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GENDER BALANCE IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES AND BODIES COLLABORATIVE DESIGN OF THE GEP WITH THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ANR, France

The Gender-SMART project is a community composed of seven European Research Performing & Funding Organisations, operating in the broadly framed field of research in food, agricultural and life sciences, committed to advancing gender equality.

This fact sheet illustrates one of the twelve experience-based good practices collected by the project to encourage and steer change in Gender-SMART Partner Institutions.

Results are meaningful and scalable to reach out to a larger number of beneficiaries.

AREA



Gender Balance
 in Decision-Making
 processes and bodies

CATEGORY



Management Social
 and
 Cultural advocacy

PARTNER



ANR, France

FOCAL PERSONS



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Key stakeholders

Gender-SMART Core Team, Human
 Resources Department

Main Description

The main objective of a Gender Equality Plan (through audit, planning, implementation, and monitoring & evaluation) is to achieve gender equality within an organisation.

At ANR, knowledge disparities on gender equality, on the vision and objectives to be achieved were the main problems identified. Therefore, the Gender-SMART project Core Team (Steering Committee member, project manager and middle management) involved the Executive Committee (CEO and Heads of Departments) in the GEP design to share a common vision of the needs and objectives to be achieved, to collectively agree on specific actions and thus prevent and reduce potential resistances.

This collective approach and design of the GEP allowed all stakeholders to feel concerned and become "agents of change".

Background

The French National Research Agency (ANR) is the main national research funding agency under the supervision of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation. The Ministry allocates an annual budget dedicated to funding research projects. The agency employs about 300 people, the vast majority of whom has a scientific background.

ANR missions are defined in a decree of August 2006 amended in March 2014:

- ✓ Funding and promoting basic and targeted research, technical innovation and technology transfer as well as public-private partnerships;
- ✓ Implementing the programme approved by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation;
- ✓ Managing the State's major investment programmes in teaching and research fields;
- ✓ Strengthening scientific partnerships at European and International levels;
- ✓ Analysing the evolution of research opportunities and measuring the agency funding impact on the national scientific production.

Each year more than 8,000 peer reviewers assist ANR in the selection of projects of very high quality standard. The ANR teams finance, monitor and assist these projects. ANR prioritises the quality of service delivered to the scientists, speed of response, procedural simplification and constant adaptation to new challenges.

ANR's GEP was adopted in December 2019, presented to the administrative board and published on the website in July 2020. The Plan includes three main axes: culture and organisation, human resources, evaluation and selection process. 65 actions are planned for the four-year period 2020-2023.



Action Plan for Gender Equality and Gender Mainstreaming 2020 – 2023

VISIT PAGE 

Specifics of the measure

The aim of the practice was to fully involve the top management since the start of the project to show how everyone can and should foster change.

In January, June and November 2019, several participatory workshops were organised at ANR to design the GEP jointly with the executive committee.

A working core group was created including the Heads of Human Resources, Scientific Operations and Communication. This participatory approach allowed to raise awareness on gender equality in general and on more specific topics, create dialogue on gender issues and engage the responsibility of the staff.

ANR Gender Equality Plan, including three main axes i.e., Culture and organisation, Human resources, Funding research, and 65 actions, was adopted in December 2019. It was presented to the administrative board and to the staff and published on the Organisation's website in July 2020. It was then reported to the relevant Ministry (Ministry of Higher Education, Research, and Innovation) which congratulated the team on this achievement.

More than 60% of the planned actions have already been implemented and monitored with specific indicators.

Moreover, an annual review is conducted with the executive committee.

The participatory and collaborative approach of this practice proved to be a very effective working method since it enabled to include all the target stakeholders in the process. The involvement of the top management in the working sessions made it possible to avoid or reduce potential future resistances to change, gain their full support throughout the process and ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of actions. It also reflects an official commitment to gender equality.

Lessons learned

The commitment and involvement of the CEO was an enabler of this positive and dynamic approach. Referring to national and international recommendations and legal framework on gender equality is highly recommended. Practices from organisations with a comparable profile, which have already set up GEPs, can be useful sources of inspiration to draw on.

