



IGB

Leibniz Institute of Freshwater Ecology
and Inland Fisheries

ACTION PLAN

Gender Equality Plan

29 September 2026

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Preamble

IGB is committed to fostering an inclusive, diverse, and equitable research environment in which all employees have equal opportunities to develop their scientific and professional potential. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) defines IGB's objectives, responsibilities, and measures to promote gender equality and diversity across all areas of the institute. It builds on existing activities and structures while identifying further actions to address remaining inequalities, prevent discrimination, and support a family-friendly and inclusive working environment.

As a Leibniz Institute, IGB is committed to complying with the Leibniz standards on equal opportunities. The Leibniz Association has defined the Implementation Agreement to the GWK Agreement on Gender Equality in Joint Research Funding (AV-Glei) as the legal framework for its institutions. In the AV-Glei, the Federal Government and the Länder undertake to implement gender equality, in accordance with the principles of federal and state equality laws, in the research institutions they jointly fund. The provisions of the AV-Glei are therefore binding on the institutions of the Leibniz Association. IGB also complies with the DFG's Research-Oriented Diversity and Equality Standards (FODGS), the "Framework Recommendation on Gender Equality in the Institutes of the Leibniz Association" (2016), as well as the "Recommendations on Standards for the Work of Equal Opportunities Officers in Leibniz Institutions" of the Leibniz Equal Opportunities and Diversity Working Group's spokespersons council.

This GEP of IGB is supplemented by the GEP of the Forschungsverbund Berlin e.V. (FVB), which is the legal entity of IGB and 6 other research institutes. The IGB's GEP addresses five areas of action:

1. Improve gender balance of researchers in all career stages at IGB through proactive recruitment, active candidate screening, and balanced selection processes.
2. Promote the career development of woman researchers at IGB, through targeted support, training, mentoring, and opportunities for professional advancement.
3. Further foster an inclusive, gender and diversity-friendly atmosphere and working environment at IGB by promoting equal opportunities, respectful collaboration, and supportive working conditions.
4. Promote family-friendly working conditions at IGB that supports the compatibility of work, family, and caregiving responsibilities.
5. Contribute to changing societal perceptions of women and non-binary persons in science by increasing their visibility and promoting diverse and inclusive representations of scientific careers.

The implementation of this GEP is a shared responsibility of the entire IGB community, with particular commitment from institute leadership and all employees with supervisory responsibilities. Progress is discussed annually between director and equal opportunities officers, and measures will be adapted where necessary to ensure continuous improvement. The director and all persons in management positions are responsible for the implementation of measures to reach these aims and are supported in this by the equal opportunities officer

and her deputy. This GEP serves the four purposes the European Commission demands of the GEP of the recipients of their funding:

- It publicly documents IGB's aims and measures to improve gender equality and family friendliness at IGB and confirms the director's dedication and support.
- It defines the resources IGB allocates to gender equality.
- It defines the regular collection and presentation of gender segregated data as a basis to plan and evaluate measures to increase gender equality.
- It defines training and awareness rising activities to diminish gender-based biases, both for specific groups as well as the entire IGB staff.

In 2015, IGB has obtained and since maintained the logo "HR Excellence in Research" of the European Commission for its exemplary personnel development strategy. All Action Plans include various measures for equal opportunities and family friendliness. Since 2023 IGB has maintained the Total E-Quality (TEQ) certificate, which is a testament to our considerable ongoing efforts to actively foster gender equality and diversity. The regular external evaluation guarantees that our gender- and diversity fostering measures are planned carefully, executed reliably and monitored and evaluated diligently.

Responsibilities and resources for gender equity measurements at IGB

1 Leadership responsibility

The IGB director and Board pursue equal opportunities for all genders as well as family-friendly working conditions consistently and visibly at all organizational levels and establish this as strategic management priorities. All structural and governance measures must be designed with gender equity in mind. An intersectional approach to gender equality must be explicitly considered and integrated into decisions and measures. IGB works toward achieving gender parity, particularly in supervisory and leadership positions. All IGB employees, particularly those with supervisory and leadership responsibilities, are obligated to promote gender equality and support the compatibility of family, caregiving, and work within their respective areas of responsibility. Leaders bear a special responsibility as role models and must intervene if the aims of this GEP are ignored or violated.

2 Development and evaluation of the Gender Equality Plan

The targets and measures set in this GEP were developed through a participatory process in the IGB Council, including representatives of all staff groups. The outcome of this process was compiled into concrete aims and feasible actions by the director, the equal opportunities officer and her deputy, and approved by the Board. The success of measures is evaluated every two years or, for specific measures, after an appropriate period. The evaluation is discussed by the director and the equal opportunities officers within three months after the election of the equal opportunities officer. If a new officer is elected, both the former and new officers should be involved. Based on the findings, the statistics and, if necessary, the measures of the GEP are updated. Interested staff members may contribute to strategic planning. The director and the equal opportunities officer can consent to change the GEP at any time.

3 Tasks and rights of the equal opportunities officer and her deputy

The equal opportunities officer and her deputy (further referred to as equal opportunities officers, EOO) are elected every two years (since 2005) in accordance with the election regulations adopted by the FVB Executive Board. Their activity is an official institutional task and is not subject to professional instructions.

The EOO are involved in all personnel, organisational, and social measures of IGB relating to gender equality, the reconciliation of family and work, and protection against sexual harassment in the workplace. In this regard, they also have an advisory and support function for individual employees.

The institute management informs the EOO at the earliest possible stage during the outset of the preparation and decision-making process and enables their active participation, particularly regarding the following matters:

1. Personnel matters;
2. Organisational and social matters;
3. Drafting of assessment guidelines and participation in meetings to ensure their consistent application within the institution;
4. Procedures for appointing members to committees;
5. Development and evaluation of personnel development plans.

The EOO are provided promptly and fully with the necessary information to independently determine which matters are relevant to gender equality and require their involvement. To fulfil their responsibilities, the EOO are granted a general right to information, including access to relevant personnel files and other information that are necessary for the respective matter, in compliance with applicable data protection laws. They are fully involved in all steps of recruitment procedures, contract extensions, termination and termination agreements, dismissals, remuneration changes, early promotion, tenure procedures, and appointment procedures for joint professorships. They are consulted on the internal distribution of strategic funds, as well as on all central IGB reports and statements related to gender equality.

The EOO have the right and duty to report directly to the institute management and are supported by the institute management in carrying out their duties. The EOO have the right to take the initiative in all matters within their remit.

The EOO promote and monitor the objectives and implementation of this GEP. They support management in achieving these objectives and receive corresponding support from the management. The EOO have an advisory and supervisory role towards the management.

Equal opportunities work is a demanding cross-cutting task. The EOO are released from other duties to the extent necessary for its proper execution. For this purpose, part-time employment may be increased; for employees in full-time positions, other tasks shall be delegated or reassigned accordingly. The necessary information, personnel, funds and equipment are provided. EOO duties take precedence over other duties.

The equal opportunities officer is represented by her deputy during absence, conflicts of interest, or by mutual agreement to mitigate workload constraints. Both consult on strategic matters and situations that require collegial exchange. The deputy receives corresponding relief from other duties.

The EOO are given the opportunity and funds for training, conferences, meetings, workshops on topics relevant for their work, especially networking activities with EOO from Leibniz institutes or other research organizations.

The EOO monitor the development of gender ratios across all staff categories. The administration provides relevant data annually and upon justified request and assist in interpretation. These data are used to evaluate implemented measures and develop further actions. The EOO report annually on the GEP, gender ratios, and equality measures at a general staff meeting, with information made available on the IGB intranet.

The EOO are supported and advised by the FVB's Central Equal Opportunity Officer, who also represents their interest at FVB level.

4 Resource allocation to promoting women researchers and family-friendly working conditions

IGB invests 50,000 € annually to its ECR (Early Career Researcher) Women Advancement Fund to support *woman doctoral and postdoctoral researchers*. Financial support may be requested for re-entry after maternity leave, compensation for reduced working hours due to care obligations, career development measures such as training or laboratory rotations, and dedicated time to develop independent research projects.

IGB offers 2-years postdoc positions for international women researchers to foster their career development. The number of positions varies with the availability of central funds from 1 to 4 positions annually, which corresponds to at least 186,000 € annually.

IGB also invests in training, coaching, and mentoring activities for *woman group leaders*, including external mentoring programmes, internal training, and individual coaching. IGB enables *all staff members* to attend trainings and conferences on equal opportunities and provides annual funding for internal seminars and workshops to raise awareness of gender equity, diversity and inclusion, and family friendly working conditions. The EOO receive full compensation for annual training and networking events.

IGB contributes to funding a 50% position and an annual budget of 10,000€ for the FVB Central Equal Opportunities Officer, representing IGB and six other research institutes within the legal entity.

Current situation and recent developments

1 Structure of the governing and supervisory bodies

The highest hierarchical level of IGB consists of the scientific director and the managing director of the FVB. Following the departure of the scientific director in October 2025, a woman department head was appointed interim director. Particular efforts will be made to recruit a woman as new scientific director.

The governance structure also includes the Scientific Advisory Board, composed of renowned international researchers from external institutions (<https://www.igb-berlin.de/en/scientific-advisory-board-igb>). IGB strives for gender parity in this body; the current board is chaired by a woman and consists of five women and three men. The FVB Board of Trustees is required to have equal representation of men and women.

2 Gender-segregated employment structure 2025

All numbers refer to 31.12.2025.

Overall, the gender ratio among IGB employees subject to social security contributions is almost balanced (45% of 260 employees are women), although the figures vary greatly between employment groups.

Like all Leibniz Institutes, IGB is committed to achieving at least 50% women researchers at all career stages. Ambitious target quotas have therefore been set for each career stage and remuneration level within a cascade model. These quotas define the minimum percentage of woman researchers expected at each level, considering anticipated fluctuation, and do not exceed 50%. The initial target quotas established for a 5-year interval ending in 2025 have now been evaluated (see tables 1 and 2). Scholarship holders and guest researchers are excluded from the cascade model and gender-sensitive recruitment procedures.

Table 1: Proportion of women and total number of employees in selected different research career levels at IGB; status as of 31.12.2025.

Career level	% Women			Persons 2025
	2020	2025	Target 2025	
Director	0 %	100 %	0 %	1
Heads of department	33 %	40 %	40 %	5
Research group leaders	19 %	25 %	27 %	28
Researchers with doctoral degree without leadership position, mostly postdocs	40 %	45 %	45 %	60
Doctoral candidates	64 %	63 %	n.a.	24

One of our departments is co-led by one woman and one man since October 2025, the head of another department was appointed as director *ad interim* and is counted accordingly.

Table 2: Proportion of women and total number of employees in selected remuneration levels of researchers at IGB; status as of 31.12.2025.

Remuneration level	% Women			Persons 2025
	2020	2025	Target 2025	
W3	17 %	33%	40 %	3
W2	50 %	50 %	50 %	4
E15/E15Ü/AT-B	33 %	50 %	0 %	4
E14	16 %	22 %	29 %	23
E13	48 %	50%	51%	84

Following active recruitment of excellent candidates for the new group leader positions within the newly acquired *Sondertatbestand* (extraordinary item of expenditure), combined with retirements, IGB substantially increased the proportion of woman research group leaders. Since some new group leaders recruited in 2025 could only start in 2026, the figures at the end of 2025 do not fully reflect these achievements. By May 2026, five additional group leaders have started, three of them woman, increasing the proportion of women at group leader level to 30%, above the target quota. The proportion of women at E14 payment level increased to 28.6 %, meeting the target. The W3 target was not reached, mainly due to lengthy procedures for joint professorships and the need for external counter offers to support internal progression from W2 to W3.

Early career researchers at IGB are generally hired on third party funded projects, often requiring rapid hiring after funding approval. This limits time consuming active recruitment measures. Nevertheless, increased awareness of gender targets and the implementation of gender-sensitive recruitment procedures have enabled IGB to nearly or fully achieve targets at doctoral and postdoctoral levels. To further promote the recruitment of highly qualified (early career) woman researchers, all researchers with leadership responsibilities have been trained on equitable recruitment procedures, focusing on gender equality, unconscious gender bias and active promotion of women candidates. This may have contributed to the increase proportion of woman researchers across career levels.

Staff numbers and gender ratios across employment groups are reported annually in the programme budget, on the IGB webpage, and in a general staff meeting. The cascade model quotas are monitored annually as part of the programme budget and inform the human resource planning at IGB.

Objectives and measures

Within the framework of the personnel development plan established by the institute management, the EOO are involved in all planning processes aimed at increasing the proportion of women in recruitment, qualification, promotion and decision-making. IGB welcomes non-binary persons and has introduced a third gender category (non-binary/diverse) in reporting, statistics and forms, including preferred forms of address. Due to the currently very small number of employees in this category, numerical targets cannot be established and the term gender balance used here refers to a 50% proportion of women.

IGB is committed to creating an open, inclusive, and discrimination-free workplace by addressing stereotypes, biases, and barriers related to gender and other diversity dimensions. The institute welcomes input from staff members and implements the following objectives and measures to promote equal opportunities. These activities are embedded in and regularly externally evaluated via the "HR Excellence in Research" and "Total E-Quality" certifications that we strive to maintain. An internal action plan accompanies this GEP.

1 Improve gender balance of researchers in all career stages

1.1 Maintaining gender balance on IGB's Scientific Advisory Board

After reaching gender balance in IGB's Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) in 2020, IGB will maintain this balance whenever changes occur. Temporary fluctuations may occur during replacement processes.

1.2 Increasing the proportion of woman researchers, particularly in leadership positions

IGB has established [recruitment guidelines](#) based on principles of the "[European Charter for Researchers](#)" and "Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers" (OTM-R). IGB plans to further update these guidelines in the next two years. Furthermore, a [guideline for tenure track procedures](#) was established in 2020 and revised several times since. Both guidelines include measures for gender-equitable processes such as consideration of family-related worktime restrictions or career breaks in the performance evaluation of candidates, and gender quotas on recruitment and mentoring committees. The recruitment guidelines state that in employment groups (career or remuneration levels) where women are underrepresented, women with equivalent qualifications and aptitude are preferentially considered. A respective note encouraging woman researchers to apply is included in every such job advertisement. Family-related interruptions and care responsibilities are systematically considered in recruitment, tenure-track and performance evaluations, and competitive selection procedures. For mothers, two years per child are subtracted from academic age, even if official career breaks were shorter. Job advertisements and the [IGB job offers webpage](#) encourage candidates to report care-related career interruptions or part-time work.

In accordance with the *Pakt für Forschung und Innovation* (pact for research and innovation) new target quotas for women researchers to be reached at the end of 2030 were determined, based on gender quotas in the end of 2025 and expected fluctuation until 2030. At least 50% of all open positions should be filled by woman researchers. Due to the interim leadership situation, recruitment at leadership levels is currently limited until a new scientific director is appointed. Two additional group leader positions will be filled in the next year within the framework of *Sondertatbestand*. New targets account for the expected retirements and reduced replacement (see tables 3 and 4).

Table 3: Proportion of women researchers in different career levels at IGB; status as of 31.12.2025 and target quotas for 31.12.2030.

Career level	2025	Target 2030
Director	100 %	100 %
Heads of department	40 %	50 %
Research group leaders	25 %	38 %
Researchers with doctoral degree, mostly postdocs	45 %	47 %
Doctoral candidates	63 %	≥50 %

Table 4: Proportion of women researchers in different remuneration levels at IGB; status as of 31.12.2025 and target quotas for 31.12.2030.

Remuneration level	2025	Target 2030
W3/C4	33 %	50 %
W2/C3	50 %	33 %
E15/E15Ü/AT-B/W1	50 %	50 %
E14	22 %	38 %
E13	50 %	50 %

1.2.1 Women early career researchers

All recruitments must follow IGB's gender-sensitive recruitment guidelines. Researchers with leadership responsibilities have received mandatory training on equitable recruitment, unconscious bias, and the active promotion of women candidates. New group leaders will receive corresponding training from an external trainer within the next two years. Practical guidance on implementing gender-sensitive recruitment is available on the intranet. Adherence to these recruitment procedures aims to increase the proportion of women among post-doctoral researchers while maintaining balance representation at the doctoral level. IGB will advocate for the establishment of a database within an aquatic research society through which

women researchers seeking academic positions can self-register and provide key information about their career and expertise.

Since 2009, IGB has selected outstanding researchers at different career stages as "Frontiers in Freshwater Science" fellows to develop innovative research projects in cooperation with IGB researchers. Since 2026, the postdoctoral fellowship line exclusively supports women through 24-months postdoctoral positions.

For senior fellowships, no formal gender target quota applies, but gender is considered when decisions are made. Family-related obstacles faced by excellent women applicants will be addressed on a case-by-case basis, with the EOO involved in identifying appropriate solutions.

To further increase the proportion of women at postdoctoral levels, the ECR Women Advancement Fund supports the development of funding applications through contract extensions. Acquiring competitive grants is an important milestone in career development and contributes to the long-term retention of excellent woman researcher at IGB. Applications are evaluated by a gender-balanced commission, chaired by the Equal Opportunities Officer, according to transparent and clearly defined criteria.

1.2.2 Group leaders and department heads

The director recruits group leaders and department heads through procedures involving the recruitment committee. To achieve gender parity among group leaders, the IGB Board has committed to active recruitment of women researchers through targeted searches, direct invitations to apply, or women-only symposia for prospective candidates. Most group leaders are appointed through tenure-track procedures supported by mentoring and evaluation committee. Department heads have responsibility for supporting woman group leaders, particularly in departments with unbalanced gender ratios, by ensuring their involvement in relevant processes and decisions, and by fostering an inclusive and respectful working environment. These measures aim to support the success and long-term retention of woman researchers at IGB.

2 Stimulate career development of woman researchers

2.1 Mentoring for woman researchers

IGB recommends and finances the participation of women group leaders in mentoring or coaching programmes. Participants select the programmes most suitable for their needs, an internal coaching is organised upon request. Since 2012, the Leibniz Association has offered a one-year mentoring programme for highly qualified early career women researchers from Leibniz institutions, combining seminars with individual mentoring. Every year, IGB supports at least one woman researcher in applying for [Leibniz Mentoring Programme](#). In addition, women researchers are encouraged to participate in the Berlin University Alliance [ProFiL programme](#) for women pursuing a professorship.

Since 2020, IGB has organized the internal *Women's mentoring lunch* series for early career women researchers. Woman group leaders and department heads share career experiences,

discuss topics relevant to academic careers, and provide opportunities for informal exchange, making it easier for junior colleagues to seek for advice. Every two years, a dedicated session on career milestones will encourage woman postdocs to apply early for tenure-track and permanent positions. Informal women's lunch meetings are also organized regularly at different IGB locations. The ECR Women Advancement Fund supports training and networking activities not covered by research projects.

To further support career development, IGB will establish a career guideline for postdoctoral researchers outlining mentoring opportunities and suitable career development formats.

2.2 Training opportunities for woman researchers

To promote equal career development opportunities in scientific and leadership positions, woman researchers at all career stages are given access to further training. Special attention is paid to ensuring balanced participation of woman group leaders in all three levels of the Leibniz Leadership Academy. The ECR Women Advancement Fund also supports outstanding early career woman researchers through funding for professional training and research visits to other institutions. Since 2010, the FVB has offered annual workshops for early career woman researchers covering leadership skills, prevention of gender-based discrimination and harassment, stress management, and conflict resolution. IGB actively encourages participation in these workshops.

2.3 Scientific Awards

Scientific awards play an important role in career development. IGB therefore actively disseminates relevant calls, identifies promising candidates, and support them and their superiors in preparing applications. Each year, institute management nominates a candidate for the Marthe-Vogt Award for the best doctoral thesis by a woman. In 2025, an IGB researcher received the Marthe Vogt Award, and an IGB postdoctoral researcher received the Caroline von Humboldt Award. For awards that allow only one institutional nomination, gender is considered as an additional selection criterion alongside scientific excellence.

3 Further enhancement of a gender-diverse and inclusive working environment at IGB

3.1 Gender-balanced participation and involvement

For selected committees and functions at IGB, the participation of both women and men, and where appropriate a gender-balanced composition, is explicitly required (e.g. the ECR Women Advancement Fund Commission, recruitment committees, and the HRS Committee). This ensures that diverse perspectives are considered and provides women with opportunities to gain experiences and influence decision-making. At the same time, care is taken to avoid disproportionately burdening women in leadership positions with committee work. IGB regularly evaluates where gender-specific perspectives are particularly relevant and adjusts guidelines where needed. Should this lead to an overdue time demand on a woman researcher, compensatory measures may be requested.

3.2 Invitation of woman colloquium speakers

Researchers invited as speakers for IGB research colloquia are selected based on their scientific quality and topical relevance to IGB, as well as their potential to serve as role models. This approach supports the invitation of woman researchers of different career stages, thereby increasing their visibility and providing opportunities for personal interaction beyond the colloquium.

3.3 Creating a gender- and diversity-friendly working atmosphere

IGB has developed a Code of Conduct on collegial interactions through a participatory process. The code establishes a zero-tolerance policy towards mobbing, bullying, discrimination, harassment, and abuse of power, and highlights the responsibility of leaders to prevent and address unacceptable behaviour.

The EOO provide an annual overview on gender ratios, equality measures, and family-friendly initiatives at a general staff meeting. The Diversity Officer similarly reports on developments and activities related to diversity. This information is also made available via the intranet to increase awareness of existing inequalities and monitor progress.

The FVB diversity officers organise an annual Diversity Awareness Day with lectures or workshops addressing unconscious biases, behavioural patterns, and their effects on research, workplace interactions and career development. These events highlight underrepresented groups, provide role models, and are considered as working time for all employees. Participation is actively encouraged by department heads, and leaders are expected to act as role models.

IGB aims to foster an inclusive discussion culture by addressing behaviours that hinder participation, such as repeated interruptions, dominating discussions, or dismissive communication. Awareness-raising training on respectful communication and recognising inappropriate behaviour will be introduced, complemented by bystander intervention training. A whistle-blower tool will be developed to enable concerns to be raised anonymously.

The IGB Conflict Counselling Centre offers confidential consultations, mediation, and conflict resolution services. Counsellors receive regular training, and all employees are informed about the available support.

3.4 Gender-sensitive language

The way we speak and write reflects not only our reality, but also our views. It is inappropriate to use male terms with the statement "this refers to everyone", as this shapes male images and appeals less to women and non-binary persons. IGB promotes gender-sensitive communication and provides recommendations to support staff in using inclusive language. Internal and external communication materials and documents are continuously reviewed and adapted accordingly.

3.5 Measures against gender-specific discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment

IGB does not tolerate discrimination of any kind, including gender-based discrimination and harassment, in accordance to its diversity and inclusion strategy. To ensure that inclusiveness is practised at all levels and in all IGB activities and actions, continuous awareness is necessary. The 2024 staff survey included questions on experiences of discrimination across different diversity dimensions. Based on the results, awareness-raising activities will address behaviours perceived as discriminatory or degrading. All employees, particularly leaders, are sensitised to prevent gender-based discrimination.

The IGB Conflict Counselling Centre brings together responsible persons for complaints handling, mediation, and conflict resolution. A dedicated intranet page provides information on prevention, reporting procedures, confidentiality rules and contact persons. Those responsible for conflict resolution receive appropriate training and provide anonymised statistics to identify potential systemic issues. The complaint office dealing with discrimination required under the AGG (General Equal Treatment Act) is part of this general structure. Complaint and mediation procedures are introduced during onboarding and communicated regularly.

Sexual harassment is not tolerated at IGB. The EOO and institute management have established a guideline defining prevention measures, responsibilities, complain procedures, and possible interventions. Dedicated complaint officers receive specific training, and affected persons are encouraged to report incidents. Offenders are shown clear limits and the possible consequences of their behaviour. The guideline complements the requirements of the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG) and ensures a fair, transparent, and effective response to cases of sexual harassment. As a strong signal also to the outside, IGB will become a signatory of the "Together Against Sexism" Alliance (Bündnis "Gemeinsam gegen Sexismus").

4 Promotion of family-friendly working conditions at IGB

4.1 Information for new or incoming parents

Navigating administrative, organisational and financial aspects of parenthood or family care can be challenging, especially in an unfamiliar culture. IGB will compile guidance with relevant information and bilingual resources within the next two years. The institute will also explore establishing trained contact persons for childcare and care-related questions or cooperation with external providers. To facilitate exchange among parents, IGB will create a mailing list or an intranet space for sharing experiences, advice, and potentially organizing short-term childcare solutions.

4.2 Family-related flexibility in working time and workplace

IGB supports flexitime working arrangements, with additional options for employees with childcare or care responsibilities. This also applies to persons with managerial duties: "For employees with underage children and/or relatives in need of care, core working hours and flexitime can be determined individually by a written agreement with the department head" (Intranet: [Organisation>Representation and Representatives>Works Council>Works](#)

agreements). Flexitime working agreement will be revised within the next two years to reflect new standards and expectations regarding flexible work schedules.

There is also a general works agreement on mobile work, which enables employees with temporary obligations for childcare or care of close relatives to apply for additional temporary mobile work (Intranet: [Organization](#)> [Representation and appointees](#)> [Works Council](#)> [Works agreements](#)).

The institute's management enables staff members to bring their children to the institute when regular childcare is unavailable, for example due to a day-care centre closure or similar circumstances. The rules governing the presence of external persons in the institute buildings, including children using the parent-child room, are laid down in the user regulations (Intranet: [Service and Administration](#)> [Workplace Safety](#)> [Files: house rules_MSD310_EN](#)).

IGB supports childcare costs incurred during business trips or training activities where alternative care arrangements are unavailable. As a rule, these costs are to be covered by the funds of the respective project, working group or department, but it is being discussed that IGB should contribute 50% from the core budget. Information and application procedures are provided via the intranet ([Service and Administration](#)> [Human Resources](#)> [Family Friendly](#)> [Childcare](#)).

In exceptional situations, employees with care or childcare obligations might require additional support. The director might provide measures such as contract extensions or funding for student assistants. For example, during the COVID-19 pandemic, IGB extended contracts of researchers who lost working time due to home-schooling or temporary closure of childcare facilities.

4.3 Re-entry and part-time work

The ECR Women Advancement Fund (established in 2011 and currently funded with 50,000 € annually) supports early career woman researchers returning after parental leave and compensates for family-related absences. If maternity-related project interruptions are not covered by external funding, the fund can support continuation of employment following successful project evaluation.

IGB promotes part-time work for employees for all genders with family responsibilities and ensures equal career opportunities by adjusting performance expectations to working hours. A corresponding notice is included in job advertisements.

Parental leave statistics show that fathers generally take considerably shorter parental leave than mothers across all career levels and employment groups. Within the next two years, IGB will create opportunities to reflect on these patterns and propose measures that support more equal distribution of care responsibilities.

4.4 Family-friendly events

Colloquia, meetings, and events at IGB are held in a family-friendly manner, preferably during core working hours and outside school and holiday periods. Hybrid participation options are often provided, to enable participation of employees working remotely or on parental leave.

Longer events are announced well in advance to facilitate care arrangements. The EOO welcome suggestions from colleagues on further ways to improve family-friendly working conditions.

5 Promote awareness of diverse scientists in society

Stereotypes depict researchers as white, middle-aged or older men. In order to show society and especially pupils and students that scientific research is an interesting and promising profession for women, non-binary persons, and people from diverse ethnic backgrounds, IGB will incorporate greater representation of the diversity of its researchers into its communication strategy. The Communications and Knowledge Transfer Team, together with IGB researchers, actively supports initiatives such as Girls' and Boys' Day and Soapbox Science Berlin.

The measures outlined in this Gender Equality Plan are flexible and under constant evaluation and development. Through their implementation, IGB will continue to strengthen a work culture in which equality, respect, and mutual support are integral parts of everyday practice.

These signatures confirm that the directors fully support this GEP and are committed to ensuring its implementation and compliance.

Berlin,

Berlin,

This GEP was signed by the management listed below on 29.09. and 06.10.2026, respectively. Funding organisations who require the original signatures can contact the director's office manger (office.director@igb-berlin.de).

Prof Sonja Jähnig
Scientific Director *a. i.* of IGB

Martin Böhnke
Managing Director of FVB