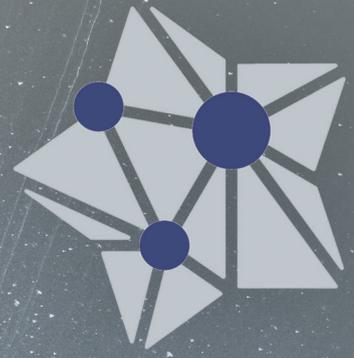


JIVE

Joint Institute
for VLBI ERIC



GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

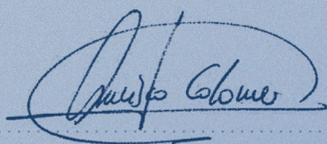
FOREWORD

According to and aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), JIVE ERIC has developed its first Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

UN SDG #5 aims to “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”, reaching equal rights through equal opportunities for all genders. Gender equality is “a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world”.

The European Commission acknowledges gender planning as an active approach for making real progress towards a more sustainable future; in particular, GEPs are a requirement for organisations to participate in the Horizon Europe calls for funding.

We at JIVE ERIC engage with enthusiasm in this process to identify and eliminate any possible source of discrimination at all levels within the Research Infrastructure.



Francisco Colomer

JIVE Director

Dwingeloo, December 2022



GLOSSARY

Diversity	Involving people at an equal level, irrespective of gender and background (ethnic, socio-economic, ability, etc.).
Equality	Providing the same resources to everyone, irrespective of their gender or other minority representations they identify with.
Equity	Recognising that each person has different circumstances and allocating the resources and opportunities needed to reach an equal outcome for everyone.
Gender	Gender refers to the characteristics of women, men, girls and boys that are socially constructed. This includes norms, behaviours and roles associated with being a woman, man, girl or boy, as well as relationships with others. As a social construct, gender varies from society to society and can change over time.
Gender-based misconduct	Actions including sexual assault, sexual harassment, and other forms of non-consensual sexual activity, as well as stalking and relationship violence.
Gender equality	Situation regardless of sex and gender when people are free to develop their abilities and make choices without the limitations imposed by society.
Gender equality plan	A set of commitments and actions that aim to promote gender equality in an organisation through a process of structural change.
Gender equity blindness	Failing to take into account potential sex differences as well as gendered roles and conducts of women and men in society. It leads to gender biased research.
Inclusion	Pursuing a deliberate effort to ensure that differences are welcome, different perspectives are heard and everyone feels a sense of belonging.
Sex	Sex (sometimes called biological sex, anatomical sex, or physical sex) is comprised of things like genitals, chromosomes, hormones, body hair, and more. Sex in a biological sense is a broad spectrum.
Unconscious (gender) bias	Occurs when one is making judgements or decisions on the basis of their own prior experience and not being aware of it; e.g. studies show applications with a male name are rated more highly than identical applications presented with a female name.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION	05
1.1 Definition of Gender Equality Plan	05
1.2 Objectives	06

2. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT	06
2.1 Methodology	06
2.2 Data analysis	07
2.2.1 Status of actions in place	07
2.2.2 Employees Data	07
2.2.3 Survey to identify current challenges in the organisation	09
2.2.3.1 Analysis survey	10

3. MONITORING AND REPORTING	11
------------------------------------	-----------

4. ACTION PLAN	12
-----------------------	-----------

1. INTRODUCTION

The Joint Institute for VLBI ERIC¹ (JIVE) is an institute that, since its establishment as a foundation under Dutch law in 1993, has always entertained a very culturally diverse, but not necessarily gender-diverse, workforce. Typically, at any instance of time, staff from five or more nationalities are being employed. JIVE is hosted by the Netherlands Institute for Radio Astronomy (ASTRON), an institute of the Dutch Science Council NWO-I.

Within the Netherlands and the astronomical community in general it is increasingly recognised that gender balance, diversity, and work/private-life balance in an organisation are topics to be

actively addressed. JIVE being hosted by ASTRON has implications on several of these aspects. At a very practical level, JIVE shares the ASTRON HR department, external confidant and occupational physician. Certain gender equality measures must therefore necessarily be coordinated with, or at least aligned with, those of ASTRON.

The JIVE Gender Equality Plan (GEP) will be introduced in the following sections. It consists of a display and analysis of the current state, results of a gender-equality survey amongst JIVE employees, and an action plan to address issues highlighted by those assessments.

1.1 DEFINITION OF GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

A Gender Equality Plan (GEP)² is a set of commitments and actions that aim to promote gender equality in an organisation through a process of structural change. An effective GEP should support an ongoing process for improving gender equality to the benefit of the entire organisation. Therefore, the GEP is a living document and will change over the years because it will also contain indicators to monitor the situation and the effectiveness of measures adopted.

There are four basic minimum requirements for a GEP, namely:

- **Publication:** a formal document published on the institution's website and signed by the top management;
- **Dedicated resources:** commitment of resources and expertise in gender equality to implement the plan;
- **Data collection and monitoring:** sex and/or gender-disaggregated data on personnel (and students, for the establishments concerned) and annual reporting based on indicators;
- **Training:** awareness-raising/training on gender equality and unconscious gender biases for staff and decision-makers.

1 The Joint Institute for VLBI in Europe foundation under Dutch law was granted European Research Infrastructure Consortium status in 2015.

2 European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans, Publications Office of the European Union, 2021, <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2777/876509>.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objective is to create a tool for sustainable change towards a fairer, safer, and more transparent work environment, improving the quality of everyone's work. The GEP will change over the years according to the situation registered in the repeated audits that will take place at a regular rate.

The actions defined in JIVE GEP are structured in the following thematic areas:

- Work-life balance and organisational culture
- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment

2. PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT

2.1 METHODOLOGY

The statistics used in this GEP are derived from anonymised records supplied by the HR department of ASTRON and a survey among JIVE staff. JIVE is a small organisation with 25 staff members employed as of 1 January 2022, the highest for the last five years. Over that same period of time, it had only eight positions advertised. Due to such a limited sample, the conclusions of the analysis do not rely on strong statistical evidence. However, indicators from the raw Male/Female/Neutral³ statistical data and from the analysis of the survey have been used to identify areas where gender and/or diversity and inclusion measures could be best applied.

In particular, this GEP contains:

- An analysis of already existing initiatives and policies;
- Data on the hiring process, including gender representation of applicants and hired (permanent or temporary) staff, and data on the evolution of JIVE gender balance in the past six years;
- Analysis of an anonymous survey, developed for the purpose of this GEP. Employees were invited to give their feedback on gender, inclusion, and discrimination. It was decided not to include personal data (among them gender) – being the organisation relatively small, the information about gender could have reduced the anonymity of the survey and might have led to the identification of the person taking the survey.

2.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The cultural and gender mix at JIVE varies with time because of two reasons. JIVE aims to employ three or four post-doc positions (making up 15-20% of JIVE's total staff) of at most three years duration. This drives the majority of changes in

staff. Also, JIVE's dependence on project-based funding favours the hiring of temporary staff. JIVE's core staff has remained quite stable over the last five years.

2.2.1 STATUS OF ACTIONS IN PLACE

Several actions are currently in place within JIVE and in collaboration with ASTRON, and within the Netherlands. JIVE has a member in the ASTRON/JIVE/NOVA EIC (Equity and Inclusion Committee), which actively observes the EDI (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) issues within the Dwingeloo offices for all institutes hosted there. Furthermore, JIVE has two representatives on the National Astronomy Equity and Inclusion Committee (NAEIC⁴). This committee comprises members of all Dutch astronomical institutes and it reports to the Raad van de Astronomie (the Dutch Astronomy Council). The NAEIC members receive regular training through their membership, such as crisis communication and entry-level confidant training.

Through the NAEIC activities, the JIVE staff is regularly informed about ongoing activities at the national level, and the monthly NAEIC seminars on a broad range of topics are accessible and advertised to JIVE staff. A diversity workshop was provided, remotely, to all JIVE staff during the COVID-19 lockdown (March 2021).

The two NAEIC members act as informal confidants within JIVE, thus lowering the threshold for JIVE employees to report issues they face at work. The main purpose is to guide employees in the decision-making process on the most suitable course of action and to support them in the process of their choice.

It is worth noting that JIVE actively participates in the actions implemented by its host institute ASTRON, such as active bystander training. Gender-neutral toilets have recently been established in the building and a quiet room has been allocated for the staff, following a request from the local EIC committee, to use for prayer, meditation, or any physical inconveniences requiring a private space.

Both JIVE and ASTRON also share the Dwingeloo Code of Conduct⁵, which sets the institutions' core values and expectations of the behaviour of their respective staff.

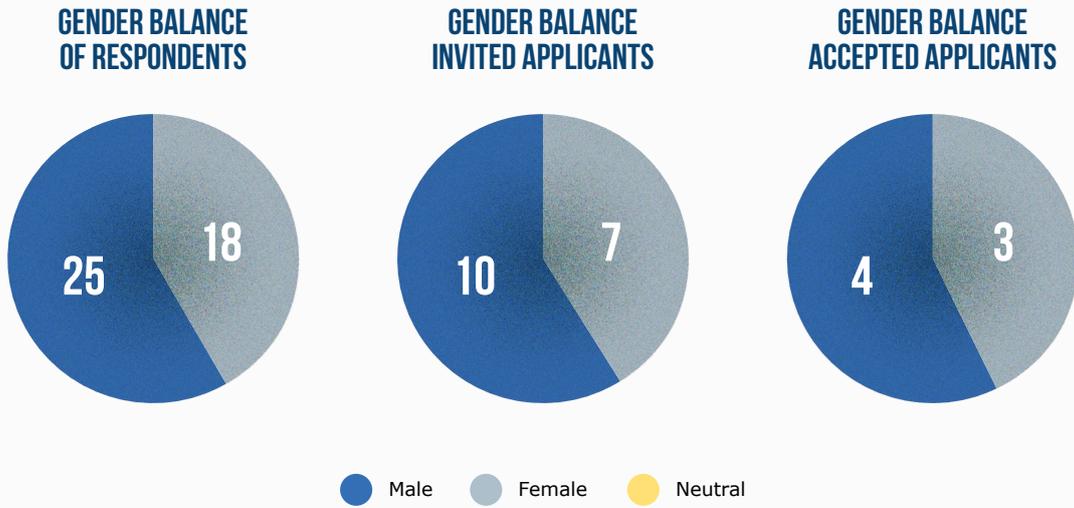
2.2.2 EMPLOYEES DATA

The ASTRON HR department has provided anonymised employees' statistics of gender-balance in the different phases of the hiring process and of the organisation as a whole over the past six years.

The first charts shown in this section are broken down into three categories: overall applicants, people invited for an interview and hired persons. On the whole, the application process seems balanced enough with equal fractions in the balance reflected in all three categories.

4 <https://www.accessastronomy.eu/netherlands>

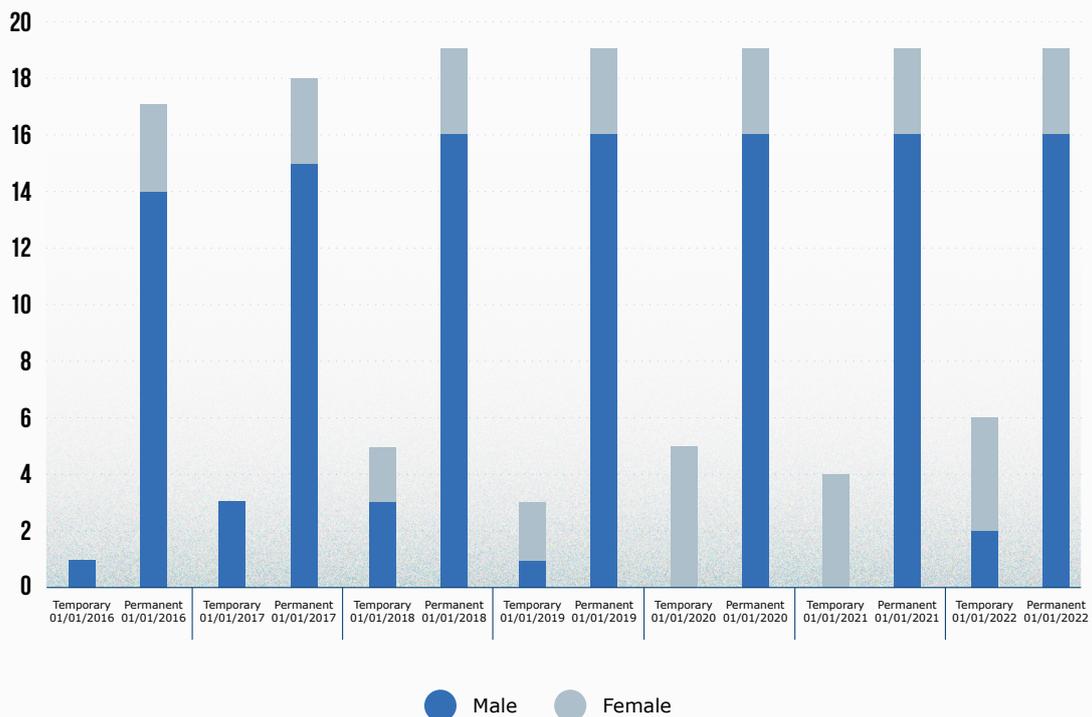
5 <https://www.jive.eu/dwingeloo-code-of-conduct>



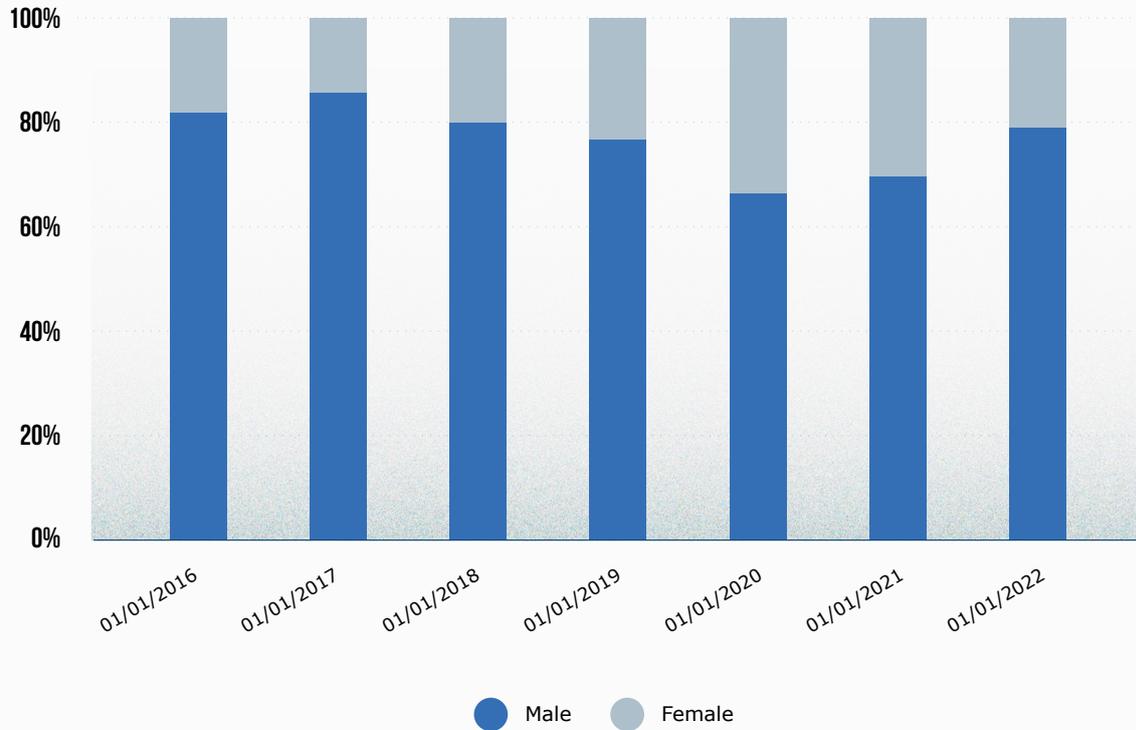
Those hiring data are compared to the total gender balance at JIVE over the same period. Two different histograms are presented. One illustrates the development of the gender balance in JIVE staff over time as a percentage. It can be seen that there are some fluctuations over time but in general, the gender balance hovers around 70% - 30% male to female. The other

histogram shows the gender balance over time in absolute numbers, broken down by contract type: permanent or temporary. In the latter histogram, it is clear that the gender balance in the permanent staff remains constant whilst the fraction of females is fluctuating in the temporary (post-doc) positions only.

JIVE GENDER BALANCE CONTRACT TYPE OVER TIME (ABSOLUTE NUMBERS)



JIVE STAFF GENDER BALANCE OVER TIME (PERCENTAGE)



2.2.3 SURVEY TO IDENTIFY CURRENT CHALLENGES IN THE ORGANISATION

To identify current challenges present at JIVE, an anonymous survey⁶ was distributed for employees to give their feedback on gender, inclusion, and discrimination.

The survey was composed of different sections on specific topics of interest. The survey started off with three questions on gender equality aspects in general. The following section included

three questions to gather information about the work-life balance of JIVE staff. The third section included two questions related to gender balance in leadership and decision-making. Then a section comprised two questions related to gender equality in career progression and the final section held four questions related to measures against gender-based misconduct.

6 The survey was based on a template produced by the Gender Equality Working Group of the H2020 ERIC-Forum project (<https://www.eric-forum.eu/2022/09/01/eric-forum-and-the-gep-gender-equality-plan/>)

2.2.3.1 SURVEY TO IDENTIFY CURRENT CHALLENGES IN THE ORGANISATION

The survey was sent to all JIVE staff on 22 September and closed for input on 30 September. Twenty-one responses were received, which constitutes 85% of the JIVE staff. This makes the results representative of JIVE as a whole.

The results show that overall JIVE is doing well when it comes to gender equity and creating equal opportunities. None of the survey respondents thinks JIVE is not committed to gender equity, and policies in place are perceived by the majority as supporting gender equity.

Work-life balance is satisfactory for sixteen of the twenty-one respondents, five people are "not really satisfied", and nobody is "not at all satisfied". About half the people have experienced work-life balance issues while working at JIVE and the majority are "satisfied" or "somewhat satisfied" with the flexibility offered, though there are still two people "not really satisfied". The comments indicate that the dissatisfaction arises from the fact that work-life balance issues are solved differently by different JIVE groups, which leads to different views on how the issue is handled within JIVE.

The perception of gender balance in decision-making shows a mixed response. Two-thirds of the respondents do not perceive gender equity in the process. 40% of the people perceive gender equity in the JIVE Management Team (currently there is one woman and four men in the MT). The comments indicate that this could be due to the definition in the question: we can aim for equity with respect to society as a whole, or with respect to the current population in JIVE.

Mixed responses are also noticeable in the gender equity in career opportunities and progression. JIVE staff is almost split in half: about 50% of the respondents find there is "not really" or "not at all" sufficient training or support for career advancement.

The Code of Conduct is known to most people, though it was not formally 'signed', which led to confusion in the answers on whether people are aware of it. The comments indicate several people answered "no" because they did not remember whether they signed it or not.

The reporting process of gender-based misconduct is clear to only half the people, but the majority would feel comfortable reporting it. Nobody is "not at all" comfortable, three people selected "not really" and three people have no opinion.

From this analysis, we find there is room for improvement in several key issues:

1. Overall better and more transparent communications on rules and regulations already in place to help with work-life balance (e.g. parental leave, funds for personal development, etc);
2. Mentoring and support for early career researchers;
3. At a personal level, the flexibility offered depends on who is involved in making this decision, this should be more uniform and transparent. Workload management and regular monitoring should be part of this;
4. Not everyone perceives the obvious lack of gender equity in the decision-making process as a problem;
5. A more visible Code of Conduct with regular reminders about the reporting strategy for violations.

3. MONITORING AND REPORTING

A dedicated team, the GEP Working Group, will be formed with the aim of monitoring and evaluating the GEP. The GEP Working Group will comprise three members, including the JIVE GEP Officer, a member of the JIVE Management Team and one member chosen by JIVE staff (non-Management Team). The Working Group will be chaired by the JIVE GEP Officer.

The GEP Working Group will meet regularly every three months to monitor the GEP implementation. At the end of each year, the GEP Working Group will present a report to the JIVE Management Team including an evaluation of the actions implemented, potential challenges present in the

organisation and potential actions to tackle in a new iteration of the GEP. To gather feedback from all JIVE staff to build up the report, the GEP Working Group will establish an anonymous survey in the last quarter of the year. After the report is presented and approved by the JIVE Management Team, the GEP Working Group will produce a revised GEP for the upcoming year.

The JIVE GEP Officer role will be appointed by the JIVE Management Team and will be a member of JIVE staff (or in collaboration with ASTRON) with EDI expertise to dedicate part of their time to monitor GEP actions.

4. ACTION PLAN

The following actions will be developed by the end of 2023. Some of the activities will start at a later stage and their status will be addressed in the updated GEP.

GEP AREA	MEASURES	TIMELINE	TARGETS	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE
All areas	Gender equality training for all staff	Planned start of development: first quarter 2023	All staff	Number of employees participating in the training	GEP Officer
Work-life balance and organisational culture	Establishment of new JIVE remote working policy	Continuous from GEP adoption	All staff	Increase in the number of people satisfied with flexibility in the next employees' survey	JIVE Management Team
	Develop an informational package with an overview of rules and regulations already in place to help with work-life balance	Planned start of development: first quarter 2023	All staff	Increase in the number of people stating in the employees' survey that they are aware of rules and regulations	GEP Working Group
	Create mentoring opportunities for new staff to get introduced in organisational culture	Planned start of development: first quarter 2023	New staff, non-permanent staff	Number of people stating in the employees' survey that they feel part of the organisation	JIVE Management Team
	Establish unified protocols between JIVE departments regarding workload and prioritisation	Planned start of development: second quarter 2023	All staff	Increase in the number of people stating in the employees' survey that their workload is manageable	JIVE Management Team

GEP AREA	MEASURES	TIMELINE	TARGETS	INDICATORS	RESPONSIBLE
Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	Organise training on the importance of diversity in decision making	Planned start of development: first quarter 2023	JIVE Management Team	Training organised at the end of period	GEP Working Group
Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Include job advertisements in sites outside those commonly used in astronomy	Planned start of development: continuous from GEP adoption	Under-represented groups	Jobs advertised in at least three international online job search services	JIVE Secretary
	Actively approach women to apply for positions in which they are under-represented	Continuous from GEP adoption	Women	Increase on the number of women applying to jobs where they are under-represented	Monitored by GEP Officer
	Organise training sessions for staff in mentoring	Planned start of development: Third Quarter 2023	All staff	Training organised at the end of period	GEP Officer
Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment	Regularly raise awareness of the Code of Conduct to all JIVE staff, especially informing new staff at the time they join JIVE	Continuous from GEP adoption	All staff	Number of people stating in the employees' survey that they are aware of code of conduct	GEP Officer
	Clearly define the steps for reporting procedures for violations of the code of conduct	Planned start of development: first quarter 2023	All staff	Number of people stating in the employees' survey that they are aware of the procedure to report violations of code of conduct	GEP Officer and JIVE Management Team

PUBLISHER:

Joint Institute for VLBI ERIC

VERSION:

December 2022

CONTRIBUTORS:

Giuseppe Cimò
Suma Murthy
Jorge Rivero González
Ilse van Bommel
Marjolein Verkouter

DESIGN:

Aneta Margraf-Druć



Joint Institute for VLBI ERIC

Oude Hoogeveensedijk 4
7991 PD Dwingeloo
The Netherlands



+31 (0)521 596 500



@JIVEVLBI



+31 (0)521 596 539



/jivevlbi



secretary@jive.eu



@jivevlbi



www.jive.eu



/JIVEandtheEVN



JIVE
Joint Institute for VLBI
ERIC



JOINT INSTITUTE FOR VLBI ERIC