



## The DFG's Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality

*“Insufficient participation by women compromises efficiency and excellence in academia. The innovative potential of science and research can be fully leveraged only if outstanding talents, regardless of gender, work in large numbers in science and academia and do not drift off into other occupational areas even as they approach their peak performance. Men and women must be given equal opportunity to participate in all levels of scientific inquiry.”*  
(Recommendation by the German Rectors' Conference on promoting women, 14 Nov 2006)

A successful strategy for gender equality delivers significant added value. Gender equality enhances research quality because it enlarges the talent pool, promotes a diversity of research perspectives, and eliminates blind spots regarding the significance of gender in research contents and methods. Thus the inclusion of relevant gender and diversity aspects is a key ingredient of high-quality research.

**To achieve and maintain gender equality, the DFG member institutions agree on structural and personal standards.**

The responsibility to concretise and implement these Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality lies with each individual institution. To facilitate the implementation of the Standards, the DFG's Internet presentation on equal opportunity ([www.dfg.de/chancengleichheit](http://www.dfg.de/chancengleichheit)) will provide practical examples (“toolbox”) beginning in mid-2009.

Using incentives and a differentiated reaction system, the DFG itself will ensure adherence to these standards (see last section: *Implementation of Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality*).

### **A. Structural Standards on Gender Equality**

The members of the DFG agree that ensuring gender equality in a way that is

1. consistent,
2. transparent,
3. competitive and forward-looking,
4. and competent

is fundamental to quality assurance in research today.

1. Consistently ensuring gender equality means pursuing this goal visibly and at all organisational levels; making it integral to a research institution's management agenda; cooperating with existing independent structures; and systematically designing all institutional measures concerning human resources, organisational development and strategy/content with gender equality in mind. The goal of gender equality must be explicitly taken into account in all institutional decisions on resource allocation and personnel, and consistently integrated into quality assurance procedures. The standard is the systematic monitoring of equality-promoting measures, also when it comes to cooperative arrangements with commercial institutions.
2. Transparently ensuring gender equality means continually collecting and regularly publicising differentiated data on gender equality at research institutions on all organisational levels and at all academic career stages.
3. Competitively and forward-lookingly ensuring gender equality means actively empowering men and women at DFG member institutions to combine family and academic career; countering outdated gender stereotypes; and accommodating individual life plans.
4. Competently ensuring gender equality means designing procedures at DFG member institutions in a transparent, structured and formalised manner. This includes consistently countering personal dependencies. The research-oriented gender-equality standard is the verifiable assurance of the ability to evaluate persons, scientific achievements and research projects in an unprejudiced way, both in terms of the people involved and of any gender or diversity aspects in research.

### ***B. Personal Standards on Gender Equality***

The members of the DFG agree that selecting, promoting, acknowledging, and equitably hiring and supporting researchers — and even students — in a way that is

1. consistent,
2. transparent,
3. competitive and forward-looking,
4. and competent

is fundamental to gender equality in research today.

1. Consistently ensuring gender equality, in terms of staffing at DFG member institutions, means acting explicitly and at all organisational levels to ensure fair practices in hiring, recruiting, and all other steps of the HR process, as well as in allocating resources such as time, money, space, equipment or personnel.
2. Transparently ensuring gender equality means, at a minimum, publicising and meeting institutional objectives for achieving true gender equality, based on differentiated data. The members of the DFG consider the number of men and women at various academic career stages as a benchmark indicator for gender equality in research. The relevant stages<sup>1</sup> are:
  - a. Enrolments — master's degrees
  - b. Doctoral researchers, research staff in qualifying positions — doctorates
  - c. Junior professors, leaders of junior-research or working groups, habilitation candidates
  - d. Professors
  - e. Professors with outstanding functions and/or resources
  - f. Mid-level management positions (e.g. deans) and high-level management positions (e.g. rectors, presidents), to be tracked separately

In addition the number men and women with tenure should be documented.

3. If the men/women ratio at any career level deviates significantly from the next lower level, DFG member institutions will determine and publicise the extent to which they intend to close this gap within five years.

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<sup>1</sup> Similar stages should be considered at non-university member institutions.

4. Competitively and forward-lookingly ensuring gender equality means — also in view of European standards on equal opportunity — basing all staffing decisions strictly on track record and potential, rather than on gender or other social factors like age, disability or illness, origin, sexual orientation, religion and belief. The gender-equality standard for research institutions is to give all qualified scientists and academics equal opportunity to engage in fair competition. This entails visibly increasing the presence of women in funding programmes — especially those of the DFG — if women are found to be underrepresented.
5. Competently ensuring gender equality means designing procedures, especially those for evaluating persons, in a way that reveals and corrects distortions. The gender-equality standard for DFG members is taking concrete measures to ensure this.

## **Implementation of Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality**

At the DFG General Assembly on 2 July 2008, a majority of member institutions agreed on structural and personal standards on gender equality. Under this agreement, members committed to issue within one year statements on the implementation of the Standards and to define targets for increasing the presence of women.

At the 2009 General Assembly, members will appoint a working group on Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality, headed by the appropriate DFG Vice President. This working group will be charged with advising and supporting member institutions as they implement gender-equality standards, and with issuing recommendations.

The member institutions' statements, especially their voluntary commitments to increase the participation of women, will be published by the DFG. To support member institutions' implementation efforts, the DFG, in collaboration with external experts, plans to provide by mid-2009 a toolbox for the implementation of the Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality, which will present helpful examples and practical tips on how to achieve the goal of gender equality.

In the spring of 2011, member institutions will present interim reports on the implementation of the Standards. These reports will be analysed by the aforementioned working group, with support from the DFG Head Office, and presented to the General Assembly in the summer of 2011.

In the spring of 2013, member institutions will submit their final reports on the implementation of the Standards and the attainment of their chosen goals for recruiting women researchers. Like the interim reports, the final reports will be evaluated and presented to the 2013 General Assembly.

Member institutions who have met their chosen targets will be acknowledged accordingly, e.g. by way of a presentation of their successful concepts before the General Assembly and publication in suitable media outlets.

Adherence to the Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality is also one of the key criteria for the approval of research networks in which member institutions are applicants.

The 2013 General Assembly will discuss any further development of the Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality.