

Gender Equality Plan NORSUS

Introduction

NORSUS commits to gender equality. We believe that gender balance is good for research quality and the work environment. In this document we will describe our approach to gender equality in terms of a) ensuring equitable staffing and b) considering the gender dimension in our work.

The Plan was decided in the NORSUS leadership on January 4th 2022. The Plan is a living document and will regularly be updated.

Status equitable staffing

From our latest annual report (2020) the gender equality is shown as follows:

Of 27 staff, 16 (59 %) were women and 11 (41 %) men. In the NORSUS Board, 4 out of 8 are women (50 %). The NORSUS Board did not consider it necessary to take any actions to change the situation.

Every year we make a head count of our staff. This allows us to monitor the situation over time. Over the last 5 years, trends are:

Year	Male staff in total	Female staff in total	Male leaders	Female leaders
2020	11 (41 %)	16 (59 %)	3 (50 %)	3 (50 %)
2019	9 (35 %)	16 (65 %)	2 (50 %)	2 (50 %)
2018	10 (37 %)	17 (63 %)	2 (40 %)	3 (60 %)
2017	10 (52 %)	14 (58 %)	2 (50 %)	2 (50 %)
2016	8 (35 %)	15 (65 %)	2 (40 %)	3 (60 %)

As of December 2021, the distribution of men and women in research positions in terms of seniority is:

Position	Men	Women
Senior researcher	5	13
Researcher	5	4
Research assistant	1	

NORSUS considers the number of staff and the proportion of leaders (i.e. leaders in the leadership group) as the most relevant indicator. We do head count and calculate percentages. The resources dedicated to this is the Chief Administrative Officer and the Managing Director. The data on the gender balance of the staff in total is published in our public annual reports and monitored by the NORSUS Board. The data collection informs the leadership's continuous (re)assessment of the GEP's objectives and targets, indicators, and progress.

The salary policy at NORSUS is algorithmic based on the number of years since graduating with a master's degree. This is monitored annually by the management. There is thus no gender bias that can affect this graph.

Goal for equitable staffing

Our goal is to not extend beyond a 30 / 70 % imbalance. As we have over time been within this range we have not initiated 'hard measures'. However, we would like to reach at least a 40 / 60 % balance and thus apply 'soft measures', i.e. preferring a male candidate when the competence otherwise is equal. With regard to career development internally (from researcher to senior researcher) this is carried out as part of research projects that allow for PhD work and is dependent on the motivation of the junior candidates to take a PhD. It can also be carried out through giving our researchers a leave to take a PhD outside the institute. Two of our male researchers are at the moment conducting PhDs, which in a few years will lead to a slightly more equitable gender balance at the senior researcher level.

It is worth noticing that this research field internationally has been dominated by men, so in the larger picture we contribute to better gender balance in the field.

Status considering the gender dimension in our research

NORSUS mostly conducts industrial environmental research, modelling climate and broader environmental impacts of different kinds of industrial production through Life Cycle Assessments (LCA). The potential for unconscious gender bias is present through the fact that historically, men have developed and decided upon models without consciously considering specific impacts on women. However, this is not easy to detect and thus relate to consciously. In Social LCA the gender dimension is explicitly considered. Moreover, we have some broader research project (beyond LCA), regarding issues like reducing food waste, nudging, sustainable business development, solutions for textile reuse, etc. There may in some of these projects be issues where the gender dimension could potentially be relevant. This has, however, not been systematically investigated.

Goal for considering the gender dimension in our research

NORSUS intends that all researchers at the institute will be able to identify potential gender related issues in their research, and address these in an informed and proportionate way.

Status other gender related issues

NORSUS has a family friendly culture. For instance, we seldom have meetings or events after 16.00 in the afternoon. This is not directed specifically towards mothers; it is equally applicable to fathers, who generally take their share of the care responsibilities in the homes. We also register all work hours. Hours superseding 37,5 hours a week can be balanced with an equal amount of time off. The leaders with staff responsibilities follow up each employee on their accumulation of extra time and encourage them to find ways to reduce the extra hours.

There has been no reported instance of gender-based violence or sexual harassment in the history of NORSUS (previously Østfoldforskning). We have no evidence to suggest that this is a problem in the organisation. However, we have a whistle-blowing system to report any such incidents.

Goal for other gender related issues

The management will continue to monitor family friendliness, gender-based violence/ sexual harassment, and other potential gender related issues and take action if needed.

Organisation of the gender equality work

Dedicated resources for gender equality

NORSUS is a small research institute, currently (December 2021) with 31 staff in total. We also have a very lean administration (two members of staff in addition to the Managing Director). Therefore, we split the responsibility for gender equality between the Chief Administrative Officer (for collecting numbers) and the Managing Director (for implementing the plan). Time and resources for this work are dedicated to these two functions. We believe that this volume of resources is sufficient to support the ongoing process of sustainable organisational change approaching gender equality in staffing.

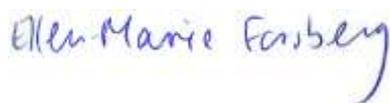
We also dedicate 45 work hours to training of our staff in gender awareness in their research.

Action plan for 2022

As we are a small organisation we do not see the need for specific training in the management. Gender equality is already always addressed when recruiting new staff and when allocating roles in the organisation. All members of the leadership have a high awareness of gender equality issues and we collectively consider gender issues at all relevant decision points, so this is not delegated to a specific function in the organisation.

We see the need for putting awareness raising on gender dimensions in the research on the agenda for the whole organisation. In February 2022 this will be a dedicated part of our monthly institute meetings where all staff are gathered. We will there organise group work and plenary presentations, leading to a common dialogue on potential gender issues we can encounter in our research and how to address such issues.

Fredrikstad, January 4th 2022



Ellen-Marie Forsberg

Managing Director