



INSTRUCT-ERIC

DIVERSITY & GENDER

EQUALITY PLAN

09. March 2024

To whom it may concern,

We, as the new leadership of Instruct-ERIC are fully committed to the implementation of the Diversity & Gender Equality Plan in all aspects of the organisation to promote diversity and equality, enhance work-life balances and foster a respectful, open and welcoming workplace culture at the Hub.

We are also committed to promote gender equality and diversity in Instruct-ERIC's core activities, such as user access, training and research and across its' governing bodies.

This will be achieved through several comprehensive measures including monitoring, training, policies and others, as appropriate to improve equality and diversity.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'H. Schwalbe'.

Prof. Dr. Harald Schwalbe
Instruct-ERIC Director

Two handwritten signatures in black ink, one for 'Natalie Haley' and one for 'Claudia Alen'.

Dr. Natalie Haley & Dr. Claudia Alen Amaro
Instruct-ERIC Hub Coordinaton Team

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INSTRUCT-ERIC GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2026

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1. INTRODUCTION

Instruct-ERIC is committed to the principles of diversity and equality. We believe in eradicating discrimination and persecution and redressing the historic imbalances in representation of minority groups and genders in research and management.

Following the implementation of Instruct's first Gender Equality plan (2022-2023) the scope of the work was extended to include all aspects of diversity and equality at Instruct-ERIC. This Diversity & Gender Equality plan (DGEP) presents our ambition and practical measures towards fairer treatment and inclusivity of persons of all genders and backgrounds within Instruct-ERIC, be they members of staff or researchers making use of Instruct-ERIC services.

Definitions:

In this context **gender** refers to the gender identify of a person, not their biological sex, and is a broad spectrum with individuals identifying at any point within.

Instruct-ERIC is a pan-European distributed research infrastructure composed of a number of centres of excellence across Europe coordinated from a central Hub. Instruct-ERIC provides open user access to cutting edge structural biology, specifically supporting research that uses integrated approaches and technologies. It operates with the following principles: a) scientific excellence is our priority in the services we provide and the research we support; b) transparency, equality and legality is the cornerstone of our operational model. Additionally, Instruct-ERIC offers training and career development opportunities for European scientists.

All necessary organisational and reporting activities to the consortium and the community are performed by the **Instruct-ERIC Hub** acting as the point of contact and administrative centre. The Hub staff is predominantly employed by Instruct-ERIC but some staff members are seconded from other organisations. This diversity and gender equality plan (DGEP) covers all Hub staff to ensure equal treatment and encourage openness, diversity, and a respectful work environment. The research facilities performing the scientific activities whilst part of Instruct-ERIC are managed by separate organisations which have their own policies in place including for gender equality.

Instruct was designated a European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC) in July 2017 and the governance structure defined in the Instruct-ERIC statutes. This includes Instruct's **decision-making bodies**, the Instruct-ERIC Council and the Executive Committee. Appointment of new delegates in both bodies is outside the remit of the Instruct-ERIC staff and therefore not included in this DGEP.

To tackle the challenges of gender equality, Instruct-ERIC formed a Gender Equality Working Group (GEWG) from Hub staff members for the first Instruct GEP in 2022. With the scope of the new plan, the working group was reformed as the **Diversity and Equality Working Group (DEWG)**. This group performed a 2024 diversity and gender equality audit, prepared the DEP and will monitor the impact of the plan going forward. All challenges identified as well as the goals and measures set out in this DEP were discussed with the Instruct-Hub leadership who will ensure that all outlined actions are taken to improve Instruct-ERIC's diversity and equality.

2. METHODOLOGY

To start assessing the status quo in Instruct-ERIC, the DEWG reviewed the progress on the goals set out in the 2022-2023 GEP and conducted surveys in Instruct-ERIC decision-making bodies as well as a diversity and equality survey among the Hub staff.

2.1. Review of goal and measures from the 2022-2023 GEP

The DEWG reviewed the goals and measures set out in the 2022-2023 GEP. 58% of measures were fully implemented in the indicated time frame and another 33% partially completed due to adjustments needed during the implementation. Only one measure was not implemented and transferred to 2024. See summary Annex 6.1. Some measures (eg policy reviews, staff training and diversity in decision making processes) will be continued in this DGEP as they were found to be important and beneficial.

2.2. Gender Distribution and Equality surveys

To establish the current status of diversity and equality in Instruct-ERIC, two surveys were conducted.

To assess the gender distribution in Instruct's decision-making bodies, a short survey was performed in February 2024. The survey was private and confidential, and offered the options man/woman/non-binary/prefer not to say.

Additionally, in February/March 2024 a more extensive diversity and equality survey was prepared by the Instruct-ERIC DEWG and completed by Hub staff. This survey was fully confidential and did not request or record the responders name or other identifying characteristics. Due to the small Hub team size and predominantly unique job titles it was not possible to collect diversity and gender information in relation to career stage or salary whilst maintaining confidentiality. Therefore, this type of data was not gathered in the survey.

The survey results (Annex 6.5 and 6.6) were analysed by the DEWP to identify relative strength and weaknesses (see Challenges, Annex 6.2). This diversity and equality analysis forms the basis of the goals and measures outlined in this DGEP (see section 3 and Annex 6.3. and 6.4).

3. GOALS AND MEASURES

As of March 2024, the Instruct-Hub consisted of eight women, seven men and three staff members who preferred not to disclose their gender (0 non-binary;). All respondents considered Instruct-ERIC committed to gender equality (11 Yes, definitely; 7 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all). To maintain this and further improve the gender equality in Instruct, areas of weakness (see Challenges Annex 6.2) were identified and will be addressed in five different areas (see 3.1-3.5 and 6.3).

3.1. Work-life balance and organisational culture

A healthy work-life balance and a respectful, open, and welcoming organisational culture are essential to advance gender equality. Overall, the Hub staff are satisfied with their current work-life balance at Instruct-ERIC (11 Yes, definitely; 7 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all) and majoritively feel that Instruct-ERIC offers enough flexibility for them to undertake their work (14 Yes, definitely; 3 Yes, somewhat; 1 Not really; 0 Not at all). To maintain this and further improve the organisational culture (Challenges 1-4) annual staff training on equality rights, policies, and measures will be provided (Goal 1, Measure 1.2).

3.2. Measures against gender-based harassment and violence

Harassment and violence is unacceptable in any environment including the workplace. Instruct-ERIC has standards of work behaviour as well as a harassment policy and complaints procedure in place to protect employees. All Hub staff consider Instruct-ERIC to have a culture of zero tolerance toward gender-based harassment and violence (15 Yes, definitely; 3 Yes, somewhat; 0 Not really; 0 Not at all). Nevertheless, areas of improvement were identified (Challenge 1, 5-6) which will be addressed by annual staff training on discrimination and harassment (Goal 2, Measure 2.2) and updates to the bullying and harassment policy (Goal 2, Measure 2.1).

3.3. Gender balance in leadership and decision making

The gender distribution survey in Instruct's decision making bodies revealed a significant imbalance in the Executive Committee membership which was also noted by the Hub staff in the internal survey (Challenge 7). As the selection of Council and Executive Committee members is outside the remit of the Instruct-ERIC Hub, limited direct actions for improvement by the Hub staff are available. Recommendations will be made when a position becomes open to which qualities should be preferred in a candidate to achieve diversity, including gender diversity (Goal 3, Measure 3.1).

3.4. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

The Hub staff mostly feel that Instruct-ERIC is an equal opportunity employer with equal opportunities for career advancement at Instruct-ERIC (10 Yes, definitely; 7 Yes, somewhat; 1 Not really; 0 Not at all). However, areas of improvement were identified (Challenge 8-9) which will be addressed by a review and update of the Equal Opportunities Policy, the use of gender-neutral language in vacancy advertisements, mixed-gender recruitment panels and staff training on unconscious bias (Goal 4, Measures 4.1-4.4).

3.5. Gender diversity in research and training

Gender diversity in research and training is essential to perform excellent science as well as further the career of underrepresented genders. In the structural biology research community women and non-binary persons are underrepresented. Instruct-ERIC also aims to increase the gender balance in its access, training, internship and R&D users. As part of the measures set out in the 2022-2023 GEP, updates to the ARIA user profile were made to increase diversity with the option man/woman/non-binary. This means gender-diversity in applicants can be monitored consistently. To ensure that diversity is taken into account, award criteria will be continually reviewed to include and promote diversity (Goal 5, Measure 5.1).

4. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

In January 2025 the Hub Coordination team will review and ensure that the measures to be undertaken in 2024 (Measures 1.1, 2.1, 2.3) are complete and in place. Additionally, the DEWG will review the progress on the indicators to identify any issues with the monitoring process, implementation or evaluation.

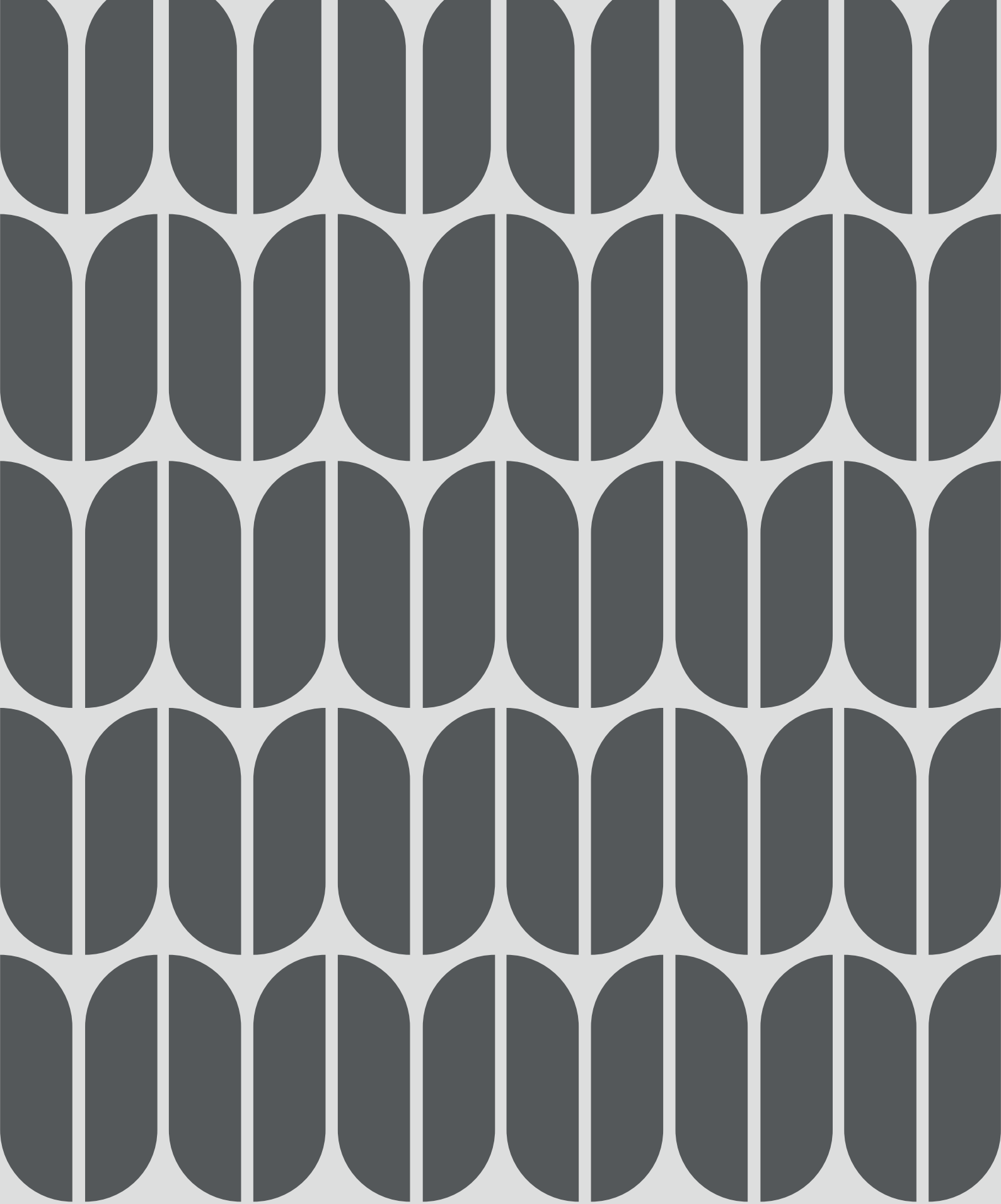
The next Diversity & Equality Survey will be prepared by the DEWG and presented to all Hub staff in April 2026. The survey results will then be analysed by November 2026 together with the other targets and indicators set out in this DEP (see 6.3). This will allow for the next DEP [2027] to be prepared by the DEWG and to be reviewed by the Instruct-ERIC management in December 2026 before coming into effect in 2027.

5. RESOURCES

From March 2024 – December 2026 Instruct-ERIC will dedicate 6 PM to implement the DGEP and sufficient funds for a staff training course on unconscious bias by an external expert. The person month will be split between the members of the DEWG, HR staff and the Hub coordination team.

6. ANNEX [CONFIDENTIAL]

The annexes to this DGEP are confidential and available from the Instruct-ERIC Hub with a valid request.



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