

Gender and Diversity Policy of the Institute for Food and Environmental Research (ILU)

1. Introduction

Scientific institutions assume social responsibility by enabling personal development, shaping spaces for scientific discourse and reflection on current issues, and promoting social engagement. A diversity-oriented and anti-discriminatory attitude helps scientific institutions to fulfill their core tasks in research and development in the best possible way. ILU is committed to designing processes and structures so that employees can realize their potential and experience acceptance and appreciation.

With this Gender and Diversity Policy, activities and individual measures are listed that are used at ILU to develop the areas of diversity, equality, equal opportunities, inclusion, and anti-discrimination. The goal is to implement measures in a coordinated manner with the involvement of everyone. The Gender and Diversity Policy comprises three areas of action: research and knowledge transfer, personnel selection, and communication. With this Gender and Diversity Policy and its implementation, a contribution is to be made to the development of the institute by promoting appreciation and recognition and striving for a better distribution of resources and opportunities. Furthermore, barriers and risks of discrimination are to be reduced and one's own actions critically reflected upon.

In addition to issues of gender equality and equal opportunities, this policy also addresses anti-discrimination, family-friendliness, and inclusion. Employees go through different life phases in which care and gainful employment or training take different forms. Family here not only means parental responsibility for children, but any living community in which long-term social responsibility is assumed for other people, such as relatives in need of care. Inclusion is a human right and a key cross-cutting task for an educational institution. The goal is to remove disabling barriers and risks of exclusion for all employees, particularly those from marginalized social groups, to enable equal participation in the community.

With the following areas of action, the goals of the Gender and Diversity Policy are to be achieved, namely 1) to reduce exclusion mechanisms and 2) to promote participation.

2. Areas of Action

2.1 Research and Knowledge Transfer

Awareness will be raised of gender and diversity aspects in research and knowledge transfer, for example by considering criteria on equality and diversity of the German Research Foundation in project applications. Dialogue between researchers and cooperation partners on diversity in project teams and project results should be actively promoted.

2.2 Personnel Selection and Development

Personnel selection should be as non-discriminatory and barrier-free, transparent, and criteria-based as possible, resulting in diversity in all status groups. The proportion of persons from disadvantaged groups should be increased. During the qualification phase, multiple discrimination should be counteracted. Employees should be treated equally.

2.3 Communication

Communication in research should be as free from barriers and discrimination as possible, and sensitive to gender and diversity in text, image, and sound. Events should be organized as barrier-free as possible, and information should be provided in a barrier-free and comprehensible manner. When creating visual materials, care should be taken to use gender- and diversity-sensitive imagery.

3. Additional Commitments

In order to ensure transparency, accountability, and effective implementation, the ILU commits to the following organizational and procedural measures:

3.1 Publication

The Gender and Diversity Policy will be published as a formal document on the institution's website. This demonstrates the institute's commitment and leadership responsibility in advancing gender equality and diversity.

3.2 Dedicated Resources

The ILU allocates dedicated human resources and gender expertise to the implementation of this policy. This includes appointing personnel responsible for gender and diversity matters and providing support for relevant measures and initiatives.

3.3 Data Collection and Monitoring

Data on personnel (and students, where applicable) will be collected and analyzed in a sex/gender-disaggregated manner. The ILU will conduct annual reporting based on specific indicators to monitor the progress of gender equality and diversity activities and identify areas for improvement.

3.4 Training

ILU will provide awareness-raising and training sessions on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers whenever needed. These trainings are designed to foster an inclusive culture and ensure that equity considerations are an integral part of institutional practices.

3.5 Recommended Content Areas

The ILU sets concrete measures and targets in the following key areas to ensure comprehensive and effective promotion of gender equality and diversity:

Work-life balance and organizational culture: Measures to support the reconciliation of professional and personal responsibilities and the development of an inclusive, respectful, and supportive work environment.

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making: Targeted actions to increase gender parity in leadership positions and ensure balanced gender representation in decision-making bodies.

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression: Procedures and measures to ensure equal opportunities and transparency in recruiting, hiring, and career advancement for all employees.

Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content: Ensuring that gender perspectives are incorporated into research design, project implementation, and educational materials.

Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment: Policies, procedures, and support mechanisms to prevent and address gender-based violence and sexual harassment in the workplace and to provide safe reporting channels and assistance to affected persons.

4. Conclusions

This Gender and Diversity Policy will be continuously adapted to societal developments. The ILU is committed to achieving equality for all people and to making ongoing improvements in diversity, equity, and inclusion within the institute.