

Gender Action Plan

Goals

ETH Zurich, just as all leading global science and technology universities, exhibits low percentages of women at all levels of the academic career. Approximately 30% of students and doctoral students are women. The proportion of female postdocs and senior scientists amounts to around 25% and circa 9% at the level of titular professors. About 30% of assistant professor positions are occupied by women and women make up barely 9% among full professors. All numbers lie below the appointed goals at ETH Zurich.

Higher numbers of women on all levels should be reached because diverse teams with a larger proportion of women play an important role with respect to innovative cutting edge research (refer to the study "Gendered Innovations" by the European Commission in 2013). By employing more women within scientific research, interdisciplinary fields could be addressed with more attention, just as putting a stronger focus on the needs of diverse groups within our society. ETH Zurich sees itself as a university that aims to make essential contributions in fundamental research as well as to solving global problems such as food, energy, health etc. A stronger involvement of women on all academic levels appears demanded in this context.

Furthermore, ETH Zurich concerns itself with supporting for all students and employees the reconciliation of academic studies and occupational activity on one hand, and family commitments on the other.

Last but not least, ETH Zurich does not tolerate any form of sexual harassment or discrimination on the grounds of gender and takes action on the above.

Responsibilities

It is the duty of the President of ETH Zurich to ensure the realisation of the aforementioned goals. The President is hereby supported by the Associate Vice President Equal Opportunities who leads Equal, the Office of Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Moreover, the Department Heads are required to develop gender action plans for the respective departments, to present these within the dialogues with the Executive Board of ETH Zurich and to put appropriate progress controls into place. Further entities of ETH Zurich, such as, for example, the Dual Career Advice, the Infrastructure Division of Human Resources and Services or the Office for Faculty Affairs are tasked with supporting the process of realising the aforementioned goals.

Realisation

ETH Zurich acknowledges four areas of action that require specific measures to reach the previously listed goals.

1. Careers and Career Development in Academia

For many years, ETH Zurich has been active in the area of developing academic careers. The existing measures shall be upheld and shall in some aspects be extended.

With respect to measures fostering career development in academia, ETH Zurich is essentially focussing on the following target groups:

— **Potential students:**

Girls and boys, and particularly female and male high-school students should be motivated for STEM-fields early on. This is to be achieved through special events on the National Future Day, through Experiment Days as Summer Break Activities, through Open Doors Days or Trial Weeks within the Departments, advanced trainings for teachers, activities of ETH Unterwegs etc. The Departments are mostly responsible for these activities, but there are also other contributors like EducETH, Teacher Training of ETH Zurich, SOC and the Equal Office.

— **Students and doctoral students:**

Female (doctoral) students should be supported through mentoring programmes at the interface between academia and industry (e. g. Femtec), through career-development programmes within academia (e. g. Fix-the-Leaky-Pipeline, a joint programme of all institutions of the ETH Domain), through information events (e. g. concerning career perspectives) as well as through excellence scholarships for women. Responsible bodies are the ETH Career Centre, the Rector's staff as well as the Equal Office.

— **Alumni and alumnae:**

Enabling ETH Zurich to stay in touch with ETH alumnae should be fostered by activities to follow the careers of excellent graduated female doctoral students and postdocs. The responsibility thereof falls on the Departments. Furthermore, it would be helpful to establish an alumnae section within ETH-Alumni in order to allow networking of current and past female ETH members.

— **Postdocs, senior assistants and senior scientists:**

Women on this career level should be supported by career-development programmes within academia (e.g. Fix-the-Leaky-Pipeline) as well as through targeted information events (e.g. concerning application and appointment procedures). Both the Office for Faculty Affairs and the Equal Office hold the responsibility. Furthermore, measures towards re-integration of female scientists after a family break are to be developed. Responsible bodies are the Departments and the Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services. Also, consistent support of female senior scientists, specifically through nominating them as adjunct professors (Titularprofessorin), deserves further attention. Here, the Departments are the responsible bodies.

— **Assistant professors:**

The career path of assistant professors should be supported through qualified mentoring within the Departments, with respect to planning of the continued career, as well as through transparent and well-communicated rules governing the evaluation of tenure applications. Thereby, the effects of gender stereotypes are to be taken into consideration. The Departments, the Office for Faculty Affairs and the Tenure Committee are responsible for these aspects. The President of ETH Zurich conducts mid-term meetings with all tenure candidates in order to quickly identify possible issues and to address these if possible. Finally, it remains to be mentioned that an assistant professor position can be prolonged by one year at the most in the case of a maternity and therefore, the tenure process can be initiated at a later point in time.

— **Tenured professors:**

First of all, for this group a consistent compliance with and a constant development of the established measures for ensuring equal opportunities in faculty recruiting procedures should be guaranteed. The Delegates for Recruiting Procedures as well as the Office for Faculty Affairs are responsible in this respect. Furthermore, dual career consulting plays an important role, specifically when looking for a position for partners while the recruiting procedure is underway. Here, the Dual Career Advice as part of the Office for Faculty Affairs holds responsibility. Female role models are to be presented when searching for tenured professors and qualified female applicants are to be looked for actively. The Departments (creating current reference lists of female leading scientists in their respective fields) as well as the ETH President and the Office for Faculty Affairs are tasked in this context. The Women Professors' Forum (WPF), holding know-how from female networks, can be consulted in advisory capacity. Furthermore, on average two additional professor positions per year are created for women with an excellent academic career, but not exactly matching the profile of advertised professorships. The Office for Faculty Affairs and especially the President of ETH Zurich are directly responsible. In addition, ETH Zurich aims to employ more women within consequential commissions of ETH Zurich (for example within the Strategy Commission or the Research Commission) and in the Executive Board. The Executive Board is responsible for these actions. Lastly, it is important to keep tenured female professors at ETH Zurich. This can be achieved through excellent framework conditions. Within this context, an active professor's network is important, such as the one supported by the WPF. This network may serve as dialogue partner for the Executive Board of ETH Zurich.

2. Integration of Gender-Specific Aspects in Research and Teaching

Women and men are interested in different research questions and topics, which motivate them also for their studies and profession. If women are to be won more easily for a STEM education and if research findings are to be built on a broader perspective, the following points need to be implemented:

- Experts with specific know-how concerning varying interests and approaches of women and men in research and teaching will be invited as guests of ETH Zurich for periods spanning weeks to months. These experts hold a consulting function within important Decision Boards during their stay at ETH Zurich. Equal, the Office for Equal Opportunities, is responsible for inviting and organising the stays of the aforementioned experts.
- ETH Zurich is active in the development and accomplishment of seminars, workshops and courses addressing the relevance of specific teaching and evaluation methods for women and men. Furthermore, these activities are supposed to make participants aware of the possibilities to adapt single lecture courses as well as entire curricula to the different needs of women and men. The Office of Educational Development and Technology (LET), the Departments and the Equal Office are responsible for such activities. Financial resources are provided by the Rector of ETH Zurich as well as by the Departments.
- The Innovedum programme promotes and supports courses with particular gender-specific aspects and introduces an appropriate evaluation criterion for proposals. The Office of Educational Development and Technology and the Teaching Commission, and more generally the Rector's staff, hold the responsibility for the changes just described.
- Furthermore, a new criterion is introduced for the evaluation of departments as well as for the evaluation of individual research projects within ETH Zurich. This criterion should give particular recognition to gender-specific aspects, similar to EU research projects. If such aspects fail to be depicted, a special explanation is required. The Vice President Research and Corporate Relations and his / her staff are responsible.

3. Facilitation of Work/Life Balance

ETH Zurich has been active in facilitating a healthy work/life balance for its affiliates since many years. The most important groups of actions that are to be continued and to be extended, if necessary, consist of the following:

- ETH Zurich offers the possibility of part-time occupation. Flexible work conditions including, for instance, home office are supported in principle. In special situations, for example in case of a sick-nursing within the family, the respective superiors offer support for generous individual solutions. Apart from the superiors, the Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services is accountable.
- Each year in December, an award is granted to especially family-friendly superiors. Both the AVETH and the Equal Office are in authority for this award.
- A maternity leave of four months is granted. Half of the maternity leave can, after consultation with respective superiors, be taken in the form of reduced employment during a certain period of time. If both parents are employed by ETH Zurich, part of the maternity leave can be drawn by the father. The superiors and the Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services are responsible.
- Departments typically dispose of salaries they do not need to pay to persons on maternity leave due to the fact that the Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services settles the respective salaries directly during four months. The Departments have to take care that the corresponding financial resources are made available directly to the units which the persons on leave are part of.
- For children of ETH employees and students a significant amount of day-care facilities are made available by the kihz Foundation (Childcare in the Zurich University Area). This Foundation receives an important part of its financial means from ETH Zurich and the University of Zurich. Furthermore, ETH Zurich offers facilities in a day-care centre at ETH Zentrum. In the case of temporary bottlenecks at ETH Zentrum or Hönggerberg, ETH Zurich endeavours to provide quick remedy. ETH employees are also supported through the "Family Campus" project planned for fall 2014. This project will provide information, counselling and aid in searching for day-care solutions matching individuals' needs. In addition, beginning in the fall semester 2014, financial resources will be made available to ensure that ETH employees with kids in extrafamilial childcare institutions do not pay higher tariffs for new-borns (up to 18 months) than they do for toddlers (above 18 months). The kihz Foundation organises individualised day-care models for conference visits and makes available a pool of nannies. ETH Zurich is active in keeping in place and in developing appropriate measures for appropriate childcare models within the Board of the kihz Foundation.
- Children of ETH employees and students within the ages 5 to 13 years are offered holiday courses by the kihz Foundation.
- Relevant information on combining studies, career and family will be made available in German and English on the new portal of the Welcome Center of ETH Zurich, which is targeted towards incoming doctoral students and postdocs. The portal starts in February of 2014. In 2015 at the latest, the Welcome Center aims at providing also individual consultations.
- Information events and discussion fora to the question of work/life balance as well as fathers' and mothers' lunches are regularly organised by the Equal Office.

4. Sexual Harassment and Discrimination on the Basis of Gender

Sexual harassment and discrimination on the grounds of gender are not tolerated at ETH Zurich and are actively combatted. This is already clearly stated in the Compliance Guide of ETH Zurich. A detailed description of the steps to be taken in the case of sexual harassment and discrimination is being compiled until Summer 2014 by the Legal Office of ETH, the Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services, the Ombudspersons and the Equal Office.

In the case of need for individual counselling for sexual harassment and discrimination on the grounds of gender, members of the Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services, the Equal Office as well as the Ombudspersons of ETH Zurich may be contacted.

In order to better estimate the degree of sexual harassment and discrimination at ETH Zurich and the resulting need for action, ETH employees are regularly surveyed accordingly. The Infrastructure Division Human Resources and Services is accountable for these surveys.

Evaluation

To support the efficient implementation of measures within the aforementioned four areas of action as well as to evaluate their success, ETH Zurich regularly collects data and conducts studies.

At least once a year, ETH Zurich issues the so-called Gender Monitoring Report¹ and informs about the shares of women at different academic and non-academic levels. Data not only for ETH Zurich as a whole but also for all individual Departments are presented and assessed. If the impression arises that either the work/life balance has worsened or the leaky pipeline, i. e. the “loss” of women with increasing levels of academic careers, has become more leaking, then appropriate counter-measures are employed immediately by the President of ETH Zurich.

As necessary, studies to specific problems are performed. For example, high-school graduates were questioned for their plans of academic studies and exiting ETH scientists were questioned for their reasons for leaving ETH Zurich and for their future plans. The following studies are currently in planning:

- Assessment of the motives and barriers of a cohort of beginning students to decide for or against continuing an academic career
- Assessment of experiences of other (STEM) universities in Switzerland and abroad with different measures towards equal opportunities.

The responsibility for performing the Gender Monitoring and the studies rests with the Equal Office.

¹ www.equal.ethz.ch/gender_monitoring/index_EN

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