

Horizon Europe and Gender Equality at the National College of Ireland

National College of Ireland (NCI) is committed to supporting gender diversity, equality, and inclusion in all our endeavours. Our mission is 'to change lives through education.' Delivery of that mission over the past 70 years has always required responsiveness to the changing needs of our staff and student body. NCI has always drawn on diverse perspectives and talent to maintain relevance in education, advance knowledge, and build resilience.

NCI welcome that the European Commission has re-affirmed its commitment to gender equality in research and innovation and sets gender equality as a cross-cutting priority in the Horizon Europe framework programme. As a result, having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) will be an eligibility criterion for certain categories of legal entities from EU Member States and associated countries. This requirement will apply to all calls for proposals with a deadline in 2022 onwards. [Horizon guidelines](#) can be found here.

Horizon Europe has set out what it requires in a GEP with four mandatory process-related requirements as follows:

1. Publication of a formal signed document
2. Dedicated resources in gender equality
3. Data collection and monitoring of gender
4. Training and awareness raising on gender equality/unconscious bias

There are also five thematic themes that it requires an institution to address either in the GEP or broader EDI action plans:

1. Work-life balance and organisational culture
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content
5. Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment

The following statement demonstrates how NCI meets these GEP requirements in Horizon Europe.

National College of Ireland is proud to hold an Athena SWAN Bronze Institution Award in recognition of our commitment to gender equality and an inter-sectionally inclusive environment. The Athena SWAN Bronze Award is our badge, demonstrating our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.

The Athena SWAN Bronze award affirms that an institution:

- is aware of gender equality issues at an institutional level
- understands that intersectional gender equality is critical
- has identified and embraced challenges
- has a clear and achievable plan for the future

The cornerstone to NCI's submission for the Athena SWAN Bronze Award is the [2020-2024 Gender Equality Action Plan](#) which outlines measurable and impactful actions. Our plan is comprehensive, peer reviewed and touches on the experiences of staff and students at every stage of their journey with NCI. This includes how we engage with prospective staff and students, through to training and development opportunities, as well as ongoing review of policies impacting gender diversity and broader inclusivity.

Specifically, the NCI Athena Action plan contains 48 broad actions, which are inclusive of areas such as:

- Supporting, developing, and maintaining dedicated resources and equality infrastructure to support the roll out of the Athena Swan Action Plan. This includes a Vice President with responsibility for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI), an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager, as well as committee structures, including an EDI Joint Advisory Community, a Gender Equality Working Group, and Consent Working Group.
- Gathering, developing, and supporting the collection of data on gender and ethnicity at every opportunity.
- Training for example in Unconscious Bias and Inclusive Recruitment
- Actions in relation to a range of HR processes, including the introduction of eRecruit software to actively support continuous EDI data monitoring and future analysis.
- A range of policies and training including:
 - NCI Equality and Diversity Policy
 - NCI Dignity and Work and Bullying and Harassment Policies
 - NCI Disability in the Workplace Guide
 - Flexible working policy and guidelines for Line Managers
 - Maternity, Paternity, Adoptive and Parent's Leave

NCI has signed up the new [Athena Swan Ireland Principles](#). These principles are a vital strand in our broader EDI strategy. We will demonstrate our commitment to equality in measurable ways, recognising and sharing good practice, and embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all we do.

In addition to commitments made in our Gender Equality Action Plan, NCI is also committed to the critical work of ending sexual violence within the higher education sector. We have launched the [NCI Consent Framework](#), which is also published on our website and is inclusive of an action plan to tackle issues in relation to consent and gender-based violence.

NCI's Athena Swan Action Plan and Consent Framework are both public published documents available on our website, along with this signed, public commitment to these action plans we adhere to the Horizon Europe, commitment to gender equality in research and innovation by having a Gender Equality Plan.

Any queries or comments in relation to gender equality can be sent to equality@ncirl.ie

Signed:



Gina Quin
President



Professor Jimmy Hill
Vice President Academic Affairs and Research (with
institutional responsibility for EDI)

Date: 14th April 2022