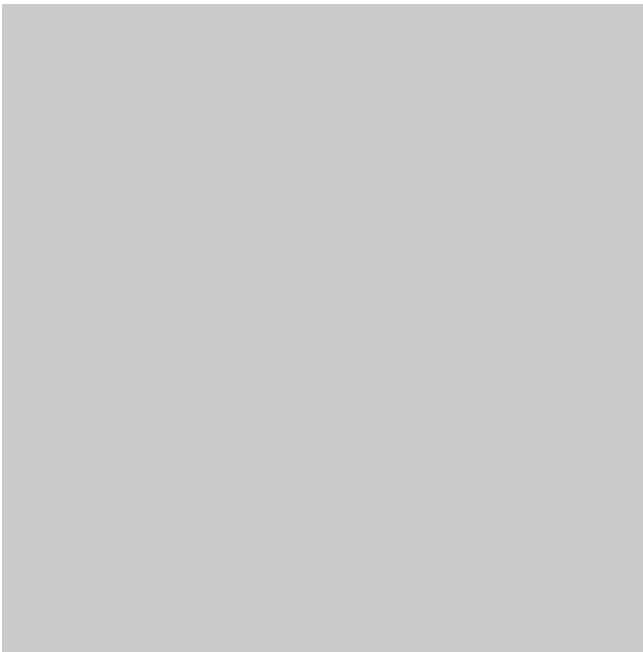


HANDBOOK FOR LOCAL GENDER EQUALITY WORK

- FOR IMPROVED GENDER EQUALITY IN ACADEMIC POSITIONS



NHH



Dated 8 December 2022



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INTRODUCTION

NHH will improve its work on gender equality. The proportion of women in academic positions at the Norwegian School of Economics (NHH) currently ranges from 17% to 46% in the different job categories. The present gender balance represents an important strategic challenge for NHH. The work on improving gender balance is incorporated into the school’s core activities, and enjoys strong support from the board and management.

The work for improved gender balance is a complex matter. There is neither one single cause for the gender imbalance, nor one single measure that will solve these complex challenges, which vary between departments, subject areas and levels.

The ‘Action Plan for Improved Gender Equality in Academic Positions’ (as of 1 January 2023) outlines NHH's strategy and plan for the work of improving gender balance in academic positions. Work on gender equality is a responsibility for management at all levels.

The purpose of this handbook is to provide specific advice for practical gender equality work within departments. The heads of department have special responsibility for integrating and aligning this work with the academic community and for ensuring the goals are attained within their respective disciplines. This responsibility involves:

- actively promoting an understanding of the importance of NHH achieving its goals for equality
- actively working to achieve target figures set for gender balance in academic positions
- actively participating and contributing to NHH’s overall, coordinated work towards equality
- assisting annually in the preparation of the ‘Status report for Action Plan for Improved Gender Equality in Academic Positions’, including submitting equality accounts that show to what extent considerations for equality have been taken into account when prioritising research resources, and the extent to which equality funding has been used in accordance with the action plan’s objectives.

The heads of department are responsible for equality in their department and constitute the equality team at NHH, together with NHH's central gender equality advisor and the Vice-Rector for Faculty Affairs.

The equality team must be a driving force and an inspiration by contributing to strategic discussions and objectives, as well as coordinating the work towards equality at NHH. The team must keep abreast of best practice in the higher education sector in general, and at NHH in particular, and has overall responsibility for implementing the action plan, with special responsibility for the annual equality seminars, for management training and training of new employees, the design of equality support and information about equality. The team annually reviews the budget and accounts for equality funds.

On the one hand, the handbook presents a list of specific measures that can supplement the overarching initiatives in the action plan and, on the other hand, provides suggestions and questions that can aid reflection on the work to improve gender balance. First and foremost, it is hoped that the handbook will contribute to the discussion and increase attention on the work of improving gender equality in academic positions.

RECRUITMENT

New appointments in permanent or temporary positions are normally made by advertising the position and following the subsequent recruitment process. In some cases, appointments are made without advertising the position. This raises questions about the conscious and unconscious influences in the recruitment process that may impact the extent to which more women are recruited.

1. Planning

- a) How should the position be defined? Which qualifications/competencies are important? Can the qualifications be clearly, categorically and explicitly defined? Who should participate in these assessments?
- b) A (senior) position that becomes vacant is not automatically advertised in the same area. Can gender equality be used as one criterion when assessing whether the position should be advertised in another area?
- c) Might it be appropriate to appoint candidates to multiple positions at the same time? Does the department have an active policy for establishing research groups? Can advertisements be seen in relation to this policy? Will focusing on research groups influence the proportion of female applicants? ¹
- d) Might employing someone without advertising the position be an appropriate measure from a gender equality perspective? Unadvertised appointments may be used as a means of recruiting women.
- e) Should potential candidates be advised that a job advertisement is imminent? Can personal contacts, search-and-find committees, women's networks etc. be helpful in identifying potential candidates?

According to a Centre for Innovation Research (STEP) report from the Nordic Institute for Studies in Innovation, Research and Education (NIFU), research communities that have succeeded in recruiting women in research are characterised by either being newly established or by having made several appointments during a short period of time.

- f) Are there any potential internal candidates?
 - a. Is it possible to request information about whether there are potential qualified women applicants when the advertisement text/job description are drafted?
 - b. Can the knowledge obtained about potential qualified women candidates be used as a criterion when the job level is determined at the time of advertisement, professorship / associate professorship positions and tenure-track positions?
- g) Can international recruitment be used in relation to the gender perspective?
- h) When should the position be advertised?
- i) What strategy(s) should be used when it comes to choosing recruitment channels and marketing?

2. Formulation of the job advertisement

- a) How should the advisement text be formulated? What information and documents do applicants need to submit?
- b) Is the language in the advertisement suited to the target audience? You should be aware that men tend to be attracted by competitive wording, while the opposite is often true for women.
- c) Are the requirements for qualifications and competence realistic? A number of studies show that extensive and unrealistic qualification requirements may result in qualified women not applying.
- d) Has the choice of job level in the advertisement/appointment been considered from a gender perspective? The use of post-doctoral and associate professor positions can be a useful tool in recruiting and qualifying female researchers, since the generation change provides a good recruitment basis among women.
- e) Is it possible to open the position for temporary academic appointment while the applicant gains the necessary qualifications, cf. the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges Section 6-5?
- f) Can the degree of specialisation vs an open call for applicants in the advertisement text influence the applicant pool from a gender perspective?²
- g) Should the future potential of applicants be given more importance? (may favour younger applicants).
- h) Might it be appropriate to request just a selection of published articles? This will generally help to highlight potential among applicants. Requirements of 'production in relation to time' will be particularly unfavourable for employees who are responsible for the care of small children.
- i) Is it possible to put contact persons of both sexes in the job advertisement?
- j) The under-represented gender is encouraged to apply when positions are advertised. It can be helpful to write that women will be preferred when other qualifications are considered equal.

² Cf., among other sources, the NIFU STEP report 'I spennet mellom kvalitet og krav til likestilling' ('Uniting quality and equality requirements') – in Norwegian, in which it is stated that general, i.e. relatively unspecific, advertisements of permanent positions are considered more favourable to female applicants, since these advertisements cannot easily be tailored to the research field of an internal, often male, candidate.

Alternatively, the advertisement text can state that the school is aiming for good gender balance and gives this high priority.

- k) When recruiting internationally, Norway's excellent welfare system should be emphasised.

3. Interviews

- a) Before interviews, candidates should be provided with as much information as possible. Relevant information may, for example, be information about who will participate in the interview, where the interview will take place, anything the candidates should bring with them, how long the interview will last etc. The more a candidate knows about the interview, the better they can prepare for it. All members of the interview panel should be given copies of submitted documents before the candidate arrives.
- b) We recommend that all qualified women are invited for an interview and to give a trial lecture.
- c) Is it possible for both men and women to participate in the interview?
- d) Be conscious of gender differences in presentation and evaluation – both among the candidates and the persons conducting the interview.
- e) Avoid questions relating to the candidate's partners' work, how the candidate will organise care for any children, etc.
- f) Sell the position and NHH! When recruiting internationally, Norway's excellent welfare system should be emphasised.

4. Assessment

- a) Be aware that informal invitations are more often given to men than to women.
- b) References – prepare and assess the questions and answers/information from a gender perspective.
- c) Be aware of gender differences in presentation and evaluation – both among potential candidates and those evaluating them – expert evaluations, teaching evaluations, obtaining references etc.

OTHER MEASURES

We differentiate between individual measures and structural measures. *Individual measures* are limited in time and space, and can generate debate and increase awareness of the gender equality challenges as well as create ripple effects. The advantage of individual measures is that they are very precise in relation to the issue they are intended to address. The goal of *structural* measures is to make gender equality work part of the institution's day-to-day operations – in research, teaching and dissemination.

5. Individual measures

- a) *Appointment without advertisement*: This has been used for many years in the recruitment of professors, particularly adjunct professors, but the appointees have usually been male. Departments that have started using this measure in their gender equality work stress that academic competence

is still a critical criteria, but that they are now looking for qualified female candidates in particular. This measure is goal-oriented and status-raising.

- b) *Appoint and make active use of employees in adjunct positions* – both male and female. Teaching, research, networks, mentor activities etc.
- c) *Steps to facilitate qualification for employees in permanent positions*: Enabling women to take time off from teaching duties, the organisation of teaching, organisation of working hours, the use of leave of absence for research purposes and research stays abroad etc. are all goal-oriented measures for further qualification. Any local schemes that supplement central schemes relating to absence for research purposes, funding of permanent and tenure-track positions, annual stipends etc., cf. the Action Plan.
- d) *Steps to facilitate recruitment to and qualification of employees in temporary positions*:
 - a. Short-term (two to six months) employment of student assistants at bachelor's degree level
 - b. Scholarships and/or short-term (two to six months) employment of student assistants at master's degree level

in order to motivate and inspire, and with a view to applying for master's degree and doctoral degree programmes.
- e) *Resource allocation*: Female researchers are given increased opportunities to travel for academic purposes and are offered research assistance paid by the hour and such, in the form of grants. The central scheme of annual stipends and the provisions of the Funds Regulations come in addition to, but do not replace, any local measures.
- f) *Start-up packages*: Give women recently appointed to academic positions a start-up package of funds for operations and equipment, funds to pay a research assistant or similar to ease their start-up phase. Any local schemes supplement the central scheme of annual stipends for female post-doctoral researchers and associate professors.
- g) *Courses, competence-raising*: Women in academic positions should be given priority for places on courses in media, dissemination, research management, management development, and be offered translation and proofreading.
- h) *Compensation for committee work*: Compensate women for additional workloads in connection with committee work etc. Emphasise that women must have sufficient time for their own research when preparing work schedules. See also sections 4.1 and 4.3 of the Action Plan.

6. Structural measures

One premise for successful gender equality work is that the responsibility is rooted in and originates from the central academic senior management and the department management. Structural measures can be divided into *research strategy measures* and *management and organisational measures*. A number of measures may belong in both categories.

i) *Research strategy measures*

Measures relating to research strategy can have a stimulating effect both for research communities in general and for women in particular. This is important from a gender equality perspective because poor research environments are considered a major reason why women leave academia. A selection of measures:

- a) *Research groups and subject/research environments, collective research projects:* Research groups have a stimulating effect on the research environment. This is important from a gender equality perspective because poor research environments are considered a major reason why women leave academia. Another barrier for women is that they do not participate in merit-giving networks to the same degree as men. This is significantly strengthened through participation in research groups³. In the event of available budgetary allocations for salaries, 'block appointments' may be a relevant measure in this context.
- b) *Support for/facilitation of networks.* Women participate less than men in networks that confer merit. Any local schemes supplement central measures under Section 4.1 of the Action Plan.
- c) *Mentoring programmes* or career development programmes for female research fellows, postdoctoral fellows and associate professors. Any local schemes supplement central measures under Section 4.3 of the Action Plan.
- d) *Performance appraisal interviews and career plans:* In performance appraisal interviews, qualification and qualification measures are a compulsory topic, including mapping of the employees' ambitions and work tasks and agreement on further qualification. The management should have an active influence on the division of administrative tasks among employees, and the degree to which each employee has tasks that confer merit (cf. the statistical point below). The management should also encourage female researchers in intermediate positions to enhance their qualifications through academic publication and research stays at relevant institutions in Norway and abroad, and introduce them to academic networks. Participation in mentor programmes should be facilitated. Any local schemes supplement Section 4.3 of the Action Plan, cf. also the Procedure for Facilitating Qualification and Promotion.
- e) *Allocation of tasks:* Make sure that women are allocated tasks that develop their expertise, confer merit and are meaningful in relation to promotions. Women should also be integrated in the academic strategy work in individual departments and in the institution as a whole, to ensure that the research interests of female researchers are taken into account. Statistics on gender in relation to teaching, supervision and publication can, among other things, be used as a basis for the allocation of tasks; see the item about statistics below.
- f) *Conscious prioritising of research topics/ research perspectives with female recruits.*
- g) *Representation:* Women, particularly women in senior positions, are encouraged to represent the department and discipline to the public and outside world. The composition of boards, councils and committees should ensure that men and women have equal influence in key decision-making processes. The importance of female role models should be highlighted.
- h) *Statistics:* Gender equality reporting is one of the institution's management tools. The difference between genders is often revealed in statistics that have a gender perspective. Relevant statistics include statistics on the applicant pool, employees in academic positions

³ Studies have shown that heterogeneously composed research groups are more robust than homogeneous groups (see, inter alia, *The Scientist* 7 November 2005 and *Science* vol. 309, 2005). One of the reasons for this is that when persons with different backgrounds are included in the same research group, it creates more possibilities for a broader research perspective. Creativity and innovation are improved when research groups are made up of a diverse group of people. Studies also show that establishing research groups increases both the flow of PhD candidates and the frequency of publication – particularly for women.

broken down by discipline, the distribution of funds for projects and academic communities, salary statistics, statistics related to teaching, supervision, publication etc.

ii) Management and organisational measures

- a) *Strategic planning work*: The main elements of the gender equality commitments must be incorporated into the units' strategic planning work. The plans must be specific and the results should be evaluated.
- b) *Strategies, plans and reports*: Integration of gender as a factor in all strategies and plans, with annual reporting of *target figures, measures and performance*. The plans must be specific. It is also important that new initiatives and projects are evaluated in relation to the gender equality targets.
- c) *Integration and alignment of equality work in the professional environment*: Has the management team put gender equality on the agenda? Is gender equality discussed in strategy meetings and other meetings? Is gender equality addressed when receiving new employees at the department? The department could consider developing its own equality plan.
- d) *Management training*: Gender equality work must be promoted by the management at different levels, so it is necessary for management to have expertise in this area. This also applies to heads of research projects and research groups. Such expertise can be requested during appointment/selection, and may also be included as an evaluation criterion.
- e) *Representativeness and influence*: The composition of boards, councils and committees should ensure that men and women have equal influence in key decision-making processes.
- f) *Role models*: Does the department have a conscious strategy regarding female role models?
 - Does the department make use of all opportunities for the appointment of women in adjunct positions?
 - How are female academics utilised in teaching?
- g) *Moderate gender quotas*: The provisions are laid down in the Basic Agreement, and read as follows: 'If there are several applicants with approximately equal qualifications for a vacant position, then applicants from the gender which is under-represented in the category of position in question shall be preferred.' 'The gender to which less than 40% of employees in the category of position in question belongs is deemed to be under-represented.'
- h) *International cooperation*: Use and develop international research contacts in order to improve gender balance in permanent positions, adjunct positions, visiting professorships and committees. This can be done by encouraging academic communities to appoint female adjunct professors, by inviting female guest researchers, and by using female foreign researchers in committee work.
- i) *Recruitment to master's and doctoral degree programmes*: To what extent does the department motivate and inspire candidates to apply for admission to master's and doctoral degree programmes?
- j) *Gender testing of budgets*: Gender testing of budgets (also called gender equality evaluation of budgets) means following up political goals in the gender equality field in budgetary and reporting work. This is done by reviewing the budgets and analysing the various allocations on

the basis of how funds are actually divided between men and women in relation to, for example, academic commitments and funding for research and academic environments.

k) *An active and conscious wage policy*

l) *Environment, appreciations, etc.* – measures such as women’s days, women’s dinners, and acknowledgement and highlighting of women.

m) *Submit an annual gender equality report to the Board.* This will entail material follow-up of the requirement in the action plan for gender equality and the statutory requirement that gender equality be integrated into departments' strategies, plans and reports, including the requirement that departments carry out an annual review of the status for new appointments.

GENDER EQUALITY AND GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN RESEARCH PROJECTS

7 In general

Gender as a *perspective* is about biological and social gender being reflected in the *content* of research. An increasing number of studies show that diversity, including gender balance and gender perspectives, contributes to increased academic quality and societal relevance. All public institutions that apply for EU research funding from Horizon Europe must have a gender equality action plan in place before they can receive funding. The Research Council of Norway has also introduced a gender perspective in research as a compulsory criterion in the assessment of applications.

It may be difficult to immediately recognise a project’s gender perspective. Depending on the scope and breadth of the project, a gender perspective may not always be relevant in that context. However, gender perspectives can in fact often be found in many research topics. Some references:

- The Research Council of Norway: <https://www.forskningsradet.no/en/Adviser-research-policy/Gender-balance-and-gender-perspectives/>
- Gendered Innovations: <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/what-is-gendered-innovations.html>
- Kilden Gender research: Handbook: ‘What is the Gender Dimension in Research? Case Studies from Interdisciplinary Research’ see https://kjonnsforskning.no/sites/default/files/what_is_the_gender_dimension_roggkorsvik_kilden_genderresearch.no_.pdf
- The Nordic Council of Ministers, Prosjekter i et kjønns- og likestillingsperspektiv (Projects in a gender and equality perspective) – in Norwegian. Contact: The Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and LGBTI (MR-JÄM): <https://www.norden.org/no/publication/prosjekter-i-et-kjonns-og-likestillingsperspektiv> – in Norwegian
- European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) (2016):
 - *Integrating gender equality into academia and research organizations: Analytical paper* .
 - [Gender equality in academia and research– GEAR tool](#).
 - *Roadmap to Gender Equality Plans in research and higher education institutions* : [a short guide](#) / [Success factors and common obstacles](#).

8 How can gender perspectives and gender equality be made relevant in a research project?

Gender perspectives in research improve the quality of research in a number of areas. The Research Council of Norway and EU/Horizon Europe place emphasis on gender perspectives in their assessment of applications. This represents both major opportunities and challenges for research communities. NHH is working to increase the integration of gender perspectives in its research. NHH employees can receive assistance from the Office of Research Administration at NHH.

Applications for externally funded research projects are also assessed based on the gender balance in the management and execution of projects, e.g. project management, the project group, steering committees and reference groups.

There are three recommended perspectives when assessing a project in relation to gender and gender equality⁴: Representation and participation, allocation of resources and consequences.

i) Representation and participation:

Representation and participation are important in every phase and at every level of the project. *Who* is a key word in this context: It is important to think about who is influencing and who is affected, who makes the decisions and for whom do the decisions have consequences, who participated in the management and execution of the project, etc. Clarifying the purpose of the project may also help to uncover a gender dimension.

Information should be provided about the representation of men and women in, among other areas:

- ✓ The project management
- ✓ The project group
- ✓ The steering committee
- ✓ Reference groups

When evaluating how each gender is represented and participates in the project, it may be helpful to reflect on the following questions:

- ✓ Who took the initiative and who formulated the objectives?
- ✓ How were persons in the various positions recruited/selected?
- ✓ What qualifications, expertise and characteristics are sought for appointments to various tasks, positions and roles?
- ✓ Are particular criteria applied when selecting persons for positions and tasks in the project? If so, do the criteria provide opportunities for and/or hinder gender-balanced representation?
- ✓ Is gender a significant factor when people are selected to take part in the project?
- ✓ Are there systematic differences between the men and women in the project in terms of age, status, expertise, priorities, influence, needs and wishes? If so, can anything be done to even out these differences without negatively affecting the quality and running of the project?

ii) Allocation of resources

Project resources can be defined in many ways, and not all of these resources are easily quantifiable. First and foremost, this concerns money, labour, expertise, time, facilities and equipment. Money,

⁴ Source: The Nordic Council of Ministers, Prosjekter i et kjønns- og likestillingsperspektiv (Projects in a gender and equality perspective) – in Norwegian. Contact: The Nordic Council of Ministers for Gender Equality and LGBTI (MR-JÅM): <https://www.norden.org/no/publication/prosjekter-i-et-kjønns-og-likestillingsperspektiv> – in Norwegian

the monetary value of equipment and the amount of time available are easy to quantify. It is more difficult to assess value in terms of the quality of the resources the project represents, and how this value is divided between men and women. When evaluating the division of resources, it may be helpful to reflect on the following questions:

- ✓ Who performs the various tasks, who has the professional skills, and who has access to those skills?
- ✓ Who has access to and can make use of the project's resources? How are the allotted resources allocated?

iii) Consequences

A project, plan or initiative may include several aspects with consequences for gender and gender equality. When evaluating a project's consequences for gender and equality, it may be appropriate to reflect on whether the project has consequences for people, whether these consequences will be different for women and men, and if so, why.

It may not be easy to immediately recognise the gender perspective. Depending on the scope and breadth of the project, a gender perspective may not be relevant. When assessing the project's relevance from a gender and equality perspective, it may be important to assess the following factors:

- ✓ The challenges that the project will contribute to solving – possibly improve the project's stated objective
- ✓ The project's influence on actors' actions and decisions
- ✓ Are there ideas relating to gender that have not been reflected in the project's premises or theoretical assumptions.

A FEW ARGUMENTS FOR EQUALITY AND IMPROVED GENDER BALANCE

- ✓ **Fairness:** Equality is a matter of fairness. Men and women must be given equal opportunities to participate in the research community.
- ✓ **Democracy and credibility:** Report no. 20 to the Storting, 'Commitment to Research', points out that critical research is an important basis for political development and administration, contributes to a more critical and open debate in society, and that research-based knowledge provides an improved basis for decision-making. In order to ensure a well-functioning democracy, women must participate in research on an equal footing with men.
- ✓ **Role models:** Female members of staff send positive signals to students. Female researchers act as role models for potential future researchers and new (younger) researchers.
- ✓ **Research relevance:** High-quality, relevant research depends on the research communities' ability to pose the 'right' questions and consider several possible solutions. This is best done in an environment where there is room for different types of people with different perspectives, interests and experience, and the ability for academic cooperation. Improved gender balance and gender perspectives will result in research institutions more appropriately reflecting the diversity of the population, which will increase credibility.

- ✓ **Research quality:** Increased recruitment of women to research will increase knowledge resources, contribute to quality in the production of knowledge, and make the sector more robust and competitive. Studies suggest that heterogeneously composed research groups are more robust and innovative than homogeneous groups.
- ✓ **Research management:** Good research management is becoming an ever-stronger requirement. Academic management positions have a strong influence on research and are important to the development of quality. Men and women must be ensured equal access to training for academic management positions.
- ✓ **Working environment:** A balanced gender composition improves the social environment between colleagues and job satisfaction in the academic community.
- ✓ **Challenges in terms of expertise and competition:** When it comes to students and academic recruitment, women make up 50% of the talent pool for which we compete. Uneven recruitment means missing out on talent. Our challenge is to enable NHH and the academic communities to compete for capable women.