

## **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN FOR THE LEIBNIZ CENTER FOR LITERARY AND CULTURAL RESEARCH (ZfL) 2021–2027**

### **Second update 2025**

#### **Mission Statement**

The ZfL regards gender equality and the reconciliation of work, private life, and family responsibilities as core guiding principles of its organizational and human resources development across both academic and science support staff and at all career levels. Responsibility for advancing these principles lies with the institute's management and all other employees in leadership positions. The ZfL supports the Leibniz Association's goals of equal opportunities and diversity and firmly opposes discrimination and disadvantage, for example on the grounds of ethnic origin, gender, religion or belief, disability, age, and sexual identity, in accordance with the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG). As an institution of the Leibniz Association, the ZfL is subject to the Leibniz Association's gender equality standards as well as the Implementation Agreement of the German Joint Science Conference (GWK-Abkommen) on Gender Equality in Joint Research Funding (AV-Glei). It actively promotes the equality between women and men according to article 3, paragraph 2 of the German Basic Law (GG) and § 2 of the Berlin State Equal Opportunities Act (LGG).

#### **I. Principles and Objectives of the Gender Equality Plan**

The gender equality plan serves to identify existing needs for action in the areas of gender justice and equality at the ZfL and to specify measures for achieving and sustainably safeguarding these goals. It is based on the provisions set out in § 4 LGG Berlin concerning the preparation of women's advancement plans and was adopted jointly by the ZfL equal opportunities officer and the institute's management for a period of six years. In accordance with § 4 LGG, the ZfL will update the gender equality plan and adjust the objectives and measures as needed at regular intervals of two years; the present version constitutes the second update.

The target quotas set out in the gender equality plan are to be achieved by 2025 in accordance with the target agreement of the Leibniz Association for the first half of the Pact for Research and Innovation IV (2021–2025). In determining these quotas on the basis of the cascade model – under which the target proportion of women in a given remuneration group, management level, or career stage is aligned with the proportion at the level immediately below – expected staff turnover is taken into account. In addition, the particularly ambitious Leibniz benchmark quotas are used as a standard.

All statistical data on the staff structure used as the basis for the analysis of the current situation and for calculating the target quotas refer to the reporting date of 31 December 2024.

## II. Current Situation Analysis

As of the reporting date, a total of 55 persons are employed at the ZfL.<sup>1</sup> Of these, 35 are women and 20 are men, corresponding to a ratio of 64% to 36% (2022: 63% to 37%).<sup>2</sup>

In the science support area, a total of 10 persons are employed, of whom 7 are women and 3 are men (70% to 30%; 2022: 80% to 20%). A clear overrepresentation of women therefore continues to exist in this area.

The number of student assistants employed at the ZfL has decreased drastically overall since 2022 due to budget constraints. Of the 12 student assistants employed at the ZfL (2022: 21), 11 are women and 1 is a man. The proportion of women is therefore 92%, representing an increase of 21% since 2022. The overrepresentation of women among student assistants already identified in the 2021 gender equality plan has thus become even more pronounced.

Among the 33 researchers employed at the ZfL, 17 (52%; 2022: 53%) are women and 16 (48%; 2022: 47%) are men. Excluding those employed at the ZfL for the purpose of doctoral studies, 29 researchers remain, of whom 15 are women and 14 are men; the proportion of women in this group is 52% (2022: 53%).

	Total	Number of Women	Number of Men	Percentage of Women
<b>All Employees</b>	55	35	20	64
<b>Researchers</b>	33	17	16	52
- Docs	4	2	2	50
- Postdocs <sup>3</sup>	19	11	8	58
- Habilitated Researchers	10	4	6	40
<b>Science-Support-Staff</b>	10	7	3	70
<b>Student Assistants</b>	12	11	1	92

Two male employees who are on leave are not included in this table.

In the following, the personnel structure in the academic area, excluding student assistants, is presented in differentiated form according to remuneration groups, management positions, full-time and part-time employment, and qualification phases.

### II. 1. Remuneration groups

Of the 33 employees in the academic area, 27 are employed in **remuneration group 1 (E13 TVöD)**, of whom 14 are women (52%; 2022: 59%). The proportion of women among positions funded through third-party funds (TP) is 64%, representing an increase of 2% compared with 2022. Among positions funded from the core budget (CB), the proportion is 38%, which is 18% below the 2022 level. Women are therefore overrepresented in this remuneration group among third-party funded staff, while they are underrepresented in core-

<sup>1</sup> This figure includes all persons working at the ZfL at the time of the current situation analysis whose positions are funded either from ZfL resources (core budget) or from third-party funds. It therefore does not include scholarship holders, senior fellows, honorary members, or two research staff members who, at the time of the current situation analysis, were on leave expected to last until 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Here and in the following, all percentage figures are rounded to whole numbers.

<sup>3</sup> This category also includes persons without a completed doctorate who are not employed for the purpose of pursuing a doctorate.

budget-funded positions. Among permanent core-budget-funded positions in remuneration group 1, the proportion of women has fallen from 50% in 2022 to 43% as a result of the conversion of a male researcher's fixed-term contract into a permanent one, which was necessary from the ZfL's strategic academic perspective.

Of the 4 employees in **remuneration group 2 (E14 TVöD)** (2022: 5), 3 are men; the proportion of women at this level is therefore 25% (2022: 0%). Three of these positions are funded through independently acquired third-party funding that provides for classification in this remuneration group (1 ERC Starting Grant, 1 ERC Consolidator Grant, and 1 DFG Heisenberg position).<sup>4</sup> The remaining core-budget-funded position in this remuneration group (held by a man) is the result of an individual case decision by the former director of the institute. Under the ZfL staffing concept, neither new appointments to core-budget-funded positions nor re-classifications into remuneration group 2 (E14 TVöD) are planned.

The person employed in **remuneration group 3 (E15 TVöD)** is a woman; in this case, the third-party funder (Volkswagen Foundation) provides for classification at this level. The proportion of women in this group is therefore 100% (2022: 0%).

In **remuneration group 5 (W3)**, the proportion of women remains unchanged at 100%, with one core-budget-funded position held by a woman.

Overall, 6 of the 15 core-budget-funded academic positions are held by women; the proportion of women has declined from 50% in 2022 to 40%. Reasons for this include the expiry of positions held by women and the appointment of women to positions at other institutions, while replacement appointments were not possible for financial reasons. As before, 3 of the 9 permanent academic positions in remuneration groups E14 and E13 (33%; 2022: 33%) are held by women. These percentages do not include one employee (male, postdoctoral researcher, permanently employed) who is on leave and reaches retirement age on 31 December 2024.

Remuneration Groups (RG)	Total		Number of Women		Number of Men		Percentage of Women		
	CB	TP	CB	TP	CB	TP	CB	TP	Total
RG 5 (W3)	1	-	1	-	-	-	100	-	100
RG 4 (W2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
RG 3 (E15)	-	1	-	1	-	-	-	100	100
RG 2 (E14)	1	3 <sup>5</sup>	-	1	1	2	-	33	25
RG 1 (E13)	13	14	5	9	8	5	38	64	52
<i>thereof permanent positions</i>	<b>Total</b>		<b>Number of Women</b>		<b>Number of Men</b>		<b>Percentage of Women</b>		
RG5 (W3)	1		1		-		100		
RG2 (E14)	2		-		2		-		
RG1 (E13)	7		3		4		43		

This table does not include one male employee (permanent) who is on leave and is being covered by a substitute.

<sup>4</sup> This includes two positions that are funded at 75% and 80% respectively by the funding body; the remaining percentage is financed from the core budget.

<sup>5</sup> See note 4.

## II.2 Management Positions

The ZfL has three management levels: institute management (level 1), program area management (level 2), and project management (level 3).

The scientific institute management is held by a woman; the proportion of women at this level is therefore 100%.

The underrepresentation at the program area management level, already identified in 2021, continues to persist. The proportion of women remains at 33%, as in 2022.

At project management level, 3 out of 5 positions are held by women. The proportion of women relevant for target quotas under the cascade model is therefore 60%, representing an increase of 10% since 2022.

While all target-quota-relevant management positions at levels 1 and 2 are, with the exception of one male-held position, funded from the core budget, at level 3 two project management positions are funded from the core budget (one held by a man and one by a woman). Among third-party funded positions, the proportion of women is 66%.

Management Level	Total		Number of Women		Number of Men		Percentage of Women		
	CB	TP	CB	TP	CB	TP	CB	TP	total
L1: institute	1	-	1	-	-	-	100	-	100
L2: program areas	5	1	2	-	3	1	40	-	33
L3: projects	2	3	1	2	1	1	50	66	60

## II.3 Part-Time and Full-Time Employment

Of the total 55 employees at the ZfL, 14 were employed part-time as of the reporting date, of whom 9 are women and 5 are men. The proportion of women among part-time employees is therefore 64%. Since the last data collection, a decrease of 9% in the proportion of women has been recorded.

Broken down by assignment and funding source, the distribution as of the reporting date is as follows: In the science support area, 3 female employees funded from the core budget are employed part-time at 80%, 77%, and 67% respectively.

Of the postdoctoral positions in the academic area,<sup>6</sup> 7 third-party funded positions are filled on a part-time basis. Of these, 4 employees are employed at 50% (3 women, 1 man), 2 employees at 65% (1 woman, 1 man), and 1 male postdoc at 75%. The remaining part-time positions are held by doctoral researchers. Four doctoral researchers (2 women, 2 men) are employed at 65%, of whom the two women are funded through third-party funds.

## II.4 Qualification Phases

At the ZfL, researchers are employed in all stages of academic training and qualification, ranging from the first university degree to habilitation.

Of the total 4 doctoral researchers at the reporting date, 2 are women and 2 are men. The gender parity already identified in 2022 has thus been maintained. 2 doctoral positions are funded from the core budget. Both are held by men, which reflects a further decline in the

<sup>6</sup> This also includes one academic staff member who does not hold a doctorate but is not employed at the ZfL for the purpose of pursuing a doctoral degree.

proportion of women from 75% (2021) to 25% (2022) and to 0% at the reporting date. The two core-budget-funded doctoral positions expired on the reporting date and could not be refilled for financial reasons.

For the postdoctoral phase, an overrepresentation of women is observed, as in 2022 (60%), with a current proportion of 58%. A separate analysis shows a clear difference between core-budget- and third-party-funded postdoctoral positions: while 8 of 13 third-party-funded postdoctoral positions are held by women, corresponding to a female proportion of 62% and thus an increase of 8% compared with 2022, 3 of 6 core-budget-funded postdoctoral positions are held by women, resulting in a female proportion of 50%, which represents a decrease of 21% compared with 2022.

A difference is also evident at the level of staff with completed habilitation between core-budget positions, of which 3 of 6 are held by women (female proportion 50%; 2022: 50%), and the 4 third-party-funded positions, all but one of which are held by men. Overall, of the 10 habilitated researchers at the ZfL, 4 are women; at 40% (2022: 40%), women remain underrepresented in this group.

	Total		Number of Women		Number of Men		Percentage of Women		
	CB	TP	CB	TP	CB	TP	CB	TP	Total
<b>Docs</b>	2	2	-	2	2	-	-	100	50
<b>Postdocs</b>	6	13	3	8	3	5	50	62	58
<b>Habilitated Researchers</b>	6	4	3	1	3	3	50	25	40

This table does not include one male employee who is being covered by a substitute.

### III. Projected Staff Development and Target Quotas

During the period up to 2025 defined by the Leibniz Association and the Pact for Research and Innovation IV as the basis for calculating target quotas, one academic position funded from the core budget was extended as planned (held by a woman).

#### III.1 Pay Equity and Fixed-Term/Permanent Positions

In accordance with the guidelines of the Leibniz Association, the maintenance of the gender parity already achieved is set as the target for **remuneration group 1 (E13 TVöD) in the academic area**. The slight overrepresentation of women at core-budget-funded positions observed in 2022 (56%) could not be maintained (currently: 38%).

For **remuneration group 2 (E14 TVöD)**, a target quota of 50% would have to be set in accordance with the cascade model and the Leibniz benchmark quota for 2025. However, as explained under II.1, the ZfL staffing concept does not provide for any new appointments or replacements of core-budget-funded positions in this remuneration group, meaning that no target quota can be defined. The ZfL will nevertheless work to attract women in particular for correspondingly funded third-party positions (e.g. DFG Heisenberg positions, ERC Consolidator Grants, etc.) and to support female staff in the planning and submission of grant applications.

In line with the recommendations of the Leibniz Association, the ZfL staffing concept provides for a balanced ratio of fixed-term and permanent positions. Against this background, it is expected that no existing positions can be made permanent and no new permanent positions can be created. Only unforeseeable fluctuations in existing positions could create scope to

achieve gender parity among permanent staff. The ZfL commits to giving priority to the goal of gender parity in the event of such future fluctuations.

Among permanently employed academic staff, the proportion of women has slightly increased from 36% in 2022 to 40% as of 31 December 2024.

### ***III.2 Management Positions***

With regard to the underrepresentation of women in core-budget-funded positions at the second management level (program areas), and taking into account the projected staff turnover, the aim for level 3 (projects) is to fill vacancies or newly created core-budget-funded project leadership positions with women, in order to achieve the gender-balanced composition in the fluctuating staff segment at this level as required by the Leibniz Association. For the management of third-party funded projects, where the proportion of women currently stands at 66%, gender parity of at least 50% will continue to be pursued.

Taking into account expected fluctuations due to the appointment of habilitated staff to positions at other institutions, a target quota of 50% is set for level 2 (program area management).

### ***III.3 Part-Time and Full-Time Employment***

As of 31 December 2024, 11 academic staff members were employed part-time, of whom 5 were women and 6 were men. Due to the departure of 2 male doctoral researchers employed part-time and the recruitment of 2 female doctoral researchers after the reporting date, the proportion of women among part-time employees increases.

Among non-academic staff, 3 female employees were working part-time. During the first half of 2025, two further members of the science support staff will reduce their working hours. No additional changes are planned.

### ***III.4 Early-Career Support and Qualification Phases***

The target set in 2021 of maintaining at least a balanced gender ratio among doctoral researchers has been achieved. However, there has been a renewed significant shift in the gender ratio among doctoral positions funded from the core budget. The proportion of women has decreased from 75% in 2021 to 25% in 2022 and finally to 0% in 2024. Due to the departure of the two doctoral researchers employed on core-budget-funded positions and the recruitment of two female doctoral researchers (one third-party funded, one core-budget-funded) after the reporting date, the proportion of women among doctoral researchers currently stands at 100%.

The target set in 2022 – to re-establish an overrepresentation of women in doctoral positions overall across both core-budget and third-party funded positions – was achieved after the reporting date. This target was intended to support the stabilization of the proportion of women in the postdoctoral phase and, in particular, to increase the share of women among habilitated researchers both within the ZfL and beyond, until gender parity is reached even in higher qualification phases.

While in 2022 there was still a clear overrepresentation of women in core-budget-funded postdoctoral positions (71%), a gender-balanced ratio could at least be achieved by the reporting date. Among habilitated researchers in core-budget-funded positions, a balanced gender ratio has likewise been achieved, as was already the case in 2022.

## **IV. Measures**

Based on the current situation analysis and the staff development forecast, a continued need for action can be identified, particularly with regard to the distribution of permanent positions and management roles. The following measures are presented in the areas of human resources development and recruitment, as well as the improvement of work-life balance and the general strengthening of a gender- and diversity-sensitive working and organizational culture. Through these measures, the ZfL aims to eliminate existing inequalities in the coming years and contribute to an overall balanced employment structure.

### ***IV.1 Human Resources Development***

In order to address the underrepresentation of women, particularly in higher remuneration groups and in leadership positions, the ZfL commits to early-stage and sustained support for female researchers, especially with regard to the critical phases of academic careers, i.e., the transitions between qualification stages.

To this end, the existing measures supporting early-career female researchers at the institute will be continued. These include status meetings conducted by the institute's management upon request and as needed in addition to the annual staff appraisals. These meetings focus in particular on career development and the clarification of further training and professional development needs of employees. Career development issues are also addressed at the doctoral day held once per semester, where advice on funding opportunities is provided and further training needs are identified. Upon request and subject to available funding, career days may include contributions from external guests who provide insights into alternative career paths.

Female employees are informed about the advisory, networking, and funding formats of the Leibniz Association for individual career planning support (e.g., Leibniz Junior Research Groups, Leibniz Mentoring Program) and are encouraged to participate in external training opportunities, including those aimed at taking on higher-level responsibilities and positions. In matters of appointment procedures, for example, they are also referred to the German Association of University Professors and Lecturers. In special cases, the ZfL provides financial support for the involvement of external experts. This may be done in cooperation with other institutes of the Leibniz Association, in particular those under the joint umbrella of the Humanities Centers Berlin e.V. (GWZ).

As part of individual career support, in order to ensure long-term gender parity at the level of project leadership and to counteract the unbalanced gender ratio in remuneration group 2 (E14 TVöD), the ZfL particularly supports its female employees in the planning, acquisition, and implementation of third-party funded projects. These include, for example, junior research groups within the EU Horizon program, DFG Heisenberg positions, or ERC grants. Short-term available core-budget funds are to be used in a targeted manner to employ women in particular and to give them the opportunity to advance their projects or to prepare a third-party funding application, with the ZfL providing support through third-party funding and application advising, peer consultation, and academic proofreading.

### ***IV.2 Recruitment***

Job advertisements are issued in accordance with § 5, paragraph 1 LGG internally within the institute and, above remuneration group E9, publicly, provided that women are underrepresented in the respective group. In accordance with § 5, paragraph 5 LGG, job advertisements always use both masculine and feminine as well as gender-neutral language forms. In recruitment processes for positions in areas where women are underrepresented, female applicants are given preferential consideration in the event of equal qualifications and suitability in accordance with § 8, paragraph 1 LGG. A corresponding statement in the job advertisement

explicitly encourages women to apply.

In order to increase the proportion of women in these areas, the process of active recruitment has been optimized. Based on best-practice examples, the ZfL has developed its own set of guidelines and a practical manual for implementation. In doing so, the ZfL is guided, among other things, by the standards for the appointment of scientific leadership positions within the Leibniz Association (24 November 2006) and makes targeted use of women-oriented networks and databases such as AcademiaNet in the search for suitable female candidates. Recruitment begins well before the actual hiring process by actively inviting promising female researchers to conferences, lectures, guest residencies, etc. In cases of recruitment in areas where women are underrepresented, additional women are also encouraged to apply after the application deadline has passed.

Job advertisements generally include a reference to the possibility of part-time employment, including for leadership positions, unless compelling operational reasons prevent this.

Selection committees are, wherever possible, composed in a gender-balanced manner and must include at least one voting female member. All projects are also, where feasible, staffed in a gender-balanced manner. For interviews, as far as possible, an equal number of female and male candidates is invited in cases of equal qualification and suitability; at a minimum, the proportion of invitations is proportional to the number of applications received. Equal opportunity principles are observed in every selection process. Care work, parental leave, and caregiving periods are taken into account in the evaluation of performance, particularly in relation to researchers' publication records.

For the involvement of the equal opportunities officer in the recruitment and selection process, see V.

### ***IV.3 Work-Life Balance***

The ZfL regards the compatibility of work, private life, and family as an important strategic element for attracting and retaining highly qualified staff. Measures aimed at supporting this balance are explicitly formulated in a gender-neutral manner.

The ZfL designs its working and organizational structures in a way that fosters a family-friendly working environment: it offers flexible working hours and the possibility of mobile work to its employees. Family-related concerns are taken into account in scheduling, and efforts are made to ensure that events and internal meetings, where possible, take place within the opening hours of daycare centers, schools, and after-school care facilities. In the case of important appointments outside regular care hours, subsidies for childcare costs may be requested, as may be the case for participation in conferences and professional development measures. Travel cost subsidies may also be requested for the travel of a trusted caregiver, for the travel of children to a trusted caregiver, or for accompanying children on business trips.

For employees on parental or caregiving leave, the institute maintains contact with their consent and offers return-to-work agreements; training opportunities remain accessible during parental and caregiving leave as well as for part-time employees.

The ZfL advises applicants for third-party funded projects to include funds for contract extensions covering maternity or parental leave already at the application stage. Where the funding body does not provide for such arrangements or no agreement can be reached with the funding body, the ZfL endeavors to extend employment contracts to account for taken parental leave, even though there is no legal entitlement to this in cases of fixed-term employment due to third-party funding under § 2, paragraph 1 of the German Fixed-Term Employment in Science Act (WissZeitVG).

In its new premises, the ZfL has established a parent-child room, offering staff with children an alternative in cases of childcare shortages.

In order to sustainably shape and further develop work-life balance, the ZfL successfully completed the certification process for the “audit berufundfamilie” in May 2022. The target agreements were presented within the institute and are accessible to all employees via the intranet.

#### ***IV.4 Gender- and Diversity-Sensitive Working and Organizational Culture***

The implementation of the guiding principle of equal opportunities and diversity includes a gender- and diversity-sensitive working and organizational culture within the institute, as well as respectful interaction in everyday working life and communication. This includes, in particular, the condemnation of any form of discrimination and sexual harassment, which all ZfL employees – especially those in leadership positions – are expected to actively prevent and counteract.

In addition, in accordance with section 2.2 of the annex to the AV-Glei, the ZfL also expresses the equal status of women and men linguistically in its general regulations, all publications, and fundamental documents.

#### **V. Equal Opportunities Officer**

The duties and rights of the equal opportunities officer and their deputy are regulated in sections 12 and 15–18 of the annex to the AV-Glei as well as in § 16 and 17 LGG. The equal opportunities officer and their deputy are appointed by the institute’s management following a confidential vote of the female employees, for a term of four years. The institute’s management ensures that the equal opportunities officer is able to carry out their duties in accordance with the recommendations on standards for the work of equal opportunities officers in Leibniz institutions.

The equal opportunities officer and their deputy are given the opportunity to participate in further training on gender equality-related topics, as well as to attend relevant events and networking meetings of the Leibniz Association. If necessary, they are temporarily relieved of other duties. They are in regular contact with the institute’s management and draw attention to gender equality-related issues. There is a monthly meeting between the director and the works council, to which the equal opportunities officer is also invited.

The equal opportunities officer is, as a matter of principle, involved at an early stage in strategic personnel measures, particularly with regard to recruitment processes (from workforce planning, job advertisement, review of applications received, selection of candidates to be invited, and interviews through to hiring decisions) as well as decisions on the conversion of fixed-term to permanent contracts. They are a member of selection committees in an advisory capacity. It is at the discretion of the equal opportunities officer to what extent they accompany each individual process. The equal opportunities officer is a contact person for issues of gender equality, equal opportunities, and the compatibility of work, private life, and family, and ensures that a gender- and diversity-sensitive approach is maintained at all levels of the ZfL’s working and organizational culture.

In addition to the ombudspersons, the equal opportunities officer is a confidential contact person for employees in cases of sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, or workplace bullying and can be reached via the functional email address [gleichstellung@zfl-berlin.org](mailto:gleichstellung@zfl-berlin.org). Since June 2022, the equal opportunities officer has also offered a regular monthly open consultation hour. In addition, employees may contact the central external clarification office established by the Leibniz Association for conflict counselling and prevention.

## VI. Final Provision

This updated gender equality plan enters into force upon signature by the institute's director and the equal opportunities officer.

In accordance with § 4, paragraph 6 LGG, the plan is submitted for information to the member of the Senate responsible for women's policy, at the time of entry into force the Senator for Labor, Social Affairs, Equality, Integration, Diversity and Anti-Discrimination, Cansel Kiziltepe.

Berlin, 15 August 2025



Prof. Dr. Eva Geulen  
Director of the ZfL



Dr. Dr. Magdalena Gronau  
Equal Opportunities Officer of the ZfL