



ELI ERIC Gender Equality Plan

2022 – 2025



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1 ELI ERIC's commitment to promoting gender equality

As a global technology and innovation leader in high-power, high-intensity, and short-pulsed laser systems, the Extreme Light Infrastructure European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ELI ERIC) is committed to creating and promoting a positive and inclusive working environment that supports cooperation among diverse employees as well as the members of the research community. As a research infrastructure having operations in multiple countries, ELI ERIC recognizes that a diverse workforce makes an essential contribution to achieving its mission of operating the world's leading laser-based research infrastructure.

The Gender Equality Plan demonstrates ELI ERIC's commitment to improving measurable gender equality outcomes with respect to employee representation, value, safety, and recognition. Gender equality and non-discrimination benefit research and innovation by improving the quality and relevance of Research and Innovation, attracting and retaining more talent, and ensuring that everyone can maximize their potential.

ELI ERIC's objective is to create a gender-equal working environment where all talents can thrive and better integrate the gender and diversity dimensions in projects to improve research quality as well as the relevance to society of the knowledge, technologies, and innovations produced.

In all of its activities, ELI ERIC respects the human dignity of persons maintaining or intending to establish employment or any other relationship with it and undertakes all efforts to promote equal treatment, equal opportunities, and the full enforcement of the relevant principles and rules of the European Union.

ELI ERIC strives to build a diverse workforce to ensure that job applicants and employees do not receive less favorable treatment at work on the grounds of age, gender, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity, family responsibilities, political beliefs, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

I enthusiastically endorse this initiative and confirm that the information presented in the document is an honest, accurate, and true reflection of ELI ERIC as an organization. I affirm that ELI ERIC understands and is committed to the proposed plan.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Allen Weeks', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Allen Weeks
Director General

In Prague, 30 September 2022



2 Current status and objectives

On 30 April 2021, the Extreme Light Infrastructure ERIC (hereinafter referred to as ‘ELI ERIC’ or ‘the Organisation’) was established to jointly manage the operations of the ELI facilities (initially ELI ALPS and ELI Beamlines) for the benefit of international academic and industrial researchers. As of September 2022, 59% (13) of our staff were female, and 41% (9) were male (Tab. 1). All of the current employees at ELI ERIC are business professionals and experts working in non-scientific positions.

With the legal integration and transfer of the ELI Beamlines facility into ELI ERIC, which is expected to become effective on 1st January 2023, the number of employees of ELI ERIC will increase significantly, and the proportion of female and male employees will change. Another change in the number of ELI ERIC employees and the gender ratio is expected with the integration of the ELI ALPS facility expected at the beginning of 2024.

ELI ERIC recognizes that the European Research Area, despite EU-level strategies on gender equality, still suffers from a considerable loss and inefficient use of highly skilled women. ELI ERIC aims to improve the gender balance by increasing the proportion of women in research, education, technical professions, and management. Ensuring equal opportunities for women and men within all ELI ERIC facilities is a prerequisite for achieving this goal.

This document outlines a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for ELI ERIC, an overarching strategy, and an active effort to foster gender balance and equal opportunities for women and men at ELI ERIC.

While the broader concept of diversity and equality is important to ELI ERIC as well, this strategy focuses specifically on the gender dimension to adopt an efficient and targeted approach mainly on these five focus areas in the next three years:

- work-life balance and organizational culture;
- gender balance in leadership and decision-making;
- gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
- integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content;
- measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

The GEP consists of a set of actions aiming at conducting impact assessment/audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias, outlining and implementing innovative strategies to correct any discrimination, and setting targets and monitoring progress via indicators. The implementing bodies and measures required for achieving the objectives are described below.

The GEP applies to ELI ERIC job applicants and all ELI ERIC employees whether full-time or part-time, temporary or permanent and to visiting workers, students, or those workers provided by a third-party agency.



Tab. 1 Profile of female and male employees at ELI ERIC as of September 2022

Total number	Number of females	Number of males	% of female	% of male
22	13	9	59	41

Tab. 2 Distribution of nationalities at ELI ERIC as of September 2022

Nationalities	Number of employees
Czech	9
Hungarian	4
French	2
American	2
Romanian	2
Croatian	1
Italian	1
British	1



3 Responsibility and reporting

The General Assembly of ELI ERIC assigns the ELI ERIC **Director General** ('DG') to determine and oversee the execution of implementing regulations, processes, and procedures that ensure a consistent approach and point of reference for managers and employees and outline their respective roles and responsibilities. The DG is committed to actively promoting gender equality and the implementation of the GEP. The DG dedicates financial resources to the GEP implementation.

The implementation of the GEP comes from and concurs with the ELI ERIC Gender Equality & Diversity Policy. The GEP shall be verified via regular periodic evaluations to ensure that the respective actions stated in the GEP were implemented supported by evidence that employees have been informed of the policies, and that management and employee roles and responsibilities are reinforced on an ongoing basis.

The DG shall appoint an **Equality Panel** – the main working group being responsible for the development, implementation, and execution of the GEP actions, annual monitoring, and evaluation of the implementation of GEP targets and actions, and communication both inside and outside of the organization. The Equality Panel includes HR and PR representatives from the ELI ERIC Seat and ELI ERIC facilities and embraces all protected groups. It is chaired by the **Advocate for Equality and Diversity**.

The ELI ERIC DG shall report periodically to the General Assembly on the implementation of the GEP. Relevant data for KPIs related to the achievement of the objectives, as defined in the Gender Equality & Diversity Policy, shall be collected and published in the ELI ERIC Annual Report.

This GEP was approved by the ELI ERIC DG and will be reviewed regularly as well as the data collection and monitoring and annual reporting based on indicators.



4 ELI ERIC Gender Equality Principles

ELI ERIC seeks to advance gender equality and diversity across the organization guided by the following principles also reflected in individual actions in all five focus areas:

- a) **the principle of legality** – involves the development of activities to promote and implement the principle of equal opportunities and treatment between individuals, irrespective of their gender, marital or civil partnership status, pregnancy, maternity, family responsibilities, political beliefs, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation or gender identity, according to the provisions of relevant legislation, agreements and other international legal documents;
- b) **the principle of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms** – implies respect for human dignity and mutual respect in social relations;
- c) **the principle of non-discrimination and equal opportunities and treatment between women and men** – implies non-discrimination and equal access for women and men to resources that guarantee them the free, full and unrestricted development of their life and personality on all levels;
- d) **the principle of adequate financing** – implies the allocation of the responsible use of financial resources for the implementation of the identified measures in order to achieve the objectives;
- e) **the principle of equitable and flexible treatment** – implies that the prohibition of discrimination and the principle of equal treatment cannot eliminate all inequalities that employees may suffer while in employment. Therefore, ELI ERIC develops positive and equitable actions that improve the employees' employability;
- f) **the principle of equal accessibility for all** – implies that ELI ERIC ensures physical and infocommunication accessibility by making the buildings accessible, promoting and facilitating the movement of employees and visitors with disabilities or reduced working capacities, elderly employees and visitors, as well as employees and visitors having young children;
- g) **the principle of protection of families** – implies the harmonization of family and workplace responsibilities, where ELI ERIC helps employees to create a work-life balance.



5 ELI ERIC Gender Equality Action Plan

ELI ERIC is committed to making gender equality a priority focus of its development strategy. With this objective in mind ELI ERIC set up a comprehensive action plan.

5.1 Work-life balance and organizational culture

Work-life balance refers to an environment where the home and the workplace, or "work" and "life", can be harmonized. ELI ERIC aims to promote gender equality and enable each employee to achieve a better work-life balance by working in a flexible manner according to their life stage. Work-life balance is an integral part of company culture, and ELI ERIC's continuous intention is to continuously improve the working conditions, environment, and culture to reach the highest possible standards. Maintaining a healthy work-life balance and gender equality brings benefits to both the employees and the employer. ELI ERIC shall define and implement actions pursuing the following objectives:

- ensure gender equality in working conditions, internal policies, documentation, and processes;
- raise awareness about gender equality among employees using seminars, workshops, networking, and training events;
- ensure and actively promote diversity and non-discrimination among employees;
- promote constant and transparent communication and gender-sensitive language;
- bolster knowledge transfer and raising awareness of gender-related topics.

For the employees to be able to balance their work and life and to create an environment where all employees can work comfortably, the following actions will be implemented to support further gender equality in work-life balance and organizational culture at ELI ERIC.

Work-life balance and organizational culture			
Objective	Action	Indicator	Timeline
Ensure gender equality in working conditions, internal policies, documentation, and processes	Review all existing ELI ERIC documents and policies from a gender perspective	Documents and policies reviewed to mitigate against unequal outcomes in relation to gender	2022 – 2023
	Implement necessary policies to ensure an open and inclusive working environment	Number of policies implemented	2023 – 2024

	Deepen understanding of the practices and possibilities – parental leave, support for caring possibilities, etc.	Number of HR campaigns organized promoting work-life balance tools	2023 – 2025
	Establishment and examination of diverse working arrangements with emphasis on home office, flexible working hours, part-time jobs, etc.	Number of employees using flexible forms of working (among employees whose position allows such flexibility)	2023 - 2025
	Conduct regular employee satisfaction/opinion survey	% of satisfied employees	2024 - 2025
Raise awareness about gender equality among employees using seminars, workshops, networking, and training events	Organize gender equality events and seminars on topics such as work-life balance, career development, frequent obstacles for parents with children etc.	Number of organized events and seminars Number of participants	2023 - 2025
	Organize and run gender equality awareness-raising training to promote the GEP and other related activities	Number of trained employees	2023 - 2025
Ensure and actively promote diversity and non-discrimination among employees	Organize campaigns promoting diversity and non-discrimination	Number of organized campaigns	2023 - 2025
	Establish Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) in the Organization	Number of ERGs established and employees actively participating	2024 - 2025

Promote constant and transparent communication and gender-sensitive language	Organize a training seminar for the PR team on gender-sensitive language and communication	PR team trained	2023 - 2024
	Develop a communications plan, with gender equality as a strand	Coverage of key gender equality events and awareness days (International Day for Women and Girls in Science, etc.) Communications around positive interventions and impact	2023 - 2025
Bolster knowledge transfer and raising awareness of gender-related topics	Active cooperation across ELI ERIC seat and facilities on gender equality and knowledge transfer	Number of shared seminars taken place and dissemination of information using the Organization's intranet/newsletter	2024 - 2025

5.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Both women and men play an essential role in the leadership and decision-making at ELI ERIC. Although women's progress in corporate leadership has gradually increased, the top jobs are still largely occupied by men. It is generally known that senior leadership positions have been traditionally dominated by men in the research area.

ELI ERIC realizes that the under-representation of women in decision-making is a very broad and multifaceted issue, and it is necessary to act against it.

The following actions shall be implemented in order to support women's motivation, career planning and development in the leadership and decision-making at ELI ERIC:

- set up a talent development programme to discover, develop and promote hidden potential in female and male candidates;
- profile employees of different genders and intersectional characteristics to role model

success;

- create motivation tools for attracting more female candidates to apply for leadership positions and stand for appointment to the ELI ERIC decision-making committees and boards.

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making			
Objective	Action	Indicator	Timeline
Increase the number and share of women in leadership and decision-making positions	Set up a talent development programme to discover, develop and promote hidden potential in female and male candidates	Number of participants of the programme	2024 - 2025
Develop role models to resolve the gender leadership gap	Profile employees of different genders and intersectional characteristics to role model success	Number of role models	2024 - 2025
Support gender-balance in leadership and decision-making committees and boards	Create motivation tools for attracting more female candidates to apply for leadership positions and stand for appointment to the ELI ERIC decision-making committees and boards	Number of created tools in action	2024 - 2025

5.3 Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

In line with the principles set in the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, ELI ERIC ensures the implementation of rules for open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment and the selection of researchers, administrative and technical positions.

ELI ERIC strives to create conditions for expanding professional knowledge and sharing experiences, but also for the development of transferable and soft skills. ELI ERIC aims to provide the employees with training and development activities and organize several training sessions focusing on the development of managerial skills, legislation awareness, transferable knowledge, and soft skills.

Focus on individual training and development planning and developing a conceptual and systematic approach to a continuous career for women and men belongs among the key intentions in this area at ELI ERIC. Therefore, further activities in this area will focus on gender-balanced support in career progression and analysis of possible gender wage gaps to ensure that women and men get equal chances to develop and advance their careers.

Actions are to support the following objectives:

- address gender inequalities in recruitment and career progression;
- ensure well-trained recruitment staff is capable of applying the gender equality and Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R) principles in recruitment and selection processes;
- ensure that women and men are equally supported in career progression;
- mitigate wage gaps based on gender or other types of discrimination.

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression			
Objective	Action	Indicator	Timeline
Address gender inequalities in recruitment and career progression	Undertake a review of recruitment and employee lifecycle processes and practices to identify gender and intersectional inequalities and barriers	Review undertaken with clear actions and interventions identified	2023 - 2024
Ensure well-trained recruitment staff is capable of applying the gender equality and OTM-R principles in recruitment and selection processes	Promote the gender equality principles in recruitment and selection processes	Recruitment team trained Number of organised promotion activities	2023 - 2025
	Ensure that recruiters, hiring managers and selection committee participants have a training in the recruitment and selection processes	Number of trained employees	2023 - 2025

Ensure women and men are equally supported in career progression	Create and approve a methodology for career growth and development of researchers with the integral gender and diversity dimensions	Methodology created and applied	2024 - 2025
Mitigate gender wage gaps	Analyse gender gaps in wage-setting methods	Analysis undertaken with recommendations identified	2023 - 2025

5.4 Integration of the gender dimension into research

ELI ERIC pursues the goal of increasing awareness of researchers on how to identify gender and other discrimination issues in research and helping them understand the importance of integrating the gender and diversity dimensions into their research practices, methodology, and outcomes.

As a research performing organization, ELI ERIC is fully aware of its responsibility in ensuring that the gender dimension is considered in research and the support and capacity provided to the researchers. The aforementioned objectives shall be guaranteed through the following:

- integration of gender dimension into research practices, methodology, outcomes and proposals;
- get familiar with existing approaches within similar institutions to capture, share, and embed evidence of good-practice.

Integration of the gender dimension into research			
Objective	Action	Indicator	Timeline
Integration of gender dimension into research practices, methodology, outcomes, and proposals	Design and run a training to integrate the gender dimension into the practices, methodology, outcomes and project proposals in basic and applied research	Number of trained employees	2024 - 2025

Get familiar with existing approaches within similar institutions to capture, share, and embed evidence of good-practice	Collect evidence and data on existing practices within other organizations in the European Research Area	Evidence collected and analysed	2024 - 2025
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5.5 Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

ELI ERIC is strictly against any violation of human rights, including gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination. ELI ERIC is developing an Ethical Codex that all employees will be required to follow and also on practical guidelines on how to eliminate and proceed in case of inappropriate behavior, including sexual harassment (e.g., unsolicited comments and the use of inappropriate stereotyping), conflicts, discrimination, disputes between departments or work teams, bossing, mobbing, staffing or manipulation, as well as manipulation by superiors or colleagues. The appointment of an Ombudsman is considered, who will be in charge of dealing with ethical issues and tackling specific areas of gender-based violence, sexual harassment, and discrimination in the organization.

ELI ERIC shall define actions pursuing the following objectives:

- raising employee awareness of unconscious bias and inappropriate behavior, by promoting values such as: respect for others, fairness, equal treatment of problems and complaints;
- implement complaint mechanism.

Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment			
Objective	Action	Indicator	Timeline
Raising employee awareness of unconscious bias and inappropriate behavior	Run an internal campaign on unconscious bias to break down gender stereotypes and mitigate inappropriate behavior	Number of organized campaigns	2023 - 2025
	Set up regular e-learning training for employees focused on	Number of trained employees	2023 - 2025

	inappropriate behavior, gender-based violence, harassment, and its prevention, with a particular focus on hidden discrimination, marginalising behavior, and the 'bystander effect'		
	Train direct supervisors in order to prevent inappropriate behavior	Number of direct supervisors trained	2023 - 2025
Implement complaint mechanism	Create and approve an ethical codex and establish a new role of Ombudsman in the company	Ethical codex approved Ombudsman established	2024