

**GENOVATE**

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# **Implementing Measures for Gender Equality in Recruitment, Promotion and Progression in Academic and Research Careers**

## **Contextualised Guidelines for Universities and Research Organisations**



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GENOVATE<sup>1</sup> was an action research project, funded under the EU FP7 Science and Society Programme (2013-16), which operated across seven European partner institutions with different institutional and national contexts for gender equality. GENOVATE sought to address gender inequalities in research and innovation through the implementation in six partner institutions of context-specific Gender Equality Action Plans (GEAP).

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<sup>1</sup> See also <http://www.genovate.eu/>

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## **Implementing Measures for Gender Equality in Recruitment, Promotion and Progression in Academic and Research Careers**

### **Contextualised Guidelines for Universities and Research Organisations**

#### **Introduction**

This document outlines a set of guidelines for universities and research organisations that are in the process of, or considering, implementing: measures for gender equality in selection processes relating to recruitment, promotion and progression of academics and researchers; measures aimed at strengthening the presence of women in leadership and senior positions, including gender targets; and measures to support women in accessing opportunities for career progression.

The term 'career transitions' is used as shorthand in the document for all processes relating to recruitment, promotion, progression, career support and gender targets in academic and research careers.

#### **Who may find these useful?**

These Contextualised Guidelines may be of use to actors working within, or with, universities and other higher education institutions and research organisations, to address gender inequalities in academic/research career transitions. They may be of particular use to groups or individuals within universities and research organisations who are driving change for gender equality in career transitions through developing or implementing gender equality actions/ plans (GEAPs). These actors are referred to in the document as '**GEAP teams**'.

## The GENOVATE Experience

The Guidelines presented here have been developed as part the GENOVATE consortium project and are grounded in partners' experiences of attempting to implement actions and measures to improve gender equality in recruitment, promotion and progression in academic and research careers.

The measures implemented by the GENOVATE partners drew on international good practice (see Appendix A for review of international literature). However, the measures varied across the partner institutions: the actions prioritised for development and implementation reflected the particular institutional context of each partner. This was based on the GENOVATE approach which recognises the need for local and institutional context-sensitivity in implementing measures to enhance gender equality.

**The measures** implemented by GENOVATE partners included the following (each one implemented by at least one partner):

Monitoring and data:
Collection, analysis and reporting of data on staffing
Embedding gender monitoring processes
Pay-gap data analysis and reporting
Recruitment/promotion processes:
Policy on gender balance of selection panels
Policy on equality training for members of selection panels
Development of gender-aware recruitment processes
Review of criteria used in promotion processes
Setting gender targets for senior positions
Supporting women in career progression:
Career/professional development programs
Sustainable staff progression policy
Mentoring programme for female academics/researchers
Leadership training for female academics and researchers
Targeting (very) male-dominated disciplines:
Attracting female students to male-dominated STEM disciplines
Targeted gender mainstreaming at departmental level

The **Guidelines** presented here have been developed through a process of contextualised self-assessment and analysis by the six partner institutions of their experiences of implementing these actions.

Some of these Guidelines are intended to be useful in a generic sense, across all types of institutions. However, they are provided here in a contextualised form, **tailored to particular types of institutional contexts**, in recognition of the multiplicity of historical, political, social and legislative contexts for gender equality implementation.

## Contextualised Guidelines

### Implementing Measures for Gender Equality in Recruitment, Promotion and Progression in Academic and Research Careers

#### Core Guidelines for GEAP Teams

1. Work with senior management/leadership.
2. Take a participatory and inclusive approach.
3. Support female academics and researchers directly through career progression or development programmes such as training and mentoring.
4. Improve recruitment and promotion procedures for more gender-equal outcomes.
5. Set gender targets for senior positions.
6. Develop measures to increase proportions of women in very male-dominated disciplines.
7. Seek to influence national policy on academic recruitment/promotion processes.
8. Take advantage of opportunities for synergies with national-level or EU-level developments
9. Ensure accountability of all actions through ongoing monitoring.

#### **1. Work with senior management/leadership**

All of the GENOVATE partner universities have identified 'working with senior management' as crucial to success in implementing measures to address gender inequalities in recruitment/promotion/progression in academic/research careers (or, from here, 'career transitions').

##### **Key Advice 1**

- Engage university senior management/leaders from the outset.
- Focus on relationship-building to engage senior management in the imperatives for gender equality.

- Integrate activity in this area with other related projects or initiatives and stress how progress can be made through integration and synergies.

However, the approach to engaging senior management, and the prioritisation given to it, varied among the partner institutions, depending on their governance structures and on the organisational positions occupied by the members of the GENOVATE team.

**Sample Context (1i) –Universities with decentralised governance structures:** Partner C is an organisation with relatively decentralised governance structures; in addition, within Partner C, the GEAP/GENOVATE team members were located in one faculty and did not occupy managerial positions.

‘... the culture and history of planning and developing different policies at our university, in our society is rather formal than real. People are not interested in planning and development as long-term activities. People in general prefer short-term action with direct effect on their work today, or tomorrow [...] There is a need to be prepared that at universities usually we don’t have managers with appropriate managerial skills, but academicians – that could be crucial barrier in process of planning-implementation-evaluation at institutions’ (Partner C).

In institutions like this that do not have a strong corporate policy and planning infrastructure, or that have quite decentralised governance structures, and where the GEAP advocates are not in very senior or managerial positions, the emphasis is on developing and maintaining an ongoing collaborative relationship with different groups in the organisation, including the leadership.

**Key Advice – Sample Context (1i)**

- Keep in close and frequent contact with institutional leaders and key influencers.
- Be prepared to work with different groups with different needs – both employees and employer.
- Work closely with different staff grades/groups – academic, research, administration and technical.

**Sample Context (1ii) –Universities with a strong corporate strategic planning culture:** In universities that have a strong culture of strategic planning and corporate identity, and hence quite centralised management structures, it is advisable to make use of these structures to progress actions and to engage senior management. Engaging senior management was a core objective for some partners’ GEAP/GENOVATE teams:

According to Partner E: ‘Facts, figures, research and examples of innovative practice elsewhere have been key to this engagement in [our university], particularly with senior level stakeholders who may be especially alert to the reputation and prestige of the institution both nationally and internationally and the implications for funding and rankings regarding research and academic standards’.

This process may be easier in a context where the GEAP/GENOVATE team itself includes members of senior management, such as in Partner F and Partner B:

As found by Partner F: 'The senior management team will be supportive of actions that are aligned with their long-term plans; therefore it is important that the actions are aligned with the University's Vision, corporate strategy and strategic objectives. The senior management team hold the power to make key decisions in regards to implementation of activities to progress the actions, and can also influence sub teams to appreciate the need for some of the changes being implemented. Consistent involvement of the Senior Management Team is vital, as they will ensure the relevance of the actions within current contexts. Additionally they will offer high-level support in creating changes to policies, practices and cultures that are otherwise difficult to implement'.

According to Partner B: 'Serving in several committees and executive positions for the university enabled wider reach of GENOVATE. It helped to have support of the top management'.

**Key Advice – Sample Context 1ii**

- Seek to influence university vision and corporate strategy so that it aligns with gender equality goals.
- Ensure that your Gender Equality Action Plan is an official policy document approved by the university senate or management board.
- Recruit individuals who are in senior management or leadership roles in the university to the GEAP team, or join senior management committees.
- While gender equality is an important goal in its own right, it may be useful to demonstrate how gender equality objectives align with and support other university strategic objectives (such as, for example, inclusiveness, research excellence, staff wellbeing, etc.).
- Identify and refer to any external factors (e.g. legal, political) that might propel engagement of senior management in the strategic importance of gender equality in academic and research careers.
- Use robust and authoritative data to make gender patterns in selection processes visible to senior management.
- Build engagement from the bottom up in the organisation also by involving departments.
- Focus on the ways in which gender diversity 'creates value' for the organisation through efficient use of existing resources.



## 2. Take a participatory and inclusive approach

All GENOVATE partners emphasised the importance of taking an inclusive and participatory approach to implementation of measures to address gender inequalities in career transitions in universities. The GENOVATE approach has involved the use of participatory methods such as GENOVATE World Cafes, GeCATs<sup>2</sup>, workshops and other events to engage in a meaningful way with a wide range of stakeholders including staff at all levels in the design and implementation of GEAPs.

**Sample context (2i) - Integrating participation with a top-down approach:** A number of GENOVATE partners emphasised the importance of combining the top-down approach of engaging senior management with a participatory bottom-up approach through active involvement of staff at all levels in developing and implementing GEAPs.

For example, Partner D: ‘In order to achieve **structural change** we recommend both top down and bottom up approaches’.

And Partner F: ‘Encourage the involvement of all faculties and staff members across the University. This participatory involvement will support the **sustainability** of the above actions and will ensure that the activities reflect the **needs of everyone** within the University. This bottom up approach will work well alongside the involvement of senior management teams. Participatory involvement will allow for everyone to have a voice, and share views and opinions in regards to problems and potential solutions within the Institution and the sector more widely’.

**‘The cross organisational and interdisciplinary approach taken by Genovate has produced strategies and plans providing a strategic, systematic approach to addressing inequality which have currency beyond gender alone. There is potential to inform advancement of equality challenges for staff and student experience in other aspects of Higher Education such as the new Race equality standard for Higher Education’ (External member of Project Advisory Board, Partner F).**

**Sample context (2ii) – Dealing with cynicism and lack of knowledge** - For some partners, developing a participatory approach was crucial in raising awareness of gender issues and their importance among some internal stakeholders, while dealing with fatigue among others. For example, in Partner E a certain level of suspicion towards gender equality actions among management contrasted with feelings of resignation among other staff who felt that change may not be possible.

‘Start from the assumption that significant numbers of stakeholders will be unaware of gender inequalities, are not attuned to gendered processes [...] and be prepared to encounter a certain level of cynicism particularly from those who have reason to be sceptical of gender equality programmes when they have seen little change over

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<sup>2</sup> Gender Equality Change Academy Team – a team established at local unit level (school/department/faculty) or institutional level to progress gender equality change at local level.

a long period of time [...]. Work to persuade and convince staff, through inclusive and participatory mechanisms, that there is an issue to be addressed and engage with them as to how it might be addressed' (Partner E).

**Sample context (2iii) – Engaging external stakeholders** – Many partners involved external stakeholders on their advisory boards. Engaging with external stakeholders such as companies and research collaborators was a central part of the approach to gender equality in career transitions for Partner D in particular, where there were pre-existing strong research links with external companies:

'We go from the needs and drivers of the internal and external stakeholders. Joint learning processes with gender researchers and practitioners on equal terms enable stakeholders' commitment'. [...] 'Engage both internal and external stakeholders, early in the process. External engagement and attention opens valuable doors. Establish a **joint work and learning process** together with stakeholders with diverse competences and experiences. Go from the needs and drives of the stakeholders. We recommend integration of gender equality activities in the core activities of stakeholders to make a bigger impact and to ensure participation of stakeholders'.

**Key Advice – Sample Contexts 2i, 2ii, 2iii**

- Ensure activities/measures reflect the needs of everyone within the university.
- Build participation among staff who can provide support and develop further actions.
- Identify examples of good practice already in the university by consulting widely.
- Use mechanisms such as world cafes, interviews/focus groups, departmental/school-based teams (or GeCATs) and joint learning processes to facilitate participation.
- Make information about the university's Gender Equality Action Plan, and related developments, available on the university website.

**3. Support female academics and researchers directly through career progression or development programmes such as training and mentoring.**

Some of the most popular measures to address gender inequalities in career transitions are those that directly support women in their careers (often referred to as 'individual-level' actions). For example, some of the GENOVATE partners developed actions such as career development programmes and mentoring programmes. In developing and implementing these programmes, GENOVATE partners identified the following as key:

**Key Advice 3**

- Conduct research to identify staff needs in relation to career development, training or mentoring.
- Consult with staff in different grades and at different levels in developing and planning initiatives or policies.

- Identify the key career transition points at which widening gender gaps occur in your university.
- Target these career levels for support, training and/or mentoring initiatives.
- Recognise the differing career development needs of academics and contract researchers when planning initiatives.

***Sample Context (3i): Where the climate for such initiatives can be challenging***

In some universities, positive action to promote gender equality in academic careers is a new concept. Significant gender imbalances in academic career structures may exist but there is no history of attempts to address these imbalances or to support women in career progression. The climate of the institution may not be conducive for the introduction of structural measures to address gender equality that might challenge existing processes and practices. In this kind of context, Partner C introduced a new career development programme for female and male academics. This involved personal development plans prepared by employees, which formed the basis of career development discussions between the employee and their line manager, and which fed into departmental and faculty plans.

According to Partner C: ‘The Career Development Programme and the Sustainable Staff Progression Policy that we have planned are the first of their kind in our institution [...].

In this context, measures that directly support women in career progression can achieve change, can be more culturally acceptable and can provide a strong basis for future structural change measures.

***Key Advice – Sample Context 3i***

- Consider including women and men as participants – to enhance acceptability of the initiative.
- Alternatively, consider the positive action approach of a female-only initiative to maximise impact on the gender gap
- Focus on the faculty level, tailored to local needs, and build on this to extend to other faculties

In universities that do not have strong centralised management or human resources support structures, and that may have more autonomy at faculty level and among academics, it may be most effective to begin implementation of actions relating to career progression at the faculty/unit level.

According to Partner C : ‘...at the beginning we thought it will be perfect to develop the program at university level for whole [...] University, but we have found that it is very time consuming and that main barrier is that faculties are very isolated itself [...].

Partner C’s Career Development Programme therefore was implemented as a pilot programme at faculty level.

**"This Career Development Programme is very important for our faculty, because of better communication between employees and employers and to contribute to continuous growth of the faculty" (Vice Dean of the Faculty, Partner C).**

- **Key Advice – 3i continued**
- **Focus on the faculty level, tailored to local needs, and build on this to extend to other faculties**
  - Develop career progression policies or initiatives at the faculty level, tailored to local needs, and build on this to extend to other faculties.
  - Conduct research (survey and focus groups) with staff at local level to identify staff needs.
  - Involve Heads of units (Schools/Departments/Faculties) at all stages in the process of developing initiatives.
  - Consult with staff in different grades and at different levels in developing and planning initiatives or policies.
  - Embed ongoing monitoring and evaluation processes to assess initiatives and enable sustainability.
  - Draw on the experience in one unit/faculty to share learning with others.

***Sample Context (3ii): Where it is not possible to intervene directly in recruitment and selection processes***

In some European countries, academic recruitment and selection processes are centralised at national level. Hence, it is not possible to intervene directly at institutional level with gender equality measures in recruitment or selection processes. GENOVATE partners in these countries worked to intervene in career transitions in a more indirect way through initiatives to support women such as career development or mentoring initiatives.

According to Partner B: 'In state universities in [our country], recruitments and appointments are all regulated by the central Higher Education Council [...] Thus it was not possible to set up monitoring systems to track the recruitment processes that could be effective in transforming gender balance. We tried to follow a more indirect and a bottom up approach to influence these processes'.

***Key Advice – Sample Context 3ii:***

- Try to influence gender balance in career progression indirectly through providing mentoring and other supports for early-career female academics.
- Establish a permanent mentoring and support system for young academics.
- Provide workshops and seminars as positive-action initiatives to support women in accessing opportunities for advancement in their careers, especially early-career academics and those in non-permanent positions.

***Sample Context (3iii): Successful career development and mentoring programmes can lead on to development of more structural interventions.*** Measures that target women directly

are often criticised for placing responsibility on women rather than on institutions and cultures to change. However, Partner A and Partner E both found that these measures can be a very useful first step towards structural organisational change. Partner E had previously developed a female-only career development and mentoring initiative which had a wide institutional impact. Partner A, an institution where there was an identified need for greater gender awareness and a change in academic culture, developed a female-to-female mentoring programme for academics and researchers (with some support from Partner E). The mentoring programme was prioritised by Partner A as an important measure to address a key career transition point for women (post-PhD), but also to begin to raise gender awareness and to challenge gender-neutral assumptions in the institution.

‘From our point of view, not only can the mentoring programme help to support young women's research careers, but it may also be used as a transformation tool in academia. In other words, at the moment the other key challenge of our mentoring programme is to understand whether, and eventually how and to which extent, the program could contribute to structural change in our academic context, besides providing support to individual researchers’ (Partner A).

**“Female-only initiatives should take into account the specific needs of young researchers within the specific context (discipline, university, etc. ), and provide spaces where young researchers could actually meet and share both successes and difficulties in their career path. On-going monitoring of these initiatives is also a key element to appreciate what has to be modified and/or improved to better suit the young researchers’ needs” (Member of Pilot Mentoring Program Team and Project Advisory Board, Partner A).**

***Key Advice – Sample Context 3iii:***

- Embed career development, training or mentoring initiatives in a gender equality framework, by focusing on those aspects of career development structures that particularly disadvantage women.
- Provide female-only career development initiatives.
- Create spaces for female academics and researchers to share experiences and to raise gender awareness in the institution.
- For early-career academics/researchers, include successful role-models of both genders in communication activities, such as brochures, posters, videos etc.
- Build on the success of such initiatives to plan future structural change measures.

#### 4. *Improve recruitment and promotion procedures for more gender-equal outcomes*

A number of GENOVATE partner institutions, located in national contexts where responsibility for recruitment and promotion lies with institutions themselves, attempted to introduce structural measures within their institutions to improve existing recruitment and promotion procedures for more gender-equal outcomes. The contexts for these actions vary.

**Sample Context (4i): Gender-sensitive institutional environment** – Partner D has a well-established history of attention to gender equality and pre-existing links between GENOVATE/GEAP team members and other internal stakeholders. Close collaboration with Human Resources Departments was crucial to success in developing measures for enhanced recruitment processes here. A quality assurance process was introduced, along with training for selection board members and revised guidelines. This was possible because of existing analysis on gender patterns and the gender-aware and positive climate of the university management and wider society. It was based on the use of methods and tools for gender equality interventions targeting both women and men. This meant that all actors involved in the recruitment and promotion processes participated in interactive and joint learning activities, with the aim of leading to systematic and sustainable change.

**We have been working with strategic recruitment for a couple of years in close collaboration with the Pro Vice-Chancellor and gender researchers at the university. This work has resulted in a more holistic view on recruitment, a better understanding of the internal processes and their strengths and weaknesses, and a more gender-aware recruitment process (HR strategist, Partner D).**

##### **Key Advice – Sample Context 4i:**

- Work collaboratively between Human Resources department, GEAP teams and management.
- Target both men and women in interventions to create more gender-aware promotion and recruitment processes.

**Sample Context (4ii): Where there is a need to raise awareness of gender issues** – Other partners did not have a well-established organisational culture of implementation of gender equality measures. Raising awareness of the issues and the need for such measures was a first step towards implementation here. For example, Partner E produced initial recommendations for exploring possibilities for structural measures to achieve gender balance in, and equality training requirement for all members of, recruitment, promotion and leave panels. Similarly, to raise awareness, Partner B introduced localized training in gender issues for members of key decision-making bodies in the university with a role in promotion and progression processes, and reviewed and systematized their evaluation processes through new regulations.

**Key Advice – Sample Context 4ii**

- Conduct a gender analysis of existing policies, practices and their outcomes.
- Use analysis to raise awareness of the need for change.
- Draw on examples of good practice in similar institutions to emphasise the need for change.
- Emphasise the importance of transparency in selection processes.
- Recommend the introduction of gender balance in, and equality training requirement for all members of, recruitment, promotion and research-leave decision-making panels.
- Work with supportive members of key committees/bodies to facilitate acceptance of review and change processes.

**5. *Set gender targets for senior positions***

A number of GENOVATE partners set out to encourage the use of gender targets for senior positions as part of their career transitions strategies. They identified a number of key considerations for the use of gender targets.

**5.1 *Gender Targets: The need for gender-disaggregated data***

Availability of gender-disaggregated data for statistical monitoring is crucial for both setting gender targets and providing rigorous evidence of gender disparities. First, gender-disaggregated analyses are indispensable to demonstrate the degree and the extent of gender inequality to top management and key stakeholders in the institutions at stake; second, gender analyses are essential to implement any initiative and/or solution that can address gender-based discrimination - to the point that, it may be argued, no effective change strategy could be devised without provision of empirical evidence.

**Sample Context 5.1.i: In some universities there is little availability of gender-disaggregated data and hence gender targets had not previously been considered.**

Setting gender targets for senior positions is seen as an ambitious goal in university settings where basic gender-disaggregated data are not available, and where recruitment and promotion processes have not been subject to rigorous gender audits. In these contexts, introduction of gender equality monitoring at all stages of recruitment, promotion and progression processes, and analysis of available data, is a necessary first step. Some partners therefore had to focus on the related tasks of accessing available data and embedding gender equality monitoring procedures:

Partner E: ‘Particular actions have progressed more than others, ie, equality monitoring has progressed because it is seen as key to unlocking many of the others, and because there is a very strong interest from across the spectrum within the university in ‘data’; [...] ‘Work continues to identify realistic and palatable target setting within [this university]. The development of this task is being facilitated by analysis of data made available.’

Partner A: “Data access is a key difficulty to overcome for producing accurate gender analyses. Even in those cases when the institution has already formalized processes of gender-disaggregated data collection, access to data often proves to be challenging for several reasons, among which privacy concerns’.

#### **Key Advice – Sample Context 5.1.i**

- Seek top management support to make (aggregated and anonymized) data accessible on a regular basis.
- Embed gender equality monitoring at all stages of enrolment, recruitment, progression and promotion processes.
- Gather and analyse gender-disaggregated data to identify trends, make gender patterns visible and to provide the evidence-base for target-setting.
- Use robust data analysis to make the case for greater transparency in selection procedures and for positive action measures such as gender targets.

### **5.2 Gender Targets: Fine-grained data analysis**

**Sample Context 5.2.i: In some institutions, equality monitoring is already embedded and an authoritative evidence base exists, and there is often an institutional commitment** to addressing the gender gaps at senior levels. Setting gender targets is still a challenging activity, and meaningful gender target-setting requires in-depth and fine-grained data analysis in order to identify exactly where the obstacles to progression to senior roles lie, and to make hidden inequalities more visible.

Partner F: ‘... developments [in our University] are clearly supportive of the direction of travel towards greater inclusivity, but there remain gender imbalances in some of the senior research roles within the University and it is our aim to seek to explore the systemic and structural reforms that can work to better support gender diversity and equal opportunity.’

Partner F identified particular gender imbalances in research leadership roles and in relation to pay, and conducted detailed institutional research through a pay-gap analysis, career-break analysis and academic trajectory analysis. The academic trajectory analysis would inform a promotion policy review; the career break project provided the data required for monitoring, support towards transition and progression policies, and benchmarking of maternity, paternity and parental leave entitlements with competitors.



**Key Advice – Sample Context 5.2.i**

- Conduct more fine-grained and detailed gender analysis of career structures and leadership roles and responsibilities in the organisation.
- For example, a **pay-gap analysis** can reveal gendered disparities in pay and reward structures.
  - Work with Human Resources and let them take responsibility for the pay-gap analysis as this will promote sustainability of such activities
  - It is key to include all staff, from all grades and career stages, in pay data and analysis.
  - Training and support is needed for staff undertaking pay reviews.
  - Both mean and median pay gaps should be presented to help identify where there may be something happening at either end of the pay ranges.
  - Commentary and analysis should also be included, within statements and reports, on the causes and consequences of any disparities in pay.
  - Finally it is advised that specific sustainable activities should be implemented beyond the gathering of data and analysis in order to ensure positive changes.

**5.3 - Setting Gender Targets**

**Sample context 5.3:** Some partners identified gender targets for senior posts. For example, Partner D is located in a context where a national policy of gender target-setting for senior roles exists already, which is to be devolved to institutions. Based on their experiences to date, Partner D suggested that gender targets need to be based on careful analysis and projections.

**Key Advice – Sample Context 5.3**

- Set realistic and achievable gender targets for senior positions.
- Targets should also be ambitious enough to stimulate action and innovation on ways to increase numbers of women at senior levels.
- Set targets for numbers of women to be nominated for, or to apply for, promotion to senior posts.

**5.4 - Gender Targets: Addressing gender imbalance at senior levels in order to meet targets**

**Sample Context 5.4 – Organisations with explicit gender targets for senior roles:** Setting gender targets for senior posts should be just one element of a wider integrated strategy to address gender imbalances at senior levels. In order to meet gender targets without the direct use of gender quotas, measures to address

unconscious bias and structural obstacles to career progression need to be introduced. Partners introduced a range of measures linked to setting gender targets and they offer the following advice:

**Key Advice – Sample Context 5.4**

- Review performance and promotion processes to identify gendered impacts, such as mismatches between stated promotion criteria and actual practice.
- Review the offering of rewards, including performance recognition schemes.
- Review pay structures.
- Identify actions to address issues. (See Core Guideline 4 above).
- Work with faculties to adopt more proactive ways of identifying promotion opportunities.
- Develop career progression supports such as supports for those taking career breaks and supports for contract researcher careers.
- Conduct an equality impact assessment of research excellence standards and implement guidelines on gender equality and diversity competence in research excellence standards (see GENOVATE Deliverable 5.1).

**6. Develop measures to increase proportions of women in very male-dominated disciplines**

Horizontal gender segregation is a particular concern in most universities, where some academic disciplines have very high proportions of either men or women among the staff and student populations. Tailored programmes to promote greater gender diversity through measures relating to careers can be targeted at specific disciplines or units that are characterised by high male dominance.

**Sample context 6:** Partner D responded to an identified need for greater gender diversity in innovation activities in the areas of ICT and engineering, and used this approach as a test-bed for implementation of actions in one academic/research unit:

‘There are two types of gender gaps at [our university]: the vertical segregation of gender (few women hold professorships) and a horizontal segregation between fields of research and education (extremely few women in ICT and some areas of engineering). We have been mainstreaming gender in [the ICT] research centre together with the university’s gender researchers. It’s grown from the needs of our staff and ICT companies’ (Partner D).

**Key Advice 6**

- Select an academic unit which has very few women and develop activities at the level of the unit.
- Promote gender mainstreaming among the staff within the unit to raise awareness and interest.

- Work with the Head/management of the unit to develop recruitment procedures.
- Inspire staff to develop their own activities to promote recruitment of women in their discipline.

## **7. Seek to influence national policy on academic recruitment/promotion processes**

**Sample context 7: In some European countries, academic recruitment and promotion processes are centralised nationally**, and universities have little autonomy in shaping policy and practice regarding recruitment or promotion. This is challenging for GEAP teams, but one way of seeking to bring about change is to attempt to influence national policy.

According to Partner A: ‘Our initial plan of introducing new regulations for recruitment and promotion committees, to modify procedures to elect board and committee members and to modify career advancement procedures for university Administration had to be redesigned in order to suit national policy-making procedures. [...] We realized that in order to envision and implement any action related to these points we have to intervene in national policy making, which has made the process slower for us’.

Or Partner B: ‘Some of the above actions developed in a different direction than originally anticipated. First actions regarding recruitment or promotion etc. were impossible to proceed with given the centralized appointment procedures and structure in [our country]’.

### **Key Advice – Sample Context 7**

- **Seek to influence national policy on academic recruitment/promotion processes.**
- Develop national contacts and networks to support strategies to influence national policy.
- Include gender studies experts as well as other stakeholders in national networks.
- Develop policies, such as gender targets, through a networked and collaborative bottom up approach between institutions.
- Recognise that it may be a long, sometimes non-linear, process that may include stalemate and/or drawback phases.
- Provision of empirical data is fundamental to making gender dynamics visible to policy-makers.
- Seek to make gender central in research evaluation processes at national level.
- Periodically review strategies to influence national policy in terms of their responsiveness and effectiveness.

- While working at the national level, it can be useful to develop more small-scale activity at the level of the institution. At local institutional level, select actions that can be implemented locally and that can have an **immediate impact on the institution** at stake, such as a mentoring programme or career development programme.

### **8. Take advantage of opportunities for synergies with national-level or EU-level developments**

Measures to promote greater gender equality in academic/research careers in universities are often being implemented in the context of wider national-level and/or EU level developments that are complementary. These might be, for example, national equality initiatives or developments in the higher education or research sectors that may be complementary to gender equality goals, such as quality promotion processes, etc. While gender equality is a goal in its own right, some partners found that it is extremely helpful to take advantage of the opportunities presented by these developments to further gender equality goals.

**Sample Context (8i) – International and national-level pressure for change towards gender equality:** For example, in some national contexts, key influencers such as research funding bodies are pushing the agenda for greater gender equality in research and innovation, which is reinforced by the demands being made by influential EU-level or international bodies. Synergies can be generated through engagement with other actors with shared goals. For example, Partner E has progressed the agenda for change internally by engaging with external drivers.

‘In as much as possible push the momentum for change strategically with external drivers e.g. [science foundations], H2020, Athena SWAN, that are recognised and valued by peer institutes and/or strategic funding and other external bodies. So the driver is not just ‘a good thing for our staff’ but being externally recognised and validated for efforts made’ (Partner E).

The synergies that are created through this type of engagement can strengthen GEAPs and maximise their impact by positioning them at core of the university’s strategic planning.

**‘GENOVATE’s research has complemented and enhanced institutional-level equality initiatives in [this university]. In particular, the university’s new gender equality action plan is more robust and authoritative because it is underpinned by principles developed by GENOVATE; this has helped secure buy-in for the action plan across the institution. In turn, these institutional-level initiatives serve to implement GENOVATE’S proposals; in this way, the proposals can become embedded in [this university’s] strategies, policies and practices’ (Gender Project Officer, Partner E).**

**Sample Context (8ii):** In another context, the attention being given by the GENOVATE project to academic career transitions coincided with national-level developments relating to accreditation in higher education.

‘These actions have progressed because as university we faced a process of accreditation by Ministry of Education of [our country] last year, and criteria include requirements such as quality assessment systems and career development plans. So the timing of our project activities [in career development] was perfect’ (Partner C).

**Key Advice – Sample Contexts 8i and 8ii**

- Take advantage of opportunities presented by external drivers or developments to promote the benefits of gender equality measures in your institution, for example by drawing attention to H2020 guidelines on the gender dimension in research.
- Develop synergies with wider policy developments or initiatives with complimentary goals.
- External developments can provide validation and stimulus for action.
- Be prepared that engagement can happen at short notice and at critical moments. Get the groundwork done by keeping abreast of initiatives and being prepared to engage when opportunities arise.

**9. Ensure accountability of all actions through ongoing monitoring.**

To ensure accountability, impact and sustainability of gender equality interventions, develop effective monitoring procedures.

**Key Advice 9**

- Embed regular reporting procedures in university structures to monitor progress of all gender equality interventions.
- Gather data on a regular basis to monitor progress and impact of all actions and interventions.
- Analyse, present and publish data and progress reports on a regular basis.
- Identify actions to address any lack of progress or impact.

## Appendix A

### Review of International Literature

A wealth of international research on the roles, achievements and career paths of female academic researchers highlights a persistence of career patterns and outcomes that differ from their male counterparts (European Commission, 2009a; genSET, 2010; European Commission, 2012). Numerous reports and studies have recognised the gap that continues to exist between principle, policy and practice. Despite a gender equality agenda, gender inequality persists in selection, experience and outcome across disciplines, levels and countries. This has a cumulative effect on careers: higher numbers of women than men get siphoned off along secondary career paths at key transition points so that women remain over-represented in junior academic positions, under-represented in senior positions, are more likely to be team members on research projects than Principal Investigators, will apply less for promotion, and will be poorly represented in decision-making roles at all levels of the research enterprise (Zalevski, Tobbell and Butcher, 2009; Doherty and Manfredi, 2010; Doherty and Cooke, 2011; Van Den Brink and Benschop, 2011; European Commission, 2012; Head et al, 2013; Morley, 2013, O'Connor, 2015).

Strategies to addressing gender inequalities in academic and research careers in the European context have tended to involve one or more of three key approaches: ensuring compliance with legal obligations prohibiting direct and indirect discrimination rather than positive obligations to promote gender equality; measures aimed at promoting the career progression of individual women; and the development of initiatives at the structural levels of institutions. However, the persistence of gendered patterns suggests that policies do not necessarily get implemented fully or in enabling environments, and that policies that do get implemented may be top-down or context insensitive.

In this context, the GENOVATE project has sought to implement innovative, locally-appropriate and sustainable strategies for embedding structural and cultural change in universities and research organisations to better support gender diversity and equal opportunities in research and innovation for men and women.

More specifically, in the area of career transitions, the GENOVATE project has sought:

- to positively strengthen selection processes relating to equality in recruitment, promotion and progression of, and support for, researchers, in the partner institutions;
- and to develop processes to strengthen the presence of women in academic/research leadership positions and senior academic research positions in the partner institutions.

Considerable research exists on measures, actions and interventions that can contribute to address gender inequalities in academic/research careers. One of the key elements of any strategy in this area is gender equality monitoring. Heward and Taylor (1992:119) assert that '**systematic monitoring** of applicants, interviewees, appointments and promotions is the first step in implementing a policy'. Referring to Jewson and Mason (1986), Heward and Taylor (1992) concur that formalising recruitment procedures does not of itself lead to greater equality. What is required, they assert, is action based on data which is gathered, monitored, analysed and reported to a designated equal opportunities post holder who is in turn responsible to strategic-level bodies

within institutions. In order to prevent equal opportunities policies from floundering, Heward and Taylor (1992) maintain that the results of monitoring must be published, imbalances identified and actions put into place to redress imbalances, actions which they acknowledge may be 'difficult and politically sensitive'.

A growing body of research indicates gender equality issues within academia are systemic and that interventions need to be balanced in their approach in terms of addressing issues of agency and structure (Acker, 2006; Rice, 2012; O Grada et al, 2015). Guth and Wright (2009: 143) maintain that 'a culture of fairness, equality and equity' is important, suggesting that new initiatives and/or directions are required as even the most rigorous policies fail to address the 'lived experiences' of female academics. As Rice (2012:10) summarises: "Men and women are judged by different criteria, they are expected to perform differently, and they are rewarded differently for the same accomplishments."

This may warrant evaluations of selection processes for 'adverse impact' (Collins and Morris, 2008). Adverse impact may be mitigated with regards to gender by introducing **positive action** measures, defined by the European Commission (2009a: 6) as 'consisting of proportionate measures undertaken with the purpose of achieving full and effective equality in practice for members of groups that are socially or economically disadvantaged, or otherwise face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage'. **Positive action** can involve a range of actions such as seeking and welcoming applications from under-represented groups, providing mentoring or training opportunities, ensuring gender balance of decision-making bodies, targeting special assignments to enhance career development and **setting equality driven targets**. Rice (2012) advocates the development of actions and programmes to meet targets, rather than merely the setting of equality targets.

More broadly, positive action measures can be integrated with **structural approaches** that seek to challenge the gendered norms embedded in academic/research cultures, including for example, challenging gendered notions of research excellence, gender-proofing policies and procedures that relate to career progressions and transitions, and consciousness-raising to enhance gender-sensitivity of key actors.

The different approaches and examples of good practice discussed in the international literature provide a wealth of examples of good practice and advice to universities and research organisations that seek to address gender inequalities in academic/research careers. However, in reality, local and national contexts provide different environments for the implementation of actions. Van den Brink and Benschop's (2012) study of 971 professorial appointments in the Netherlands, while demonstrating the 'leaky pipeline', does also show that this effect varies depending on institutional context. Their work also highlights the importance of investigating beyond apparently 'transparent' policies to the implementation and outcomes of such policies in day-to-day recruitment and decision-making processes. Bamberger and Pratt (2010) argue for the value of studying specific organisations as a way of gaining insights into what 'makes diversity work'. The GENOVATE approach to implementation has acknowledged the need for context-sensitivity in developing and implementing measures in this area and as a result the project has produced a valuable body of learning that can contribute to understandings of 'what makes diversity work'.

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## Appendix B: Glossary of Terms

Gender – Refers to the social differences between men and women and the social attributes, expectations of and opportunities of males and females due to sexual classification.

Sex - Refers to the biological and physiological differences between men and women.

Gendered – Where the experience, attributes and behaviours etc of one sex is valued over the other(s).

Gender Analysis – An analysis of gender relations in terms of gender inequalities or inequities; Gender analysis illustrates gender patterns with regard to, for example, recruitment, promotion and progression opportunities.

Gender Audit – A social audit which examines existing policy or practice from the perspective of gender equality and identifies what could be improved to pursue gender equality

Gender Balance – Refers to the ratio of men and women in a given context: a standard definition of gender balance is a minimum 60:40 ratio between men and women (considered as a minimum of 40% of either gender).

Gender Disaggregated Data - Data that is collected and analysed by gender

Gender Equality – Refers to the equal enjoyment of rights and opportunities of men and women in all social institutions and spheres such as the economy, family, education, the legal system, universities and so forth

Gender Equality Monitoring - A process of collecting, storing, collating and analysing data on gender equality grounds.

Gender Inequality – Refers to the differences in opportunities and advantages due to gender.

Gender Sensitivity – Refers to the extent to which gender awareness informs policy, practice and behaviour

Mentoring – A goal-oriented relationship that aims to enhance and nurture career development and reflection on the part of a mentee through guidance and support from a more experienced mentor

Positive Action – ‘... proportionate measures undertaken with the purpose of achieving full and effective equality in practice for members of groups that are socially or economically disadvantaged, or otherwise face the consequences of past or present discrimination or disadvantage’<sup>3</sup>.

Unconscious gender bias – Refers to implicit biases which contribute to gendered outcomes.

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<sup>3</sup> European Commission (2009a) *The gender challenge in research funding: assessing the European national scenes*, Luxembourg: Office for Official Publications of the European Communities