



K O N I N K L I J K E N E D E R L A N D S E  
A K A D E M I E V A N W E T E N S C H A P P E N

**AGENDA FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION  
ACADEMY INSTITUTES**

**2022-2025**

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# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Mission and vision

The Academy promotes, supports and recognises excellence in science and interprets the results of research for society. The Academy articulates the importance of scientific research, knowledge and understanding for the economic, physical, social and cultural good and the well-being of mankind. It wants to make a visible contribution to a scientific community with equal rights and opportunities for all and room for the open exchange of views based on equity.

Equality and equity are about equal opportunities and possibilities for all, and also about fighting discrimination. Diversity refers to all visible and invisible characteristics, experiences and/or backgrounds in which people and groups of people may differ from each other. Inclusion is the creation of a working environment in which everyone, regardless of social or cultural background, gender, sexual orientation, age or disability, can be themselves, feel safe and have the space to develop.

## 1.2 Ambition

The Academy wants to promote equality, diversity and inclusion within the Academy, the Young Academy, the Academy of Arts, the institutes and the Bureau, based on the conviction that diversity in persons and perspectives enriches the scientific debate and contributes to creativity, innovation and quality. The Academy wants to embed diversity and inclusion in its thinking and actions across the board and offer a working environment where differences are embraced and people feel at home.

The Academy does this in two capacities. On the one hand, as a society of excellent scientists and prominent artists who are members of the Academy, the Young Academy or the Academy of Arts respectively but are not employed by the Academy. And on the other hand, as the employer of more than 1,300 employees working at ten national research institutes, three institutes that provide infrastructure for research and the Academy Bureau. Because of this difference in position, purpose and tasks, the translation of our vision into measures and actions will differ between the academies and institutes. In view of their own history and culture, the details may also vary from academy to academy and from institute to institute. The principles and assumptions have general appeal and will be applied across the board. Of course, there is scope for tailor-made solutions when it comes to actual implementation, provided that well-argued reasons are given.

## 1.3 Environment

Following on from its Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, the European Commission wants to actively promote gender equality<sup>1</sup> in research and innovation. Organisations that want to be eligible for funding from Horizon Europe, the framework programme for research and innovation, should therefore have a gender equality plan (GEP) in place from 2022.

At national level, the Dutch Minister of Education, Culture and Science adopted the *National Action Plan for Greater Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education and Research* in 2020, which underlines the positive relationship between quality of education and research and the pursuit of inclusion and diversity. As a guardian and interpreter of science, the Academy has contributed to the *National Action Plan* and is also a co-signatory of this *National Action Plan*.

Naturally, the Academy supports the European Commission in its efforts to promote gender equality within the organisation because it helps to promote underrepresented groups in the research sector. For us, this is an integral part of our commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> Although the concept of gender is broader, the European Commission emphasises the male-female relationship for the time being.

## 1.4 Current situation

Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) are nothing new to the Academy. In 2019, for example, it was decided to analyse every three years whether any disciplines, institutions and/or target groups are underrepresented within the Academy's membership. Where necessary, the Academy's General Assembly can, on the proposal of the Academy Board, decide to change the number of members to be appointed for a specific year in order to create space for underrepresented fields of study and to improve the representativeness of the membership.

### *Institutes*

A variety of actions have also been initiated for and by the institutes over the course of time. In 2010, the Academy joined the *Talent to the Top* charter, aimed at promoting the recruitment, advancement and retention of female talent in top positions. This cooperation was discontinued in 2015 after some of the quantitative goals formulated in that context had been achieved. Subsequently, a number of D&I initiatives were started, but there was no Academy-wide D&I policy. In 2020, the P&O department appointed a diversity & inclusion advisor (0.8 FTEs) for two years, mainly to support the recruitment of more people with a disability and/or distance from the labour market (*Dutch Job Opportunity Act*). Unfortunately, the coronavirus pandemic has seriously hampered these efforts. After all, it was not possible to physically bring people from these groups into a workplace when working from home was the norm, and providing careful work supervision remotely was not realistic either. In 2020, on the initiative of the D&I advisor, a working group on Diversity of Talent was started in which all P&O advisors of the institutes participate. This working group is looking into, among other things, an inclusive recruitment and selection process, facilitating meetings on inclusive employment practices and strengthening cooperation with parties that support various target groups in the labour market. In addition, steps have been and are being taken for and by institutes such as:

- organising meetings to train people how to recognise and deal with their own bias;
- developing a talent programme aimed at underrepresented groups of students;
- organising a panel discussion on undesirable behaviour in science and linking it to practical interventions;
- creating research position(s) for trainees from underrepresented groups;
- organising a poster campaign highlighting unconscious prejudices in order to influence perception;
- conducting D&I surveys among staff;
- establishing local teams/working groups dedicated to diversity and inclusion (D&I);
- organising a master class on inclusive communication for all the Academy's communication officers;
- integrating D&I aspects into the personal leadership course for academics.

At first glance, the Academy scores well in terms of gender equality. In 2020, 51% of the total workforce was female.<sup>2</sup> The proportion of women in each institute ranges from 45% to 89%. However, if we zoom in on the academic staff, it is noticeable that the number of women decreases as the job level increases. This pattern can also be observed in managerial and other positions. So there is still a clear need for the Academy to change this. Following a national survey, in 2017 a general assessment was made of a possible structural pay gap between women and men in each position and job group within the Academy. This did not reveal any significant differences at the time.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: Academy Annual Report 2020

### **1.5 Structure of the D&I agenda for Academy institutes**

This agenda is intended as a guide to the development and implementation of policy and practical activities to promote diversity and inclusion in a broad sense at the institutes and the Bureau, based on the Academy's mission and vision. However, in view of the European Commission's Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, gender equality is highlighted in a number of places in this agenda so that it can also constitute a gender equality plan (GEP). The GEP is therefore part of our commitment to all aspects of diversity and related inclusiveness.

## 2 FROM VISIONS TO ACTIONS

### 2.1 Objectives

Following our vision, we have set the following objectives for the period 2022-2025 for the academies, the institutes and the Bureau:

**1. Promoting the D&I vision**

Actively and consistently supporting and promoting the Academy's vision, based on the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and mutual respect. We do this both within the Academy (in the academies and institutes) and externally, towards the entire scientific world, nationally and internationally, towards society and towards politics.

**2. Increasing awareness and knowledge**

Stimulating and promoting awareness and knowledge of equality and equity, diversity and inclusion at all organisational levels within the academies and institutes and anchoring this in the organisation-wide culture.

**3. Promoting an inclusive, open and safe working environment**

Promoting a situation where members of the academies and staff, as well as visitors, can come to the Academy with a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds and experiences and feel welcome and valued. Promoting an organisational culture with room for open debate and where discrimination is not accepted.

**4. Monitoring and evaluating**

Establishing a monitoring and evaluation process regarding the selection of members of the academies and the inflow, throughflow and outflow of staff in order to objectively measure progress regarding equality, diversity and inclusion.

In Section 3, these objectives are defined in terms of activities, measures and/or organisational choices that the Academy can make as an employer. This agenda is not a blueprint, but is intended to provide guidance, so that there is still room for fine-tuning its implementation. The agenda is intended for the institutes and the Bureau only, as the Academy does not have any responsibility for the academies as an employer. In view of their position and role within the Academy, they will each follow their own track in translating the above Academy objectives.

### 2.2 Approach

In our approach, we generally distinguish the following steps:

1. *Become aware*: everything starts with recognising and acknowledging our blind spots and unconscious prejudices, both on a personal level and in structures, methods and processes within the organisation.
2. *Investigate*: the causes, facts and circumstances that may account for these blind spots and unconscious prejudices must be further analysed and interpreted. Specific data is collected during this phase and the D&I aspects of procedures, processes and working methods are critically evaluated.
3. *Choose solution*: based on 1 and 2 it can then be decided what actions and measures will be taken to remedy the problems identified. Available resources, responsibilities and the timeline are also agreed.
4. *Act*: finally, we will have to adapt our behaviour and/or the structures, working methods and processes within the organisation to match the chosen solution and monitor the extent to which we actually succeed in doing so.

The Academy chooses to build expertise by initiating pilot projects and sharing best practices. Where possible, we will make use of recent scientific insights. Promoting diversity and inclusion is a long-term

process. It is about changing behaviour while leaving room for reflection, dialogue and cooperation. We would of course emphasise that although many aspects of D&I touch on the area of Personnel & Organisation (P&O), the issue is not just P&O's concern. After all, equality, diversity and inclusion are about broadening our perspectives throughout the organisation, not just in the area of P&O. It is therefore imperative that as many people as possible from all levels of the organisation want to get involved.

### 2.3 Intersectional and integrated approach

Partly inspired by the European Commission guidelines, we have opted for an intersectional approach. This is based on the fact that the interrelatedness of ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation and disability can reinforce inequalities, and also that diversity can exist within the different dimensions.<sup>3</sup> This means that, for example, in the case of gender, we should look closely at the diversity *within* this category and, when developing and implementing specific activities, we must be aware of the connection with other dimensions of diversity.

When developing activities and measures, we make use of three interdisciplinary approaches mapped out by Schiebinger & Schraudner<sup>4</sup>:

1. *Numbers (fixing the numbers, FTN)*. This is about increasing, for example, gender diversity in terms of numbers. Measures in this category mainly focus on increasing gender diversity in the different scientific areas and hierarchical layers. This may involve creating special positions for underrepresented groups including women, but also actions aimed at increasing the visibility of these groups in committees, panels and external communication.
2. *Institutions (fixing the institutions, FTI)*. This is about changing elements in the structure and culture of the organisation that cause and perpetuate inequality. Aspects of behaviour, structures and processes can unintentionally lead to inequality between different people and groups in the organisation, such as between young and old, people with different cultural backgrounds or between women and men. It is often a question of small but structural differences which, when added up, can lead to serious inequality.
3. *Knowledge (fixing the knowledge, FTK)*. This concerns measures aimed at making the content of and approach to scientific research and education inclusive, although we note that education is not relevant for the Academy institutes. Many scientific studies ignore gender differences or exclude certain groups or perspectives. Knowledge production is affected when particular social groups have structurally limited access to science. Reflection on such exclusionary processes within one's own field should be a core part of any scientific practice.

These approaches cannot be viewed in isolation. Increasing the diversity of the workforce (*fixing the numbers*) will not be successful in the long run if the culture, structure and processes of the organisation are not adapted accordingly (*fixing the institutions*). These include leadership, transparent recruitment and selection procedures, recognition and appreciation of more than just quantitative performance, social safety and/or work-life balance. Making scientific research more inclusive (*fixing the knowledge*) can also only get off the ground if a simultaneous effort is made to promote overall diversity and to adapt the culture, structure and associated processes.

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<sup>3</sup> Guidance for drawing up a gender equality plan, Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education and Research (DIHOO), Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, June 2021.

<sup>4</sup> Schiebinger, L. & Schraudner, M., 2011, Interdisciplinary approaches to achieving gendered innovations in science, medicine and engineering.

## 3 AGENDA

### 3.1 Definition of objectives

Below is a more detailed definition of each objective in terms of activities, goals and intended results. This definition is not limitative. There are, of course, many other conceivable possibilities. However, it is not possible to address everything at the same time. Choices will have to be made. Depending on the discussion of this agenda, the definition may therefore still be amended. The D&I steering group (see Section 4), in consultation with the institutes and staff departments involved, will then attend to prioritisation and planning, agreements on capacity utilisation and the coordination of activities.

It is proposed that, in addition to continuing activities already underway, the focus for 2022 should be on increasing awareness and knowledge of equality, diversity and inclusion within the organisation (Objective 2) and on collecting, analysing and interpreting diversity data to gain a better understanding of the composition of our workforce and possible problems (Objective 4). This is in line with the first two steps of our approach, as outlined in Section 2.2: "become aware" and "investigate". Nothing will change unless we recognise our blind spots and unconscious prejudices, both on a personal level and in structures, methods and processes within the organisation. The fact that our current knowledge of diversity and inclusion is often still limited makes it difficult to develop effective measures. This prioritisation does not mean that we will not pursue the other objectives if there are opportunities to do so.

### Objective 1

#### *Promoting the D&I vision*

Actively and consistently supporting and promoting the Academy's vision, based on the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility and mutual respect. We do this both within the Academy (in the academies and institutes) and externally, towards the entire scientific world, nationally and internationally, towards society and towards politics.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Intended result</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Related to gender balance</i>
1.1 Drawing up and implementing a coherent communication policy. Following on from this, integrating D&I aspects in word and image in communications of the Academy as an employer and of the institutes (websites, newsletters, reports, programming of meetings, etc.).	Discussion of D&I being encouraged. Awareness of the Academy's strategy and activities in the field of D&I has increased.	FTI	Yes
1.2 Establishing an open, transparent and inclusive recruitment and selection process. Compiling a toolkit (vacancy texts that meet D&I criteria, interview techniques, working method/composition of selection committees, etc.)	A more diverse workforce and the Academy profiled as an inclusive employer.	FTI	Yes
1.3 Increasing physical accessibility to buildings: removing obstacles, adapting lighting and signposting and establishing quiet areas. To be taken into account in new buildings and renovations.	Improved accessibility of buildings for staff and guests with disabilities.	FTI	
1.4 Increasing digital accessibility of institutes for people with visual and/or hearing impairments. Providing interpreters (including	More accessible online facilities for staff and guests with disabilities.	FTI	

sign language) at webinars and other meetings. Adapting language use (and level).			
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## Objective 2

### *Increasing awareness and knowledge*

Stimulating and promoting awareness and knowledge of equality and equity, diversity and inclusion at all organisational levels within the academies and institutes and anchoring this in the organisation-wide culture.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Intended result</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Related to gender balance</i>
2.1 Integrating D&I aspects in the Academy's training offering, in particular training courses in academic leadership and actively offering specific training courses such as dealing with implicit bias, intercultural skills, dealing with undesirable behaviour, etc.	Employees and current and future managers know the D&I philosophy, understand the mechanisms of exclusion and know how to act in cases of undesirable behaviour.	FTI	Yes
2.2 Organising Academy-wide activities on D&I-related days such as diversity day, coming-out day, international women's day, day against racism and discrimination and pride.	Increased awareness of D&I thinking.	FTI	Yes
2.3 As an employer and research organisation, seeking connection with and maintaining external networks in the area of D&I.	Knowledge and experiences of others being acquired and exchanged, in particular on making scientific research more inclusive and recording and monitoring D&I data (including sensitive data).	FTI/FTK/FTN	
2.4 Highlighting opportunities in employment terms and/or other facilities that can improve the work-life balance or make it easier to work with a disability.	Employees are facilitated to carry out their work in a way which is compatible with their private situation and/or disability.	FTI	Yes

## Objective 3

### *Promoting an inclusive, open and safe working environment*

Promoting a situation where members of the academies and staff, as well as visitors, can come to the Academy with a wide range of perspectives, backgrounds and experiences and feel welcome and valued.  
Promoting an organisational culture with room for open debate and where discrimination is not accepted.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Intended result</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Related to gender balance</i>
3.1 Highlighting the facilities that contribute to the prevention of gender-related violence, sexual and other forms of harassment and/or discrimination, such as in-house social workers, confidential counsellors, Academy complaints committee and ombudsperson.	The Academy's assistance structure is known and easily accessible.	FTI	Yes
3.2 Integrating D&I aspects into scientific research. Encouraging research by, for and into groups that are underrepresented, such as researchers from migrant backgrounds/of colour, with disabilities or women. Stimulating diversity in applicants for research grants.	Research focus being widened.	FTN/FTK	Yes

3.3 Internally and externally highlighting role models in positions where certain groups are underrepresented. For example, people with a migrant background/of colour, with a disability or women in leading scientific positions.	Academy's accessibility for underrepresented groups being increased.	FTI	Yes
3.4 Building and supporting internal networks to deal with D&I.	Inclusive communities being strengthened within the Academy.	FTI/FTK	Yes

#### Objective 4

##### *Monitoring and evaluating*

Establishing a monitoring and evaluation process on the selection of members of the academies and on the inflow, throughflow and outflow of staff in order to objectively measure progress regarding equality, diversity and inclusion.

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Intended result</i>	<i>Category</i>	<i>Related to gender balance</i>
4.1 Investigating how data (including sensitive data) from various groups can be identified and monitored to ensure the development of evidence-based policy. Seeking cooperation with other parties.	Ensuring policy measures and actions are better aligned with the actual situation (tailor-made).	FTN	Yes
4.2 Academy-wide and institute-specific analysis of registered personnel data (numbers, position, disability, age, nationality, pay grade, gender, etc.).	Better insight into the background and composition of the workforce and potential problems and gaps.	FTN	Yes
4.3 Investigating whether Academy-wide targets should be set for specific groups (e.g. people with a disability, people with a migrant background/of colour and/or women in certain positions).	Different groups being encouraged to enter the Academy's employment.	FTN	Yes
4.4 Collecting and quantitatively and qualitatively analysing career data (inflow, throughflow and outflow).	Insight into internal mobility and reasons for leaving the Academy. This may provide pointers for improvement.	FTI	Yes
4.5 Developing (tailor-made) solutions such as possible preferential policies and/or targets (for each institute) for underrepresented groups.	More diverse and balanced workforce.	FTN	Yes
4.4 Periodically questioning specific employees or groups of employees about how diverse and inclusive they feel working at the Academy is.	Employees feel more involved and provide input for possible actions.	FTI	
4.5 Periodic reporting of institute boards to the director general/Academy Board on D&I activities, through the PBO cycle.	Information on progress and results.	FTI/FTN	

## 4 ORGANISATION

### 4.1 Steering group

The structural integration of diversity and inclusion requires a sound internal organisation and infrastructure. The policy goals must be clear to everyone involved. It must also be clear which resources can be used to develop, adapt and perform (or continue to perform) activities. This involves not only what is already available in the organisation but also what the possibilities are for hiring additional external expertise, e.g. for training. Since equality, diversity and inclusion are relevant to the whole organisation, all organisational units are being asked to contribute to the agreed activities. This can be in the form of providing human resources, money, facilities, etc. Activities already in progress will be continued and of course included in the overall agenda.

The proposal is to entrust the implementation of the D&I agenda to a steering group in which different parts of the organisation participate. Although the exact mandate and composition of this steering group has yet to be decided, it is envisaged that there will be an institute director, several PhD students/researchers, a director of operations, the head of P&O and possibly someone representing the employee participation body. This steering group will focus on:

- Actively promoting the Academy mission and vision on equality, diversity and inclusion.
- Raising awareness and garnering support by putting items on the agenda, organising discussions and meetings, etc.
- Setting priorities and coordinating activities in consultation with portfolio holders of the institutes and the Bureau and with the staff departments.
- Monitoring the progress of the implementation of activities, adapting the agenda where necessary and reporting periodically to the director general on this matter.
- Encouraging the accumulation and securing of expertise on equality, diversity and inclusion within the organisation.

This steering group will receive administrative and policy support from the Academy Bureau through a project manager/secretary from the P&O department.

### 4.2 The Academy's P&O department

The role of project leader/secretary of the steering group will be fulfilled by a senior policy advisor on Diversity & Inclusion (0.8 FTEs), yet to be recruited<sup>5</sup>. Funds have also been released to continue the position of Diversity & Inclusion Advisor (0.8 FTEs) from mid-2022. Added to this, the "in kind" (policy) capacity of the department is used for activities with a P&O component, such as researching the possibilities of identifying and recording different forms of diversity (including gender) or integrating D&I aspects into training and career activities. The exact extent of this deployment will also depend on the priorities in the D&I agenda and for P&O as a whole but, for the time being, we are assuming an average of 0.2 - 0.3 FTEs on an annual basis. Where necessary, staff departments such as Communication & Information Services or Finance will also contribute "in kind". In addition to the fact that some of the budgets already allocated for training and expertise enhancement may also be used for D&I activities, additional funds are available for specific matters such as hiring in external expertise. This will, of course, be based on specific proposals.

### Centralised deployment of D&I advisor at the Academy

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<sup>5</sup> In view of the similarities in areas touched on, this officer can, in consultation, also be deployed to address the themes of leadership and Recognition & Rewards.

	Size	Pay scale	Remarks
Senior D&I policy advisor	0.8 FTEs	12	Also deployed part-time on R&R/leadership
D&I Advisor	0.8 FTEs	10	
Deployment of P&O policy advisers	0.3 FTEs	11/12	In kind from P&O
Deployment of FAO policy advisor	0.1 FTEs	12	In kind from FAO
Deployment of communications advisor	0.1 FTEs	10	In kind from Communication
Secretarial support	0.1 FTEs	7	In kind from P&O
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.2 FTEs</b>		

### 4.3 Institutes

The proposal is that each institute should appoint an MT member as portfolio holder for D&I<sup>6</sup>. To ensure that they are capable of fulfilling their role properly, it is proposed that training be organised for them centrally. The portfolio holder will ensure that a D&I annual plan for the institute is drafted on the basis of the Academy agenda, which will become part of the PBO cycle. The portfolio holder will be the contact person inside and outside the institute for D&I issues and have an advisory role, reporting to the Academy P&O department and/or the D&I steering group. It is especially important for the portfolio holder to have an affinity with the subject or, even better, a certain level of knowledge and experience in this area. In addition, the decentralised P&O advisors and working and project groups at institute level will also help to implement the annual plan.

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<sup>6</sup> A portfolio holder will also be appointed from the Academy Board.

## Appendix 1

### European Commission guidelines: mandatory and recommended elements of a gender equality plan

The European Commission has formulated a number of process-related requirements with which a gender equality plan must comply.<sup>7</sup>

#### 1. Public document

- The gender equality plan is a formal, public document.
- The plan has been signed by the organisation's senior management.
- The plan is available on the organisation's website.
- The plan will be circulated throughout the organisation.

#### 2. Resources

- Funds have been allocated for positions or teams dedicated to gender equality.
- For others, time has been set aside to work on gender equality.

#### 3. Data collection and monitoring

- Data on gender or sex of staff and leadership is available.
- Annual evaluation and reporting of progress and results.

#### 4. Training and capacity building

- The entire organisation is involved.
- Addressing gender bias in people and in decisions.
- Joint action on specific topics.

In addition, the European Commission has identified a number of recommended areas for attention:

1. Work-life balance and organisational culture.
2. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making.
3. Gender equality in recruitment and career progression.
4. Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content.
5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Guidance for drawing up a gender equality plan, Advisory Committee on Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education and Research (DIHOO), Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, June 2021.