



The project gender + is funded by the Federal Ministry for Transport, Innovation and Technology (bmvit) within the programme *FEMtech - Women in Research and Technology, FEMtech career*.

Duration: May 2011 to April 2012

Structural implementation of gender- and diversity mainstreaming at the Austrian Institute of Ecology

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Structural implementation of gender- and diversity mainstreaming at the Austrian Institute of Ecology

Since the foundation of the Austrian Institute of Ecology in 1985, the equal opportunities represent a main principle within the performance of research and consulting activities in the field of sustainable development. About a half of the employees of the Austrian Institute of Ecology (AIE) is female. These and other aspects were decisive when the the AIE received the national prize for equal opportunities in R&D for small and medium extrafaculty research institutes in 2009. Packages of measures developed and implemented in the project gender+ aim to structurally incorporate and therefore to institutionalize the principle of equal opportunities in the Austrian Institute in the long term.

By the organisational implementation of measures to enhance the balance between family and career and to support the individual planning of the career, the Austrian Institute of Ecology aims to ensure the attractiveness for male and female researchers and experts on long term.

Diversity in the Institute

A crucial step for the structural implementation was the establishment of the special unit "Gender- and Diversity Mainstreaming" which is responsible for the analysis of the potential for improvement and the design and realisation of measures. This special unit serves as a contact point for all members of staff and is the interface between staff and the management of the institute.

A written questionnaire survey on the contentedness, needs and requests of optimisation was the basis for the design of the following packages of measures:

Organisational culture and work climate, appraisal of work

- Support and backing of new staff members at the start in the institute | Drafting of a handbook for new staff members
- Staff appraisal | Drafting of interview guides, evaluation
- Survey on contentedness and requests of optimisation | yearly written questionnaire survey, development of packages of measures
- Workplace design | creation of an attractive communication room
- Gender competence | yearly gender training, regular exchange on gender and diversity issues

Work-life-balance, parental leave and educational leave, leave for caring for family members, work structures, salary model

- Coaching regarding parental or educational leave | staff appraisal before and after parental or educational leave, nomination of responsible persons for ensuring the communication flow between the institute and persons who are on parental or educational leave
- Works agreement | implementation of the articles "flexible working time", "leave for care of family members"

- Optimisation of work structures | specific planning of work load
- Preventive health care | yoga course
- Transparent salary model | gradually revision of the existing salary model in involving the works council and managing board

Internal communication and public relations

- Enhancement of communication opportunities for professional exchange and about successful projects | Newsletter, Jour fixe including various fields of work, closed meetings and Netdays
- Enhancement of informal communication possibilities and exchange | enlargement of internal events and leisure activities for family and partners in life
- Internal and external representation of staff members | enhancement of the representation of female staff members

Human resources development and further education and training

- Personnel progress | individual career management, mentoring programme
- Management of further education | qualifactory and transparent programme on further education
- Human resources management | special focus on enhancement of diversity within the scientific staff when recruiting employees

For further information:

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