



Gender Equality Plan

2018 - 2023





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Author of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

Contact person	Pieter van Braam van Vloten
Implementation Manager	Stan Bentvelsen
Implementation team	Pieter van Braam van Vloten
	Els Koffeman
	Marcel Merk

Institute: Nikhef, the Dutch Institute for Subatomic Physics

Signature

The director of Nikhef, who is responsible for the execution of this Gender Equality Plan, commits the institute to the implementation of this plan.

"A balanced mix of male and female staff members, that allows and enables the organization to fully exploit its human capital in all its facets. With 'Balanced' we mean: a male/female ratio reflecting the relevant societal context in which we operate."

Committed to the execution of this plan:

Amsterdam, 22 January 2018

Prof.dr. S.C.M. Bentvelsen. Nikhef director





Introduction

Nikhef is an ambitious scientific research institute that is embedded in society and relies heavily on the willingness of this society to fund and support the research that is being performed.

As an ambitious institute, it is of great importance to be able to attract and retain the most talented employees. Every boundary or selection criteria that hinders Nikhef in selecting the best available employees is a direct threat to its ambitions. Also, we owe it to society and ourselves, that the Nikhef staff population reflects society in the diversity of its composition.

The actual composition of Nikhef's staff population does not meet the abovementioned criteria. Specifically, the ratio of male and female staff members is not in balance. In the current societal context, as well as the scientific field of physics in which Nikhef operates, the mentioned imbalance is no longer acceptable. For this reason, Nikhef management decided it is necessary to take action.

Diversity in the broadest sense of the word gives organisations a clear competitive advantage because it brings about structural improvements to performance in important characteristics such as growth and innovation. There is clear added value to having teams that consist of people of, for example, different cultural backgrounds, gender and religions. Teams that are formed this way are more productive, the management style focuses more on cooperation, team members tend to listen to each other better and efforts are made to find win-win solutions.

The aspect of gender diversity is being addressed in this plan, being the most visible aspect of the lack of diversity that can be found at many organizations. Nikhef unfortunately is no exception. For Nikhef, gender imbalance is a complex theme calling for an integrated approach. The result of an imbalanced population could be that we do not make optimal use of existing talent, we are not taking sufficient advantage of the proven benefits of diversity and in the long run, our imbalanced population might even affect our image.

Scope and objectives

Although gender equality is part of a much broader agenda of diversity related issues, the scope of this GEP is limited to develop actions that support the improvement of the balance between male and female staff members, in all staff categories of our institute.

The definition Nikhef chooses to use for a gender-balanced staff population is:

"A balanced mix of male and female staff members, that allows and enables the organization to fully exploit its human capital in all its facets. With 'Balanced' we mean: a male/female ratio reflecting the relevant societal context in which we operate."

The scope of this action plan is to further improve the gender balance at Nikhef in order to achieve a balanced representation of men and women in the organization in the long term. The foundation of the plan is the quality of all employees at all levels of our organization. Specific attention is given to senior female scientists and their careers. Efforts to improve diversity are in the interest of quality. More diversity results in better use of talent, female talent in particular, and that helps our efforts to achieve excellence. Scientific research has demonstrated that companies with a diversity of employees at the top levels perform better¹.

¹ Desvaux, G., Devillard-Hoellinger, S. & Baumgarten, P. (2007). *Women matter: Gender diversity, a corporate performance driver.* Paris, France: McKinsey & Company.





The objectives that this GEP aims to achieve, are the implementation of tools and actions that make Nikhef staff members aware of the problematic imbalance, and enable and support them to do something about it.

In the short term this means an increase of awareness of the problem, measurable in terms of passive and active familiarity with the problem (e.g. percentage of staff members that mention the issue as a problem for Nikhef). Other concrete goals will be the balanced composition of selection committees, an unbiased, gender neutral image of Nikhef through expressions in the public space (website, vacancies, media exposure, et cetera) and regular, animated discussions on the subject among staff members.

This gender action plan describes a range of actions that we believe will help the development towards this balanced situation. Actions aim at an increase of gender awareness within the Nikhef institute, and at support and stimulation of women. The director of Nikhef and Nikhef's management team will be expressly involved in the implementation of the action points to ensure that the efforts and application of available resources are effective. The progress of the action plan for gender balance will be on the agendas of the Nikhef Directorate regularly.

The concrete translation of all actions described should become visible in terms of long term, measurable results, such as an increasing number of female staff members over the next five to ten years at Nikhef, with a focus on the flow of women into permanent scientific positions, employed by all of the partners in the Nikhef partnership.

Timeframe

The actions described in this plan aim at a gender-balanced personnel population at Nikhef. The timeframe in which these actions will be taken oversees a period of 5 years, starting early 2018 and stretching out to 2023. After this period an evaluation should be done.

Current situation at Nikhef

Already several years ago, Nikhef has recognized the fact that female employees are underrepresented among its staff. Several attempts have been made in the past years to improve the gender balance. In January/February 2017 Nikhef took part in a gender evaluation conducted by external gender experts from Joanneum Research, Austria. The results show there is no formal gender institutionalisation yet, like having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP). In terms of a sustainable gender implementation Nikhef will require institutionalized measures/actions. Therefore Nikhef has formulated this Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

As the table below shows, all actions together resulted in a significant improvement of the gender balance in the scientific population over the past five years.

	2011				2016				
	M (fte)	F (fte)	total fte	%F	М	F	total	%F	
Permanent scientific staff	57,0	3,6	60,6	5,9%	62,1	9,2	71,3	12,9%	
PhD students	65,3	15,8	81,1	19,5%	75,4	25	100,4	24,9%	
postdocs	23	3,8	26,8	14,2%	20	8,8	28,8	30,6%	
Technical/engineering	79, 1	4,6	83,7	5%	66,6	3,3	69,9	5%	
Management & General support	19,36	7,24	26,6	27,2%	17,5	7,9	25,4	31,1%	
Nikhef total	243,8	35,0	278,8	13%	241,6	54,2	295,8	18%	

table 1. Development of male/female staff members at Nikhef 2011/2016





Measures

Within the existing framework and working methods, Nikhef already implemented the following measures, and intends to continue these efforts:

- Men and women have equal opportunities for tenure track positions. The Nikhef HR department monitors recruitment procedures and guards the application of anti-discriminatory policies;
- At least one, and preferably two women are members of appointment advisory committees (BAC) and selection committees. This is monitored by HR;
- Management reports and discussions pay attention to the position of women;
- Female candidates are actively invited to apply for existing vacancies;
- All members of Nikhef management are actively stimulated to take part in activities aiming at a decrease of gender bias (like trainings, workshops);
- Nikhef stimulates talented female candidates to apply for female-only grants and fellowships, and hosts these candidates in case of successful applications;
- Nikhef as an employer offers regulations for maternity and parental leave, for working part-time, and for working flexible hours. Employees also have the opportunity to buy additional leave days.

The following measures will be (further) developed in the course of the execution of this GEP:

- For every scientific vacancy, female talents will be actively scouted.
- The buddy system for new PhD students, that is currently developed by the Research School for Subatomic Physics, will be actively supported Nikhef HR with focus on gender-related issues
- Female role models will be stimulated to be visible to staff members and peers outside the institute.
- Nikhef will engage in the next round of the NWO WISE program, which will hopefully result in the appointment of a female senior staff member.
- For non-tenured staff, or staff that is in the course of a tenure track leading to a permanent position, time that is 'lost' due to birthgiving or parental leave can be compensated, thus creating a level playing field regardless of gender.
- Draft job advertisements will be checked for linguistic gender-coding, with the help of manuals, interactive websites and communication experts. Monitoring by HR.
- Before the end of 2020, all scientific staff members and others who participate in selection of scientific applicants will be invited to join a workshop, to discover their personal unaware gender biases, and how to avoid these in their daily practice.
- Personal coaching is available for all senior staff members, both male and female, aiming at a balanced development of their career.
- Nikhef hosts a 'grant office' that supports and guides scientists, both male and female, with the process of writing, submitting, presenting and defending grant proposals of all kinds. Specific attention will be given to female scientists.
- The Nikhef communications department will be asked to increase the attention for a female friendly image in the various communication channels that are in place.





Budget

For the training of personnel, extra travel, extra efforts of communication professionals, and other costs that will incur in the course of the implementation process, Nikhef allocates € 40.000 for the period from 2018 to 2023 (five years).

In 2017, Nikhef participated in the WISE program of NWO. As a result, a female staff member was hired on a Tenure Track position. Since the position was opened with no regular personnel budget available, the actual investment on top of regular personnel budgets is approximately € 400.000,-- spread over 6 years.