

## Gender Equality Plan

### 1. Background and Introduction

Frederick Research Center (FRC) operates as an independent non-profit Research Organization in terms of legal and financial matters as well as IP ownership of research results, as stipulated by its memorandum of association and articles of incorporation. It is also noted that the origin of the financial resources of the organization is predominantly through funding obtained from competitive national and EU programs for the implementation of Research, Development & Innovation (RDI) and other projects in cooperation with public and private law bodies in Cyprus and abroad to promote its objectives, which revolve about promoting high calibre independent research to address societal challenges. To promote this independence FRC operates with a very lean and flat organizational structure where under the appointed legal representatives, the Directors of the organization, there exist and operate several research groups headed by a group leader that operate independently under eight thematic areas.

Furthermore, FRC has a special operational relation with Frederick University (FredU), whereby FredU offers its services to FRC in terms of access to facilities and labs, accounting, projects administration and other relevant services. The research group leaders are also faculty members of FredU and other faculty members as well as other researchers are all hired on a fixed-term basis to work on the awarded funded projects. Worth noting is that given the legacy research activities of many of the research groups in engineering and applied science domains, most of the research group leaders and consequently the lead researchers in projects are male (94% in 2021), an area of definite need of improvement. Data that has been collected over recent years of research activity expansion suggest an improved gender balance state at least in terms of new hired researchers (39% female in 2021), despite the predominance of STEM domains in research projects.

Considering the above operational mode, the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) outlines FRC's commitment to promoting gender equality within its research activities, in alignment with the principles and objectives of the [European Commission](#) as well as set forth in [FredU's Gender Equality Plan](#). As a relatively small research organization, collaborating closely with Frederick University, we recognize the importance of adopting and implementing strategies that contribute to a more inclusive and equitable research environment, as well as taking advantage of the dedicated resources of the University for this aim.

### 2. Policy Statement

Frederick Research Center is committed to:

- Promoting gender balance in decision-making processes within the organization.
- Implementing measures to prevent and address gender bias in recruitment, career progression, and evaluation processes.
- Providing support and resources for researchers to achieve work-life balance, such as parental leave policies and flexible working arrangements.
- Fostering a culture of inclusivity and diversity within research teams and institutions.
- Address gender bias and discrimination in research and innovation.
- In relation to the above commitments, where applicable align its objectives and actions with those of Frederick University to capitalise on its resources and knowhow.

### **3. Objectives**

In order to achieve the policy commitments, the following objectives are set:

- Further Increase the representation of women and underrepresented genders in research projects and especially in leadership roles in projects as well as research groups.
- Actively participate in the implementation of measures outlined in FredU's GEP to prevent and address gender bias in recruitment, career progression, and fully adopt the policies and measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment as adopted by the University.
- Create a research environment that reflects FRC's commitment to promoting inclusivity and diversity.
- Take advantage and promote engagement with FredU's training, capacity-building activities and awareness related activities.
- Collect sex or gender-disaggregated data as an evidence-base for the GEP in order to form relevant indicators and facilitate evaluation of progress.

### **4. Actions and Measures**

Elaborating more on the above objectives, FRC is planning to achieve them with following proposed actions and measures:

#### **4.1. Recruitment and Career Development**

- Collaborate with FredU's recruitment and HR services to implement transparent and inclusive recruitment processes for research positions.
- Participate in training sessions organized by FredU to raise awareness of unconscious bias and promote fair and equitable hiring practices.
- Support researchers' participation in career development programs and initiatives offered by Frederick University to enhance their skills and advance their careers.

#### **4.2. Work-Life Balance**

- Provide researchers with access to flexible working arrangements and support services in collaboration with FredU that promote work-life balance.
- Advocate for the adoption of family-friendly policies and practices within both the research organization and FredU to accommodate researchers' personal and family responsibilities.
- Promote a culture of respect for work-life balance and well-being among researchers and staff members through joint awareness campaigns and initiatives.
- Adopt maternity and paternity leave practices in line with the law in Cyprus and encourage lead researchers to supplement if possible from their reserve accounts the salaries of researchers that are on such leave.

#### **4.3. Research Environment**

- Collaborate with Frederick University to foster a supportive and inclusive research environment that values diversity and promotes collaboration and innovation.
- Actively engage with Frederick University's gender equality committees and initiatives to promote gender-balanced representation in decision-making bodies and research projects.

- Encourage researchers to report incidents of gender discrimination or harassment to Frederick University's designated channels and support mechanisms.

#### **4.4. Integrating the Gender Dimension into Research Content**

- **Training and Awareness Workshops:** Encourage participation of researchers in training sessions and workshops organised by FredU and other organizations to raise awareness about the importance of integrating the gender dimension into research content. Provide guidance on how to identify and analyze gender-related issues within their research fields.
- **Incorporation of Gender Analysis:** Encourage researchers to conduct gender analyses as part of their research design and methodology. Provide resources and support for researchers to incorporate gender-sensitive indicators, data collection methods, and analytical frameworks into their projects.
- **Collaboration with Gender Experts:** Foster collaboration with gender studies scholars, experts in gender analysis, and relevant stakeholders to integrate expertise on gender issues into research projects. Establish partnerships with organizations or initiatives focused on gender equality to leverage their knowledge and resources.
- **Dissemination of Gender-Related Findings:** Ensure that research findings related to gender issues are effectively disseminated to relevant stakeholders, including policymakers, practitioners, and the wider public. Use diverse communication channels, such as academic publications, policy briefs, conferences, and public engagement events, to reach different audiences.
- **Gender-Sensitive Research Design:** Encourage researchers to adopt gender-sensitive research designs that consider the diverse needs, experiences, and perspectives of individuals of different genders. This may involve incorporating gender as a variable in data collection, analysis, and interpretation, as well as considering intersectional approaches that account for other dimensions of identity (e.g., race, ethnicity, sexuality).
- **Capacity Building and Support:** Provide researchers with training, resources, and support to enhance their capacity to integrate the gender dimension into research content effectively. Capitalise on FredU resources and networking to offer mentoring, coaching, and peer support networks to facilitate knowledge sharing and skill development in this area

#### **5. Resources & Collaboration with Frederick University**

- As the mode of operation for other support services and resources, the relation with FredU will be enhanced to utilise the [dedicated resources of FredU](#) for the implementation and monitoring of the GEP.
- Fully align with Frederick University's Gender Equality Plan and related initiatives, ensuring consistency and coherence in efforts to promote gender equality in research.
- Participate in joint working groups and committees with representatives from Frederick University to exchange best practices and coordinate efforts to address gender inequality. As a minimum, a Director of FRC, will take part in [Center on Gender Issues, Diversity and Equality - EnAF](#) committee that is designated to monitor the implementation of the GEP.
- Involve Frederick University faculty members, including principal investigators, in the development and implementation of joint gender equality initiatives and research projects.
- Promote, support and monitor the participation of FRC researchers in training and capacity building activities organised through the [Centre for Personal & Professional Development](#) or promoted by FredU related to all topics of section 4 above.

## 6. Data Collection Monitoring and Evaluation

- Work collaboratively with FredU to establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress in implementing the Gender Equality Plan.
- Share data and findings with FredU on recruitment, retention, and career progression to inform ongoing efforts to promote gender equality in research.
- Regularly review and assess the effectiveness of joint initiatives and measures outlined in the Gender Equality Plan to identify areas for improvement and ensure continuous progress.

## 7. Conclusion

Frederick Research Center is committed to working in close collaboration with Frederick University to advance gender equality in research and innovation. By aligning our efforts with Frederick University's Gender Equality Plan and leveraging our collective resources and expertise, we aim to create a more inclusive and equitable research environment that benefits researchers of all genders.

November 2021



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