Administration, Gender Equality Officer

Measure 3.4

Part of the gender equality team activities is to make opportunities for self-development and support visible for all employees. To provide better information, the intranet page of the gender equality officer will be supplemented by a user-friendly overview of funding programmes, grants and other support options.

Target groups:	All employees
Implementation & timeline:	to be implemented by summer 2021



Individuals responsible: Gender Equality Team, Press and Public Relations Department

Measure 3.5

The Gender Equality Officer will report directly about their work in the meetings of the Board of Directors. An evaluation of the implementation of the current measures will be done and presented.

Target group: Directors and Head of Administration

Implementation & timeline: Once a year

Individuals responsible: Gender Equality Team, Institute Management

Measure 3.6

We want to make underrepresented groups more visible. Therefore, women should also appear as speakers at future events.

Target group: The public

Implementation & timeline: Ongoing

Individuals responsible: Gender Equality Team, Press and Public Relations Department and Institute Management

Evaluation procedure

In creating this plan, the measures were constructed in a manner that allows efficient and continuous evaluation. This was done by specifying target groups, timeline for implementation and responsible individuals. As stated in the measures, the gender equality officer and deputy will evaluate the implementation of these measures every year and report the findings back to the board of directors and head of administration.