

# Horizon Europe and Gender Equality Action Plan at National College of Ireland

**Validity period April 2024 – April 2029**

This document constitutes the official Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of National College of Ireland (NCI) for the purposes of eligibility under Horizon Europe.

National College of Ireland is committed to advancing gender equality, diversity, and inclusion across all areas of its work. Our mission is to change lives through education. Delivering on that mission requires an inclusive environment in which diverse talent can thrive in research, teaching, leadership, and professional practice. For over 75 years, NCI has drawn on diverse perspectives to remain relevant in education, advance knowledge, and build institutional resilience.

The European Commission has established gender equality as a cross-cutting priority within Horizon Europe. Since 2022, the existence of a compliant Gender Equality Plan has been an eligibility requirement for higher education institutions applying for Horizon Europe funding

Horizon Europe specifies four mandatory process-related requirements for a Gender Equality Plan:

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

In addition, institutions are required to address the following five thematic areas, either within the GEP itself or through broader equality, diversity and inclusion 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

NCI meets these requirements through a coordinated and institutionally supported framework of policies, action plans, and monitoring structures.

## Athena Swan Institutional Award and Action Plan

National College of Ireland renewed its Athena Swan Bronze Institutional Award in 2024. The cornerstone of this award is the 2024-2029<sup>1</sup> Athena Swan Action Plan, which outlines measurable, evidence-based actions to advance gender equality and intersectional inclusion across the institution. This plan adheres to the four mandatory process-related requirements outlined above and the five thematic themes.

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.

## Framework for Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment

In addition to commitments made in our Athena Swan Action Plan, NCI is also committed to the critical work of ending sexual violence within the higher education sector. On International Women's Day, March 8th 2022, NCI launched our [Framework for Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment](#). This was reviewed and updated in June 2025.

This framework supports compliance with the Horizon Europe thematic requirement relating to measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment, and forms a key part of NCI's wider equality and inclusion strategy.

## Institutional Commitments

NCI has signed the [Athena Swan Ireland Charter Principles](#) and the [Anti Racist Principles for Higher Education](#). These commitments reinforce the College's broader equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda and complement its Gender Equality Plan.

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<sup>1</sup> When submitted the awarding period was for four years, this was amended by Athena Swan Ireland August 2024. [Athena Swan Ireland awards granted under the 2021 charter framework are valid for five years](#). 3.8 (page 10)

## Compliance with Horizon Europe Requirements

The Athena Swan 2024–2029 Action Plan, together with the Framework for Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment, constitutes National College of Ireland’s Gender Equality Plan for the purposes of Horizon Europe eligibility.

These documents:

- Are formally approved and signed by senior leadership
- Are publicly available
- Are supported by institutional governance structures
- Include dedicated resources
- Provide for monitoring, evaluation, and reporting
- Address all required thematic areas

Through these measures, NCI meets the Horizon Europe eligibility requirements relating to Gender Equality Plans.

Any queries or comments in relation to gender equality can be sent to [equality@ncirl.ie](mailto:equality@ncirl.ie)

Signed:



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