



GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2021-2023

**1st Edition
January 2022**

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HELLENIC CENTRE FOR MARINE RESEARCH

GENDER EQUALITY (GE) PLAN

1. Introduction

With its Gender Equality Plan (GEP), the Hellenic Centre for Marine Research (HCMR), aims towards establishing its priorities for addressing gender equality, as well as setting guidelines for future activities in order to enhance Gender Equality (GE) and monitor application of the GEP. The cornerstone of the high-quality science that HCMR promotes, produces and applies is equality of opportunity. This is not only restricted to the scientific personnel, but fair access and equity is also ensured for the managerial, technical, administrative and support staff. HCMR according to international, community and internal standards, does not only limit equity to gender bias but also takes into account other inequality grounds such as disability, age, sexual orientation, religion or ethnicity (Appendix 1).

2. Regulatory framework

The HCMR GEP legitimates and protects every strategy aiming to achieve gender equality within the Center. The GEP is in accordance to Greek and European laws and aligns with national initiatives and actions towards equality of women and men, rights, discrimination banning, equality treatment, harassment in workplace, social responsibility of organisations etc. Articles, policies and directives can be found in detail in the following sections.

2.1. European Legislation

Equality between people and non-discrimination are the founding cornerstones of the EU and are being embedded in the Treaties of the European Union, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and secondary legislation. In the development of the GEP, HCMR considers the

- a. "Recast" Directive (2006/54/EC) on equal opportunities and equal treatment of women and men in employment and occupation which requires the implementation of the prohibition of direct and indirect sex discrimination, harassment and sexual harassment in pay and access to employment
- b. Directive 2010/41/EU on the prohibition of direct and indirect (sex) discrimination to self-employment,
- c. discrimination prohibition Directive on Pregnancy (92/85/EEC),
- d. Parental Leave Directive (2010/18/EU)
- e. Part- time Work Directive (97/81/EC)
- f. Racial Equality Directive (2000/43/EC) that prohibits discrimination on the ground of racial or ethnic origin in employment
- g. Employment Equality Directive (2000/78/EC), covering the grounds of religion or belief, disability, age and sexual orientation.

2.2. Greek Law

Aligning with the EU principles on gender equality instructing public research bodies, Greek policy documents related to research, innovation, technology, and higher education, including the latest National Strategy for the European Research Area (2015-2020), are aiming "to establish Gender Equality Plans and to include relevant provisions in their internal regulations and strategic plans".

Law 4386/2016 entitled, "Regulations on research and other provisions" recognises that research institutes need to achieve greater gender balance in the composition of scientific councils, committees and advisory bodies indicating that at least one third of the members to be from one sex, "as long as the candidates have the necessary qualifications as required by each position" (Art. 25).

In addition, the Greek Constitution guarantees equality between the sexes (Art. 2, §4) and the right to equal pay for work of equal value regardless of gender or other differences (Art. 22, §1). At the same time, Greece's constitution recognizes substantive equality between the sexes. In the constitutional revision process in 2001, is foreseen that "positive measures for promoting equality between men and women do not constitute discrimination on grounds of sex" and that "the state shall take measures to eliminate inequalities to the detriment of women that exist in practice" (Art. 116(2)). This amendment paved the way for positive measures in different domains, such as for example, the adoption of gender quotas for local, national and European Parliament elections, and the aforementioned gender provision for advisory bodies and scientific councils. As a result, a number of new laws and provisions were devised for research and private organisations. Law 4604/2019 on "Promoting substantive equality between the sexes and combatting gender-based violence" encourages and research content universities and research organizations to integrate gender in their study programs (Art. 17) on "Promoting substantive equality between the sexes and combatting gender-based violence", Government Gazette, No. 50/1, March 2019). Private and commercial enterprises are also encouraged to adopt equal opportunity policies, also through the development of GE Plans. For those companies, an official distinction namely the "Equality Badge" (Sima Isotitas) is foreseen (Art. 21). At the same time, Law 4589/19, Art. 33 on the restructuring of universities, includes a provision on the establishment of Committees for Gender Equality (CGE) in all Greek universities that will act as consultative bodies to assist the university administration to promote gender equality. In addition, the provisions of Law 4808/2021 provide for the prevention and treatment of violence and harassment at work and the fight against workplace bullying. Based on the existing institutional framework, the aim is to consolidate a culture of equality and protection of the world of work from violence and harassment and to cultivate a healthy work environment.

3. The Digital Gender Divide

The above regulatory framework serves the pressing national and European need for a digital future that will be based on the equal involvement of both men and women. Women's participation is crucial for the development of a sustainable, fair and equitable digital economy and society. Unfortunately, in the European digital economy women are underrepresented¹.

In Greece the Ministry of Digital Governance has designed the Digital Transformation Strategy for 2020-2025 as an attempt to address such inequalities. The Strategy was devised in close cooperation with stakeholders from the public and private sector, the academic community and civil society, sets priorities for the digital transformation of the country, and goals for the development of the digital skills of the Greek society regardless gender, at all

¹ <https://eige.europa.eu/topics/digital-agenda>

levels and ages. HCMR's vision is aligned with this strategy's objectives and by actions of research and training envisages to contribute to national and European needs and goals.

HCMR is a governmental research organisation operating under the supervision of the General Secretariat for Research and Innovation (GSRI) of the Ministry for Development and Investment. Its main objectives are to conduct multidisciplinary applied and basic research in the following areas:

- Structure and functioning of inland, coastal and marine ecosystems, including ecosystem modelling
- Aquatic biodiversity (at all levels)
- Integrated Marine Observing and Forecasting Systems in the Greek seas
- The role of climatic change in the evolution of aquatic ecosystems (marine and terrestrial)
- Effects of natural and human-induced pressures and hazards on the marine environment (e.g. oil spills, pollution, tsunamis, floods, aquatic invasions, HABs, slumps)
- Life history of fish, fisheries dynamics, fisheries ecology, modelling, and management
- Aquaculture
- Population genetics and genomics of marine organisms
- Biotechnological applications
- Integrated river basin and coastal zone management

HCMR premises span in different locations in Greece, with the headquarters being based in Attika. Within its premises, personnel are being offered an environment that supports innovative research, dissemination of scientific results to various stakeholders and the public, as well as meeting the demands and policies set at national and European levels. This action plan further sets the frame and enhances already existing rules and practices that contribute to the reduction of the Digital Gender Divide observed, providing equal opportunities and necessary resources to all personnel in order for them to advance their careers.

HCMR:

- Offers innovative research environment and an inclusive work-place.
- Ensures that all employees, regardless of gender, age or social background have equal rights to participate in research.
- Promotes women to leadership roles (key leading positions).
- Makes women more active in decision making by including them into boards and processes thus changing power dynamics.
- Assists researchers affected by career breaks and leaves in regaining research momentum as quickly as possible on return.
- Protects them through anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies.

HCMR recognises that its community may include people who do not identify with the binary construct of being either male or female, and who may be gender diverse, including those who affirm their gender as being different to the sex assigned at birth; who were born intersex or whose sex is indeterminate; or who identify as transgender or no gender.

4. Operational regime

The GEP applies to all Units of [HCMR](#) and its Institutes, namely the:

- Institute of Oceanography ([IO](#))
- Institute of Marine Biological Resources and Inland Waters ([IMBRIW](#))

- Institute of Marine Biology, Biotechnology and Aquaculture ([IMBBC](#))

The Plan will be monitored by the Gender Equality Board (GEB) with support by a) the Board of Directors, and b) the HCMR's administration services. The GE Plan will be appointed and approved by the meeting of the Board of Directors of the Centre. The work suggested under the GE Plan will be complemented and operate in parallel with other related departments, policies, and plans of HCMR (e.g. Committee on Ethics, Department of Personnel, etc). As it is essential for GEP to be implemented, monitored and updated in a continuous and smooth manner, adequate economic and human resources should be ensured by HCMR. Thus, a special fund within the Centre's Regular Annual Budget should be allocated.

5. Objectives

HCMR expects from all staff members and collaborators to act with "responsibility, integrity and respect":

- Responsibility: all member of HCMR should behaving in an inclusive and supportive manner without undermining, intimidating, or discriminating colleagues and/or visitors;
- Integrity: demonstration of professional and appropriate behaviour whilst at work is expected;
- Respect: consideration and thoughtfulness in relation to staff, clients and visitors regardless of their background, culture and belief is anticipated.

The HCMR's GE Plan is built upon the three-pillar objectives, as set by the European Commission's strategy on gender equality in research and innovation policy:

1. Fostering equality in scientific careers, by
 - practicing equity and excellence at all levels through career development and training of researchers, managers and support staff
 - contributing to the national and European needs for female experts in aquatic sciences
2. Ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies, by
 - inclusivity in decision-making by encouraging women in participating in the process
3. Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content by
 - further enhancing the research quality of the Centre by continuing the formation of heterogeneous research groups
 - creating linkages between science and industry through collaboration with the private sector.

According to the guidelines of the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE²) HCMR focuses on six key areas, in order to "*identify and implement innovative strategies to promote cultural change and equal opportunities in Universities and Research Centers*".

Key Area 1: Governance and decision making

Key Area 2: Recruitment, Selection procedures, and Career Progression

Key Area 3: Flexible and Agile Working

Key Area 4: Gender Strategy in Research

Key Area 5: Gender in events, courses and activities

² <http://eige.europa.eu>

Key Area 6: Gender in Organisation Culture

6. Methodology

This first working draft edition of HCMR's GEP, includes temporarily set internal procedures and measures, that will be further refined in the final edition of the GEP. Yet, these procedures and measures were based on the methodology included in EIGE's GEAR toolkit (Gender Equality in Academia and Research)³. Thus, HCMR's GEP is developed on three axes: 1. *Understanding*, 2. *Implementing* and 3. *Monitoring*.

6.1. Understanding and Planning

With respect to the list of initial Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), existing toolkits, methodologies and available GE Plans from several universities and institutes in Europe were surveyed. In addition, data was collected in order to estimate the current situation at HCMR regarding gender balance (Appendix 2). To this end, data on the number of male/female employees according to their employment status was collected (for 2021), and specifically numbers regarding: Researchers (permanent); Staff Scientists and Technicians permanent; Staff Scientists and Technicians on contract; Administrative staff (permanent and on contract); and PhD Students.

In order to ensure the refinement, monitoring and implementation of GEP, HCMR will establish the Gender Equality Board (GEB). The GE Board members will decide on the types of data that need to be collected, the KPIs to be defined, the data gathering procedures, and arrange a series of online meetings with the personnel to obtain their feedback.

The Plan constitutes a living document that GEB will be committed to update regularly. An annual assessment of the status regarding gender balance should be performed, in order to evaluate the progress and mitigation measures to be taken. Moreover, for the purposes of the first update (scheduled by the end of 2023), the financial and administrative data will be collected by the Central Administration of HCMR and comprise the composition of staff, recruitments, retention rate of staff, governance, leaves, payments, work options, grant acquisition, patents etc. Regarding research production and quality as reflected in articles, journals, conferences, books and other publications, relevant data will be gathered by each one of the Institutes and Units of HCMR.

Additional sets of qualitative data will be collected for the next version of the Plan through questionnaires and interviews reflecting employees' responses on their sense of belonging and safety in the workplace. From the analysis of the quantitative and qualitative research results a set of evidence-based policy proposals will be constructed, ensuring gender equality and balanced representation.

6.2. Implementing

In order to successfully implement the proposed GEP, HCMR is aiming to realise as many actions proposed as possible. Towards that goal, it is essential that the Gender Equality Board (GEB) convenes regularly. The main purpose of these meetings will be planning activities in a participatory way, discussing the overall progress and achievements, identifying traits that can be improved, and developing

³ <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/step-step-guide#step-2>

mitigation measures with respect to deviations from the original planned actions.

So as to increase to the highest possible level the impact of GEP actions, a series of trainings and meetings between the researchers and staff of the management, human resources, and administration office will be also organised.

6.3. Monitoring

It is the GEB duty to report annually on the progress of GEP implementation and success, in order to share information and achievements with the Center. Monitoring will be based on indicators, both qualitative and quantitative. In order to upscale and improve the measures proposed by the GEP, an external Advisor will be appointed. Amongst others, the Advisor will be responsible for (a) constructively reviewing the measures, (b) co-designing and evaluating the monitoring instruments and channels, (c) supervising in the implementation of the actions proposed and assisting in cases needed; and (d) providing input for an effective and uniform application of the GEP across all sites of HCMR's premises.

7. Key areas of study

The following tables present needs-based objectives for HCMR, track the development in the gender distribution of personnel at different stages of their careers within the organisation, monitor HCMR's progress in relation to equal representation through KPIs and targets, create actions to remedy any shortcomings, provide the respective timeline, assign responsibility to the personnel for each action, and present their relevance to SDGs.

Key Area 1: Governance and Decision making

Objectives:

- Proportional gender representation in key leading positions and governance bodies.
- Proportional Gender representation in decision making committees.
- Gender balance in submitted candidatures for the points above.

Who:

- GEB
- Researchers, Administrators and Technical Staff
- Media and Communication Office

Actions:

1. Encourage balanced gender presentation in candidatures for governance and decision making through gender-neutral vacancy descriptions and information campaigns as well as pro-active nominations.
2. Support balanced gender presentation in candidatures through incentives that will be properly identified and communicated.
3. Organize events that establish direct contact with corresponding role models.
4. Monitor gender balance in key leading positions, governance bodies and decision-making committees.

Plan:

2021	2022	2023
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓

KPIs and Targets:

1. Annual increase in gender representation in candidatures for leading governance and decision-making positions towards a balanced male-female ratio.
2. Organisation of at least one event per year, such as hosting talks by corresponding role models and providing information of the profiling of such positions (e.g requirements and gains etc.).

Key Area 2: Recruitment, Selection procedures, and Career progression

Objectives:

- Balance gender representation across staff categories.
- Gender balance in job application.
- Equality in staff retention and career progression.
- Equality in payment rate.

Who:

- GEB
- Media and Communication Office
- Researchers, Administrators and Technical Staff

Actions:

1. Encourage balanced gender representation in job applications through gender-neutral vacancy descriptions and presentation of HCMR's DEI (diversity, equality, inclusion) supporting profile.
2. Support balanced gender representation in job applications through the design of attractive employment packages (with emphasis on flexibility at the workplace and benefits beyond financial compensation).
3. Organize events that present that humane profile of HCMR including keep-personal employment stories, social life at HCMR and others
4. Design and use of a detailed payment rate methodology for fixed term contract staff.
5. Monitor gender balance across staff categories, as well as retention rate, career progression and remuneration.

Plan:

2021 2022 2023

✓	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓

KPIs and Targets:

1. Annual increase in gender representation in job application.
2. Usage of a pre-defined on-line CV template for job application that is gender-neutral.
3. Organisation of at least one event per year presenting the gender-neutral career profile of HCMR.
4. Updates/additions of benefits to employment packages (within the flexibility provided by national and EU legislation).
5. Annual update of the staff retention and progression study; Corrective measurements document by the end of 2022.

Key Area 3: Flexible and Agile Working

Objectives:

- Raised awareness of rights, opportunities and practices for flexible and agile working
- Enhancement of flexible and agile working practices and infrastructure
- Facilitation of achieving work-life balance

Who:

- GEB
- Personnel Department
- IT Department
- Media and communications office

Actions:

1. Organize events for raising awareness of leaves entitlement according to national law, available flexible working models (part time/ teleworking etc), agile working infrastructure and suggested best practices.
2. Design guidelines for achieving work-life balance incorporating international best practices (a) tuned to the Greek reality & the idiosyncrasies of working in a research center and (b) enhanced by staff input.
3. Digital tools for remote working to improve staff member connectivity and provide training and support of staff.
4. Monitor the uptake of the above and feedback.

Plan:

2021	2022	2023
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓

KPIs and Targets:

1. Increase the diversity of type/duration of leaves per gender.
2. Organisation of events to raise awareness on work-life balance issues and provide related training.
3. Work-life balance guidelines according to EU/national standards and legislation by the end of 2022 and annual update thereupon.
4. Qualitative survey for capturing staff perceptions and feedback on the implementation of flexible and agile working practices (mid 2023).

Key Area 4: Gender Strategy in Research and Innovation

Objectives:

- Facilitation of balanced gender representation in research productivity (publishing, acquiring grants, teaching, supervision, patenting, technology, transfer activities).
- Balanced gender representation in research and development of activities.
- Balanced gender representation in entrepreneurship.

Who:

- GEB
- Department of Financial Administration of Programmes
- Personnel Department
- IT Department
- Media and communications office
- HCMR Staff representatives (Employees & Researchers)
- Ethical Committee

Actions:

1. Organise events for raising awareness of the benefits of balanced gender representation in research and development, tuned to the needs of the research topics/disciplines of HCMR.
2. Establish a mentoring scheme for formal personal development planning.
3. Encourage the creation of peer groups and get-together events for informal consultation on research productivity and work-life balance.
4. Promote gender representation in entrepreneurship through dedicated and proactive consultation and support issues.
5. Monitor gender representation in research and innovation.

Plan:

2021 2022 2023

	✓	✓
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓

KPIs and Targets:

1. Organisation of events raising awareness on gender representation in R&D.
2. Mentoring scheme in place from mid-2022 and on.
3. Creation of peer groups and social-get-together events for supporting gender representation in research and innovation per year.
4. Monitor and feedback.

Key Area 5: Gender in events, courses and activities

Objectives:

- Balanced gender participation (of staff) in events organised by the centre.
- Equal exposure of the research results/activities, expertise and achievements of staff.

Who:

- GEB
- Media and Communication Office
- IT department

Actions:

1. Enhance the equal promotion of research contribution/ results/success stories in HCMR's social media accounts, website and science communication network.
2. Implement a gender-blind informed strategy in recruiting staff for HCMR events/campaigns/info days.
3. Monitor gender active and passive participation in HCMR events, courses, activities.

Plan:

2021	2022	2023
	✓	✓
✓	✓	✓
	✓	✓

KPIs and Targets:

1. Gender balanced in online presence of HCMR material (towards the aim of equity to the research staff gender rate).
2. Design and adoption of a process and strategy for equality in staffing HCMR events by the end of 2022.
3. In conjunction with Key-Area 4, a web portal with information on courses, seminars, project calls, networking etc will be created at HCMR's website.

Key Area 6: Gender in Organisation Culture

Objectives:

- Publication, dissemination and diffusion of GEP.
- Establishment of policies, actions and instruments to support and monitor the implementation of the GEP
- Raise awareness.
- Develop GE support services and infrastructure.
- Acquisition of GE know-how and best practices.

Who:

- GEB
- IT department
- Media and Communication Office
- Researchers, Administrators and Technical Staff

Actions:

1. Publish the GEP on the website.
2. Embed GE principles into organisation's regulations and policies.
3. Include the active use and encouragement of inclusive, gender neutral language around the organisation.
4. Organise awareness events.
5. Dedicate resources and funds for GE activities.
6. Establish procedures and support services against discrimination, harassment or violence in the workplace.
7. Establish dedicated spaces facilitating activities beyond working needs (e.g. child friendly areas).
8. Participate in EU and national events and instruments on GE.

Plan:

2021	2022	2023
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
	✓	✓
		✓
✓	✓	✓

KPIs and Targets:

1. Annual organisation of an umbrella-event presenting issues tackled in all Key-Areas.
2. Regular updates of HCMR regulations and policies in accordance to GEP needs.
3. Establishment of gender neutral language in all activities (https://www.europarl.europa.eu/cmsdata/151780/GNL_Guidelines_EN.pdf).
4. Allocation of resources for GEP Activities (with a minimum of 15000.00 euros/per year).
5. Formulate guidelines on procedures and tools regarding discrimination harassment and violence (by the end of 2023).
6. Inclusion of dedicated areas supporting the work: life balance of staff within HCMR housing plants (e.g child friendly spaces).

Appendix 1: Protected characteristics

Protected characteristic	Description
Age	The Plan protects people regardless of age. However, different treatment because of age is not unlawful direct or indirect discrimination if it can be justified, i.e. if you can demonstrate that it is a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.
Disability	Under the Plan, a person is disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The Plan encourages an employer to make reasonable adjustments to enable access to work-place.
Gender Reassignment	The Plan provides protection for transsexual people, i.e. anyone who proposes to, starts or has completed a process to change his/her gender.
Marriage and Civil Partnership	The Plan protects employees who are married or in a civil partnership against discrimination.
Pregnancy and Maternity	A woman is protected against discrimination on the grounds of pregnancy and maternity during the period of her pregnancy and any statutory maternity leave to which she is entitled.
Race	In the Plan 'race' includes colour, nationality and ethnic or national origins.
Religion or Belief	In the Plan, religion includes any religion. It also includes a lack of religion. Additionally, a religion must have a clear structure and belief system. Belief means any religious philosophical belief or a lack of such belief. To be protected, a belief must satisfy various criteria, including that it is a weighty and substantial aspect of human life and behaviour. Denominations or sects within a religion can be considered a protected religion or religious belief. Discrimination because of religion or belief can occur even where both the discriminator and recipient are of the same religion or belief.
Sex	Both men and women are protected under the Plan. This may also include people who do not identify with the binary construct of being either male or female, and who may be gender diverse, including those who affirm their gender as being different to the sex assigned at birth; who were born intersex or whose sex is indeterminate; or who identify as transgender or no gender.
Sexual Orientation	The Plan protects lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender groups, also known as LGBT

Appendix 2: HCMR's employee status on 31/12/2021

TABLE 1: HCMR Personnel (31/12/2021). Percentages are given in brackets.

Type of employment	Men	Women	Total
Researchers (permanent)	66 (65,35%)	35 (34,65%)	101
Staff Scientists and Technicians permanent	95 (67,38%)	46 (32,62%)	141
Staff Scientists and Technicians on contract	154 (48,43%)	164 (51,57%)	318
Administrative staff (permanent and on contract)	17 (23,61%)	55 (76,39%)	72
PhD Students	3 (20,0%)	12(80,0%)	15
TOTAL	335 (51,78%)	312 (48,22%)	647

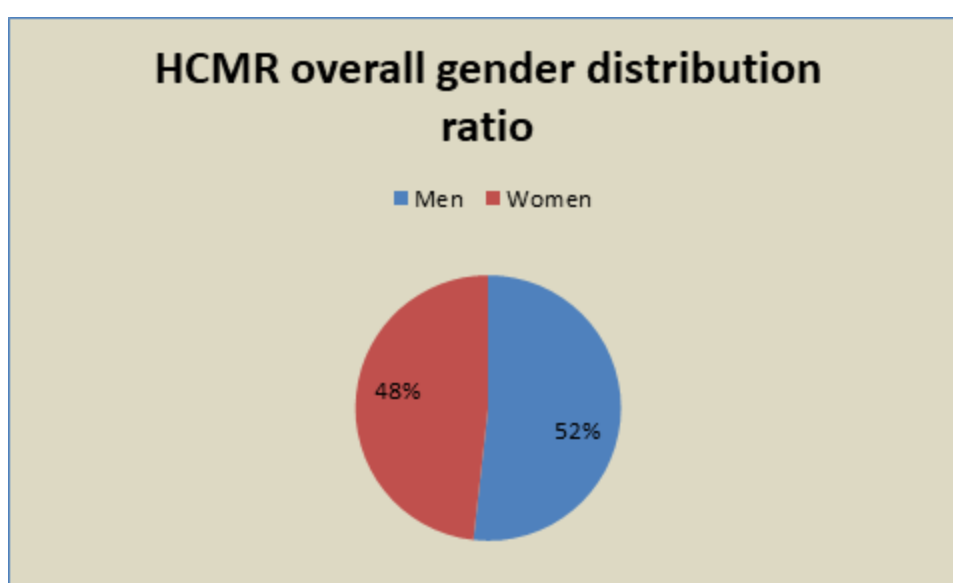


Figure A1. HCMR overall gender distribution

Appendix 3: Support available

Staff and collaborators could find support regarding issues on equality from the following departments/people. Contact details will be available at the corresponding GEP webpage, within HCMR's general website.

Gender Equality Board (GEB) and Human Resources	You can talk to the HR Manager or GEB in confidence about any concerns in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion. This includes issues directly related to you, or where you may have witnessed any unacceptable behaviour. GEB can offer advice and guidance in relation to reaching a resolution on either an informal or formal process as needed and appropriate.
Scientific Coordinators	Projects' scientific co-ordinators are encouraged to discuss concerns with the GEP, and seek advice on how to incorporate GEP into their research. Additionally, employees are strongly encouraged to discuss issues of related to inequality with the co-ordinators of the project they are employed. They will provide confidential support, advice and signposting.
Legal Advisors	HCMR's legal advisors could provide assistance and legal guidelines in any GE emerging issues.
Union of Researchers and Union of Employees	The existing Unions within HCMR are committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion. You can access support and advice from these unions in confidence.