

EIGE launches enhanced Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR) tool



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In April 2022, EIGE launches an enhanced Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR) tool, offering more tailored advice to research and innovation organisations.

This update extends guidance beyond universities and research-performing organisations to give wider audiences access to a simple way of making gender equality plans part of their institutional strategies.

In spite of progress, research and innovation in the EU is characterised by significant gender inequalities. Women researchers remain underrepresented in the ICT sector (22.4%), at professor and senior-level staff in academia (26.2% women in grade A position which falls to 18.0% in engineering and technology), and in decision-making positions, as heads in the Higher Education Sector (23,6%) (She Figures 2021).

EIGE created the GEAR tool in collaboration with the European Commission's DG Research and Innovation, to address structural reproduction of inequalities, unconscious gender biases, and gender stereotypes in research and higher education institutions.

“We welcome the update of the GEAR tool by EIGE as it can truly help boost gender equality in research-performing and research-funding organisations across the European Research Area. By providing user-friendly step-by-step online guidance and a wealth of updated good practice examples, the new version of the GEAR tool will be particularly useful for organisations applying to Horizon Europe which need to comply with the new gender equality plan eligibility criterion requirements.” – DG Research and Innovation

Horizon Europe is the EU's leading research and innovation funding programme, which will provide €95.5 billion to a range of projects until

2027. The enhanced GEAR tool attests to the EU's commitment to putting gender equality at the heart of research and innovation as a key contribution to the achievement of a Union of Equality.

“Here at EIGE we are happy to see that our updated GEAR tool can be used by audiences in the EU and beyond in research and innovation to implement simple, straightforward and efficient gender equality plans. This will make sure that more effective, more inclusive, and more gender sensitive research is implemented by more institutions than ever before.” – Carlien Scheele, EIGE

The GEAR tool helps identify gender inequalities within institutions and organisations, and provides guidance for creating gender equality plans to overcome the source of these problems through institutional change. The tool drives this change by providing user-friendly evidence of successful policies, programmes, and projects, highlighting factors leading the progress of gender equality in research and innovation.

Changes brought about by implementing GEAR tool recommendations include creating better work environments, retaining and increasing women's involvement in academia and research, and ensuring the excellence and quality of all research produced by these institutions.

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