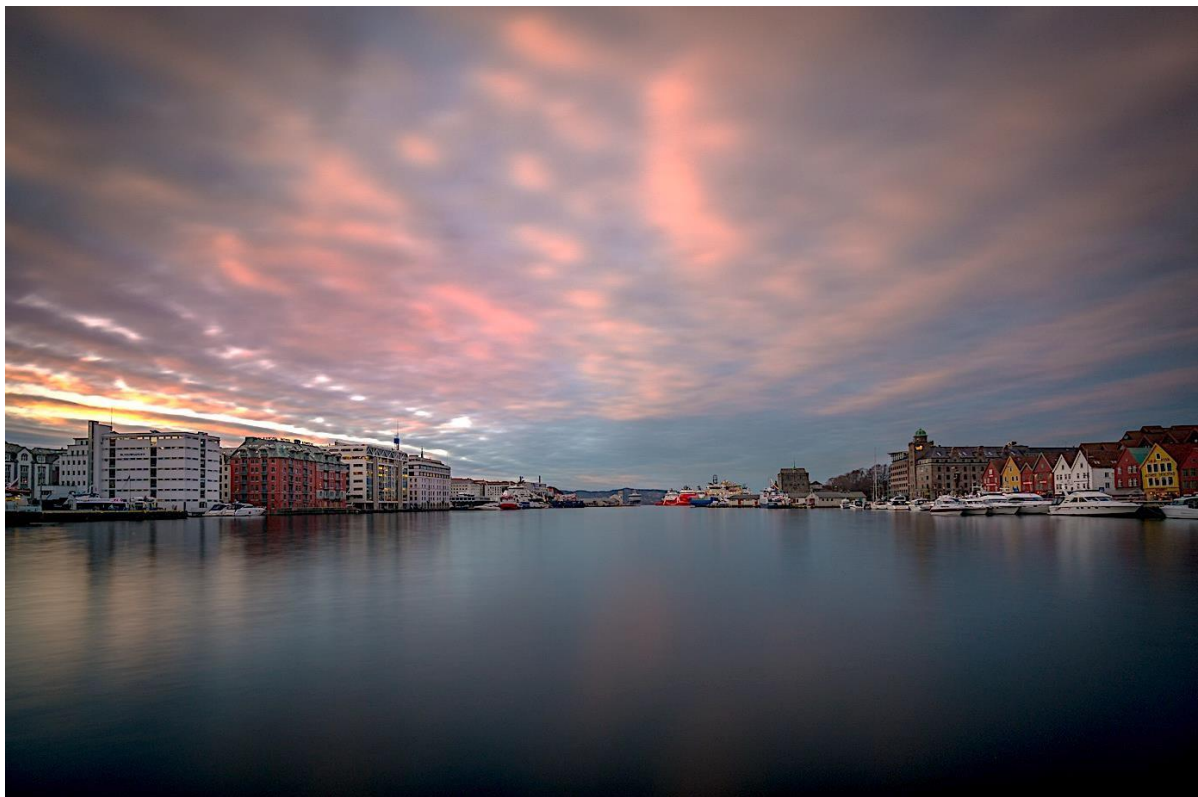


SNF



Equality and Diversity Action Plan for Centre for Applied Research at NHH



Introduction

The main objective of the action plan is to facilitate equality, promote diversity and prevent discrimination among employees at the Centre for Applied Research (SNF). SNF shall have a diverse working environment where everyone is met with respect regardless of their gender, ethnicity, religion, life stance, age, functional ability or sexual orientation.

The action plan contains the following sections: background, alignment, mapping of equality and diversity at SNF, organisation, communication and management, objectives and measures.

Background

All Norwegian employers are required by law to make active efforts to promote equality and diversity and to prevent discrimination and harassment (Section 26 of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act). Under Sections 24 and 26 on the activity duty and duty to issue a statement, all public undertakings with more than 50 employees are required to make active, targeted and systematic efforts to promote equality and to document their efforts to promote equality. This means that SNF is not required to issue such a statement. We nonetheless wish to do so because a gender equality plan (GEP) is a criterion for being granted funding from the Research Council of Norway and the EU, and, not least, because it is important to SNF.

SNF applies the extended concept of equality, which includes diversity, i.e. diversity of gender, gender orientation and gender expression, sexual orientation, functional ability, ethnicity, nationality, family situation, social class, education, life stance, political orientation and personal interests.

Alignment

Gender equality is the fifth of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. One of the targets under SDG5 is to ensure full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of the organisation.

In 2021, the EU introduced the Horizon Europe framework programme. One of the main objectives of this funding programme for research and innovation is to strengthen the focus on equality and gender balance in research. Having a binding GEP is a requirement for being awarded research funds from and including 2022.

The Research Council of Norway has decided to introduce the same requirements as the EU, and from 2022, all applicants from research organisations and the public sector must have a GEP in order to be granted funding.

SNF's Board, management and employees consider gender balance and diversity to be important because it helps to strengthen the organisation. It will lead to enhanced creativity, quality and relevance of research, thereby enabling SNF to deliver good research to its clients, helping to attract and develop talented employees, and ensuring equal opportunities for all employees at all levels and in all job categories. The plan has been considered and adopted by the Board of SNF.

Mapping of equality and diversity at SNF

Below is an overview of the breakdown of male and female employees from a foreign background (born abroad) in different job categories in 2024.

Job category	Male	Female	Foreign background (number)	Proportion of women	Foreign background (percentage)
Senior researcher	6	2	2	25%	25%
Researcher	6	4	4	40%	40%
Postdoctoral fellow	2	3	3	60%	60%
PhD candidate	1	0	1	0%	100%
Administrative staff	1	5	0	83%	0%
Head of research	2	2	2	50%	50%
Associated Head of research	1	2	1	66%	33%
Board	4	4	1	50%	13%
Associated staff (FTEs)	6	3	-	-	-

In total (researchers and adm. staff excl. associated heads of research), the breakdown between men and women is 55/45 per cent. The proportion of women in all types of academic positions (excl. heads of research) is 35 per cent. The proportion of women among the administrative staff is 83 per cent. The composition varies slightly from one year to the next, but the long-term trend is an increase in the proportion of women in academic positions, while the proportion of female administrative staff has remained the same for many years. The gender composition reflects the fact that the disciplines (economics and business administration) and the environment (NHH) that SNF mainly recruits from have traditionally been male-dominated. This is particularly true at the highest level (senior researcher), where the average staff age is higher than in the other job categories.

The mapping of diversity has only covered gender and nationality. SNF currently has employees from eleven different countries in Europe, Asia and South-America, and 38 per cent of the academic and administrative staff (excl. heads of research) are from foreign backgrounds. That must be considered a high proportion, and the highest ever in SNF's history. The proportion is highest for postdoctoral fellows and PhD candidates, but the senior researcher category also includes two members of staff from a foreign background. The proportion varies over time and between countries and continents.

On the Board, the breakdown of female and male members has been 50/50 for many years.

SNF's wage system is gender neutral. Researchers get a permanent pay rise in accordance with points awarded along two dimensions: scientific (publication) and applied (acquisition, project management, dissemination). A certain number of points are required to advance up the pay and job category ladder. In addition, senior researchers must undergo an external evaluation to determine whether they meet the requirements for professorial qualifications. The set criteria for pay increases leave little room for discretion on the part of the management in connection with pay decisions.

Organisation, communication and management

Equality and diversity shall be integrated in SNF's culture, internal and external communication, structure, governance and management. SNF's management shall be a driving force in this work in close cooperation with the employees, and the plan must be dynamic to allow adjustments according to lessons learned. The action plan is published on SNF's website (www.snf.no) in Norwegian and English, and is also distributed to staff.

Objectives

- To maintain the gender balance at organisation level and improve the balance in categories where the ratio is skewed (senior researcher, researcher, administrative staff and heads of research). The gender balance should be at least 60/40.
- Promote ethnic diversity and achieve greater diversity in groups where the ratio is skewed.
- Ensure equal opportunities for career development. All employees must be given equal opportunities for career development regardless of their gender and background.
- Promote a healthy working environment that is free from discrimination and harassment.

Measures

- Recruitment
 - Job advertisements shall appeal to applicants across genders and backgrounds.
 - Before a vacancy is advertised, it must be considered whether there are both male and female potential candidates. When vacancies are advertised in categories where the gender balance is skewed, emphasis will be placed on the possibility of recruiting from the underrepresented gender.
 - If there are both men and women among the qualified applicants, at least one female and one male applicant shall be called in for an interview.
 - When there are qualified applicants from minority backgrounds, at least one of them shall be called in for an interview.
 - When recruiting for categories where the gender balance is skewed, the applicant from the underrepresented gender shall be ranked first if two candidates are more or less equally qualified.
- Career development, training and capacity building
 - Funds shall be earmarked to help women and staff from minority backgrounds to qualify for promotion to senior researcher.
 - Individual follow-up and development plans are an important part of performance appraisal interviews. Career development shall be encouraged and any needs for adaptation shall be addressed.
 - Offer mentor scheme to all female researchers.
 - SNF expects both men and women to take parental leave and has arrangements in place to this end.

- Participation in the Research Council's BALANSE project/network, in meetings of the KIF Committee for Gender Balance and Diversity in Research and in the WomEN and Challenge projects at NHH, as well as further collaboration on equality measures with NHH (with which SNF is co-located) where relevant.
- Free Norwegian language course for persons whose first language is not Norwegian.
- Finances and reporting
 - Funds are earmarked in SNF's budget for equality work.
 - The status and follow-up are reported on and considered annually by the Board in the form of a dedicated status report and as a separate chapter in the Board of Directors' report.
 - In their annual report to the Board, the heads of research must give an account of the group's equality and diversity work, and the quality of their performance may influence the annual allocation for the group.

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 (sign.)

Cathrine Risa
 Executive Manager
 (sign.)

Kurt R. Brekke
 Chair of the Board
 (sign.)