



# MMM – Medicine Made to Measure

## Deliverable

### D 7.2 Gender Equality Plan

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**Work package: WP 7**

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Summary

The MMM Gender Equality Plan is a deliverable within the project’s lifetime, in agreement with the European Commission’s requirements for Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions.

The MMM GEP is aligned with the “Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans”. Thus, the MMM GEP contains both the mandatory process-related requirements (public document; dedicated resources; data collection and monitoring; training), as well as the recommended content-related areas (work-life balance and organisational culture; gender balance in leadership and decision-making; gender equality in recruitment and career progression; integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content; measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment).

In accordance with the “Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans”, we see the furthering of gender equality as an ongoing process, not limited to the GEP, and tracing the following steps:

## Audit

Since MMM consists of a relatively small group of members, no formal audit was necessary to collect the information presented below. All information was collected directly by Coordination.

## Planning

The objectives and targets comprising MMM's approach to gender balance are set out in this document. The "Gender Equality in Academia and Research" (GEAR) tool provides many valuable examples for implementing gender equality in a research context. Many similar practices have already been implemented at the institutions comprising the MMM consortium (universities and small businesses). For example, maternity and parental leave is self-evident, and Gender Equality Plans are in practice at all larger (academic) institutions.

## Implementation

Upon the first publication of the GEP, all MMM members are invited to give feedback, recommendations for improvement or criticism, and to provide further ideas to implement and foster gender equality. The GEP will also be discussed at the next General Assembly and Supervisory Board meetings, though feedback may be given any time. Both the publication and discussion of the GEP and the planned training on gender- and diversity-related issues will help to raise awareness for gender balance and gender bias.

## Monitoring and evaluation

Monitoring the objectives and efforts set out in the GEP will be an ongoing process, that will unfold along MMM's runtime. The GEP will be adapted according to feedback and arising needs within the MMM consortium in order to promote self-reflection and improvement on gender issues within the MMM consortium and to always provide an up-to-date reference and action plan.

## Commitment to gender equality and equal opportunities

The MMM consortium will not discriminate against researchers in any way on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition. We are unequivocally committed to promoting gender equality and the elimination of gender bias, explicit and unconscious, within all aspects of administration, research and other day-to-day operations. This commitment extends beyond traditional binary gender definitions to include biases and discrimination against trans- and non-binary individuals.

## Mandatory process-related requirements

### Public document

MMM's Gender Equality Plan will be signed by top management, published on the MMM website and sent to all members of MMM. The Gender Equality Plan will be updated regularly according to the needs arising within the MMM consortium.

## Dedicated resources

### **Gender Equality Function**

MMM has set up a Gender Equality Team currently comprising:

- Dr. Carmen Dörge (Management)
- Dr. Holm Graessner (Management Coordination)
- Laura Colar Zajnko (Doctoral Candidate)

The main responsibility within the Gender Equality Team lies with Dr. Carmen Dörge. As part of the management team, she is the central contact person for all MMM members, and she has ample experience and expertise concerning gender equality measures both from the position of a working mother, and as a previous member of gender equality teams within research institutions.

The Gender Equality Team will monitor gender-related activities and serve as confidential contact point for reporting discrimination and harassment. In addition, all members of MMM are invited to contribute to the GEP's issues, additions or improvements at any time. As the consortium of MMM is small (9 Beneficiaries, 1 Associated Partner on the level of Beneficiaries, at present ca. 35 people actively involved), involvement can be handled in an informal way and with short lines of communication.

MMM members are encouraged to contribute to gender-related issues as well as to the improvement of the GEP, both as individuals, and, where necessary, within work groups.

### **Gender budgeting**

Salaries for DCs are calculated according to EU budget tables, with no regard to DCs' gender or other personal aspects. Family allowance is paid out, if applicable, to DCs with legal spouses or dependent children living with them; the DCs have been made aware of this. The same applies to the special needs and long-term leave allowances, in case of disabilities or suspended work time, for example, in case of illnesses, maternity or parental leave.

As for other HE MSCA Doctoral Networks, there is no specific budget for promoting gender equality. However, individual beneficiaries are free to (and encouraged) to use part of their B1 and B2 budget for activities promoting gender equality.

## Data collection and monitoring

At present (June 2024), MMM has the following male/female/non-binary ratios.

### **Principal Investigators among Beneficiaries**

Total: 10

Male: 6

Female: 4

### **Larger group of involved scientists within the consortium (including PhD supervisors)**

Total: 34

Male: 17

Female: 17

**Doctoral Candidates (8 so far recruited, final number will be 10)**

Total: 8

Male: 4

Female: 4

**Supervisory Board**

Total: 24

Male: 15

Female: 9

(DC representatives: male: 1, female: 1)

**Industrial Beneficiaries:****Biano**

Total: 18

Male: 7

Female: 11

**MHT**

Total: 10

Male: 8

Female: 2

**BIOT**

Total: 25

Male: 5

Female: 20

Within the academic institutions involved in MMM, relevant gender ratios are difficult to determine, since they differ among disciplines and institutions. Especially considering the focus of MMM on STEM disciplines (in this case medicine, and including biology, chemistry, ethics and statistics), where women are still underrepresented, MMM has a good gender balance on all organizational levels. We aim to keep, and possibly improve, this balance for the remainder of MMM's runtime.

**Existing Gender Equality Plans at Beneficiaries' institutions**

All academic institutions hosting Beneficiaries or PhD enrolments for DCs have Gender Equality Plans in place and provide contact points for gender-related issues or problems (Academic Beneficiaries: UT, LUMC, LMU, UU, UKHD, UCAM; PhD enrolment: TUIL, UNIBO, MATE). Among the smaller businesses involved in MMM, none of them currently has their own GEP (though they might develop one in the future). MHT is the only one with mostly male employees (8 male, 2 female), while Biano and BIOT have an excellent male-female ratio.

The data collected here will be updated on a regular basis.

**Training**

Organised by the Equal Opportunities Office of UT, we will provide a training session imparting knowledge and raising awareness on gender- and diversity-related issues during doctoral

studies. This training session is currently planned as part of Training Workshop 1 (16-18 Sept. 2024). If necessary, we will organise further trainings on gender and diversity.

The training session(s), as well as the publication and circulation of the GEP, provide opportunity not only for raising awareness but also for self-reflection. Further, all MMM members are encouraged to fight gender bias, explicit or unconscious in their research and day-to-day actions.

## Recommended content-related areas

We endorse the principles of the “European Charter for Researchers, and Code of Conduct for Recruitment of Researchers”. Therefore, we aim at a representative gender balance at all levels of staff, including at supervisory and managerial level. Wherever possible, we aim at an adequate gender balance in selection and evaluation committees, we follow an equal opportunities policy at the recruitment stage, and will continue to do so at subsequent career stages.

### Work-life balance and organisational culture

All employees and researchers are recognised as valuable professionals and are treated accordingly. This encompasses all career and employment levels, from secretaries and postgraduate students to senior leading positions.

All MMM consortium members agree to use their authorities to push workplace culture toward gender equality. Within the actively researching members of the consortium, the male-female ratio is excellent (male: 17, female: 17); we intend to keep up this even distribution.

The small size of the MMM consortium, as well as its flat hierarchies, contribute to facilitate a good work-life balance and an organisational culture that is beneficial to both senior and junior researchers.

### Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

The gender balance on the level of leadership, as detailed above, is generally good. The male-female ratio within the Supervisory Board (male: 15, female: 9), while not entirely balanced, is satisfactory, almost reaching 40% of female members, as is the ratio among Principal Investigators (male: 6, female: 4). The representatives of DCs in the Supervisory Board are currently 1 male, 1 female.

Due to MMM’s size and limited runtime, we expect little changes in this composition, but wherever possible we aim to increase the number of women in leading and decision-making positions, as we also aim to improve awareness of gender- and diversity-related issues among those in leadership positions.

### Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

We consider gender inclusiveness as part of effective talent management, and, thus, follow a common strategy that promotes equal opportunities and gender balance among the DCs. The recruitment and employment of the researchers (Doctoral Candidates) adheres to the “Code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers and the European Charter for Researchers” with the intent to balance DCs’ gender and background. The current male-female ratio among DCs

(50% each) shows that so far we have been successful in maintaining gender balance on the level of first-stage researchers.

Special attention was given to enable young parents to apply for DC positions through describing and offering family-friendly policies, measures and facilities available at host institutions, such as access to local childcare and advocating flexible working conditions. At present (June 2024), there are no parents among the recruited researchers. All DCs have been informed, firstly, about the possibility to receive an additional family allowance, if applicable, and secondly, about the possibility to work part-time in case of arising family duties. The recruiting institutions will assist any DCs with family duties in facilitating access to local childcare, flexible working conditions, part-time employment and other measures that will allow DCs to pursue their career while taking care of their families.

#### Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content

In research and teaching, gender equality and diversity will also be taken into consideration. Patients will be assessed as candidates for treatment and eligibility will be based purely on genetic and medical considerations rather than gender or background. For some diseases, however, the mode of inheritance (X-linked recessive, X-linked dominant or autosomal dominant) will determine if patients are biologically male or female.

Through the planned training session by the Equal Opportunities Office of UT, researchers will gain a raised awareness of gender and diversity bias in research and teaching, and guidance on how to achieve gender balance and fairness.

#### Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

In case of discrimination or (sexual) harassment, DCs (and of course other members of the MMM consortium) can turn to any member of the Gender Equality Team to talk about their issues confidentially.

All DCs also have access to contact points either at their host institution, or at the university hosting their PhD enrolment. In addition, all DCs have multiple supervisors: apart from their primary supervisors responsible for overseeing the PhD development, each DC has been assigned a secondary supervisor and a mentor, with whom they are able to discuss problems. The Business Training laid out for the DCs encompasses personal coaching, and, here too, the DCs will be enabled to discuss problems, including discrimination and harassment, on a confidential basis. Thus, in case of discrimination or harassment, the DCs have contact persons through several independent channels.

Any reported cases of discrimination or (sexual) harassment will be thoroughly investigated and actions will be taken to protect victims and punish offenders.

#### Identified Targets and Actions

Overall, MMM has a good gender ratio within all relevant groups involved and a flat hierarchy which will enable DCs to thrive and be supported on all levels. We aim to raise more awareness for gender bias and gender equality through the planned gender and diversity training in September 2024. Although there is presently no immediate need for action or changes, the MMM GEP will be updated regularly and the Gender Equality Team, as well as the MMM

consortium as a whole, will pay close attention to – conscious or unconscious – gender-related problems. Further action may be taken after the finished GEP has been sent to all MMM consortium members, and their feedback, criticism and recommendations, have been taken into account.

## References

*Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR)*, <https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/action-toolbox>, date of access 20-06-2024.

*The European Charter for Researchers. The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*, European Commission, Brussels, 2005.

*Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*, European Commission, Brussels, September 2021.

## Signature

Dr. Holm Graessner, Management Coordination

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Holm Graessner', written in a cursive style.