



Institute of Energy Economics  
at the University of Cologne



# Gender Equality Plan of the Institute of Energy Economics at the University of Cologne (EWI)

The Institute of Energy Economics at the University of Cologne (EWI) is a non-profit organization (gGmbH). It sees itself as a knowledge factory that aims at creating, disseminating and utilizing new knowledge about increasingly complex energy markets. The energy world is currently undergoing dramatic change, with changing political and social conditions as well as new technologies and innovations. These changes raise complex questions for which EWI is seeking answers: through practical and agenda-neutral energy economics research. In order to create the greatest possible gain in knowledge for science, energy policy and energy economic practice, EWI applies the latest economic methods.

The combination of scientific excellence with an exceptionally high level of practical relevance is a unique feature of the institute. Over 40 employees with their diverse backgrounds, interests and perspectives contribute to EWIs success. In the long term, the knowledge gathered should contribute to creating a climate-neutral, sustainable and fairer world.

EWI is a workplace which allows each individual to explore their talents and contribute to EWI's claim to explore energy markets and improve decisions. A family friendly-environment and support for employee's individual personal and professional development reflect EWI's endeavours in allowing for a healthy balance of work and personal life.

### **Aim of the Gender Equality Plan**

The aim of EWI's Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is to ensure equal opportunities for all employees. The Institute proceeds from the principles of gender equality in all its activities without compromising on competence and quality. EWI's standards and processes are geared towards supporting all employees irrespective of gender, as well as sexual identity, sexual orientation, religion, disability, age, origin, and other individual characteristics. EWI is aware of the fact that gender equality is a continuous process of analysing, monitoring and enforcing non-discriminatory behaviour in all spheres of EWI's activities and structures. The Gender Equality Plans seeks to serve as a base for continuous improvement in this respect.

This GEP is intended to show what positive developments have taken place at the Institute, but also to make clear which areas still need to be improved. The GEP is a living document which is constantly assessed and adapted.

## Measures taken at EWI to implement and foster gender equality

### Gender Equality in recruiting and career planning

EWI is proud to have increased the proportion of female employees in research positions and management considerably thanks to increased ambition and efforts. Today, the share of women working at the Institute overall is around 50 percent.

The Institute's present Executive Board is gender balanced. In subordinate management positions EWI has achieved a similar, fairly balanced ratio; in administration and among researchers this is not yet the case. EWI is continuously taking measures in recruiting with the aim of achieving a balanced workforce, in particular in hiring women for research and management positions.

EWI not only emphasises the equality of opportunity but also encourages diversity and seeks to support each member of staff individually through regular feedback talks, customised training and workshops. Feedback talks may lead to trainings on leadership development, communication and presentation techniques. This allows each member of staff to meet their specific needs, which may also lead to different trainings for men and women.

Recruitment measures and hiring processes are constantly monitored and discussed yearly in the Managing Board.

### Flexitime - Mobile Work

EWI actively supports staff members in reconciling study, job and family. Flexible working hours and the option of switching to a part-time job when needed are offered wherever possible and are widely implemented. This is also true for organising various forms of parental leave, as well as granting care time for relatives. On premise, the parent-child office allows children to be brought to work.

EWI promotes an organizational culture that fosters exchange between employees, in a creative setting.

To measure the level of satisfaction among the staff, EWI conducted a survey in 2021. Participation was anonymous and voluntary. Due to the pandemic the survey focused mainly on challenges when working from home and seeking solutions to new work situation in the office. Suggestions as to how to improve working conditions were taken into account, when setting up shared desk measures and implementing mobile work.

### Gender neutral language

EWI has started to implement gender-appropriate language according to § 4 of the “Landesgleichstellungsgesetz NRW” - LGG (translates as: State Equal Opportunity Act of North Rhine-Westphalia) in internal as well as external communication based on a set of rules published internally.

### Indirect and non-voluntary discrimination

Issues of inequality and unequal treatment reach far beyond gender justice. Inequalities may manifest themselves in social and economic aspects, on the basis of income, age, ethnicity, religion and others.

EWI does not tolerate discriminatory behaviour and has developed 10 principles of behaviour focussing on academic excellence, integrity, responsibility as well as on mutual respect. According to these principles, all employees should trust in the abilities of their colleagues and supervisors and respect and appreciate differences.

EWI welcomes visiting scholars, researchers and interns from all over the world. Through its guest programme, summer schools and projects EWI supports exchange across borders and disciplines. Employees may also want take advantage of spending some time in partner institutions or in international projects. In doing so, EWI encourages international exposure, exchange and cooperation.

### Complaints Office

§ 13 AGG (German General Equal Treatment Act) grants employees the right to complain to the competent department if they feel discriminated against a cause mentioned in § 1 AGG (ethnic origin, gender, religion, ideology, disability, age, sexual identity), in association with their employment relationship by the employer, superiors, other employees or third parties.

In August 2023, the Executive Board appointed a contact person for complaints management, who is available as a contact for employees with experiences of discrimination at the institute. The contact person communicates with the Institute's Executive Board and is bound by confidentiality in all matters concerning employees. The task of the contact person relates to equality between women and men in particular and equality and diversity in general. All employees can anonymously submit complaints of any kind that cannot be traced via an email address set up specifically for this purpose. These messages are also retrieved and processed by the above-mentioned contact person.

The GEP and its implementation are reviewed yearly by the Executive Team.

Cologne, January 2024