

Gender Equality Plan

Including Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

2024 - 2026



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1 Address of the Board of Directors

Dear Member of the Institute,

We are pleased to present you with the new combined plan for Gender Equality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

We are a German Max Planck Institute located in the Netherlands, on the campus of Radboud University in Nijmegen, and have been international from our inception more than 40 years ago. Currently, we have 31 different nationalities among our staff and our researchers are involved in active collaborations with colleagues throughout Europe and the world. We make a special effort to welcome everyone.

We recognise the positive value of diversity and inclusion, promoting equality and challenging discrimination. We aim to create a working environment that embraces difference and in which everyone feels a sense of belonging.

Our Diversity & Inclusion Committee, which started life as a working group in 2021, became a permanent part of our Institute in 2022. We are delighted that we have been awarded funding from the MPG Diversity Excellence Fund in 2023 and will launch our TALENT+ program in 2024.

In this spirit, we see gender equality as part of our Diversity, Equity & Inclusion strategy and present the new 2024-2026 plan as a Combined Plan for Gender Equality, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.

This plan has been developed by the Gender Equality Officers and the Chairs of the Diversity & Inclusion Committee with the support of the Human Resources team, the Chief Operating Officer, and the Managing Director of the Institute.

It is valid for the years 2024-2026.

Nijmegen, 31st January, 2024

Signatures

Board of Directors



Prof. Dr. Simon Fisher
(Managing Director)



Prof. Dr. Antje Meyer



Prof. Dr. Asli Özyürek



Prof. Dr. Caroline Rowland



Prof. Dr. Peter Hagoort



Laura Manko
Chief Operating Officer

Gender Equality Officers



Karin Kastens
Gender Equality Officer



Dr. Barbara Molz
Deputy Gender Equality Officer

Nijmegen, 31st January, 2024

2 Analysis of status quo

2.1 Analysis of the collected personnel key figures

The numbers in this section were compiled in December 2023. The MPI currently employs 184 members of staff from 31 nationalities.

Our institute follows Dutch labour law, and not all MPG-wide measures and guidelines are easily applicable to our working environment. This means that we need to adapt to offer our personnel comparable working conditions to those at Max Planck Institutes based in Germany.

Our personnel record system isn't yet set up to register non-binary gender, so we can currently only report on (assumed) binary data. We have added this as Measure #1.

As in the previous gender equality plan (GEP), we have split our personnel data by scientific and non-scientific functions.

65% of our current employees are female. There are slight differences in proportions for scientific (70% female) and non-scientific (61% female) employees. We also observe variations according to function level (ranging from 60-75% female).

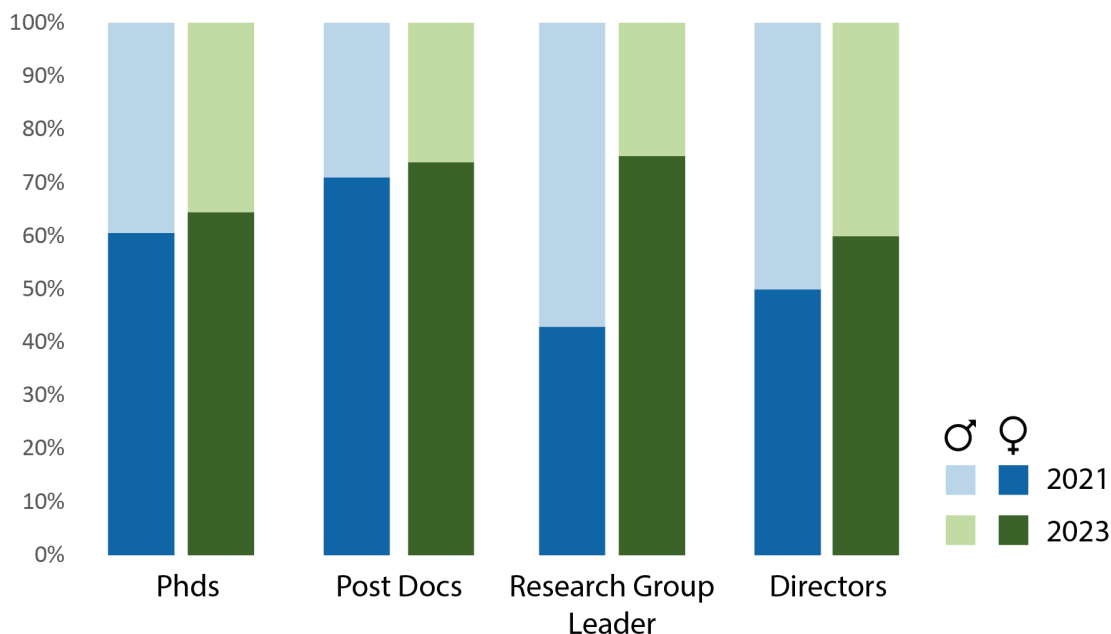


Figure 1: Percentages of female and male scientific staff at PhD, Postdoc, RGL and Director level.

Figure 1 shows that at PhD, Postdoc, Research Group Leader, and Director level the percentage of women is above 60%, with PostDoc and RGL level up to 75%. Compared to 2021 the percentages of women in higher functions have increased.

In the non-scientific personnel functions, our MPI employs more female members as well. The percentage of women in these functions is above 80% on average. However, there is a gender-bias in our Technical Group which only employs 10% female staff. In contrast, our secretaries are all female.

2.1.1 Permanent vs fixed contracts

The majority of all personnel holds a fixed-term contract, as can be expected in an academic research institute. 72% of all contracts are fixed-term. The permanent term contract can almost exclusively be found with non-scientific support staff.

2.1.2 Full-time vs part-time employment

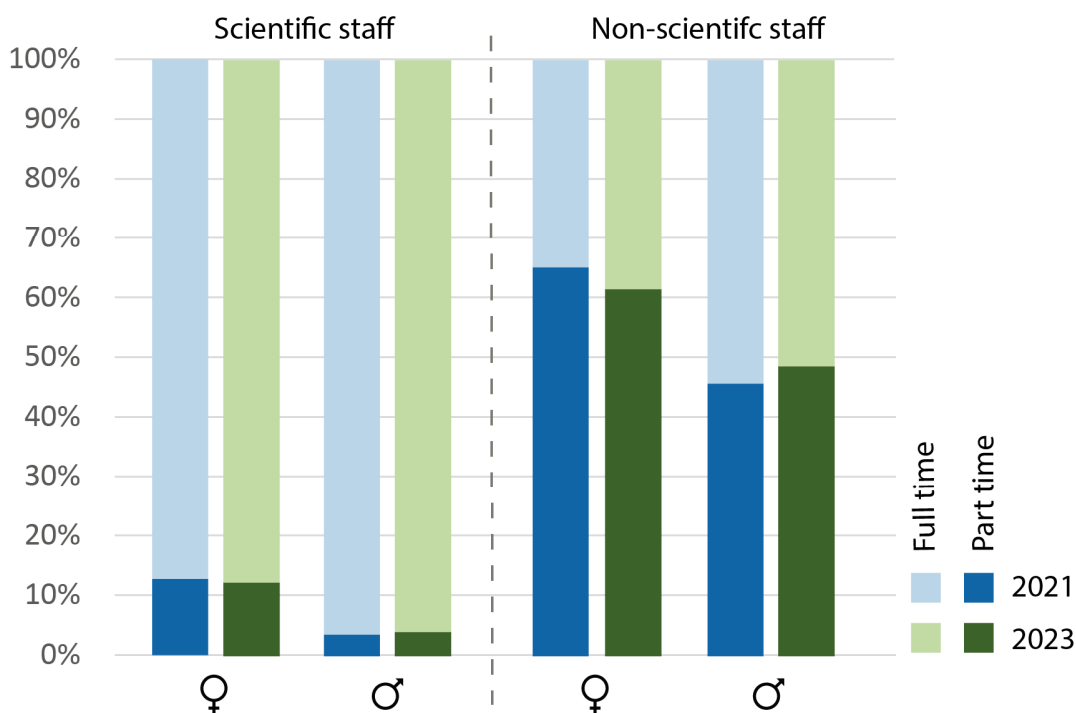


Figure 2: Overview of part- and full-time contracts per gender and employment background

Figure 2 highlights a clear discrepancy between part- and full-time contracts across scientific and non-scientific staff, and indicates that part-time work is rare for scientific staff, while overall women still have the majority of part-time contracts. This pattern is also quite consistent at the different reporting timepoints (2021 and 2023). While the nature of scientific work, requirements from funding bodies, and

the overall design of PhD programs can explain the lack of part-time work for scientific personnel, it is important to find ways to facilitate feasible part-time options for scientific staff. Possibilities are further explored in Measures #4, #7, and #11.

2.2 Other quantitative Institute-specific aspects

The data in this section are gathered from information on our MPI website, our internal intranet and with the help of colleagues in our Human Resources group. In addition, we have been supported by our colleagues in the MPG.PuRe team of the Max Planck Digital Libraries. As mentioned above, we are not yet able to routinely record non-binary gender in our systems, thus the following is based on assumed binary gender assignments.

2.2.1 Composition of committees and boards

Our Board of Directors consists of 2 men and 4 women, including our Chief Operating Officer. We also have monthly management team meetings attended by 5 women and 4 men, including the Gender Equality Officer.

The female participation rates of our 11 committees range from 41% to 88%. The committees most relevant to equality, diversity and inclusion are the Diversity & Inclusion Committee, the Data Protection Committee, and the Research Facilities Committee (RFC). The RFC currently has only a 41% female membership but importantly a female chair. Regarding the officially elected mandatory MPG positions, we have one female (Ombudsperson) and one male (Staff Representative). Our Scientific Advisory Board is made up of 50% male and 50% female members.

2.2.2 Awards and prizes

In this section we are focusing on MPG and MPI prizes and awards only. Over the period 2021-2023, 3 female and 1 male researcher received the Otto Hahn Medal and 1 male researcher received the Otto Hahn Award. 2 male researchers received an ERC Starting Grant. 2 Minerva Fast Track Fellowship positions and 1 Lise-Meitner Research Group Lead were awarded to female researchers from our institute.

We also have an internal MPI for Psycholinguistics award specifically for early career researchers to foster cross-departmental collaboration - "The Levelt Innovation Prize". This prize was awarded to 2 female and 1 male researcher in 2021.

2.2.3 Speakers at colloquia

Between 2021 -2023 the local colloquium committee organized 20 in-house colloquia, comprising 12 female and 9 male speakers (i.e. 57% female).

2.2.4 Participation at conferences

In 2021-2023 our travel management officer administered 1062 instances of travel. This incorporates all kinds of travel, including conferences, participant testing, invited lectures, training, etc., where 62% of administered instances were made by female staff. If we look specifically at conference travel, we see the same percentage of 62%. In section 2.5 on gender budgeting we look further into travel to conferences in Non-European countries.

2.2.5 Publications

Looking at 2021-2023 peer-reviewed journal articles of our institute's staff in which MPI authors are listed as either first or last author, we observe that 55% of these publications have a female first or last MPI author. First authorship percentage of female authors is higher (63%) than the last authorship (44%). (Note that we are an interdisciplinary MPI and these figures do not take into account differing

authorship practices across fields, including for example the use of co-first and co-senior authorships by a subset of the disciplines of our institute.) The data were retrieved from the MPG.PuRe repository in December 2023. Though the findings are broadly in line with the overall percentage of female scientists at our institute, we recognize the need for further and closer investigation. A special focus will hereby given to factors such as shared first/last authorships, citation bias, and the frequency of middle authorship across genders. Details regarding this action point are highlighted in Measure #3.

2.2.6 Quoted persons in press releases

Reviewing news items on our website from 2021-2023, we found 14 press releases in which female MPI researchers were quoted and 16 which had quotes from male MPI researchers.

2.3 Findings on the involvement and equipment of Gender Equality Officers

To ensure that they are involved and seen in the Institute, the Gender Equality Officers have a number of fixed appointments, participate in committees, and are available for advice and support.

The Gender Equality Officer supports our Directors at multiple stages throughout search processes for new Directors and Research Group Leaders. She is available for consultation and for potential involvement in other appointment processes at the MPG level. In the period under review, the Gender Equality Officer was invited and gave presentations at two hearings, one in 2021 and one in 2023, for MPG appointment committees for new directors at our MPI. Furthermore, the Gender Equality Officer gave a presentation about Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion for the independent Scientific Advisory Board (Fachbeirat) during their formal 2022 evaluation of our MPI.

Jour Fixes:

- Monthly jour fixe with Managing Director
- Monthly jour fixe with Chief Operations Officer
- Quarterly meetings with Human Resource officers

Member of relevant committees:

- Management Team meeting
- Diversity & Inclusion committee
- Data Protection committee

She/They give presentations:

- at quarterly staff meetings (mandatory for all staff)
- at quarterly Newcomer events (mandatory for new employees)

Collaboration with other representational channels:

- Gender Equality officers work together with PhD representatives, PostDoc representatives, Ombudsperson and staff representative in projects, like e.g. staff surveys
- The Diversity & Inclusion Committee, together with the GEOs ran a comprehensive staff survey in April 2022. Results and recommendations are put to the Directorate.

Participation in job interviews is not yet a regular task. The GEOs have been part of hiring committees when relevant, e.g. for a diversity coordinator.

The Gender Equality Officers have their own offices. Budget is available on request.

2.4 Findings on the structural anchoring of gender equality

Within the organisation of our Institute, the structural embedding of equality, diversity and inclusion is visible at many levels.

Mission Statement

Our gender and diversity perspective is part of our mission statement which is available on our website, see <https://www.mpi.nl/about-us>

“The Max Planck Society is an equal opportunities employer. We recognise the positive value of diversity and inclusion, promote equity and challenge discrimination. We aim to provide a working environment with room for differences, where everyone feels a sense of belonging”.

Webpage

Equal Opportunities has a separate entry on our website, see <https://www.mpi.nl/page/equal-opportunities>.

Job advertisements

We include a standard separate mission statement in all of our job advertisements, that reads “The MPI for Psycholinguistics recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges discrimination. We are committed to redressing systemic problems with diversity in science, and therefore welcome applications from individuals from minority groups and from groups that are otherwise under-represented.”

Diversity & Inclusion committee

This committee has produced a strategy document which has been endorsed by our Board of Directors. This document is available to all members of the Institute on our internal intranet. Our Diversity & Inclusion committee includes a female Director and the Equality Officers.

Information on procedures for acute and preventive protection against (sexualised) discrimination and harassment is available on our intranet.

2.5 Consideration of gender equality aspects in budgetary decisions

We raised the issue of gender equality aspects in budgetary decisions with the Managing Director and the female Director who is also a member of the Diversity & Inclusion committee. At the beginning of each year a draft budget plan is prepared outlining how resources are allocated across the Institute, for joint discussion, modification and/or approval by the entire Board of Directors. They assured us that our Directors (3 female, 2 male) plus Chief Operating Officer (female) are aware of the fact that budgetary decisions might have an involuntary effect on gender equality & diversity aspects. The Directors actively monitor and review finances and resource allocations through the year, discussing together during their monthly Board meetings, and adaptations can be made if deemed necessary/appropriate.

As one exemplary point, we looked into participation at non-European conferences in 2022 and 2023, as an indicator for gender budgeting to see if there was a gender imbalance for international travel. After the Covid-19 pandemic, physical participation at conferences started up again in 2022. Institute members went to conferences in the USA, Canada, Japan, Australia, and South Africa, and conducted fieldwork in Africa. 37 international trips were made by women and 26 by men, indicating that 58% of international travel stems from female employees. These numbers are in line with our institute's gender distribution and the overall travel participation see section 2.2.4., and highlights that no preference is given to male employees for more costly trips.

2.6 Consideration of the needs of trans- and non-binary persons

We are committed to take the needs of trans- and non-binary persons into account. We discuss these in our Diversity & Inclusion committee, in our MT meetings, and with other relevant committees.

We already have measures in place:

- Gender-neutral toilets are available on each floor of the building.
- There are two rooms that can be used for first aid or as resting/nursing rooms for all genders.
- In our surveys, the standard gender question is "What gender do you identify with: female, male, non-binary, prefer not to say?".

We recognize that the personnel data system (PVS) for our institute is not yet set up to support non-binary data and as previously noted, we will take this on in Measure #1.

2.7 Intersectionality

Interaction of other relevant discrimination categories with the category “gender”

We are aware that gender intersects with other discriminatory factors. We discuss these matters in our Diversity & Inclusion committee. In our 2023 survey we asked about cultural background, nationality, neurodiversity, scientific or non-scientific employment, integration into the institute and Dutch society, to be able to identify more specific needs of our staff.

TALENT+ program

Our institute is highly international with a high proportion of women. However, most of the employees come from EU countries and from privileged backgrounds. We therefore initiated a project called TALENT+ for which we got funding from the Diversity Excellence Fonds of the MPG.

The TALENT+ project aims to increase the proportion of staff and students from underrepresented groups at the institute and in academia as a whole. TALENT+ is designed to facilitate access to renowned research experiences and educational opportunities for talented researchers, regardless of national and ethnic origin, disability or intersectional factors, thus supporting global equity. TALENT+ is a multifaceted training program that provides cutting-edge research experience and skills training to talented people from underrepresented groups. It is carefully designed to prepare them for careers in the cognitive sciences. In turn, science benefits from teams with diverse experiences and skills, from all regions of the world. We will start the program beginning 2024.

Provision for deaf and hard of hearing staff and students

We include sign language interpretation at colloquia and other important events, in our mission to make everybody feel welcome including our deaf or hard of hearing members of the institute. We have drawn up guidelines for working with interpreters, both for event organisers and for presenters. These guidelines are available to everyone in the institute via our internal intranet.

We have also started sign language courses for all interested staff and will be hiring a Multimodal Language and Diversity Outreach Officer to facilitate the provision of sign language videos online and posted around the Institute to make sign language more accessible and visible at MPI.

2.8 Key evaluation findings on the use and effectiveness of existing gender measures

The 2021-2023 plan listed measures in the areas of Mental Health Support, Work-Life Balance, Career Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion, Covid-19 implications and Structural embedding of Equal Opportunities.

Mental Health Support / Work-Life Balance

- On the occasion of the Dutch National Vitality Week in September 2023 we organized two half-day events with a variety of workshops, examples are lectures on e.g. neurodiversity, mindfulness, and healthy food; active session with Yoga, Dance, Meditation; in addition, we offered the possibility to do a Health Check.
- We advertised our support channels during Onboarding sessions and in the quarterly staff meetings.

Diversity and Inclusion

The Diversity and Inclusion working group became a permanent committee, endorsed by directorate and with a female director as a member. The Gender Equality Officers are also members of the committee. The objectives of the committee are presented in a strategy document highlighting three main areas: Diversity and Inclusion at the MPI, Attracting diversity to the MPI, Diversity in our science.

Achievements

- Established a Buddy system for PostDocs and PhDs.
- Published Guidelines for hosting accessible and inclusive events.
- Published Guidelines for working with sign-language interpreters – tips for organizers and speakers.
- The Diversity & Inclusion committee applied and got rewarded with funding from the MPG Diversity Excellence Fund. We are setting up a TALENT+ program which aims to increase the proportion of staff and students from underrepresented groups at the institute and in academia as a whole.

The Diversity & Inclusion committee together with the Gender Equality Officers ran a comprehensive staff survey in April 2023, which included questions in the areas mentioned in the 2021-2023 GEP. The results relevant for the Gender Equality Plan will be discussed in the Action section.

Structural embedding

Previously, there was no institute-wide onboarding available at the MPI. In 2022 the Gender Equality Officer started an initiative in collaboration with members of the Diversity & Inclusion committee, Human Resources, and the secretaries. We now have established four annual onboarding meetings a year. We invite all members with MPG contract, as well as everyone without an MPG contract, such as guest researchers and interns. Every support unit (Communications, Library, IT, HR, Facility, etc.) and every support channel (Phd & Postdoc representatives, Ombudsperson, the Diversity & Inclusion committee, the Gender Equality Officers, etc.) gives a 3-5 minute overview. The program takes 1.5 hours, with a break to invite new members to interact.

3 The analysis of the status quo reveals a need for action in the following fields

3.1 Introduction

With the analysis of the data provided from HR figures and other key figures (see appendix 4.1 provided as a separate document), and results from our comprehensive 2023 staff survey on Equality, Diversity & Inclusion (see annex 4.2), we identified areas of gender equality, diversity, equity and inclusion which need to be further improved.

3.2 Action Fields

These areas are described with these action fields

- Structural embedding of Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion
- Organization of support channels
- Increasing the proportion of staff and students from underrepresented groups
- Diversity & Inclusion at the institute
- Work-Life Balance and Mental Health

We defined a number of measures (Table 1). These measures are described in detail below, including clearly defined objectives, milestones, and responsibilities.

Measure	Title	Action Field
#1	Adding non-binary gender data to personnel administrative system (PVS)	Structural embedding of Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion
#2	Continuous recording of gender-relevant indicators	
#3	Assessing and minimizing potential publication & citation gender bias	
#4	Collaboration of support channels	Organization of support channels
#5	Training for support channels	
#6	Complaint procedure on Intranet	Structural embedding of Equal Opportunities, Diversity and Inclusion, Increasing the proportion of staff and students from underrepresented groups
#7	Involvement of Gender Equality Officers in hiring procedures	
#8	Diversity training	Diversity & Inclusion
#9	Sign language support	
#10	Embedding inclusive language in all channels	
#11	Collaboration with Radboud University Services	Work-Life Balance and Mental Health

Table 1: Overview of measures and Action Fields

3.3 Detailed description of measures

Institute	Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics
Measure #1	
Title of the measure	Adding non-binary gender data to personnel administrative system (PVS)
Field of action	Structural embedding of gender equality and diversity
Short description of the measure	At the moment our system in Nijmegen is not yet set up to accommodate non-binary data. This should be made possible.
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Make modifications to system so that we can add non-binary data. Provide a workflow for new and current employees.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Human resources, Chief Operating Officer
Actors / players	Human resources, Diversity & Inclusion committee, Gender Equality Officers, Chief Operating Officer
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	Needs to be added to workplan of HR, no extra costs
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Monitoring and evaluation by GEO and HR, timespan: to be discussed
Measure #2	
Title of the measure	Continuous recording of gender relevant indicators

Field of action	Structural embedding of gender equality, diversity & inclusion
Short description of the measure	Gender relevant indicators on travel expenses, publications, speakers at colloquia, etc. should be continuously and systematically added to the relevant systems. Make workflows for relevant data
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Having gender relevant indicators each year and easily retrievable for a Gender Equality Plan and other monitoring documents, like SAB
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Operations, Human resources
Actors / players	Human Resources, Travel management, Library, Secretaries, relevant committees
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	Working hours, no financial costs
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Monitoring by Gender Equality Officers
Measure #3	
Title of measure	Assessing and minimizing potential publication & citation gender bias
Field of action	Structural embedding of gender equality, diversity & inclusion
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Working monitoring system and concrete numbers to identify any potential bias. Presentation of results to the DI committee and librarians; Best practice guidelines will be drawn up to minimize possible biases (Focus of the 'Diversity within our science' theme);

Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Diversity & Inclusion committee, librarians, Gender Equality Officers
Actors / players	Gender Equality Officers, librarians
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	Working hours / no costs
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Monitoring by Gender Equality Officers
Measure #4	
Title of the measure	Collaboration of support channels
Field of action	Enhancing organization of support channels
Short description of the measure	To facilitate support across different channels, HR, student Deans, PhD/ Staff representatives as well as the Gender Equality Officers work closely together to identify possible issues related to gender equality / general Diversity & Inclusion topics, discuss possible solutions and create best practices. Set up quarterly meetings with all included personnel.
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Ideally, possible issues get identified before they become problematic and in case solutions can be found quickly, as communication is already established and all channels are aware of possible support options. Status quo: detailed work-up of current status at the MPI, problems that are common across different levels, feasible solutions. Implementation of best-practice guide. As an example, the different channels can collaborate and discuss possibilities how part-time solutions for scientific staff could be realized
Localization within the organization/	Gender Equality Officers, Human resources

Allocation of responsibility	
Actors / players	Human resources, Deans, PhD/ Staff representatives as well as the Gender Equality Officers
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Continuously
Costs, equipment, financing	Working hours, no extra money
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Yearly
Measure #5	
Title of the measure	Training for support channels
Field of action	Enhancing organization of support channels
Short description of the measure	Members of support channels have requested more training, e.g. conducting confidential interviews.
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Members of support channels feel more confident.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Human Resources
Actors / players	Human Resources; Gender Equality Officers, Diversity & Inclusion committee, all support channels, Ombudsperson
Time frame / schedule to achieve	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026

target or milestone	
Costs, equipment, financing	Costs for training
Evaluation procedure and time plan	At the end of the plan by players involved.
Measure #6	
Title of the measure	Complaint procedure on Intranet
Field of action	Structural embedding / Enhancing organization of support channels
Short description of the measure	Complaint procedure according incorporating MPG structure and Dutch law
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Making a comprehensive document about the MPG complaint procedure which also includes Dutch law components.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Human Resources, Chief Operating Officer
Actors / players	Human Resources, Chief Operating Officer, Gender Equality Officers
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	Maybe training according to Dutch law for "Vertrouwenspersoon"
Evaluation procedure and time plan	End of the plan, evaluated by Managing Director, GEOs and Chief Operating Officer

Measure #7	
Title of the measure	Involvement of Gender Equality Officers in hiring procedures
Field of action	Structural embedding
Short description of the measure	The Gender Equality Officers are not involved in hiring procedures by default, except the mandatory W3/W2 appointments. To get a better understanding of gender implications of hiring and to support the hiring of under representative groups the GEOs will establish guidelines and standard practices for interviews; Advice departments, emphasize also part-time options
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Getting a more equal and equitable hiring procedure of people in departments which have a majority on one gender. Be able to hire people from underrepresented groups; have a standardized interview procedure and best-practice guidelines, which assures a fair and equal hiring process.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	All departments
Actors / players	Directors, RGL, and secretaries, Human resources. Diversity and Inclusion committee, GEOs
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	Probable no extra costs
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Next Gender Equality Plan
Measure #8	

Title of the measure	Diversity training
Field of action	Diversity and Inclusion / enhancing belonging
Short description of the measure	Diversity training, raising awareness
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Making everyone aware different cultural background, language vs non-native language usage.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Human Resources, Diversity & Inclusion Committee
Actors / players	Human Resources, Diversity & Inclusion Committee, group leads
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	Costs for hiring trainers
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Human Resources; Diversity & Inclusion committee
Measure #9	
Title of the measure	Sign language support
Field of action	Diversity and Inclusion
Short description of the measure	Embedding sign language interpreters; working on guidelines to conduct confidential conversations with members with special needs, e.g. deaf or hearing-impaired people.

Objective, target groups & indicators for success	GEOs, best practice guide, guidelines for confidential support.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Managing Director, Human resources
Actors / players	Human resources, Gender Equality Officers
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Costs, equipment, financing	To be assessed
Evaluation procedure and time plan	At the end of this plan
Measure #10	
Title of measure	Embedding inclusive language in all channels
Field of action	Diversity and Inclusion
Short description of measure	All our output as well as our webpages external, internal should use inclusive language.
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Publishing an inclusive writing guide, instructing content providers of our webpages, instructing our researchers.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Communication officers, Diversity & Inclusion committee

Actors / players	Communication officers, Diversity & Inclusion committee, Gender Equality Officers, all support units
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Continuously
Costs, equipment, financing	Probably no extra costs
Evaluation procedure and time plan	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026
Measure #11	
Title of the measure	Collaboration with Radboud University Services
Field of action	Work-Life Balance / Mental Health Support
Short description of the measure	Radboud University as a big organisation offers a lot of services in the realm of Work-Life Balance and Mental Health Support. In the survey people stated that they like to make use of this. Liaise with Radboud how part-time contracts for PhD/ overall scientific staff can be facilitated.
Objective, target groups & indicators for success	Establishing contact with the relevant departments of the Radboud University; make a webpage on the intranet about possible services that we can use.
Localization within the organization/ Allocation of responsibility	Human resources, Chief Operating Officer, Directors
Actors / players	Human resources, Chief Operating Officer, Gender Equality Officers, Diversity & Inclusion committee
Time frame / schedule to achieve target or milestone	Time frame of this plan, 2024-2026

Costs, equipment, financing	Needs to investigated
Evaluation procedure and time plan	By players at the end of the time period of the plan

4 Appendices

4.1 Diversity & Inclusion Survey at MPI for Psycholinguistics - summary & action points

The Diversity & Inclusion committee is focusing on attracting diversity to the MPI, supporting and including diverse people who are at the MPI, and improving diversity in our science. Our role is to both advise and push for changes within the MPI.

In order to get an understanding of the feelings and the needs of our institute's members, a survey was sent out in April 2023. We received responses from the majority of MPI employees (104 out of 178). It should be noted that the majority of respondents were female and that less than 50% of the male employees responded to the survey. It should also be highlighted that all functions were well represented (general support staff, research staff, research support staff, and PhDs), with over 40% of the employees in each group responding (reaching 70% for general support staff).

The comprehensive survey comprised 80 questions in these areas

- About you (demographics and language comfort)
- Newcomers or Non-Newcomers section (adjusting and belonging)
- Getting Support (access to HR and research support)
- Supervisor Support (questions about regularity of meetings, career advice, etc.)
- COVID-19 (long-term impact of COVID on work-life)
- Work-Life Balance
- Interactions within and between Departments at MPI (current and desired)
- Diversity and Inclusion (training, inclusivity, and feelings of exclusion)

In this document we very briefly summarize these sections and give some recommendations. The report in full with all the specifications and data is available on request. The results will be communicated in a series of Newsletter editions.

Employment equity

Our staff is mostly female, white, Western European and non-disabled. In our survey however, participants have also identified themselves with terms like LGBTQ+, and a different cultural background. 29.7% of the respondents identify as being neurodiverse and/or having a disability which approximates the expected average combining national physical disability in the Netherlands.

- Consider initiatives for improving diversity and also assuring that everyone who is already a member of our institute feels welcome
- Support staff members with any type disability
- Prolong and extend supporting new members from outside the Netherlands (buddy system, courses on cultural background for newcomers and current staff, ...)
- Practical & cultural guidance related to MPI/Nijmegen/The Netherlands

Language comfort

The working language at the institute is English and most people feel comfortable using English for work or socially - but not everyone. Fewer felt comfortable with social English than English for work. English is a second language for most of our employees and for some even a third language we should keep that in mind.

- Consider offering language courses – Dutch, English, and International Sign Language, the latter already being in progress
- Language support and the impact of interacting in a second (or third...) language should be considered in the context of workload and/or work/life balance (such as during annual reviews, and the support offered within the Institute)

Getting support

The respondents were aware of where and how to ask for technical support, office equipment, equality advice, or sick leave. However, the channels for issues regarding mental health, child care support, work-life balance and career steps advice are less visible and some respondents had troubles getting sufficient help.

- More attention should be paid to supporting personal and mental health issues

Supervisor Support

The majority of our respondents were happy with their supervisor's support, however in the career support section they stated that more guidance and help would be appreciated. This goes for postdocs and support staff. Most people felt comfortable going to their supervisor although a significant portion of the PhDs were less comfortable.

- Organize MPI-wide events for hard and soft-skills
- Organize MPI-wide events for career opportunities for all staff, make career coaches available through MPI
- Organize training for research and non-research staff
- Provide occasional supervision training (continue/repeat recent provision), with a particular focus on supporting/empowering PhD candidates
- More information about opportunities offered by Radboud should be made available

Covid-19 / Work-Life Balance

People said the MPI reacted very well to the COVID-19 challenges. Many reported they learned from working from home.

Many people feel pressured into working overtime but most see this as part of being in academia and not pressure from the MPI itself. They do have suggestions to improve work-life balance.

- Work on solutions / suggestions for ad hoc child care
- Hybrid working
- Activities like yoga, meditation, social events
- Training around work-life balance; staff tasked to offer advice
- Financial solutions (stipends for interns, hiring additional staff, extending the bike plan, ...)

Interactions within and between Departments

Reponses in this section were quite mixed. There are already some social events. There were requests for more MPI-wide social events. Professional interdepartmental interactions were also requested by some in order to collaborate and/or see each other's work. Impediments were named which originate mostly in time constraints and/or being unfamiliar with people from other departments and/or their work.

Diversity and Inclusion

In the diversity and inclusion section people expressed their wish for training and greater awareness of a wide range of diversity issues.

- Regular MPI-wide training sessions / talks on different aspect of diversity & inclusion

Diversity & Inclusion Committee
January 2024

4.2 Evaluation of existing measures as described in Gender Equality Plan 2021-2021

The fields and action points listed in the Gender Equality Plan 2021-2021 are being evaluated as follows: will be completed; will be continued unchanged/will be continued modified or is now part of a new measure.

Mental Health support

- Regular advertising of support channels by means of posters, our Newsletter, handouts during welcome sessions, etc. -> will be continued and amended
- Organizing (annual) events such as the successful Vitality days. We will further continuously organize events relevant to Mental Health.
- This is now part of Action Field *Work-Life Balance* and Measure #9

Work-life balance

- Where appropriate, include discussion of flexible working hours / part-time contracts in yearly performance appraisals -> will be continued and amended
- GEO to share course offerings relating to work-life balance (e.g., mindfulness, time management) via Newsletter -> will be continued and further developed; part of Measure #9.

Career opportunities

- Mandatory discussion about career opportunities during yearly performance appraisal with supervisor -> to be continued and evaluated
- GEO to inquire bi-monthly about course offerings with secretaries, IMPRS coordinator and others, communication via Newsletter -> to be evaluated
- Supporting female scientists in pointing them to programs specially tailored for them -> to be evaluated.
- Partly also addressed with new Action Field *Collaboration with Radboud University*, Measure #9.

Diversity and Inclusion at the MPI

- Supporting the Diversity & inclusion working group in its initial starting phase with the aim to collaborate on projects around equality -> resolved
- Organization of regular workshops as a platform for safe discussion, and of a series of invited talks for all personnel on diversity and inclusion -> ongoing, see new Action Field *Diversity and Inclusion at MPI*
- Gathering data on diversity and inclusion at the MPI by means of anonymous surveys, and breakout groups/discussion sessions during meetings -> resolved

COVID-19 implications

- The action points with respect to COVID-19 implications have been resolved.

Structural embedding of Equal Opportunities

- Improve and regularly update our internal GEO webpage through our prospective new Intranet -> ongoing
- Regular exchange with HR about personnel, organisational and social matters -> has been set up and is in place
- Increased involvement of GEOs in recruitment process of prospective staff -> not yet implemented, has moved to new Measure #6.
- Organize regular joint meetings with other representatives and host events (at least) twice a year to offer all personnel a chance to interact in a low-threshold, communicative setting -> not yet implemented, has moved to new Measure #3.
- Increase transparency of nominations for awards, encourage directors and group leaders to notify GEOs of all nominations and other data which are relevant to gender equity -> not yet fully implemented, has moved to new Measure #2