

A photograph of the German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) building, a modern multi-story structure with a light-colored facade and large windows. The DKFZ logo is visible on the top left corner of the building. The sky is clear blue, and there are some green plants and pink flowers in the foreground.

dkfz.

GERMAN
CANCER RESEARCH CENTER
IN THE HELMHOLTZ ASSOCIATION

Research for a Life without Cancer

German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ)

Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan (GEDIP)

2021 - 2025



DKFZ COMMITMENT

The German Cancer Research Center (DKFZ) is an international research institution in the Helmholtz Association of Research Centers. Under the guiding principle "Research for a life without cancer", people from more than 80 different countries work at the DKFZ. The DKFZ is a signatory to the "Diversity Charter" (www.charta-der-vielfalt.de) and sees itself as a cosmopolitan, intercultural, gender-equal and inclusive research institution and is committed to ensuring that no one at the center is discriminated against on the basis of age, gender or gender identity, ethnic or social origin, physical or mental impairment, sexual orientation, religion or belief, or marital status. Furthermore, the DKFZ believes that in order to achieve its ambitious goals, the different perspectives and approaches of women and men should complement each other and therefore in particular more women should be recruited and retained for scientific leadership positions. In order to be an attractive employer worldwide and to recruit top international scientists, it is therefore essential to take measures to ensure a modern, diverse and family-friendly work culture.

The DKFZ has been committed to fostering equal opportunities for women and men since 1995. Every manager at the center, including the top management, is aware of the added value of diverse teams at all work levels. Employees in managerial roles in both administration and science are actively committed to equal opportunities and promote women and men according to their professional and personal potential. This GEDIP is intended to serve as a further instrument to ensure the maintenance and development of appropriate measures to promote work-life balance, equal opportunities and diversity in the sense of a diverse corporate culture. The DKFZ thus regards the realization of these goals as a central task of the Management Board.

At the DKFZ, the Management Board is supported by an Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy, both elected by the female employees, and an operational assistant for the equal opportunity work. The DKFZ provides the *Equal Opportunities and Diversity Office* (EDO) with the financial means and personnel resources in accordance with the objectives of the GEDIP presented here. The rights and duties of the Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy are regulated internally in the "Equal Opportunities Service Agreement" (Dienstvereinbarung Chancengleichheit), at the state level in the "Implementation Agreement Equality" (Ausführungsvereinbarung Gleichstellung) and in the "Federal Equality Act" (Bundesgleichstellungsgesetz). Within the framework of this GEDIP, the EDO collaborates internally at the DKFZ primarily with the *Human Resources Department (HR)* and, within it, the working groups *Personnel Service, Advanced*

Training, Career Service, Corporate Health Management and the International Staff Service, as well as with the International PhD, PostDoc and Clinician Scientist Programs, the Staff Council and the Representative for severely disabled persons, and with the Management Board.

Definitions:

Diversity: The "Diversity Charter" describes diversity in terms of seven dimensions that correspond to the almost unchangeable characteristics of a person's personality and at the same time have the greatest influence on inclusion and exclusion. The seven diversity dimensions are age, ethnic origin and nationality, gender and gender identity, physical and mental abilities, religion and belief, sexual orientation and social origin.

Gender Equality: Equality refers to measures to equalize the situation of heterogeneous groups that are in principle equal. Examples for gender equality include promoting women in areas where they are underrepresented to date (e.g., scientific leadership positions and business start-ups), encouraging fathers to also take parental (part-)time, and ensuring that salaries and budgets - in view of the gender pay gap - are paid or negotiated on the basis of performance.

AIM 1:

BASIS FOR RESOURCE ALLOCATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF MEASURES

As mentioned above, diversity has various dimensions. Within the scope of the DKFZ's mission, it is currently most important to collect and analyse data with regard to the dimensions of age, gender and nationality.

In order to allocate resources and to reinforce already existing measures as well as to implement new ones, data will be collected in collaboration with several departments at DKFZ, as described below.

1.1 Data collection - Human Resources

Information on gender distribution in the different fields of work of DKFZ employees is regularly collected by *HR*, as is gender-specific information on age, nationality and on parental leave. Each dimension can be broken down by work area, such as administration, technical and scientific, and then again by position, such as leading and junior positions (categories will be defined based on experience level, as defined by law). Data on employees with disabilities are reported as a total number and not broken down by gender, age, nationality, or work area.

1.2 Data collection - Composition of committee members

To ensure higher quality and more fairness in the hiring process, a balanced composition of committee members regarding gender, age and nationality is required. The EDO monitors and reports on gender and nationality of members of the *International PhD Program* and the *International Postdoc Program*. This reporting is done in collaboration with the respective program managers.

It is furthermore planned to additionally monitor the composition of the DKFZ hiring committees in terms of gender, age and nationality for leadership positions such as division heads, (junior) group leaders and professorships.

1.3 Data collection - Grants, publications, patents and awards

Since scientific output is of great importance and closely related to the eligibility for leadership positions, e.g. for a professorship, data on successful applications for third-party funding, publications, patents and awards will be collected and monitored with regard to gender, nationality and age. In close collaboration with the *core facilities* and the *Grants Office*, data on third-party-funded projects and publications (first and senior/corresponding authorship) will be collected. Given the fact that the start-up sector

is still dominated by male-only executive teams, there is a need to foster diversity also in the field of technology transfer and entrepreneurship. In collaboration with the *Innovation Management* department, data on patent applications and founding teams will be collected. The recognition of scientific work will also be monitored by collecting the data on local, national and international prizes received by scientists from DKFZ. Data on awards will continue to be collected in close collaboration with the *Strategic Communication and Public Relations Department*, and visibility on DKFZ webpages and DKFZ internal newsletters will be given to all awardees.

1.4 Data collection - Scientific events

Scientific events are key for the dissemination of scientific knowledge as well as for career development via networking and visibility. A balanced composition of speakers at scientific events is important to promote women in science by giving visibility to their excellence and by giving them the opportunity to serve as role models. Of note, DKFZ is already committed to ensure diversity among keynote speakers at regular seminar series and international events.

1.5 Data collection - Monitoring and reporting

The data collected in sections 1.1-1.4 serve as a basis for regular monitoring of the dimensions of gender, age and nationality in order to update already established measures and implement new ones. The data are regularly reported in the Helmholtz Association Research Centres Annual Report and in the annual report to the DKFZ Board of Trustees.

The data will also be published and updated annually on the intranet and internet pages of the DKFZ according to the EU guidelines.

AIM 2:

IMPLEMENTATION OF RESOURCES AND MEASURES

Based on the data collected for Aim 1, adequate resources will be made available and measures will be implemented to reach gender equality and to increase the diversity dimensions.

2.1 Gender-neutral communication

DKFZ has already implemented guidelines on gender-neutral communication in words and images to avoid stereotypes and ensure fair communication in all internal and

external communication. Of note, gender-sensitive language is much more important in German than in English, but stereotypic use of words and images can happen in both languages. All official communications addressed to all DKFZ employees are provided in both German and English to ensure that the international employees can understand them.

2.2 Unconscious bias

Members of recruiting committees and decision-makers are encouraged to participate in seminars raising awareness for unconscious bias in recruitment. In addition, written guidelines are available for download on the DKFZ intranet page and handed out to committee members. Additionally, within the training portfolio organized by *Advanced Training*, the seminar on “Reflection on unconscious bias at the workplace” is open to all DKFZ employees upon registration. This training seminar is also mandatory for mentees enrolled in the Advanced Track of the DKFZ Tailored Mentoring program (see section 3.3). The implementation of a regular, mandatory “refresher course on unconscious bias awareness” for committee members and decision makers is planned (see 1.2).

2.3 Gender equality and diversity in recruiting

Data from previous years indicate that the gender gap is most prevalent in leading scientific positions, where women are underrepresented. A major constraint is the limited number of female applicants for division head/professorship positions. To overcome this barrier, DKFZ will ensure active recruitment procedures, which will be monitored by the EDO. Active recruitment will be based on contacting and encouraging potential female applicants to apply based on their expertise. By advertising the jobs in leading international journals and explicitly encouraging international candidates to apply, the DKFZ will additionally cover the dimension of internationality in leading positions.

2.4 Gender balance and diversity – Committee composition

As mentioned in section 1.2, a balanced composition of committee members will ensure the quality and fairness of the hiring process. In committees and on boards that make decisions on applications, career development or the establishment and evaluation of funding, the respective gender underrepresented in the target group should be at least 40%, in accordance with EU guidelines.

The Management Board will ensure that the DKFZ boards and committees have gender parity as far as possible.

2.5 Diversity and Inclusion – Working culture, infrastructure and events

DKFZ offers a multicultural working environment, in which more than 80 nations are represented by its employees. A key measure for inclusion is the administrative support provided to the non-German employees by the *International Staff Service*. Expert advice on the various residence and work permits is provided and practical support is offered. The DKFZ also offers guest houses for temporary residence to facilitate an uncomplicated arrival in Germany.

Additionally, the multicultural working environment requires the appropriate infrastructure for the different religious beliefs or for meditation. To this end, the DKFZ offers an equipped room for quiet moments including prayer, contemplation and meditation.

LGBTQI+ community events providing information and offering networking opportunities at the DKFZ are organized and held by the LGBTQI+ community and supported by the EDO.

2.6 Inclusion – People with disabilities

DKFZ is an inclusive workplace and the *Representative for severely disabled persons* is present in the hiring processes of candidates with disabilities to ensure the fairness of the selection procedure. Additionally, DKFZ is barrier-free for people with walking disabilities in most areas and provides special support to employees with disabilities upon request. General technical support provided to severely disabled employees includes special screens, magnifying glasses, desks, and also support from an assistant if necessary. Sign language interpreters are used in the biannual staff assemblies to enable deaf employees to participate. Within the scope of this GEDIP, DKFZ commits to maintain the current measures and implement new ones if needed.

AIM 3:

GENDER BALANCE IN LEADERSHIP AND DECISION-MAKING

3.1 Programs “Leadership in cancer research” and Cancer-TRAX

In 2019, the "*Leadership in Cancer Research*" program was launched to support the career development of scientists with young children. Within the framework of this program, outstanding scientists from the DKFZ are selected to take over the leadership of a junior group for a period of up to 10 years. Since 2020, four female scientists have been funded through the program.

The junior group leaders at the DKFZ can complete a leadership training course at the Helmholtz Academy or participate in the EMBO course "Female Self-Leadership".

For talented young female scientists, the Cancer-TRAX (*Cancer Transitional Research And EXchange Program*) program offers a flexible collaboration model to promote international mobility, interdisciplinarity and work-life balance in cooperation with the Weizmann Institute of Science (WIS), Israel.

3.2 Role models

In 2011, women scientists in leading positions at the DKFZ founded the Executive Women Initiative. The Executive Women Initiative comprises about 45 members, who are committed to support and mentor junior women scientists at DKFZ.

3.3 Training and mentoring

The DKFZ *Advanced Training* has a portfolio of around 250 training courses that are open to all DKFZ employees. The wide variety of training courses, which are constantly updated, is a key resource to support the professional and personal development of all DKFZ employees, regardless of their position, gender and nationality. The training program offers specific courses for female scientists as well as training in leadership.

In addition, the DKFZ Tailored Mentoring program is an important resource to support the career and personal development of all employees. The program is open to all DKFZ employees, whether scientific, technical and/or administrative staff, allowing for a diverse group of mentees. The program comprises two tracks: a basic and an advanced track. The basic mentoring track addresses the needs of junior staff, and the mentee-mentor match takes place via the communication platform DKFZ Connect (*Career Service*). One of the advantages of using DKFZ Connect is that it includes DKFZ alumni, allowing for a huge pool of potential mentors. The advanced track is designed for employees more advanced in their careers and includes 1:1 mentoring with an experienced mentor, mandatory training as well as ad hoc trainings based on the needs of each mentee, and networking with peers. The selection of individual training is based on the feedback from the mentees and their mentors in order to support the mentees' career and personal development as individually as possible.

In conjunction with section 1.3, trainings on grant writing are offered and complemented by information seminars organized by the *Grants Office* to inform about funding opportunities for junior and senior scientists. Seminars on specific funding programs, such as ERC, are also organized. Information on opportunities for young scientists are also provided in the form of seminars given by experts and organized by the PhD Council and the PostDoc Network.

Depending on the development of the collected data, the EDO and *Advanced Training* will develop and propose additional trainings to further address the issue of diversity on

an organizational level or within specific groups and/or with regard to specific diversity dimensions.

3.4 Women in science - Visibility

Activities aiming to promote women in science are organized by the EDO in collaboration with internal and external partners, i.e. internally with the PhD Council and the PostDoc Network and externally with the 500 Women Scientist Heidelberg Pod (<https://500womenscientists.org/pods-overview>).

AIM 4:

WORK-LIFE BALANCE

DKFZ fully supports measures to ensure an optimal work-life balance of its employees. All measures mentioned below will be continued during the term period of this GEDIP.

4.1 Flexibility at work

At the DKFZ, family-oriented, flexible adjustment of working hours, as well as part-time, tele- and remote working can be arranged, based on the needs of employees and in response to changing conditions. Flexibility and remote working became essential during the COVID-19 pandemic, and DKFZ reacted promptly by enlarging the contingent of virtual desktops, which was one important measure to maintain productivity in all areas.

4.2 Balancing family life, care and work

With regard to work-family balance, the DKFZ supports employees with children to best combine work and family. The DKFZ financially supports two nearby childcare centers. This measure is essential to allow female employees in particular to return to work after childbirth. Further measures that support work-family balance include the possibility of taking parental leave and adapting work contracts to part-time according to one's needs. Additionally, DKFZ offers infrastructure such as the parent-child room as a key measure especially for female employees coming back to work early after childbirth. The room is fully equipped for working and taking care of the baby when needed. Networking events are regularly organized to allow DKFZ employees with small children to exchange experiences and options for balancing work-and family. The EDO provides additional support and consultancy on maternity and parental leave, childcare, conflict situations with family members (e.g. illness, disability, ...).

Together with its network partners, the DKFZ has taken up the topic of "care and work" in an annually alternating lecture series on "Family Care from A to Z". There are three care pilots at the DKFZ who advise affected employees in need of support.

4.3 Mental health

Psychological support as well as physical training is organized by the internal *Corporate Health Management Unit* for all employees. External company medical services offer expert and absolutely confidential consultations for employees and managers in crisis situations. Physical and mental well-being play a central role for maintaining a healthy work-life balance.

The topic of mental health was launched in 2020 with a dedicated campaign aiming to raise awareness of the topic and provide information to DKFZ employees. The follow-up campaign consists of mental health round table discussions, seminars with external speakers, and events aiming to promote awareness and provide updated information.

DKFZ staff who act as important contact persons for the employees (such as the Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy, the ombudspersons, the *Staff Council*, the head of *Human Resources*, the head of the *Advanced Training*, the head of the *Graduate Office*, etc.) - have been trained as Mental Health First Aiders and thus function as reference contacts for DKFZ employees in need of mental health support. DKFZ will ensure that the working group of first aiders is supported by regular courses and events.

AIM 5:

GENDER DIMENSION IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING CONTENT

Since cancer research deals with living cells and organisms, it is obvious that the gender dimension is also of great importance with regard to research outcomes and healthcare measures. The DKFZ is committed to incorporating gender equality in its research and innovation priorities and to integrating the processes for ensuring that sex and gender analysis is considered in the design and outputs of research and teaching. Integrating the gender dimension into educational activities, including teaching curricula as well as public engagement, is essential for the proper training of the next generation of researchers. Of note, looking at potential sex and/or gender differences and at gender equality-related issues will enhance research excellence, reproducibility and creativity, behaviors and attitudes, and add value to the societal relevance of research and innovation.

AIM 6:

MEASURES AGAINST HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

DKFZ is strongly committed to combating harassment and discrimination. As a minimum requirement of common understanding, compliance concerning the diversity aspects regulated in the German Basic Law and the “Equal Treatment Act” (Allgemeines Gleichbehandlungsgesetz, AGG) is expected with regard to the behavior of all persons working at the DKFZ.

The guidelines established by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft, DFG) currently form the basis for fair conduct and partnership behavior at the DKFZ. In addition, DKFZ will provide all employees with guidelines including information about the different forms of bullying, discrimination and (sexual) harassment as well as whom to contact in case of need. All contact persons are certified Mental Health First Aiders.

The EDO is regularly involved in the organization of the Mental Health Awareness Month October. With the campaign on Mental Health Awareness initiated at DKFZ in 2020, seminars were offered on the topics of micro-aggression, harassment and power abuse at the workplace. The campaign was reinforced by several activities, including seminars and round tables on the impact of harassment on mental health.

Harassment and discrimination might originate from unconscious biases. To create a more inclusive working environment and to increase the awareness of the effects of unconscious biases at the workplace, the training portfolio includes seminars on “Reflection of unconscious bias at the workplace” (see 2.2).

CLOSING REMARK

As stated above and in accordance with EU guidelines, the proportion of women in total staff and in scientific staff will be published and updated annually on the DKFZ website and intranet. In addition, the GEDIP is a living document that will be regularly updated with new initiatives, guidelines and policies that have not yet been implemented, as they become necessary. The GEDIP will be made available on an ongoing basis on the DKFZ website and intranet.

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