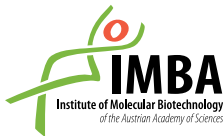


EQUITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN

Version 1.0, July 2023



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OUR COMMITMENT

At GMI, IMBA, and IMP, we are committed to creating a safe, productive, and inclusive work environment in which all employees can thrive. As such, we consider equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) as important values to make our institutes attractive to the top scientists in our respective fields, to promote excellence in science, and to foster a truly diverse and inclusive community.

Our institutes face similar challenges encountered by research institutions around the world, particularly unconscious and implicit bias, and the lack of representation of women and/or minority groups in leadership positions. All three institutes have made efforts to proactively address these challenges, which will be maintained in future as well.

However, we recognize that the road to fully implementing equity, diversity, and inclusion is long and requires high management attention. We consequently support this action plan as an opportunity to formalize, streamline, and coordinate our efforts to improve equity and foster a diverse and inclusive workplace.

This EDI Action Plan reflects our commitment and sets out the concrete steps we will take in the period 2022-2025 to work towards our key strategic goals. We aim to further promote an inclusive culture and work environment, ensure equal opportunities for all in terms of professional development and support, strengthen representation in positions of responsibility and leadership, and prevent discrimination, harassment, and bullying of any form.

We commit to implementing the measures described in the EDI Action Plan and provide resources and budget for this purpose. We also commit to communicating the contents of the EDI Action Plan to all employees in our respective institutes and relevant external stakeholders. We will ensure that progress is monitored and reported annually.

Finally, we view the EDI Action Plan as a living document. To ensure that it meets the needs of participating institutes, we will regularly review the EDI Action Plan and allow for revisions as needed.

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GENERAL PROVISIONS

PURPOSE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The participating research institutes are committed to embedding equity and inclusion at GMI, IMBA and IMP. This is primarily the responsibility of institute management and, by extension, their leadership staff, but involves all staff members.

The implementation of this action plan is a joint effort of all employees of the participating institutions, regardless of position or seniority. Consequently, the action plan applies to all employees (whether in scientific, technical, or administrative positions), as well as committee members participating in recruitment processes.

The action plan will be in effect for the period 2022-2025, after which a review will take place.

The appointed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Officers support and advise management on EDI-related matters and provide timely internal and external information upon request.

The 2022 - 2025 Action Plan is regularly evaluated, supplemented, and further developed. The effectiveness of the EDI measures and the achievement of the action plan objectives are reviewed and reported annually. The report is made available to management, all leadership staff, and staff representatives. A summary of the report will be posted online. The review will focus on the implementation of the actions and progress made and will be supported by an external expert auditor/consultant. It will also identify any required adjustments.

OUR VALUES

Excellence: We are dedicated to excellence measured at an international level. We ensure that scientists can carry out their work in a purely science-driven and impartial manner, within the boundaries of good scientific practice and research integrity. We place a high value on fostering and encouraging talented individuals with the potential to engage in the rigorous and exciting scientific endeavors taking place at our institutes. This includes identifying and mentoring promising individuals who may come from underrepresented or underprivileged backgrounds, which is an explicit priority at IMP, IMBA and GMI. We also strive for excellence in science support, administration, and services to create a working environment that enables all employees to realize their full potential.

Equity: We strive to be a workplace that ensures fair treatment, access, and equal opportunity for all employees. Equity is about identifying and removing barriers that have prevented the full participation of underrepresented groups. Improving equity means more justice and fairness within the institutions' processes, as well as communication and sharing of resources.

Diversity: We recognize and value the great diversity of our community. By diversity, we mean the differences among people that encompass all the characteristics that distinguish a person or group. Dimensions of diversity include, but are not limited to, ethnicity, physical appearance, nationality, gender, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, background (socioeconomic status, immigration status, etc.), religion or belief, marital or family status, pregnancy and parenthood, age, and disability.

Inclusion: We actively promote an environment in which every individual or group feels welcome, safe, supported, respected, and valued for participation. In doing so, the Institutes are committed to a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination, harassment, and bullying of any kind. An inclusive and welcoming workplace culture appreciates differences and offers respect in word and deed to all current and prospective employees, guests, cooperation partners and others associated with the Institutes. In particular, the Institutes recognize that proactively addressing implicit bias is necessary to nurture inclusivity.

Leadership: Individuals in leadership positions, especially group, team, and department leaders, have a special responsibility to advocate for equity and inclusion in their areas because of their role model function and their decision-making responsibilities. We strive to equip leadership personnel with the tools and qualifications necessary to lead effectively and in accordance with this Action Plan.

Engaging the scientific community: As centers of excellence in molecular biology research, we are embedded in an international scientific community. We are committed to working towards greater equity and inclusion in this community by proactively advocating our values, engaging with relevant networks, and exchanging ideas with other scientific institutions.

OUR GOALS

The cross-cutting priorities of this Action Plan for the period 2022-2025 are to

- Outline specific objectives we wish to achieve,
- Develop a baseline and implement efficient monitoring and evaluation of progress benchmarked against our list of objectives,
- Ensure visibility and awareness of EDI issues at the institutes, and
- Comply with the requirements of funding organizations and regulatory bodies.

The Action Plan pursues seven core strategic objectives which guide the development and implementation of operational measures to foster EDI at the institutes.

- **Organizational culture:** The participating institutes shall promote an inclusive, integrative, and welcoming organizational culture.
- **Work environment:** The participating institutes shall strive to maintain a work environment that is fair, safe, productive, and equitable, where all employees can realize their full potential.
- **Education and awareness:** The participating institutes shall take action to improve awareness of and education on EDI issues at all levels, with special attention given to the role of employees in leadership positions.
- **Prevention of discrimination, harassment, and bullying:** The participating institutes do not tolerate any form of discrimination, including harassment, nor do they tolerate bullying. The Action Plan shall support ongoing efforts to revise, enforce, and share anti-discrimination, -harassment, and -bullying policies to foster a safe work environment for all.
- **Equitable recruitment:** The participating institutes shall take action to improve ongoing efforts and policies for equitable hiring, with special attention given to increase the hiring of women in leadership positions.
- **Accessibility and transparency:** The participating institutes shall strive to make internal policies, documents, and support services more easily accessible and transparent to all employees.
- **Representation:** The Action Plan shall propose actions that enable all employees to voice their needs and have their perspective considered in decision making.

Each core strategic objective is addressed by at least one or several specific actions. An overview of all actions matched against strategic objectives is provided below. The individual actions are further detailed in section 3.

Objectives	1 Org. culture	2 Work env.	3 Education	4 Anti- discrimination	5 Recruitment	6 Transparency	7 Representation
1 Training (all)	X		X				
2 Training (leadership)	X		X				
3 EDI Seminar Series	X		X				
4 Supporting pregnant & nursing researchers		X		X			
5 Reviewing anti-discrimination policies				X			
6 Inclusive & barrier-free internal communication						X	
7 Raising awareness on policies & support services						X	
8 Applying for external recognition		X		X		X	
9 Equitable recruiting & HR processes				X	X		
10 Efficient implementation & monitoring	X					X	X

MONITORING & PROGRESS

In accordance with the mandatory requirements of the European Commission, an annual monitoring and progress report is prepared and published by June 30 of each year, covering the period from January 1 to December 31 of the previous year.

A summary of the report is published on the institute websites and presented to senior management and executive staff. The report will include an assessment of progress against the Action Plan goals and recommendations for modification/adjustment of actions, implementation, targets, and/or monitoring indicators, as appropriate.

Data will be kept confidential and respect the anonymity of individuals, i.e., disaggregated data must cover a minimum group size of 6 individuals to be included in the public report. The list of indicators to be covered by the monitoring and progress report is provided in Annex 1.

If needed, the list of indicators may be adjusted during the annual monitoring process. However, we strive for consistency and continuity to allow assessment of progress over time.

In addition, the Institutes will conduct a pay equity analysis every two years to determine whether pay is equitable across genders and collective agreement classification. The results of this analysis will be freely available at the offices of the HR departments as per the legal requirements.

RESOURCES

The participating institutes commit to ensuring the availability of adequate resources and budget for the implementation of the EDI Action Plan 2022 – 2025. Resources entail personnel, space, and materials, as well as costs for external suppliers.

For the implementation of the EDI Action Plan 2022-2025, personnel resources to the extent of up to 1 FTE are foreseen. This includes the working time of three appointed EDI Officers, as well as of other staff across the departments involved and functions as detailed in the specific actions in section 3 of this plan.

ACTIONS

1 INTRODUCE MANDATORY EDI TRAINING FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

Strategic goals	Education and awareness, Organizational culture
Action	Develop an online learning module on EDI topics, applicable policies (EDI Action Plan, codes of conduct, anti-discrimination, -harassment, and -bullying policies), and available support services. Mandatory for all new hires. Refresher mandatory for all employees every second year.
Timeline	Development/deployment: 2023/2024
Outcomes	Enhanced awareness of EDI topics, applicable policies, and available support services at the institutes. Common understanding of values across different cultures and backgrounds and expected conduct. Enhanced trust in policies and available support services.
Target Groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	EHS in collaboration with EDI officers

2 BUILD EDI AWARENESS AND SKILLS INTO LEADERSHIP TRAINING

Strategic goals	Education and awareness, Organisational culture
Action	Executives and key personnel will follow a leadership training curriculum that a.o. addresses the effects of Unconscious Bias, and illustrates inclusive leadership practices to mitigate these effects, especially in research. The training will strengthen the leadership skills of all participants and make decision-making processes more objective and performance oriented.
Timeline	2023-2025
Outcomes	Leadership personnel are equipped to lead with fairness and have the tools to reduce unconscious bias as much as possible in decision-making.
Target Groups	Key personnel (in EDI relevant positions) and leadership personnel
Responsibility	External consultant in collaboration with Scientific Training/Leadership Program Curriculum

3 EDI SEMINAR SERIES

Strategic goals	Education and awareness
Action	Include up to four EDI themed events per year into the institute's events schedules. This may include a variety of formats, such as lectures, seminars, roundtable discussions, and Social Hours.
Timeline	2022-2025. Up to four events per year, associated with important science related EDI dates. The EDI Seminar Series will be piloted in 2022 and adapted based on experiences made throughout the year.
Outcomes	Increased awareness of EDI matters among staff / increased visibility of EDI policies and services available to staff
Target Groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	EDI group @ VBC, EDI Officers

4 ENSURE TARGETED SUPPORT TO PREGNANT AND NURSING RESEARCHERS

Strategic goals	Work environment, Prevention of discrimination
Action	Further develop and improve the model for supporting pregnant and nursing researchers in continuing lab work and experiments, while respecting Austrian labor law.
Timeline	2024
Outcomes	Improved working conditions and reduced limitations on scientific work of nursing mothers and pregnant employees.
Target Groups	Pregnant and nursing scientists with limited access to labs.
Responsibility	EDI officers in collaboration with EHS and occupational physician

5 REVIEW & UPDATE ANTI-DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND BULLYING POLICIES

Strategic goals	Prevention of discrimination, harassment, and bullying
Action	Regularly review, revise, enforce, and share anti-discrimination, -harassment, and -bullying policies to foster a safe work environment for all.
Timeline	Review conducted in 2022. Inclusion of updates into the usual review cycle for policies and SOPs at the institutes.
Outcomes	Improved prevention of harassment, discrimination, and bullying. Improved mechanisms for recourse in case of instances of harassment or discrimination. Improved dissemination of policies among staff.
Target groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	Ombudspersons, HR

6 RENDER STANDARD INTERNAL DOCUMENTS MORE ACCESSIBLE & INCLUSIVE

Strategic goals	Accessibility and transparency
Action	Review existing standard internal documents for inclusive language use, accessibility to non-German speakers (e.g. availability of English language translation), and to employees with disabilities (subtitles in videos for the hearing impaired, optimizing written content for the visually impaired, etc.).
Timeline	2023
Outcomes	Updated standardized internal documents (eg.: payslips, contracts, etc) and websites/communication materials
Target Groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	EDI Officers in collaboration with relevant admin and service departments Communications

7 ENSURE ALL EMPLOYEES ARE AWARE OF POLICIES & SUPPORT SERVICES

Strategic goals	Accessibility and transparency
Action	Include information on EDI measures, policies & support services in the participating institute websites, including a link to the EDI Action Plan.
Timeline	2023
Outcomes	Improved employer branding. Transparency on EDI efforts, policies & support services at the institutes.
Target Groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	Communications & Partnerships in collaboration with EDI Officers

8 APPLY FOR EXTERNAL RECOGNITION OF EDI EFFORTS

Strategic goals	Accessibility and transparency
Action	Apply for public recognition of effort to enhance EDI as a means to demonstrate the (quality of our) EDI engagement to our international stakeholders, e.g. HR Excellence in Research (EURAXESS).
Timeline	2024/2025
Outcomes	External validation and recognition of EDI efforts. Contribution to EDI sensitive employer branding.
Target Groups	Potential candidates, the interested public, all employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	EDI Officers

9 ENSURE EQUITABLE RECRUITMENT AND HR PROCESSES

Strategic goals	Equitable recruitment, Prevention of discrimination
Action	<p>Equitable recruitment: Formulate job postings in a language that is equally attractive to all genders and to people with disabilities; monitor the percentage of female applicants and the offer acceptance rate; Provide guidelines for candidate selection / interview; Review existing recruitment procedures and evaluate the extent to which they are in peril of perpetuating potentially discriminatory practices.</p> <p>EDI in onboarding: Include intro to EDI issues and key documents (Code of Conduct, Anti-Discrimination, -Harassment, and -Bullying Policy, EDI Action Plan) into onboarding process/welcome meeting.</p> <p>EDI in offboarding: To the extent possible, gather data on perceptions of EDI relevant issues among employees leaving the institutes.</p> <p>Pay equity analysis: Companies with more than 150 employees are required by law to prepare an anonymized income report every two years. This must show the average income of all employees in the company and be broken down by gender and collective agreement classification. The reports for all participating institutes shall be made accessible to all employees of the respective institute for which the pay equity report was compiled. A summary will be included in the annual monitoring report for the EDI Action Plan.</p>
Timeline	2023-2025
Outcomes	<p>Sensitize all staff responsible for recruitment decisions to practices for reducing potential discrimination.</p> <p>All new employees are informed and aware of EDI relevant key document, policies and expectations when joining the respective institute.</p> <p>Discovery of potential shortcomings in existing processes and support services.</p> <p>Assessment of and transparent information on pay equity at the institutes.</p>
Target Groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP responsible for recruitment decisions (HR, recruitment committees, group/team leaders)
Responsibility	HR in collaboration with EDI officers

10 FORMALIZE STRUCTURES FOR EFFICIENT IMPLEMENTATION & PROGRESS MONITORING

Strategic goals	Representation, Accessibility and transparency, Organizational culture
Action	<p>EDI Officers: Appoint 3 EDI Officers (one per institute). For the annual monitoring and review process, these are to be supported by HR and if necessary, by external experts. The actual scope of responsibilities, compensation, reporting relationships and duration of appointment are to be internally discussed, decided, and formalized.</p> <p>Data collection for progress monitoring: Collect and monitor data as per indicator list in Annex 1 to this document.</p> <p>Staff consultation: Develop and administer a consultation survey on the EDI Action Plan to gather employee feedback. Include EDI relevant questions into existing regularly administered surveys at the institutes (e.g. mental health survey, PhD and post-doc surveys, workplace satisfaction survey).</p>
Timeline	2023 - 2025
Outcomes	<p>Ensure adequate resources for implementation of the EDI Action Plan</p> <p>Effective progress monitoring of EDI issues covered in this Action Plan. Compliance with EU requirements.</p> <p>Improved monitoring of employee needs and perceptions of EDI issues at the institutes. Effective progress monitoring</p>
Target Groups	All employees at GMI/IMBA/IMP
Responsibility	EDI Officers in collaboration with HR, with support from external experts if needed and with other departments responsible for employee surveys (reps, EHS)

ANNEX: LIST OF INDICATORS FOR PROGRESS MONITORING

INDICATOR	DESCRIPTION ¹	DATA PROVIDED BY...
Employment by contract	Staff by gender, family status, country of origin and form of contract (fixed term, permanent, academic, admin)	HR
Employment by working time	Staff by gender, family status, country of origin and working hours (full time, part time, academic, admin)	HR
Employment by function	Staff by gender, family status, country of origin and function (Director, Group/Team Leader, Head, PostDoc, PhD, Student helper, Master student, Technician, other academic, admin)	HR
Pay equity	Pay equity analysis report	HR
On parental leave	Staff on parental leave by gender, function, family status and country of origin (and duration?)	HR
Candidates Group Leader Searches	Aggregate number of applications for group leader positions by gender, family status and country of origin	HR – to the extent available
Hires by function	Number of hires by gender, family status, country of origin and function (Director, Group/Team Leader, Head, PostDoc, PhD, Student helper, Master student, Technician, other academic, admin & science support)	HR
Grant applications submitted	Total number of grant applications submitted by gender of main proposal author	Grant Management
Grant application success rate	Success rate of grant applications by gender of main proposal author	Grant Management
Service on TAC committees	Average number of TAC committees that faculty serve on by gender	VBC Training
First author publications	Number of publications by gender of first author (excluding pre-prints)	Library
Discrimination, harassment & bullying	Number of reported incidents of discrimination, harassment, and bullying	Ombudspersons, compliance committee

¹ All indicators are broken down per institute

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