

# Action Plan for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in NORCE

2025-2027



# Introduction

NORCE is committed to fostering equality and diversity among its employees and ensuring an inclusive working environment for all. We value diversity in gender, nationality, language, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, work ability, and life stage.

A diverse NORCE strengthens our contribution to a democratic and sustainable society, enhances the relevance of our research, and provides us with a competitive advantage nationally and internationally.

The principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion are integrated into NORCE's 2022–2027 strategy and are described in both the Policy and Action Plan for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

This work is supported by the Committee for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, a dedicated HR resource (10% position), and administrative support. The Action Plan is revised every three years in collaboration with all divisions within NORCE.

## **Commitments Under the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act**

The purpose of the Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act (Likestillings- og diskrimineringsloven) is to promote equality and prevent discrimination based across a range of protected categories, including gender, ethnicity, religion, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, and age. The Act sets specific obligations for employers related to activities, reporting, and information-sharing to ensure compliance.

## **Commitments for Participation in Horizon Europe and the Norwegian Research Council Programs**

Under Horizon Europe, a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a mandatory requirement for certain organizations, such as public institutions and research organizations, to receive funding. This plan must address several key areas, including gender balance in recruitment, career progression, leadership, and decision-making. Additionally, it must incorporate gender dimensions into the research and innovation process to ensure that outputs are relevant and impactful for diverse populations.

Similarly, the Norwegian Research Council requires that organizations seeking funding demonstrate their commitment to gender equality by implementing a structured action plan. This requirement aims to ensure that research environments actively promote equality and diversity while addressing gender-based disparities. By doing so, these initiatives enhance both the quality and societal value of research and innovation.



Senior Researcher Julie Runde Krogstad. Photo: Andreas R. Graven/NORCE

## Key Concepts

Understanding key concepts is essential for fostering a culture where everyone feels valued and respected.

**Equality.** Equality involves providing everyone with the same opportunities, rights, and conditions regardless of their personal characteristics or background, wherever possible. At NORCE, equality means treating all employees fairly in terms of hiring, compensation, professional development, and working conditions while actively addressing structural inequalities to ensure fairness and equal access.

**Diversity.** Diversity within an organization encompasses the inclusion of individuals from various backgrounds, including gender, age, nationality, language, religion, political beliefs, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, and life stage. At NORCE, diversity is recognized as a strength that contributes to a richer exchange of ideas and perspectives.

**Inclusion.** Inclusion is the practice of creating an environment where diverse individuals feel respected, valued, and empowered to fully participate. An inclusive workplace at NORCE ensures that all employees can contribute to the organization's goals and feel a sense of belonging. This involves actively

addressing barriers that may prevent full participation and making sure that policies, practices, and behaviors promote acceptance and engagement across the organization.

**Non-discrimination.** Non-discrimination is the principle of treating individuals fairly and equitably without bias or prejudice. NORCE is committed to upholding this principle across all employment practices, including recruitment, promotions, training, and access to opportunities, ensuring that decisions are based on merit and relevant qualifications.

**Accessibility.** Accessibility means creating an environment that allows all individuals, including those with disabilities, to access and participate fully in the workplace. This includes physical accessibility as well as digital accessibility. At NORCE, accessibility also extends to providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with reduced work ability to enable them to perform their roles effectively.

**Reduced work capacity.** Reduced work ability refers to a situation where an individual's capacity to perform work is diminished due to a physical, mental, or cognitive condition.





# Measures within the Action Plan

This Action Plan outlines NORCE's commitment to advancing equality, diversity, and inclusion throughout our organization. It serves as a structured framework for implementing, monitoring, and evaluating initiatives that align with both our strategic objectives and the requirements of national legislation and Horizon Europe.

The Action Plan is organized into six key areas, each addressing critical aspects of our commitment:

1. **Overarching Themes in Equality and Diversity Management:** This includes management practices, data collection and analysis, and overall governance related to equality and diversity initiatives to ensure with valid laws and rules
2. **Life-Work Balance and Organizational Culture:** Initiatives aimed at promoting a healthy work-life balance and fostering a positive organizational culture that supports all employees.
3. **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Leadership and Decision-Making:** Efforts focused on ensuring diversity, including but not limited to equal representation of genders in leadership roles and decision-making processes.
4. **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Recruitment and Career Progression:** Strategies to promote fairness and equality in recruitment practices and career advancement opportunities for all employees.
5. **Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research:** Actions to incorporate gender considerations into research and educational programs, enhancing their relevance and impact.
6. **Measures Against Gender-Based Violence, Including Sexual Harassment:** Policies and initiatives designed to prevent and address gender-based violence and harassment in the workplace.

Through this comprehensive structure, we aim to create a transparent and accountable framework that not only addresses our immediate goals but also fosters a culture of continuous improvement in equality, diversity, and inclusion at NORCE.

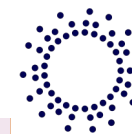


*Researchers in the EU-project BlueRemediomics, from left: Neda Gilannejad, Antonio Garcia-Moyano, Gro Bjerga, Naouel Gharbi and Lars Ebbesson.  
Photo: Andreas R. Graven/NORCE*

# Central Initiatives



Key Area	Measures	Responsible	Timeline/ Deadline	KPI
<b>Overarching Themes in Equality and Diversity Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Equality and Diversity Committee will meet AMU and KL once a year and provide a status update.</li> </ul>	COO, Committee Leader	Within 01.11 annually	
<b>Organizational Culture</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strive for gender balance when establishing all internal committees at NORCE.</li> </ul>	KL, leaders at all levels	Whole period	
<b>Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion in Leadership and Decision-Making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strive for diversity in the leadership at NORCE.</li> </ul>	Corporate Management	Whole period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue building leadership competence in diversity and inclusion through training offered under the Leadership Development Program at NORCE Academy.</li> </ul>	Division Leadership, NORCE Academy	Whole period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Present topics related to equality and diversity in the leadership forum to ensure continuous engagement and knowledge sharing among leaders.</li> </ul>	HR, NORCE Academy, and the Equality and Diversity Committee	Once a year	
<b>Equality, diversity, and inclusion in recruitment, onboarding, and career development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ensure that job advertisements are inclusive and gender-neutral.</li> </ul>	Leaders and researchers / recruitment committee	Whole period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strive for recruitment committees to include representation from both genders and diversity beyond gender.</li> </ul>	Recruiting leaders at all levels, HR	Whole period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer Norwegian language training to all new employees with non-Norwegian backgrounds.</li> </ul>	HR	Q4 2025	Information on the intranet and to recruiting leaders.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Division and department leadership analyzes salaries during annual salary reviews, based on system reports, to ensure a reasonable balance between genders under otherwise equal conditions.</li> </ul>	Division leadership	Whole period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work towards gender balance in all research positions. Specific measures are developed at the divisional level based on gender-balanced data in divisions.</li> </ul>	Leaders in each division	Whole period	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work to improve gender balance in scientific top positions (Researcher I, Chief Researcher) by encouraging all qualified employees to apply for promotion, especially in units where one gender is underrepresented. This includes making leaders and employees aware of promotion policies and informing about application requirements.</li> </ul>	HR, managers	Whole period	Information included in the employee handbook. HR informs in leadership meetings. Information on the intranet regarding development discussions.



Key area	Measures	Responsible	Timeline/Deadline	KPI
Life-Work Balance	• Develop a life-phase policy that supports a good balance between work and leisure.	HR	Q4 2025	Life-phase policy published in MAPS.
	• Identify challenges related to the balance between work and leisure during development conversations and facilitate life-phase adjustments.	All managers with personnel responsibility / HR	Q1 2025	Template for development conversations adapted to needs.
Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.	• Ensure all employees are familiar with the reporting procedure on MAPS.	COO	Q1 2025	Intranet case when the procedure is revised.
Integration of gender perspectives in research	• Enhance researchers' awareness of the benefits and opportunities that integrating a gender perspective can bring to their research.	Division leadership with support from the Equality and Diversity Committee	Whole period	Include the topic "Integration of Gender Perspective in Research" in at least one divisional-level meeting in 2025.
	• Create a guide for researchers to incorporate gender perspectives into their proposal development.	NORCE Academy, Research Administration	Q4 2025	Guidance/support document published in MAPS.
	• Offer targeted training programs to build researchers' capacity to effectively incorporate gender perspectives into their research projects, including practical guidance on methodology, data collection, and analysis.	NORCE Academy, Research Administration	Whole period	Development of programe as either an online course, asynchronous nanocourse, or as part of existing established courses.

## Local initiatives

Key areas	Measures	Responsible	Timeline/Deadline	KPI
Local Action Plans	• All divisions shall develop their own tailored action plans for equality, diversity, and inclusion, based on their own challenges.	Division leadership with support from HR and the Equality and Diversity Committee	First iterations by 01.04.2025, followed by annual status updates from the divisions.	Action plan template developed