



**INRAE**



# Gender equality in the workplace Action plan

november 2020 - november 2023

# "Gender Equality in the Workplace"

## Action Plan

### Table of Contents

#### **Focus Area 1 - Assess, prevent, and deal with pay differentials**

- 1.1. Further develop studies designed to objectively review the situation
- 1.2. Increase the role of women at the highest rungs of the job ladder and, in that way, reduce pay differentials.

#### **Focus Area 2 - Ensure that women and men have equal access to the public service**

- 2.1. Promote greater diversity and interaction between job categories and address related perceptions
- 2.2. Enhance the visibility of women's roles
- 2.3. Strengthen our place in networks and create new partnerships

#### **Focus Area 3 - Promote a better work-life balance**

#### **Focus Area 4 - Prevent and eliminate discrimination, sexual and/or sexist abuse, psychological or sexual harassment as well as sexist behaviour**

## Foreword

This short document explains the background and the issues at play for INRAE in our commitment to the certification process.

As such, it sets out the main thrusts of INRAE's "Gender Equality in the Workplace" action plan, developed in line with AFNOR specifications and the French public service reform act, in cooperation with the Institute's various governing bodies and trade unions, and in keeping with staff concerns.

## Preamble

INRAE's "Gender Equality in the Workplace" action plan forms part of the Alliance standard certification process, which INRA began in 2017 and which led to the Institute being awarded both the "Diversity" and "Equality in the Workplace" labels in January 2020 for four of our centres. After the merger of INRA and IRSTEA, the new institute, INRAE, continued this work with the goal of expanding certification to the entire new institute during the renewal audit in late 2021.

Even before the French public sector reform act was published, INRAE had for many years been fully aware of how much work still needed to be done in terms of gender equality in the workplace and had striven to develop actions designed to bring about changes based on initial observations in this area.

One requirement of the dual Alliance standard certification process was for a gender equality action plan to be developed. The first step in drafting such a plan was to assess the existing situation at the Institute. A range of information sources were used to make that assessment:

- A desk review<sup>1</sup> of all the documents related to the measures, particularly HR, in force.
- Individual and group interviews<sup>2</sup> with various Management staff (centre presidents – division heads – unit directors – those in charge of the key AFNOR specification areas) and with INRAE's representative trade unions.
- Discussions and exchanges within the Human Resources and Sustainable Development Directorate and Management.
- A study on diversity in work units carried out as part of the development of the 2013-2016 HR roadmap.
- Information collected for analysis during the workshops held as part of training sessions on eliminating unconscious biases for line managers and HR staff.
- The outcomes of the Quality of Life at Work survey of all staff in February and March 2019, with questions on three aspects, i.e. psycho-social risks; the quality of life at work; and change management, including a section that specifically covered eliminating discrimination. The response rate was about 44% of those interviewed.

This analysis was then discussed by several different bodies, i.e. the technical committee, the Diversity - Equality in the Workplace committee that brought together those involved in HR, volunteer trade unions, pilot centre representatives and, for the independent counselling and reporting centre, the central Health, Safety and Working Conditions Committee (CCHSCT). Further discussions took place when the technical committee presented INRAE's two comparative assessments.

---

<sup>1</sup> Review carried out by the consultant who supported INRA during the dual standard certification process: FACE – *Fondation Agir contre l'Exclusion* (Action against Exclusion Foundation).

<sup>2</sup> Interviews also carried out by FACE

This action plan sets out and elaborates on INRAE's commitment in that regard. It reiterates INRAE's determination to strengthen our efforts to eliminate discrimination and promote gender equality in the workplace.

To better articulate application of INRAE's "Equality in the Workplace" policy within each of our centres, a network of advisers has been set up, i.e. dynamic local focal points for the national policy, so as to ensure greater ownership by all our diverse range of staff members, whatever their occupational category, professional field or scientific discipline, and implementation of that policy based on the centres' needs and opportunities.

## ➤ Focus Area 1 - Assess, prevent, and deal with pay differentials

- Further develop studies designed to objectively review the situation

Implementing an effective equality in the workplace policy must be based on an objective knowledge of the situation. Such knowledge is key to taking the most appropriate and relevant actions. While the initial evidence drawn from the gender indicators monitored in the social audit made it possible to consider some preliminary strategic directions, the data from the comparative assessment, together with discussions with those in charge of HR areas and other echelons of the Institute, helped determine the focus areas for the first Equality in the Workplace action plan. The goal is to complete yearly assessments, and continue to refine analysis of the various sectors, particularly to clearly identify any possible differences in terms of:

- remuneration, with a focus on better defining data concerning bonuses
- professions/sectors of activity/disciplines
- part-time positions

Indicator:

1. Publication of a comparative assessment each year. Objective: 1/year

This assessment will be completed and distributed each year. It will allow us to monitor progress on achieving gender equality in the workplace at INRAE and serve as a benchmark for identifying those measures to be taken, maintained, or strengthened.

- Increase the role of women at the highest rungs of the job ladder and, in that way, reduce pay differentials.

The following observation came out of the first comparative assessment: while INRAE has achieved gender equality overall, disparities still exist since the higher one goes on the professional and corporate ladders, the smaller the percentage of women is. So, the percentage of women decreases significantly as you move up the categories from assistant engineer to project engineer to research engineer and the same lower percentages of women are found in research director positions as compared to those for research scientists. Due to the impact such inequalities have on remuneration and, in certain cases, on bonuses, they lead to gender-based wage differentials.

Such factual data resulted in priority being given to increasing the role of women at the highest rungs of the job ladder.

To do so, priority has been given to encouraging women to take part in competitive exams and promotions for research-director, engineer, and research-engineer positions. Department heads began to actively work towards this objective under Management leadership. In addition, support measures will be introduced in the form of mentorships to help women promote their careers and the skills they use with a view to better showcasing their qualities and accomplishments.

Another action is designed to continue communication efforts via stories and portraits that provide examples in order to assist women visualise themselves in positions of greater responsibility.

Indicators:

1. Percentage of women and men eligible for promotion and actually promoted during the annual job advancement campaign by professional category and ranking.
2. Wage differential trends.

## ➤ Focus Area 2 - Ensure that men and women have equal access to the public service

- Promote greater diversity and interaction between job categories and address related perceptions

The target is to work towards greater diversity and interaction in certain professions (e.g. IT) where women and men are less or more strongly represented.

In studying the data provided by the social audit [e.g. gender distribution in scientific divisions] and given the applications received during recruitment campaigns, it became obvious that gender representation differed more in certain professions or occupational fields, in terms of both staff and applicants. As noted, the first action will be designed to build on the review by conducting more in-depth analyses as part of the comparative assessment. In addition, given these initial observations, women will be encouraged to give talks in computer-science or engineering schools and/or high schools about professions with few women to encourage young women to consider careers in those areas.

Awareness activities will also be carried out in-house to change people's perceptions and eliminate unconscious biases and gender stereotypes. Such awareness raising will specifically be integrated into the training modules created [see actions covered in both action plans], particularly for selection and professional-exam panel members and chairs.

Indicator:

1. Number of training and/or awareness sessions on stereotypes and unconscious biases.

Objective: Raise awareness for all recruitment panel chairs and line supervisors (in particular, Management, centre presidents, division heads, unit directors).

- Enhance the visibility of women's roles in all our communication efforts

Communication plays an important role in the fight for gender equality, and so, one of the priority objectives in that regard is to enhance the visibility of women's roles and change people's perceptions.

An initial approach is to identify the most important media and influencers by target audience (first and foremost women) after reviewing various media.

At the same time, discussions are underway on how to begin using gender-sensitive writing to ensure equal and non-discriminatory gender representation.

Indicator:

1. Number of “women in science”-related communication activities.

- Strengthen our place in networks and create new partnerships

The existing policy will be strengthened and enhanced through the development of networking and partnerships, which promote exchanges of practices and feedback on experiences. The goal is to stimulate discussions, step back from existing measures in order to adapt them, when needed, with a view to bringing about positive change and amplifying the momentum behind gender equality in the workplace.

First, this will involve participating, at the national level, in the networks and working groups that have been set up in our line ministries, i.e. the ministry in charge of research, on the one hand, and the ministry in charge of agriculture, on the other, as well as in the association *Femmes et Sciences* (Women in Science). This involvement will be rounded out by discussions with the delegation and advisers of other public scientific and technological (EPST) bodies on setting up an inter-EPST network. The work to identify other potential partners will also continue, in particular with the regional centres' partner universities and major higher learning institutes, and the centre president and adviser network.

At the same time, a survey of membership in local networks will be completed to ensure better coordination of the actions taken in the various centres, actions that will also be promoted more widely at the national level so they can be shared.

Finally, the gender equality approach will be encouraged as part of contracting processes, within the limits of existing legislation.

Indicator:

1. Number of trainings/session facilitation/awareness activities implemented with partners.

## ➤ Focus Area 3 - Promote a better work-life balance

Promoting a better work/personal life balance will be one of the pillars of the HR policy over the years to come, as mentioned in the HR 2017-2021 roadmap. This theme is a priority for the support function modernisation plan entitled "Promoting the quality of life at work to increase both job appeal and staff motivation".

As 82% of staff who have chosen to work part-time at INRAE are women, a study will be undertaken to improve our knowledge of the situation and identify ways to reduce this inequality.

At the same time, the gender distribution of telework will be reviewed on a regular basis. All this will make it possible to bring about adjustments, where needed, over the coming years.

Indicator:

1. Trends in percentages of men and women working part-time.

In addition to studies on work time and arrangements, this area will also include preparatory discussions with the CNRS on an agreement for all staff to benefit from access to childcare facilities. A budgetary study will be done at the same time.

#### ➤ Focus Area 4 - Prevent and eliminate discrimination, sexual and/or sexist abuse, psychological or sexual harassment as well as sexist behaviour

Fully in line with the French Government's efforts that have taken the form, most notably, of major regulatory changes, INRAE has given priority to strengthening the prevention and elimination of sexual and/or sexist abuse.

The Institute is, therefore, committed to a proactive policy designed to eliminate such abuse.

An independent counselling centre dealing with both discrimination and sexual and sexist abuse has been in place since 2019 with a broad communication campaign (fliers and maps sent to each staff member with their payslips, posters, etc.). This centre joined existing in-house measures: (i) local HR officers [network of human resource staff - social workers – risk prevention representatives – occupational health doctors]; (ii) staff representatives; (iii) reporting lines; (iv) difficult personal situation analysis and monitoring unit. Yearly reviews will be carried out and shared within the various bodies as well as with the staff representative groups.

The goal is to ensure all staff members, whatever their status; interns, and those who have taken part in competitive exams within the preceding six months, that every measure needed will be taken to prevent, deal with and condemn sexual and sexist abuse at the workplace. This action will continue with a yearly review that is shared with staff representative groups during the technical committee meeting. Regular communication activities will inform staff of the existence of this centre.

Indicators:

1. Number of communications about the counselling centre.
2. Number of training sessions and/or conferences to raise awareness about sexist abuse.

-----



DRH  
147, rue de l'Université  
75338 PARIS cedex 07

Follow us :



<https://jobs.inrae.fr/en>



National Research Institute for  
Agriculture, Food and Environment

**INRAE**  
la science pour la vie, l'humain, la terre