

Gender Equality Plan of General Numerics Research Lab e.V. (GNRL)

Introduction

General Numerics Research Lab e.V. (GNRL) actively promotes gender equality and inclusivity within the STEM community. Inspired by the principles of a "green" organizational culture as defined by Frederick Laloux, GNRL has cultivated a family-type corporate environment that prioritizes equality and optimal work-life balance. Our commitment to gender equality is not just a policy but a practice, embedded in every facet of our organizational structure and culture.

1. Commitment to Gender Equality

1.1 Publication

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a testament to GNRL's dedication to advancing gender equality. It is a formal document endorsed by our top management and disseminated within GNRL to underline our commitment, establish clear goals, and outline detailed actions to achieve and maintain gender equality.

1.2 Dedicated Resources

As a very small organization, GNRL recognizes that establishing a large, dedicated gender equality function may not align with our operational scale or resource availability. However, we are committed to ensuring that the principles and objectives of our Gender Equality Plan (GEP) are effectively implemented and integrated into our organizational culture.

Tailored Gender Equality Approach

- **Focused Gender Equality Role:** We have designated a Gender Equality Officer within our staff to act as the focal point for gender equality initiatives. This role is tasked with overseeing the development, implementation, and monitoring of our GEP, ensuring that gender equality is woven into the fabric of our organizational practices.
- **Expertise and Leadership:** The individual in this role is equipped with or will receive training to enhance his/her understanding and expertise in gender equality matters. He/she will lead our efforts, providing guidance, and driving initiatives that support our commitment to creating an inclusive and equitable workplace.

Resource Allocation

- **Staff Involvement:** Recognizing the importance of collective responsibility in promoting gender equality, all staff members are encouraged to contribute to the GEP's

implementation. This collaborative approach ensures that gender equality efforts are shared and integrated across the organization.

- **Financial Considerations:** We allocate resources within our budget to support key gender equality initiatives, such as training, awareness programs, and flexible work arrangements. These resources are managed efficiently to maximize their impact on promoting gender equality within our organization.

1.3 Data Collection and Monitoring

In recognizing the unique context of GNRL as a very small, "green" organization with a family-like atmosphere, our approach to Data Collection and Monitoring for gender equality is tailored to reflect our distinctive environment and operational scale. This approach prioritizes practicality and sensitivity to our organizational culture while striving to meet the requirements for Horizon Europe eligibility concerning gender data collection and annual reporting.

- **Data Collection Scope:** GNRL concentrates on collecting essential gender-related data that is most relevant to our operations and mission. This includes the gender distribution of our staff at various levels, pay equity, and participation in decision-making roles, ensuring a manageable scope that respects our familial work environment.
- **Approach to Indicator Selection:** Selection of indicators will be intentionally limited to those that provide meaningful insights into gender equality within our small setting. This might include qualitative indicators derived from staff feedback on inclusion and work-life balance, reflecting our "green" and family-like culture.
- **Practical Data and Process Analysis:** Data analysis will be conducted in a manner that aligns with our organizational scale, possibly through regular team meetings or discussions led by designated staff members. This fosters a collective understanding of our gender equality landscape and encourages inclusive participation in addressing findings.
- **Transparency and Community Engagement:** Findings from our data collection and analysis will be shared internally in a transparent and accessible manner, fostering a shared commitment to gender equality. We commit to an annual reflection on our gender equality progress, integrating this into our regular organizational review processes. This reflection will be a time for open conversation about our achievements and areas for growth.

1.4 Training and Capacity Building

GNRL is committed to advancing gender equality and ensuring equal opportunities for women in STEM fields. Our efforts include active participation in a range of initiatives and partnerships. Our key activities include:

- **The ZusaNnah Project:** Supported by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, this project aims to enhance equal opportunities for women in education and research.
- **Partnership with the Institute for Diversity Studies in Engineering at the University of Stuttgart:** This collaboration enables us to contribute to research that improves our understanding and practices regarding gender equality.

To deepen our commitment further, we place special emphasis on the continuous education and development of our team through:

- **Diverse Online Training Modules:** These are designed to increase our awareness of gender equality and address unconscious biases that can influence decision-making and workplace culture. An example of such a training module is the one developed by Canadian funding agencies for their peer reviewers to raise awareness of unconscious biases: <https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/program-programme/equity-equite/bias/en/>

By integrating such online training modules into our professional development strategy, we ensure that our team is not only informed about the latest findings and methods related to gender equality but also equipped with the necessary tools to implement these insights in our daily work. This structured approach reinforces our commitment to an inclusive and equitable work environment for all employees and actively promotes gender equality within the STEM community.

2. Thematic Areas of Focus

In the context of advancing gender equality and fostering a supportive work-life balance within our organization, GNRL has tailored its policies and practices to accommodate the diverse needs of our team. Recognizing the critical role of work-life balance in both personal fulfilment and professional success, we have developed a comprehensive approach that addresses the various dimensions of our employees' lives.

2.1 Work-Life Balance and Organizational Culture at GNRL

GNRL is dedicated to creating an environment where all employees feel valued, respected, and supported. Our policies on harassment and dignity at work are clear and set out expectations for the behaviour of all staff and managers, promoting a culture of respect and inclusion. We actively encourage the use of inclusive language and practices, acknowledging the diversity of identities and experiences within our team.

By considering the impact of work-life balance and organizational culture on gender equality, GNRL aims to not only support the individual needs of our employees but also to advance the collective well-being and success of our organization. Through these measures, we strive to maintain a work environment that is conducive to both professional growth and personal satisfaction, reflecting our commitment to gender equality and the well-being of our team.

Our commitment to promoting a healthy work-life balance is manifested through the following measures:

- **Parental Leave Policies:** We ensure that all employees, regardless of their contract type, have access to parental leave. This includes provisions for extending fixed-term contracts or adjusting grant agreements to accommodate maternity, paternity, or parental leave, supporting our staff's career continuity alongside their family commitments.
- **Flexible Working Arrangements:** GNRL values the importance of flexibility in working hours and the ability to work remotely. This flexibility is particularly crucial for employees with caring responsibilities, allowing them to balance their professional and personal lives

effectively. Our processes and practices are designed to support part-time workers and those working remotely, ensuring that all team members feel included and valued.

- **Support for Caring Responsibilities:** Understanding the diverse care responsibilities our employees may have, we offer support that extends beyond childcare to include care for other dependents, such as elderly relatives or people with disabilities. This support is a reflection of our family-like atmosphere and our recognition of the varied roles our employees play outside of work.
- **Workload Management:** We are attentive to the distribution and allocation of tasks within our organization, ensuring that workloads are manageable and fairly distributed. This includes a balanced approach to teaching, administrative, and research responsibilities, particularly relevant in our research-focused environment.
- **Reintegration after Career Breaks:** GNRL provides active support and mentoring for staff returning from career breaks. This reintegration support is designed to ensure that returning employees can smoothly come back into their roles and continue their career progression within our organization.
- **Work-Life Balance Advice and Support:** We offer guidance and resources to all employees seeking to navigate the challenges of balancing work and personal life. This includes fostering an organizational culture that is open, respectful, and sensitive to the various gender identities and life situations of our team members.

Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

Our data showcases our achievements in gender equality:

- A balanced gender ratio of 50% women to 50% men among permanent employees and in research positions.
- A leadership and decision-making gender ratio of 34% women to 66% men. The control over the organization's finances is exercised by a woman, demonstrating women's representation in critical financial roles.

Achieving a healthy gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions requires more than just numerical representation. It also involves reviewing decision-making processes to ensure that they consider gender-specific issues and empower women to take on an equal role.

As a small organization with a family-like atmosphere, GNRL places special emphasis on promoting gender equality, especially in leadership roles. Our organizational structure allows all employees, who are also members of the association, to actively participate in the election of leadership. This election, which takes place every two years, reflects the will of the majority and offers a direct opportunity to influence gender balance in top positions.

Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression

In GNRL, we are committed to gender equality in recruitment and career progression by designing policies and procedures that are gender-neutral and fair. Our aim is to create equal opportunities for all employees to develop and advance their careers. The following measures are taken to promote gender equality in recruitment and career progression:

- **Transparent Recruitment and Promotion Processes:** We prioritize openness and clarity in our procedures to ensure fairness to all candidates. This includes publishing all job postings and clearly communicating the required qualifications and competencies.
- **Promoting a Work-Life Balance:** Through flexible working hours and the option of home office, we support all employees in aligning their professional commitments with personal needs. These practices help to create a culture that is accessible to everyone and encourages the participation of all members of our team.
- **Active Career Advancement:** GNRL encourages all employees to pursue their professional goals by offering development opportunities and training. This includes targeted support for those aspiring to leadership roles, regardless of their gender.
- **Involving All Employees in Decision-Making Processes:** As a democratically organized association, we ensure that all employees, who are also members of the association, can actively participate in the election of leadership. This structure fosters a culture of participation and mutual respect by ensuring that leadership reflects the broad diversity and will of our community.
- **Awareness and Appreciation for Diversity:** Through training and workshops, we promote awareness and appreciation for diversity and inclusion within our team. These initiatives aim to create a work environment where everyone feels valued and supported.

Our efforts to promote gender equality in recruitment and career progression reflect GNRL's aspiration to create an environment where the talents and abilities of all employees are recognized and nurtured. By creating equal opportunities for everyone, we strive not only to support the individual development of our team members but also to contribute to the overall success of our organization.

Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research

At GNRL, we actively integrate gender perspectives into our research and teaching content to promote gender equality within the STEM fields. This integration of the gender dimension spans the entire research cycle, aiming to enhance research excellence and societal relevance by incorporating sex and/or gender analysis. In line with the European Commission's guidelines, we integrate the gender dimension as a standard in our projects. This includes encouraging the consideration of the gender perspective in grant applications and monitoring the outcomes for gender dimension inclusion.

Our support for employees extends beyond just considering gender aspects. We address the individual needs of each employee, helping them to recognize and develop their strengths, and ensuring that assigned tasks align with the employee's areas of interest. Moreover, we place great importance on expanding the research horizons of our employees through workshops and online courses. This approach not only fosters the personal development of each team member but also significantly contributes to the innovative capacity and success of our research.

Through these measures, GNRL strives to create a work environment that not only promotes gender equality but also supports each employee in their individual development, thereby contributing to an inclusive and equitable scientific community.

Measures against Any Form of Abuse of Power (including gender-based violence)

At GNRL, we benefit from flat hierarchies and high transparency of all work processes, which serve as exemplary prevention against any form of abuse of power (especially gender-based violence and sexual harassment). Our open and clear communication culture allows every team member to feel safe and respected. The following measures support this environment:

- **Open Communication Channels:** Through our transparent procedures, we ensure that all employees can easily express themselves when needed, contributing to the early detection and prevention of problems.
- **Support and Resources:** We prioritize ensuring that all employees feel supported and have access to assistance resources, enabling immediate and empathetic responses to any concerns.

These structures and practices underscore our commitment to a work environment where safety, trust, and mutual respect prevail, and reflect our endeavour to ensure the well-being of every individual in our team.

Conclusion

The Gender Equality Plan of General Numerics Research Lab e.V. emphasizes our unwavering dedication to cultivating an environment that feels like family - one where inclusivity, fairness, and empowerment are not just ideals, but realities for all our employees. By prioritizing trust, respect, and safety, we aim to ensure the well-being of every team member, thereby not only securing gender equality but also helping each employee to fully realize their individual potential.