Deliverable 9.2

Gender Action Plan

for
H2020-INFRADEV-2018-1
(Development and long-term sustainability of new pan-European research infrastructures)

Research and Innovation Action (RIA)

Action Acronym:
EU-OPENSCREEN-DRIVE

Action Full Title:

“Ensuring long-term sustainability of excellence in chemical biology within Europe and beyond**”**

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1. Introduction

EU-OPENSCREEN ERIC (EU-OS), the European Research Infrastructure Consortium of Open Screening Platforms for Chemical Biology, builds a distributed organization of national screening and chemistry facilities, a common database, and a central headquarters that manages a joint compound collection and coordinates project flow and training. It provides world-class services to academia and industry in the fields of small-molecule screening and medicinal chemistry.

The **EU-OPENCREEN-DRIVE (DRIVE)** project unites 34 partners from 16 different European member or associated states aiming to accelerate the implementation of EU-OS services. The project will support the implementation of the EU-OS scientific and technical program and the delivery of its main mission: to build a sustainable European infrastructure for chemical biology, supporting life-science research with innovative chemical tools and bioactivity data and the translation to society, environment and medicine.

Within the DRIVE project, EU-OS committed to integrate gender aspects into H2020 research, including equal opportunities for women and men and consider the gender dimension of research contributing to excellence in research.

According to the “She Figures 2018” Report[1] published by the European Commission (EC), a disproportion between women and men in both academia and the private sector is still present in all European Member States especially when considering senior levels of employment and decision-making positions. Even if women are more likely to graduate at bachelor level than men, they are less likely to continue to doctoral level. This translates into a lower proportion of woman working as R&D researchers (33.4% in 2015), while often representing the majority at the R&D supporting staff. This imbalance is even bigger if we consider the academic career, where women represent 58% of graduates at the B.Sc. and M.Sc. levels and 48% of graduates at doctoral level but only 24% of grade A academic staff. Finally, women are still under-represented in scientific authorship, with only 32% of publications having a female corresponding author, as well as in patents. This disproportion is clearly not caused by lower scientific excellence, since the impact of scientific publication is almost equal (0.9 in 2017) in female and male authorship. Inequality is not only present at the scientific level but also at an economic level. In 2016 in fact, in two thirds of the countries analyzed, 8.1% of women were employed under precarious working contracts compared to 5.2% of men. Moreover, in the majority of the countries, higher hourly earnings were found for men, and this gender pay gap increases with age. It is nevertheless important to highlight the progress achieved during the last decade in gender equality. Between 2007 and 2016 in fact the average growth rate of doctoral graduates was 2.3% for woman and 1.4% for men and this increase has been also observed in several specific fields of Science, Technology, Engineering

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and Mathematics (STEM) where women are strongly underrepresented. Moreover, since 2013 the proportion of women among grade A staff has increased in almost all countries and in particular between 2014 and 2017 the proportion of women among heads of higher education institutions increased from 20.1% to 21.7%.[1]

This data clearly demonstrates that stimulating the public opinion and supporting active initiatives to reduce the current gender gap is a successful strategy to make a change in the institution and in the entire society, but the progress is still too slow, and further actions need to be taken to reach equality in academia and research. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has undoubtedly proven how gender inequality at the societal level is influencing the productivity of female researchers. In these last months in fact, when an adjustment to a new life of remote working was required, a direct effect of family management on female researchers with kids has been clearly observed. The number of female researchers who submitted their papers was in fact lower compared to their male colleagues and this is a clear and strong indicator that actions need to be taken to develop new approaches for supporting a better family-work balance.[2, 3, 4, 5]

Considering that "*the empowerment of women is the key to all development and gender equality and should be a core part of all policy strategies"*[6] and accordingly to **Article 33.1 "Obligation to aim for gender equality"** of the Grant Agreement (GA), which states that *"The beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.",* the DRIVE consortium is fully committed to take all the necessary actions to improve gender equality within the consortium and to promote gender balance in the partner institutions.

In fact, within Subtask 9.1.4 "Promote gender equality in science" EU-OS, together with lead partner Spanish National Research Council (CSIC), will monitor gender balance and take the necessary actions to ensure equal opportunities concerning recruitment, retention and career development within the EU-OS network. EU-OS will also tackle gender equality aspects related to research activities and staff involvement within the recently launched trans-national open calls in small molecule screening and chemoproteomics.

This deliverable D9.2 "Gender Action Plan" focuses on the monitoring of gender balance within the consortium and describes the actions already taken in the last 12 months for ensuring gender equality as well as the guidelines for future activities aimed to promote and improve gender equality. More in detail, the following aspects will be discussed:

i) Gender balance in the DRIVE consortium
ii) Gender equality within the DRIVE trans-national access (TNA) open calls
iii) Future actions and how equal participation of women and men will be monitored in the DRIVE project.

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iv) Support staff in achieving a sustainable work-life balance.

2. Gender balance in the EU-OPENSCREEN-DRIVE consortium and its dynamics

DRIVE gathers together 34 partner institutions from 14 European member countries and 2 associated states. A general overview on the gender balance at the partner institutes or departments (Table 1) shows that the vast majority of them have a percentage of female employees higher than 50%, with only 4 institutes with a percentage of women lower that 40%. Moreover, 48% of the partners have already a gender policy in place, with 4 more institutes actively working on its preparation.

A general overview of the gender action plans in place shows that they are mainly focused on the recruitment process, with the aim to increase the number of women scientists employed in professional and managerial positions, on the training of employees directly involved in the gender policy at the institute, and of university managers to raise awareness on the topic.

Some of the partners offer specific programs for career development of women in science, such as the TALENTA (T.) program at the Fraunhofer ScreeningPort (IME), a two-year career program for internal or external female scientists at different stages of their career (T. start, T. speed up, T. excellence) offering financial support to the organizational units in order to attract female scientists and managers and nurture their careers over the long term and focus on the individual careers of female scientists.

Several important aspects can be found in the gender equality plans of the partner institutions:

- Finnish Center for Information Technology in Science LTD (CSC) focuses on the monitoring of equal workload and equal pay among men and women, as well as on equal training budget distribution and development possibilities to allow equality in career advancement.
- A balance in the distribution of male and female students in all study programs is actively monitored by University of Bergen (UiB) and University of Oslo (UiO) with the aim to increase the percentage of men in professional studies and the percentage of woman in natural science studies to reach, as specified by UiO, a 40/60 ratio in gender distribution for all programs. Moreover, specific administrative organs are present to control and actively promote gender equality.
- At University of Helsinki, Institute for Molecular Medicine Finland (UH-FIMM), a Faculty and Accessibility Liaison is responsible for updating the university guidelines for

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discrimination prevention, for developing training and equality lectures and for the internal communication to raise awareness among students and staff on the topic.

- In 2020, a Faculty Ombudsman role will be established at Masaryk University (MU) to represent an independent channel for reporting and solving discrimination issues and for gender and diversity advisory.

Several DRIVE partners (UiB, UiO, The Arctic University of Norway (UiT), IME, University of Santiago de Compostela (USC), Institute of Bioorganic Chemistry (IBCH-PAS), Mar Institute of Medical Research Foundation (IMIM) and MU), hold the "HR Excellence in Research Award" awarded by the European Commission to institutions, which make progress in aligning their human resources policies to the 40 principles of the Charter & Code for Researchers (https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter), based on a customized action plan/ HR strategy in the framework of the 'HR Strategy for Researchers' (https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/hrs4r). Moreover, the partners Centro de Investigación Príncipe Felipe (CIPF), Spanish Research Council (CSIC) and Karolinska Institute (KI) have already adopted the principles of the charter and started the process for obtaining the award.

Table 1: Gender balance in the partners' institutes/departments/units.

Beneficiary	Number of women (%) working at the institution	Number of men (%) working at the institution	Number of gender-neutral persons (%) working at the institution	Gender policy in place
EU-OS	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	0	No
IMG	152 (36%)	271 (64%)	0	No
IMTM	59 (49%)	61 (51%)	0	No
HZI	483 (57%)	359 (43%)	0	Yes, in preparation
IME (ScreeningPort)	11 (55%)	9 (45%)	0	Yes
MEDI	21 (49%)	19 (44%)	3 (7%)	Yes, in preparation
CIPF	108 (63%)	63 (37%)	0	Yes
USC (Screening Platform)	26 (58%)	19 (42%)	0	Yes, in preparation
UH	4421 (57%)	3362 (43%)	0	Yes
UiB (Dept. of Biomedicine)	112 (54%)	97 (46%)	0	Yes
UiT	1848 (53%)	1639 (47%)	0	Yes
UiO (NCMM)	70 (64%)	40 (36%)	0	Yes
SIN	173 (35%)	316 (65%)	0	Yes
IMB	48 (69%)	21 (30%)	1 (1%)	No
IBCH PAS	265 (40%)	400 (60%)	0	Yes
MU	1200 (40%)	1800 (60%)	0	Yes
DTU (DK-Openscreen)	1 (33%)	2 (67%)	0	No

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CSIC	5220 (49%)	5422 (51%)	0	Yes
OSI	112 (53%)	100 (47%)	0	Yes
IBB	185 (77%)	55 (23%)	0	No
IMIM	NA	NA	NA	NA
CSC	200 (44%)	250 (56%)	0	Yes
EMBL	NA	NA	NA	NA
MUAS (CeMOS)	20 (36%)	36 (64%)	0	Yes
TUM (Chair of Proteomics and Bioanalytics)	15 (50%)	15 (50%)	0	Yes
NCSRD	NA	NA	NA	NA
KI	NA	NA	NA	NA
IBMC	726 (69%)	327 (31%)	0	Yes, in preparation
LUMC	6997 (70%)	3006 (30)	0	Yes, in preparation
WEIZMANN (G-INCPM)	6 (55%)	5 (45%)	0	No
MTA TTK	287 (54%)	241 (46%)	0	No
ICT (Institute of Chemistry)	61 (74%)	21 (26%)	0	No
EPFL	NA	NA	NA	NA
FVB-FMP	123 (48%)	134 (52%)	0	No
TOTAL	**22873 (56%)**	**18136 (44%)**	**4 (0,01%)**	

Focusing on the gender balance within DRIVE, Table 2 shows that the men to women ratio in the consortium is very well balanced, with almost half of the participants being women (47%). Moreover, for almost half of the members the percentage of women involved is 50% or more. Interestingly, if we consider that several partners (12) have only one contributor, we can see that for partners with more than one participant, the 68% present a women participation of 50% or more.

Table 2: Total and female participants involved in EU-OPENSCREEN-DRIVE consortium by member institute.

Beneficiary	Total number of EU-OPENSCREEN-DRIVE participants	Total number of women (%)	Total number of men (%)
EU-OS	8	5 (63%)	3 (37%)
IMG	6	1 (17%)	5 (83%)
IMTM	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
HZI	2	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
IME	5	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
MEDI	5	4 (80%)	1 (20%)
CIPF	5	3 (60%)	2 (40%)
USC	6	3 (50%)	3 (50%)
UH	5	3 (60%)	2 (40%)
UiB	3	2 (67%)	1 (33%)
UiT	2	1 (50%)	1 (50%)

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UiO	5	2 (40%)	3 (60%)
SIN	4	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
IMB	2	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
IBCH PAS	5	2(40%)	3 (60%)
MU	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
DTU	3	1 (33%)	2 (67%)
CSIC	3	3 (100%)	0 (0%)
OSI	2	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
IBB	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
IMIM	2	0 (0%)	2 (100%)
CSC	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
EMBL	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
MUAS	2	1 (50%)	1 (50%)
TUM	5	3 (60%)	2 (40%)
NCSRD	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
KI	1	1 (100%)	0 (0%)
IBMC	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
LUMC	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
WEIZMANN	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
MTA TTK	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
ICT	4	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
EPFL	1	0 (0%)	1 (100%)
FVB-FMP	6	3 (50%)	3 50%)
TOTAL	**103**	**48** (47%)	**55** (53%)

The DRIVE consortium shows a well-balanced distribution of genders also at managing level, with 40% of WP leader/ co-leader positions covered by female researchers and with 2 out of 3 Executive Board Members being female scientists (Table 3).

Table 3: Managing roles sorted by gender in the DRIVE project

Role	Total	Women (%)	Men (%)
WP Leader/ Co-leader	16	7 (44%)	9 (56%)
Executive Board Member	5	2 (40%)	3 (60%)

Finally, as shown in Table 4, a well-balanced gender distribution is observed also at the service/ technology provider level, where the managers providing access for the trans-national user access work packages WP3 and WP5 are more than 40% female scientists. At this stage, no information is available regarding the gender balance of the workforce involved in the experimental laboratory activities.

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Table 4: Overview of technology providers gender distribution for access provision in trans-national user access work packages (WP3, WP5)

Role	Total	Women (%)	Men (%)
Service/ technology provider's manager – involved in the small molecule screening call (WP3)	31	16 (52%)	15 (48%)
Service/ technology provider's manager – involved in the chemoproteomics call (WP5)	12	5 (42%)	7 (58%)
Service /technology provider's manager – involved in the medicinal chemistry call (WP3)	8	4 (50%)	4 (50%)

Regarding the type of R&D position covered (Figure 1), even if the workforce is still mainly composed by female employees (69%), a very interesting data is that among the researchers, 38% of the researchers involved in the project are women.

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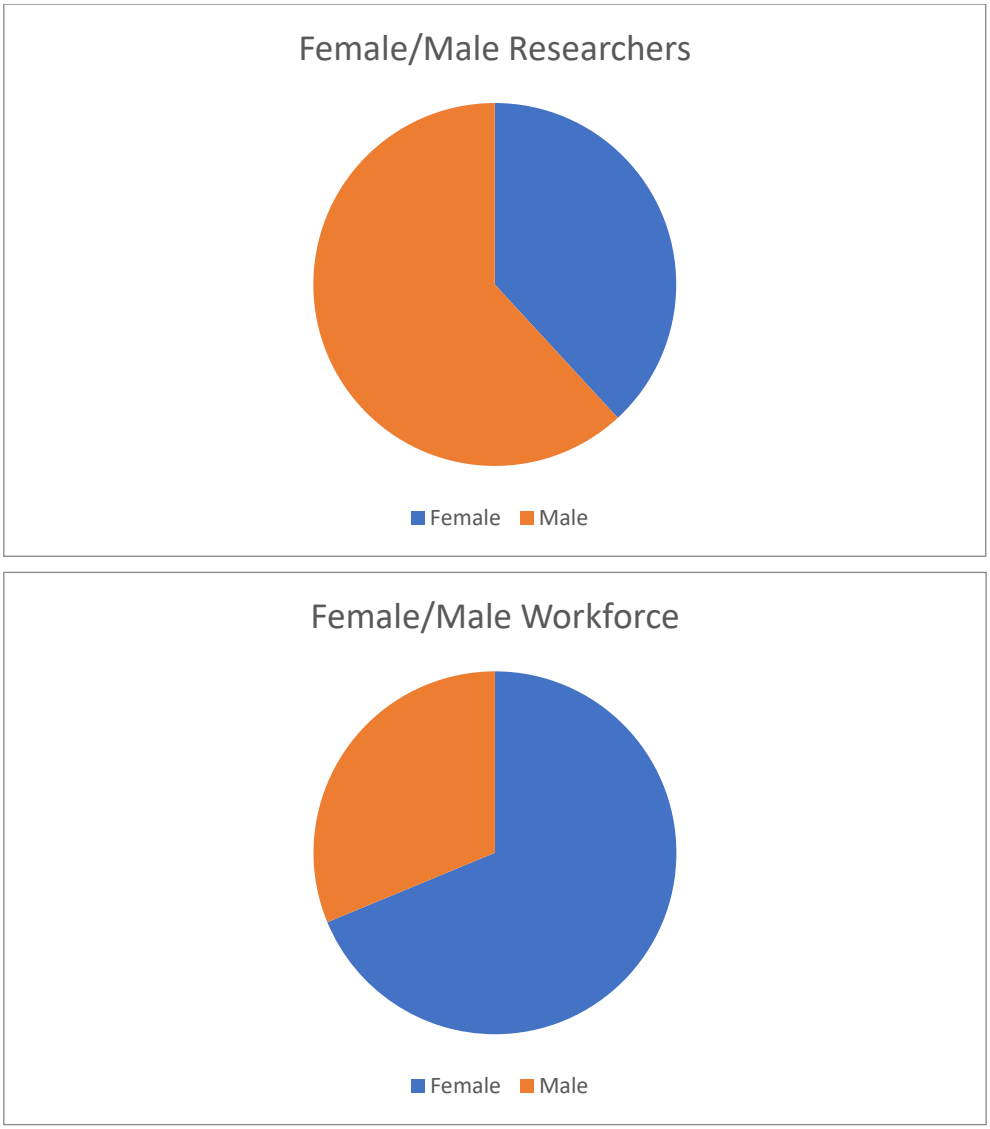

Figure 1: Female/ Male composition of workforce and researchers in the DRIVE consortium.

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3. Gender equality during EU-OPENSCREEN-DRIVE trans-national access

During the first 12 months, DRIVE has promoted trans-national access (TNA) to the research infrastructures of the consortium through two open calls. The selection process was mainly based on the evaluation of scientific excellence that was assessed not only in terms of scientific impact and innovation, but also in terms of gender balance. A maximum of 4 points (10% of the total score) was in fact allocated to gender balance in terms of Principal Investigator (PI) and team composition as well as, when applicable, the impact of the research project on reducing gender disparities in health-related aspects.

Among the two open calls, female representation was differently distributed.
53 applications were submitted to the “Small molecule screening call” and in 18 of them the PI was a female researcher (34%). Among the 13 projects selected for implementation, 6 were submitted by female applicants (46%) showing a success rate of 33% compare to 20% of male applicants. These data display a very good balance of the female/ male ratio in the project selection process for the “Small molecule screen call” funded by DRIVE.

Regarding the “Chemoproteomics call 1”, on a total of 8 applicants, 3 were female researchers (38%), but unfortunately none of these were selected for implementation. This result was not due to a negative evaluation of the applicants’ CV, but to a lack of technical feasibility for two of the projects and to a low scientific scoring for the third one, both situations unrelated to gender aspects. A second “Chemoproteomic call” is planned for the end of 2020. DRIVE will then again try to increase the advertisement efforts to attract more female applicants to the open call. It has been previously demonstrated with the Investigator Research Grant Award Program funded by the Science Foundation Ireland that implementing specific gender initiatives can lead to an increase in the number of female applicants (from 27% to 47% in two consecutive calls) with the consequent increase in the number of proposals awarded to woman (from 27% to 55% in two consecutive calls).
During the selection process, independent experts in the field of small molecule screening and proteomics were invited to evaluate the submitted proposals. The revision panel was composed of 22 experts of which 5 of them were women (23%). Since this represents a clear under-representation of women in the decision-making process, during the second “Chemoproteomics call” the presence of at least 40% of female reviewers will be envisioned.

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4. Conclusions and future actions

The DRIVE consortium is characterized by a well-balanced ratio of male and female participants and several actions have already been taken for ensuring gender equality during the open call selection process. Nevertheless, a more detailed analysis showed that a stronger focus is still needed, especially for members and the decision-making organs where females are still under-represented. Moreover, direct actions need to be taken to promote a gender equality policy within the consortium.

In the Communication COM (2012) 392 "A reinforced European Research Area Partnership for Excellence and Growth",[7] the European Commission invites the research organizations to "*implement institutional change relating to HR management, funding, decision-making and research programmes through Gender Equality Plans which aim to:*

- *Conduct impact assessment/ audits of procedures and practices to identify gender bias*
- *Implement innovative strategies to correct any bias*
- *Set targets and monitor progress via indicators"*

The gender action plan will be developed in agreement with the members of the consortium and will be based on the "GEAR Tool"[8] and the "Practical Guide to Improving Gender Equality in Research Organizations".[9] The European Commission highlighted in particular the importance of:

1. *guiding targets in decision-making bodies, such as leading scientific and administrative boards, recruitment and promotion committees and evaluation panels, to achieve gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions;*
2. *guiding targets for a more even gender balance of full professors in higher education institutions;*
3. *monitoring, with appropriate indicators, the implementation of gender policies, and actions at institutional, national and EU level;*
4. *gender awareness-raising and capacity-building tools in order to achieve institutional change;*
5. *flexible and family-friendly working conditions and arrangements for both women and men;*
6. *reviewing the assessment of researchers' performance,*
7. *to eliminate gender bias.*

To reach these goals, the consortium gender action plan will be focused on the following aspects:

- The progress of gender balance within the consortium will be monitored and documented on an annual basis in terms of
    - successful female applications to the DRIVE open calls and of
    - presence of women
        - with responsibility tasks and

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    - at senior level positions.
- Roundtables on gender equality will be organized during the annual meetings to give women within the DRIVE consortium a dedicated space, where the discussion and the exchange of experiences can lead to the development of new ideas for increased female representation in science.
- Roundtables on gender equality will also be organized during EU-OPENSCREEN ERIC meetings to discuss actions to be taken to improve gender balance in EU-OS partner sites. This represents an important action for introducing a space for gender equality discussion in the regular functioning of the organization and for ensuring long-term activity of the Gender Action Plan.
- To promote the DRIVE gender action plan and to receive useful input from experts in the field, EU-OS representatives will actively participate in international gender-related conferences and workshops such as the European Conference in Gender Equality in Higher Education" (http://upm.genderequalityconference2020.com/#latest_news-1, next conference in 2022 and the "Gender Roles and their Impact in Academia"-meeting (https://www.embl.de/training/events/2020/GRA20-01/index.html, October 2020). Moreover, the participation to special sessions on gender equality in science within general scientific conference will be supported (FEBS Congress 2021, July 3-8 Ljubljana, https://2021.febscongress.org/special-sessions-and-workshops)
- A gender-balanced participation at internal meetings and workshops as well as at external conferences and exhibitions will be promoted, supporting the dissemination of scientific results and the creation of an international network of collaboration for both male and female scientist. The participation will be constantly monitored by the EU-OS central office, and the working groups will be directly contacted if at any time an unbalanced involvement of male and female scientists is registered.
- The possibility of working under flexible working hours will be supported to reconcile work and private life. Moreover, internal meetings will be planned during core working hours, and the use of teleconferencing will be strongly promoted to minimize the need for travelling.
- A direct collaboration with the equal opportunity offices at the partner sites, if existing, will be established for obtaining valuable recommendations for improving the management of gender-related issues within DRIVE.
- EU-OS has nominated a gender officer who monitors gender distribution in the EU-OS network and is responsible for actively sensitizing partner institutions on gender-related aspects. As highlighted in the STAGES guidelines (FP7 funded project),[10] the set-up of a

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permanent internal representative for gender equality ensures a continuity in the development and improvement of the action plan inside the organization.

- A 1-day workshop could be organized to discuss gender balance in EU-OS partner sites and to define actions to be taken especially for those members where the representation of women is still limited. This measure could be implemented at the ECBS/ LS-EuChemS meeting 2021 in Milan.

For the future the gender officer, together with adequate personnel at the partner sites, could implement an objective plan with specific timelines, including the development of incentives for partner sites to improve gender balance at the specific institutions.

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6. Abbreviations

CIPF: Príncipe Felipe Research Center

COM: Communication

CSC: Finnish Centre for Information Technology in Science LTD

CSIC: Spanish National Research Council

EC: European Commission

ECBS: European Chemical Biology Symposium

EPFL: École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne

EMBL: European Molecular Biology Laboratory

EU-OS: EU-OPENSCREEN ERIC

DRIVE: EU-OPENSCREEN-DRIVE

FEBS: Federation of European Biochemical Societies

FMP-FVB: Leibniz Research Institute for Molecular Pharmacology in the Forschungsverbund Berlin e.V

HR: Human Resources

HZI: Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research

IBB: Institute of Biochemistry and Biophysics of Polish Academy of Sciences

IBCH-PAS: Institute of Bioorganice Chemisty – Polish Academy of Sciences

IBMC: Institute for Molecular and Cell Biology, University of Porto

ICT: Institute of Chemistry of the Romanian Academy

IMB: Institute of Medical Biology of Polish Academy of Sciences

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IME: Fraunhofer Institute for Molecular Biology and Applied Ecology IME ScreeningPort

IMG: Institute of Molecular Genetics of the ASCR

IMIM: Mar Institute of Medical Research Foundation

IMTM: Institute of Molecular and Translational Medicine, Palacky University

KI: Karolinska Institute

LS-EuChemS: European Chemical Society, Division of Chemistry in Life Sciences

LUMC: Leiden University Medical Center

MEDI: Fundacion MEDINA

MTA TTK: Natural Science Research Center of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

MU: Masaryk University

MUAS: Hochschule Mannheim

NA: Not applicable, not available

NCSRD: National Centre of Scientific Research "Demokritos”

UH-FIMM: University of Helsinki

OSI: Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis

PI: Principal Investigator

SIN: SINTEF

STEM: Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics

R&D: Research and Development

TNA: trans-national access

TUM: Technical University Munich

UiB: University of Bergen

UiO: University of Oslo

UiT: The Arctic University of Norway

USC: University of Santiago de Compostela

WP: Work-package

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