

Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

The IT'IS Foundation's excellence and impact rely on the diverse backgrounds, perspectives, and ways of solving problems that our team brings together. We are committed to an inclusive workplace that encourages authenticity, values diversity, and advances equality and inclusion, so that innovative ideas can flourish every day. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is a central part of our broader Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) framework and guides how we turn these commitments into practice.

Purpose and Scope

IT'IS is committed to fostering an inclusive environment that values diversity in all of its forms, including gender, age, nationality, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion or belief, and educational, cultural, or socio-economic background, or any other dimension of diversity. These principles are grounded in our internal *Z43 Guidebook*, which sets out universal ethics rules and guidelines for collaboration and tolerance within the [Z43](#) organizations. Building on this basis, IT'IS advances gender equality and inclusive research and innovation through the implementation of this GEP, which applies to all staff, students, and management personnel.

Public document

This GEP covers the entire IT'IS organization, reflecting Z43's practice of transparent communication of its values and guiding principles and outlining the objectives and implementation measures for building a more gender-equal and inclusive workplace. This GEP covers the period 2026–2029 and will be reviewed and updated as needed, taking into account organizational needs and ongoing reflections on values and culture. As a formal public document, this GEP was approved and endorsed by the IT'IS Executive Board in May 2026, is published on the IT'IS website (<https://itis.swiss/who-we-are/diversity-and-gender-equality>), and is communicated internally to all staff.

Dedicated Resources

Overall responsibility for the GEP lies with the members of the IT'IS Executive Board, who provide strategic oversight. Day-to-day implementation of the GEP is coordinated by the Diversity Officer, who is a representative of the administrative office, who dedicates part of their working time to GEP tasks, and who can seek support from management and staff as needed.

Data Collection and Monitoring

Once per year, IT'IS collects sex-disaggregated data on staff by role, seniority, contract type, and leadership responsibilities, as well as participation in training and, where feasible, remuneration bands. Key results are reviewed annually by the IT'IS Executive Board to inform future diversity and gender-equality actions, and an internal summary is shared with staff. A report can be made available on request.

Training and Awareness

IT'IS organizes and facilitates regular awareness-raising and training activities on gender equality, unconscious bias, inclusive leadership, and respectful conduct. These activities are designed for all staff to strengthen everyday inclusive practices and ensure that all staff feel safe and respected at work. Training formats include seminars to present the GEP and its updates, diversity and gender-equality awareness events, and refresher webinars on internal tolerance and collaboration guidelines. Participation in these activities is encouraged throughout the entire organization with a particular focus on those involved in recruitment, supervision, and decision making.

Core trainings on gender equality and respectful conduct are offered at least once per year and are integrated into the onboarding of all new staff and students. They will be periodically reviewed by the Diversity Officer to ensure that knowledge, attitudes, and practices continue to evolve in line with Z43's values.

Main Areas of Action

- Flexibility and Inclusive Work Culture

IT'IS promotes a respectful, safe, and inclusive working environment that does not tolerate discrimination, bullying, or harassment, with particular emphasis on preventing gender-based and diversity-related discrimination. Where compatible with project needs, IT'IS supports flexible working arrangements, part-time options, and family-leave provisions.

- Gender and Diversity in Leadership and Decision-Making

IT'IS strives for diversity among Board members and management, which is challenging given its small organizational size and specific scientific and engineering profile. When forming decision-making or evaluation bodies, IT'IS aspires whenever feasible to avoid single-gender compositions and actively seeks and considers candidates from under-represented groups.

- Fair Recruitment and Career Progression

Transparent criteria, inclusive language, and, whenever possible, diverse selection panels are used for decisions regarding recruitment, promotion, and funding procedures to reduce the risk of bias, in line with Z43's emphasis on fairness, objective criteria, and non-discrimination. IT'IS monitors gender patterns in applications and hiring towards

identifying and addressing potential bias and supports equal access development opportunities for all genders.

- Gender Dimension in Research and Funding Content

For Horizon Europe and other relevant projects or calls, IT'IS encourages applicants to evaluate whether sex and gender are relevant to the research content and methodologies and to address these issues whenever appropriate.

- Prevention of Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

IT'IS maintains clear and confidential procedures for reporting and addressing discrimination and harassment and ensures that all staff know how and where to seek help to address their concerns. The *Z43 Guidebook*, which evolved from the *Z43 Code of Ethics* introduced in 2019 and was updated in 2025, sets out Z43's expectations regarding inclusiveness and tolerance. Ombudspersons (Peter Achermann and Jacqueline C. Pieper) are available to investigate and help resolve complaints or violations of people's rights. The Z43 organizations promote open and explicate communication, with zero tolerance for any form of discrimination or sexual harassment.

Contacts

For questions regarding the GEP or its implementation, please contact the Diversity Officer, Marisa Oliveira, at diversity@itis.swiss.

Endorsed by the IT'IS Executive Board on May 08, 2026.

Sincerely,

IT'IS Foundation for Research on
Information Technologies in Society

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Niels Kuster', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Prof. em. Dr. Niels Kuster, ETH Zurich