GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2026–2030

Zertifikat seit 2012
audit berufundfamilie

Leibniz-Institut für
Wissensmedien

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Preamble

The Leibniz-Institut für Wissensmedien (IWM), based in Tübingen, is a non-university research institute under the auspices of the non-profit, private-law foundation "Medien in der Bildung". The IWM is a member of the Leibniz Association and conducts research into knowledge processes using digital, multimedia and interactive technologies, focusing on both basic and applied research in the practical fields of schools, higher education, everyday life, and museums.

As a member of the Leibniz Association, the IWM adheres to the Leibniz equality standards, which were developed in 2016 against the backdrop of the objective of promoting gender equality and diversity enshrined in the Leibniz Association's statutes, and is thus also committed to implementing the research-oriented equality standards of the German Research Foundation (DFG).

The statutes of the IWM and the Implementation Agreement on Gender Equality (AV-Glei) adopted by the GWK form the legal basis of the IWM's gender equality work.

Equal opportunities for all employees and the reconcilability of family and work life are firmly anchored in the IWM's mission statement and are a central component of the institute's culture. This also includes the disapproval of any kind of sexual harassment, bullying, discrimination, and disadvantage in the workplace.

The aim of the present Gender Equality Plan is to analyse the current initial situation with regard to the distribution of women and men at the different functional levels. Building on this, measures are outlined which are specifically designed to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions.

The IWM's Gender Equality Plan was published for the first time for the period 2022 to 2026. This is now being continued with the present Gender Equality Plan for the years 2026 to 2030. Every two years, an assessment will be carried out to determine the extent to which the objectives of this Gender Equality Plan have been met and the measures implemented, and whether the set objectives appear appropriate. Where necessary, objectives and measures will be adjusted or revised.

1 Context

In 2019, the federal and state governments decided to update the Pact for Research and Innovation for the years 2021 to 2030. In return for a reliable increase in their annual funding, the four major non-university research organisations and the German Research Foundation (DFG) have committed themselves to pursuing certain research policy goals, taking their own measures to implement them and reporting on them as part of the annual Pact Monitoring. One of these goals is to increase the representation of women in science and research.

1.1 Staff and Committees at the IWM

1.1.1 Current Staff Composition

As of 31.07.2026, a total of 64 people were employed at the IWM in the field of **research**, 40 of whom were women. This corresponds to a proportion of women of 62.5%. Broken down by position, the following more differentiated picture emerges in terms of the proportion of women:

- Researchers with a doctorate without managerial responsibilities: 74%
- Junior Research Group Leaders / Deputy Lab Leaders (E14 or similar): 80 %
- Professorships: 37.5 %

In the **service departments,** the proportion of women is as follows:

- Lower and middle-level staff: 78 %
- Upper-level staff: 77 %
- Senior staff: 53 %
- Leadership roles in the service departments: 29 %

This shows that, in both the academic and service sectors, the proportion of women decreases the higher the level of managerial responsibility or pay grade within the collective agreement systems. At the same time, it can be observed that the proportion of women in research has increased at all career levels compared with 1 May 2022 (the reference date of the previous equality plan). In the service departments, the proportion of women in leadership roles as at 31 July 2026 is comparable to that as at 1 May 2022.

As at 31.07.2026	**Total** Absolute numbers	**Male** Absolute Percentage (Fixed Term %)	**Female** Absolute Percentage (Fixed Term %)	**Diverse** Absolute Percentage (Fixed Term %)
Research Sections				
Professorships / Head of Institute	8	5 62,5 % (0)	31 37,5 % (0)	0
Junior Research Group Leader, Deputy Lab Leaders (E14 or similar)	10	2 20 % (0)	81 80 % (38)	0
Non-Leadership Researchers (Postdocs, E13)	14	5 36 % (100)	9 64 % (78)	0
PhD Students (E13)	23	10 43 % (100)	13 57 % (100)	0
Other Researchers (project staff, etc. E13)	9	2 22 % (50)	7 78 % (100)	0
Service (Directorate, Media Technology & Development, Administration, Team Assistants)				
Leadership Roles Service (from E13, senior staff)	7	5 71 % (0)	21[1] 29 % (0)	0
Positions in Service (from E 13, senior staff)	15	7 47 % (0)	8 53 % (12)	0
Positions in Service (E9-E12, upper-level staff)	21	4 19 % (0)	16 77 % (37)	1 4 % (100)
Positions in Service (up to E8/9, lower and middle-level staff)	9	2 22 % (0)	7 78 % (28)	0 0 (0)

1 Individuals may be listed in multiple areas if they hold multiple roles. Therefore, the total number of roles may exceed the total number of individuals.

1.1.2 Current Committee Composition

Gender parity should also be achieved in the committees if possible. In the Scientific Advisory Board, this composition has been achieved with a ratio of 3 men to 4 women. In the other three committees (Executive Board, Steering Committee and Foundation Board), women have so far been underrepresented.

Committee	**Total**	**Male**	**Female**	**Male** in Percent	**Female** in Percent
Executive Board	3	2	1	67	33
Scientific Advisory Board	7	3	4	43	57
Steering Committee (senior scientists as well as head of media technology/development and administration)	12	8	4	66	33
Foundation Board *	5	4	1	80	20

Overall, the evidence from the IWM to date suggests that women are over-represented in non-managerial roles, whilst they are under-represented in roles that involve managerial responsibilities.

2. Action Objectives

2.1 Increasing the Representation of Women in Leadership Roles

The stocktaking shows the need to increase the proportion of women in scientific and non-academic leadership roles. To achieve this goal, women should be recruited for positions with leadership positions wherever possible.

2.2 Support for Early-Career Staff

Targeted promotion of young talent and career development, especially for women, are a sustainable goal at the IWM in order to increase the proportion of women in scientific and non-scientific leadership roles in the long term.

2.3 Improving the Reconcilability of Family and Work Life

The incompatibility of family and work life in leadership roles is a reason for many people, but especially for women, to decide against a career in academia. Therefore, improving the compatibility of family and work life is an important concern for the IWM.

2.4 Prevention of Gender-Based Violence

A working environment free from gender-based violence and harassment is an important prerequisite for gender equality. Where employees are treated with respect and feel safe and protected from harassment, the conditions are more conducive to taking on leadership responsibilities and remaining in leadership roles in the long term.

3. Measures Implemented to Date

3.1 Measures to Increase the Representation of Women in Leadership Roles

The IWM has already taken measures to increase the proportion of women in leadership roles. These measures include:

- The proposal of suitable female candidates for gender parity in the IWM's Scientific Advisory Board, which currently consists of four female and three male members.
- The explicit invitation to qualified women in job advertisements to apply for scientific leadership and qualification positions along academic career paths, in particular for W2/W3 professorships, junior research group leaders and postdoc positions.
- The participation of the IWM's Equal Opportunities Officer in all IWM application procedures, including interviews for postdoc positions as well as for leadership roles.
- The participation of the IWM's Equal Opportunities Officers in joint search committees of the IWM and the University of Tübingen.
- The participation of the Equal Opportunities Officer of the University of Tübingen in joint appointment committees of the IWM and the University of Tübingen.
- Consideration of care-related career breaks when filling postdoc positions and leadership positions.
- Balanced composition of the second management level (junior research group leaders, deputy lab leaders) with women and men.
- The reference to measures to reconcile work and family life as well as certification by the "audit berufundfamilie" in all job advertisements.
- IWM internal workshops on the qualification of women, e.g. on the topic of "Science Communication for Women".
- Further sensitization of management and employees to topics relevant to gender equality (e.g. workshops on unconscious biases).

3.2 Measures to Support the Development of Early-Career Staff

Measures for the targeted promotion of young talent and career development, especially for women, are another means of increasing the proportion of women in leadership positions in the long term. The IWM has already taken the following measures in this regard:

- Through the Postdoc Talent Programme, the IWM provides outstanding early-career researchers who have completed their PhDs with the necessary framework to further qualify as researchers in science, to develop an independent scientific profile and to realize career paths within science. Participation in the program is 5 years. For admission requirements (e.g. number of A-publications) and the duration of membership, two years are taken into account as a standard allowance for each child of female scientists. For male researchers with children, however, the actual period of parental leave taken (max. 2 years) is counted. Part-time work due to family obligations can also be taken into account proportionately for all members.
- Female IWM employees with outstanding achievements are encouraged to apply for the Leibniz Mentoring Programme.
- Young female scientists are made aware of programs for the advancement of women and encouraged to submit an application for them, e.g. for the duration of its existence for the Margarete von Wrangell Habilitation Program advertised by the Ministry of Science and the Arts in Baden-Württemberg.
- A guideline is available for the annual employee appraisals, in which, in addition to topics such as academic activity and career status, topics from the area of work-life balance are also addressed.
- Targeted invitations of female scientists to colloquia and events to increase the visibility of women in science and to create diverse role models for young scientists
- Support for non-academic employees in taking up and carrying out a part-time distance learning course or other extensive further training measures.

3.3 Measures to Improve the Reconcilability of Family and Work Life

Since 2012, the IWM has been participating in the certification by the audit berufundfamilie. As part of this certification, goals are formulated in various fields of action that are intended to lead to a better work-life balance and more equal opportunities. As part of this process, the measures for reconciling family and work life are continuously optimized.

In 2024, the IWM received the audit berufundfamilie certificate for the fifth time.

At the IWM, there are numerous measures to improve the reconcilability of family and work life. The most important measures already implemented are:

- The works agreement on mobile working enables employees to work remotely in coordination with the head of their respective organisational unit, provided that the nature of their work allows it.
- The works agreement on the regulation of working hours offers employees the opportunity for the greatest possible flexibility in the organisation of their work.
- Employees who have to change their scope of work due to a special family/private situation can adjust it in coordination with the head of their respective organisational unit and considering work concerns.
- Under the flexitime scheme, it is possible to work a limited number of hours in advance or catch up on work later in the week. Overtime can be offset by taking days off, which can be particularly helpful for those with care responsibilities.
- Colloquia, assemblies, institute or company meetings (etc.) are held taking into account family-friendly times (9 a.m. to 4 p.m., 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. if possible).
- The care of children who are not yet of school age is subsidised with up to 50% of the costs incurred.
- To enable staff with families to take part in lab visits, shorter lab visits of 14 days or more can also be carried out, subject to the availability of funding.
- Online surveys on work-life balance issues are regularly conducted to check the satisfaction/effectiveness of the existing measures and to receive suggestions for further measures.
- Care responsibilities often occur unpredictably. For such situations, an emergency folder containing relevant information is available on the institute's intranet. The intranet also provides information on the legal framework

governing the assumption of care responsibilities. In cooperation with the University of Tübingen, all employees also can regularly participate in information events on the subject of care.

- Even during family-related breaks, the IWM strives to maintain contact with the respective employees. Accordingly, contact options are discussed before family-related breaks. Employees also can participate in further training or scientific events (e.g. conferences) during family-related breaks.
- Parents who have to bring their child to the office in certain situations have mobile childcare equipment at their disposal at the IWM. It consists of seven modules and can be used in their own or another free room. The equipment is suitable for both babies and older children.
- Breastfeeding mothers will be reimbursed for the costs of a necessary accompanying person during business trips. The measure is intended to help facilitate participation in business trips, reduce care-related disadvantages, and promote equal participation in scientific activities and professional development opportunities.
- To ensure a fair distribution of internal responsibilities, the Executive Board takes care to give preference to individuals who have not yet taken on any or only a few additional tasks when allocating new tasks. In addition, it is taken into account whether employees have reduced their working hours due to care work or are otherwise particularly stressed.
- To support the reconcilability of family and work life and to enable employees with children to participate in internal events, childcare is offered whenever possible at events at the IWM that take place after 2 p.m. The organization of appropriate childcare is the responsibility of the event organizers.
- The IWM provides information and advice on planning parental leave and on the division of family and care responsibilities. A partnership-based distribution of care work can promote equal opportunities and support the assumption of leadership positions by women.

3.4 Measures to Prevent Gender-Based Violence

The IWM has taken measures to create a working environment free of gender-based violence and harassment.

- To make it clear that the IWM expressly condemns all forms of sexual harassment, it has joined the “Gemeinsam gegen Sexismus” alliance.
- To provide guidance to those affected and witnesses of sexual harassment in the workplace, the IWM has written a preventive guideline "What to do in the event of sexual harassment in the workplace". Particularly, it describes possible contact persons and initial recommendations for action.
- To ensure a professional and legally compliant approach in the event of suspicion or complaint, managers and individuals in special functions (including the AGG complaints office and works council) were trained by a lawyer specialising in this field. The workshop provided confidence in action, legal basics, and concrete procedures for emergencies.
- As part of the *IWM Insights* series, an information event was held with an external expert to sensitize employees to the topic of sexual harassment in the workplace and to inform them about possible courses of action and support services.
- To raise awareness of sexual harassment in the workplace and make existing support services visible, the equal opportunities page on the intranet provides information on the topic. By providing information, contact persons and support services, the aim is to remove the stigma surrounding the issue and encourage those affected to make use of the support structures that have been put in place.

4. Planned Measures

The IWM intends to implement the following measures to increase the proportion of women in leadership positions and to improve equality in the period 2026 – 2030:

- Female employees are to be specifically made aware of the Leibniz Leadership Academy and encouraged to participate in the Academy's program that is suitable for their career phase.
- Job vacancies (including those involving leadership roles) should be advertised, following approval by the relevant organisational unit, with a note regarding the possibility of part-time work.
- Targeted offers of workshops for women (e.g. career planning / application training / coaching).
- The diverse career paths of former female scientists at the IWM are to be made visible in a targeted manner. Successful alumnae are increasingly involved as role models, particularly to support young female scientists in their professional orientation and development.
- The extent to which PhD candidates with care responsibilities can be granted extended access to resources for up to 12 months after the end of their employment at the IWM (instead of the usual 6 months) will be examined. The extension of access to IWM resources helps to compensate for structural disadvantages (e.g. increased care workload without an employment contract) and to create more equal conditions for the successful completion of doctoral projects.
- To prevent sexual harassment in the workplace and to strengthen employees' ability to act, a self-assertion course is planned. The course is intended to help them perceive and communicate personal boundaries at an early stage, recognise transgressive behaviour and react confidently and appropriately in unpleasant situations.
- Sensitization of all institute members to diversity aspects, e.g. in the form of lectures or workshops.

5. Structure and Principles of Gender Equality Work at the IWM

Gender equality is regarded as an important principle of the Institute's policy which must be reviewed regularly. The Institute’s management is supported in this task by the Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy. According to the statutes, the Equal Opportunities Officer reports directly to the Director and has the right to make direct representations. She carries out her duties independently of any instructions.

In this respect, she has a right of initiative and participates in all personnel, organisational, and social measures relating to equality between women and men, the reconcilability of family and work life, and the protection against sexual harassment in the workplace. The Equal Opportunities Officer of the IWM is elected by the female employees from among their number by secret ballot and appointed by the Director for a period of four years.

In carrying out her duties to the extent necessary, she is to be relieved of her other obligations. In addition, the Equal Opportunities Officer is supported by a student assistant with a volume of 20 hours per month. The Equal Opportunities Officer has an annual budget at her disposal, which she can use for equal opportunity work on her own responsibility and in coordination with the Executive Board.

To promote transparency and visibility of gender equality work, the Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy also use the Institute's intranet as a central communication medium. There, they regularly inform employees about current topics, projects, events, and developments in the field of gender equality as well as about the focus of their ongoing work. Communication is carried out in gender-neutral language. To support appreciative and inclusive communication at the Institute, the Equal Opportunities Officers have also developed a guideline for gender-neutral language and made it available to employees.

In order to anchor the topic of gender equality more firmly at the management level, the Institute Director and Chair of the Executive Board, Prof. Dr. Ulrike Cress, was appointed as the member from the Steering Committee responsible for the topics of equality and work-life balance and acts as an interface between the Steering Committee and the Equal Opportunities Officer.

The Equal Opportunities Officer must be informed immediately and comprehensively about any matter directly related to her duties. She is involved in the recruitment process and has the right to take part in interviews and application

processes. As part of her duties, she has the right to inspect personnel documents that are relevant to the decision and is informed about promotions, the conversion of fixed-term contracts into permanent contracts, and dismissals. She participates in the meetings of the Steering Committee in an advisory capacity. In addition, she is involved in in-house working groups.

Regular meetings between the Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy, the Director (who acts as the lead officer for equal opportunities and the reconcilability of family and work life), the 'audit berufundfamilie' coordinator, the Administrative Director, and the Diversity Officer complement the dialogue on issues relating to equality. The Equal Opportunities Officer and her deputy regularly attend training courses on the topic of gender equality and participate in the meetings of the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Working Group of the Leibniz Association. The Equal Opportunities Officer must report annually in writing to the Foundation Board on her activities.

Entry into Force and Period of Validity

The Gender Equality Plan was adopted by the Executive Board on 24 October 2026 and entered into force on 24 October 2026. It is valid for the period from 24 October 2026 to 23 October 2030.

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