

# Gender and Intersectionality in Research and Innovation

Under Horizon Europe, careful attention will be paid to ensuring gender mainstreaming throughout research and innovation activities. This includes the addition of explicit evaluation and eligibility criteria.

This factsheet sets out to provide those interested in participating in Horizon Europe with an overview of the gender-related policy objectives. It also aims to help applicants understand how to address the objectives when developing their research and innovation project.

## Introduction

Gender equality is a core policy objective for all European Union activities and the European Commission is fully committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. Horizon 2020 was the first framework programme to set gender as a cross-cutting issue. Building on the achievements of Horizon 2020, Horizon Europe aims to eliminate gender inequalities and intersecting socio-economic inequalities, including those based on disability, ethnicity, and sexual orientation, throughout research and innovation systems. There will also be specific activities to enhance work-life balance, address unconscious bias and systemic structural barriers, as well as to promote equality across all areas of the programme. Addressing issues related to gender inequalities is a crucial factor in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and an inclusive economy that works for all. It also enables better quality and higher societal relevance of research and innovation activities.

## Novelties in Horizon Europe

Broader understanding of discrimination looking at the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender (intersectionality)

Integration of the gender dimension of research and innovation

Public bodies wanting to participate in Horizon Europe must have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place

Specific funding for topics related to gender studies and intersectionality, in particular under Cluster 2, as well as gender equality plans, including developing inclusive gender equality policies in support of the new ERA

Promoting gender equality under the European Innovation Council (EIC), including a target of 40% women-led companies invited to pitch their projects

Gender balance in research teams, evaluation panels, boards and expert groups

## Equal opportunities

The effective promotion of equal opportunities for all and the implementation of gender mainstreaming are important elements of tackling gender inequalities. In Horizon Europe, attention is paid to ensuring, as much as possible, gender balance in evaluation panels and in other relevant advisory bodies such as boards and expert groups.

Beneficiaries should aim for a balanced participation of women and men in their research teams and are expected to take all measures to promote equal opportunities in the implementation of the action. The gender balance of the teams involved in individual research and innovation projects will be taken into account for equally ranked proposals during the evaluation process. Attention should also be given (during the running of the project) to encourage equal opportunities, and if necessary, corrective measures should be implemented.

## Gender Equality Plans

One of the novelties in Horizon Europe is the requirement that legal entities established in Member States or Horizon Europe Associated Countries, which are public bodies, research organisations or higher education establishments, will need to have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) to meet eligibility conditions. The entities are encouraged to cover the following in their GEP: work-life balance and organisational 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; and measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment.

The GEP can be a single document or a compilation of multiple documents provided that they meet the four-mandatory process-related requirements or 'building blocks':



Be a public document and signed by the top management and disseminated within the institution. It should demonstrate a commitment to gender equality, set clear goals and detailed actions and measures to achieve them.



Have dedicated resources for the design, implementation, and monitoring of GEPs. This may include funding for specific positions such as Equality Officers or Gender Equality Teams as well as earmarked working time for academic, management and administrative staff.



Include arrangements for data collection and monitoring. The GEPs must be evidence-based and founded on sex or gender-disaggregated baseline data collected across all staff categories. This data should inform the GEP's objectives and targets, indicators, and on-going evaluation of progress.



Be supported by training and capacity-building, such as developing gender competence and tackling unconscious gender bias among staff, leaders and decision-makers, as well as by establishing working groups dedicated to specific topics, and raising awareness through workshops and communication activities.

At first proposal submission stage, a self-declaration is requested through a dedicated questionnaire. An organisation may not yet have a GEP at proposal submission stage, but it must have a GEP in place at the time of the Grant Agreement signature.

The **Model Grant Agreement** commits beneficiaries to taking all measures to promote equal opportunities in the implementation of the action and, where applicable, in line with their GEP.

## Gender and Intersectional Dimension of Research

It is recognised that including gender and sex analysis in research stimulates innovation and ensures that the research better meets societal needs. It helps to rethink gender norms and stereotypes, as well as standards and reference models. Examining the gender and intersectionality in research and

innovation will lead to an in-depth understanding of different genders' needs, behaviours, and attitudes. This will help to develop new perspectives, stimulate new questions, enhances the societal relevance of the knowledge, technologies and innovations as well as contributing to a more gender equal society.

In Horizon 2020, integrating the gender dimension into research and innovation content was highly encouraged, and under Horizon Europe, this has been substantially reinforced. As part of the evaluation criteria applicants are expected to address gender under the *Excellence* criterion though it should also be taken into consideration throughout the proposal, including in the dissemination and exploitation plans.

## Evaluation criteria

Applicants to Horizon Europe calls are expected to address gender under the *Excellence* criterion.

<b>Applicants should provide clarity and pertinence of the project's objectives and state-of-the-art</b>	Have you thought about how gender norms/assumptions influence the research area?
	Will the results of the project, now or at any time in the future, be applicable to people?
	Have you considered how gender and interconnected social categorisations, such as race, class etc. shape your research question and desired outcomes?
<b>Applicants should show the soundness of the proposed methodology, including the underlying concepts, models, assumptions, inter-disciplinary approaches</b>	Are gender norms embedded in the concepts, theories and models used by your research field?
	Do the chosen methodology(ies) ensure that gender, and other connected social characterisations are considered and investigated?

Though it is not explicitly mentioned as being evaluated under *Impact* or *Implementation*, it is also important to think about gender and intersectionality throughout the proposal.

<b>Applicants should consider gender in the context of maximising the expected outcomes/ impacts, as well as in dissemination, exploitation plans and communication activities</b>	Have you thought about the different stakeholders and target audiences, including their gender?
	Have you considered the outcomes and impacts of the research on different genders and interconnected social categorisations?
<b>The consortium as a whole</b>	Have you considered the gender balance of the research team (ranking criterion), and of any decision-making bodies?
	If there will be recruitment during the implementation of the project, how will you ensure gender balance and equal opportunities?
<b>Budget</b>	What additional resources and/or training may be needed to address issues related to gender and intersectionality?
	The costs associated with gender-related activities are eligible under 'Purchase costs'.

## Support

While we cannot read proposals and comment on them directly at UKRO, we do have a range of resources available to help with proposal writing. Your UKRO European Advisor is also available to signpost and advise on general questions you might have regarding your proposal.

## Tips for addressing gender in proposals

There are several resources to help you address gender in your proposal, including [Gender Innovations](#) and the [GENDERACTIONplus](#) websites. Below are a few pointers to help get you started:

- ✓ Use gender inclusive language.
- ✓ Do not just think about gender in binary categories, sexual orientation and gender identity are important (heterosexual, homosexual, g fluid, etc).
- ✓ Think beyond gender as a category, include race, class, age, and other interconnect social categories.
- ✓ Pay attention to differences in user experience and do not overlook minimal or no differences between sex and/or gender.
- ✓ Explain how gender and intersectionality will help advance the work programme objectives.
- ✓ Explain the gender expertise in your consortium.
- ✓ Explain the project's approach to gender and intersectionality throughout the research life cycle.
- ✓ Describe the ambition of the project related to gender knowledge.
- ✓ Explain how this project will help solve current obstacles/barriers related to gender in your field.
- ✓ Demonstrate how including sex and gender findings will raise the quality of the research and enhance impact and relevance of the results.
- ✓ Use sex-disaggregated datasets.
- ✓ Use research methodologies that allow a differentiated analysis of target groups.
- ✓ Include references to any UK and or institutional policies and awards/certifications such as the Athena Swan Charter and or the HR in Excellence award.

## More information

Horizon Europe's legal basis:

- [Regulation establishing Horizon Europe](#)
- [Decision establishing the Specific Programme of Horizon Europe](#)
- [Horizon Europe Programme Guide](#)
- [First Horizon Europe Strategic Plan \(2021-2024\)](#)
- [Second Horizon Europe Strategic Plan \(2025–2027\)](#)
- [Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans](#)

Other useful websites and resources

- [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 Gender Equality in Research and Innovation](#)
- [CORDIS results pack on gender equality in research](#)
- [Gender equality: a strengthened commitment in Horizon Europe](#)
- [Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans](#)
- [Gender Equality in Academia and Research \(GEAR\) tool](#)
- [FAQs on Gender Equality Plans \(GEPs\)](#)
- [Gender Equality Academy](#)
- [ACT on Gender](#)
- [GENDERACTIONplus](#)
- [Gendered Innovations](#)
- [Gender in Science, Technology, and Innovation \(STI\)](#)
- [UniSAFE](#)
- [EU Award for Gender Equality Champions](#)
- [The European Research Area \(ERA\)](#)

UKRO Portal

- [UKRO Portal](#) (subscriber access required)