TRON gGmbH is aware of the importance of creating a safe, open and creative working environment and to ensure equal opportunities for all of its employees, regardless of religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition.

In this context, TRON gGmbH has formulated a Gender Equality and Diversity (GED) Plan and established a Gender Equality and Diversity Team, which are intended to provide an orientation framework for the management an all employees of TRON gGmbH. The GED Plan identifies potential risks and areas of conflict and provides measures to enhance gender equality and diversity at TRON gGmbH.

TRON gGmbH has defined the following goals:

- TRON gGmbH aims to promote equal recruitment practices and to ensure equal career opportunities at all levels.

- TRON gGmbH aims to promote gender equality in leadership and decision-making by providing equal opportunities for employees of all genders.

- TRON gGmbH wants to guarantee an equal, fair, polite and respectful treatment of employees regardless of gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national origin, culture, language or disability. TRON gGmbH therefore aims to prevent discrimination and violence and has appointed confidants as point of contact in case of complaints.

- TRON gGmbH aims to integrate the gender and diversity perspective in teaching, research and working conditions. The overall goal is to maintain a learning and research environment that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment. Supervisions from all genders should be available at all career levels.

- TRON gGmbH aims to provide room and flexibility for its employees to reconcile work and family regardless of the gender of the employee and the type of family. TRON gGmbH supports various flexible working model arrangements to meet the individual needs of employees in their respective family situation.

In case of doubts, questions or suggestions, the confidants, the GED Team or the management board should be contacted.

Mainz, January 29th 2025
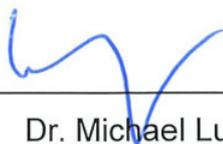
_____
Dr. Michael Ludorf
Commercial Managing Director

_____
Dr. Andrée Rothermel
Scientific Managing Director

Table of contents:

Related applicable documents

AD-01-001-A01   Code of Conduct

AD-01-006-000   Procedure for AGG §1 Complaint at the Workplace

AD-01-006-A01   Documentation Complaint according to AGG §1

AD-16-001-000   Good research praxis

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1 Intention of the operating procedure

TRON gGmbH is an independent non-profit research organization that focuses on translational oncology. To promote and sustain research excellence, TRON is committed to provide a safe, open and creative working environment and to ensure equal opportunities for all of its employees, regardless of religion, race, gender, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition. In this context, TRON has formulated a Gender Equality and Diversity (GED) Plan and established a Gender Equality and Diversity Team.

According to the WHO, the term "**gender**" describes characteristics of women and men that are socially constructed, whereas "**sex**" refers to characteristics that are biologically determined. Learned social aspects about gender roles contribute to **gender identity**. The WHO defines **gender equality** as the absence of discrimination on the basis of an individual's sex in opportunities, in the allocation of resources and benefits or in access to services (1).
In line with the WHO definitions, TRON aims to achieve and sustain gender equality and promote diversity by ensuring fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities.

The goal of this document is to inform all TRON employees about the mission, stance and measures to enhance gender equality and diversity at TRON. In addition, this operation procedure lists the tasks and responsibilities of the parties involved in the implementation of the GED Plan.

The described strategies and procedures are in line with the EU objectives for gender equality (2) and the DFG Guidelines (AD-16-001-000 "Good research praxis") (3).

The measures described in the GED Plan will be implemented by the TRON units (see "Scope and responsibilities") and the Gender Equality and Diversity Team (GED-Team). The GED-Team is also responsible for evaluation and further development of the GED Plan.

2 Scope and responsibilities

Function	Responsibility
All employees	o Treat others with respect and dignity
Each department	o Prepares job advertisements o Reviews and selects candidates and conducts interviews o Makes hiring decision together with Department heads for positions
Quality Assurance (QA)	o (together with HR) Collects proof of training/attendance of leadership trainings and shares them with the GED Team

Human Resources	- Provides a general job advertisement template - Reviews job advertisements - Posts job advertisements - Oversees and monitors recruitment process - Collects staff statistics (salary, training and leave characteristics) and shares it with the GED Team - Checks compliance with all legal requirements for leave-taking of the employees - Employs Gender Equality and Diversity specialist for GED lecture during leadership and other trainings - Monitors Career advancement of TRON employees - Makes recommendations about equality and diversity to GED Team (Together with confidants and managing directors) Consult about cases of discrimination and violence, investigation and disciplinary actions (Together with confidants and managing directors) Inform the victim about the outcome of investigation of discrimination and violence
Confidants	(Together with GED team) Inform new employees about GEP and their role as confidants - Act as first point of contact for victims of discrimination and violence - Inform victims about their rights and procedures - Document conversations - Inform managing directors and HR about complaints (Together with managing directors and HR) Inform the accused person (Together with managing directors and HR) Talk to potential witnesses (Together with managing directors and HR) Investigate the case and inform the victim about the outcome of investigation - Mediate conflicts - Advise GED Team about policy and measures
Gender Equality and Diversity Team (GED Team)	(Together with confidants) Informs new employees about GEP and confidants - Collects anonymized staff statistics (salary range per staff category divided by sex,, leave duration) from HR - Proposes clear and transparent criteria for recruitment processes and internal promotions - Conducts an anonymous survey about equality in career options and documenting results. - Conducts surveys about work-life balance, workplace satisfaction, as well as support for opportunities for promotion - Collects data on the gender of the supervisors of the PhD and other students and composition of thesis-advisory committees - Collects data on the integration of the gender and diversity dimension in courses

	o Collects data on gender and ethnicity of animals and human tissue used in our studies o Informs employees about prevention of discrimination and violence during Town Hall Meetings and posting information materials on Blackboard o Organizes Confidant elections o Collects anonymized information about complaints (if any) and advice from confidants related to discrimination and violence prevention strategy o Presents GED Data during Town hall meeting o Reports results from surveys, staff data, animal/patient samples (1x per year) and discusses results with leadership and decides on further measures. o Reviews GED Plan
Managing directors (GF)	o (Together with the confidants and HR) Investigate cases of discrimination and violence o Take disciplinary actions in case of offences of discrimination and violence o (Together with confidants and HR) Inform the victim about the outcome of investigation of discrimination and violence
Unit leaders together with management	o Encourage employees to integrate the sex and ethnic origin data in their research questions and analysis o Take any effort that employees can return to their old positions or comparable when coming back from parental or other leaves
Animal Affairs Manager	o Monitor the animal's sex in research studies
Biosampling Unit	o Records gender and ethnic data of patients/participants donating their biospecimens in the LIMS system when available
Cell Culture Unit	o Monitors gender and ethnicity of donors from which cell lines were derived if available and documenting this in the cell catalogue
PhD coordinator, Student program coordinator	o Employ Gender Equality and Diversity Specialist for lecture about this topic during PhD and student courses o Remind teachers to review materials for representative (non-stereotypic) images and inclusive language o Conduct evaluation surveys to assess the integration of the gender and diversity perspective after courses and sharing results with GED Team

3   Terms/ Definitions/ Abbreviations

Sex	Biological characteristic of women and men
GBV	Gender-based violence
Gender	Socially constructed characteristics of women and men

Gender Identity	An identification based on learned social aspects about gender roles
Gender Equality	Absence of discrimination on the basis of an individual's sex in opportunities, in the allocation of resources and benefits or in access to services
GED	Gender Equality and Diversity
GF	Managing Directors
HR	Human Resources Department
LIMS	Labor-Informations-und-Management-System
QA	Quality Assurance Department
TCGA	The Cancer Genome Atlas
GTEx	Genotype-Tissue Expression project
DFG	Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft (German Research Society)

4   Procedure

To promote and sustain research excellence, TRON aims to achieve gender equality and diversity by ensuring equal opportunities for all its applicants and employees.

In this section, we describe the current gender and diversity status at TRON. Afterwards, we discuss TRON´s policy regarding (i) gender equality and diversity in recruitment and career progression (Section 4.2), (ii) gender equality and diversity in leadership and decision-making (Section 4.3), (iii) measures against discrimination and harassment (Section 4.4), (iv) Gender equality and diversity in research and teaching content (Section 4.5) and (v) work-life balance and organizational culture (Section 4.6).

In each of these policy sections, we define goals, measures, criteria/indicators to measure success and responsibilities.

4.1 Current situation

TRON is a non-profit research organization that has 207 employees as of Dec 31st, 2023 (Figure 1). Ever since its founding in 2010, TRON has embraced the power of diversity in enhancing research excellence and aims to provide equal opportunities in recruitment and career progression. TRON´s stance as an inclusive employer is reflected in a high percentage of female employees (66 %), among which female managers represent 55 % (Figure 2), and in the multicultural diversity of its employees: currently, employees have 24 registered different nationalities.

TRON STAFF

Function	December 31, 2021	December 31, 2023
DIRECTORS	2	2
ADMIN / SCIENTIFIC SUPPORT	22	30
TECHNICAL ASSISTANTS	32	41
GRADUATES	17	24
SCIENTISTS	41	55
PHD STUDENTS	17	27
INTERNS	14	20

■ December 31, 2021   ■ December 31, 2023
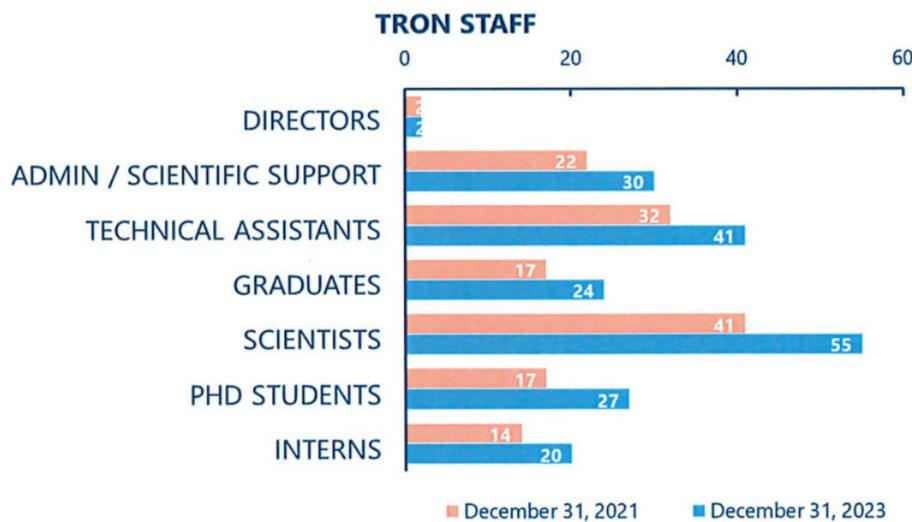
Figure 1: TRON Staff ranked by function. "Admin" refers to controlling, HR, IT front office and accounting staff. "Scientific Support" includes quality assurance, compliance, data protection and laboratory managers, procurement. "Graduates" are non-scientific staff with a Bachelor or Master Degree. "Scientists" are staff with a PhD degree and includes project management.

4.2 Gender equality and diversity in recruitment and career progression

4.2.1 Why is gender equality and diversity in recruitment and career important?

Women are often underrepresented in leadership positions in academia, healthcare and business (4–6). According to statistics, women have fewer full-time jobs than men (7) and often earn less for the same work (8). Studies have also indicated that people with non-classical gender identities often experience career difficulties, including in areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (9). In addition, genders have a different work-life balance (10), which may affect their career opportunities (discussed in more detail in Section 4.6).
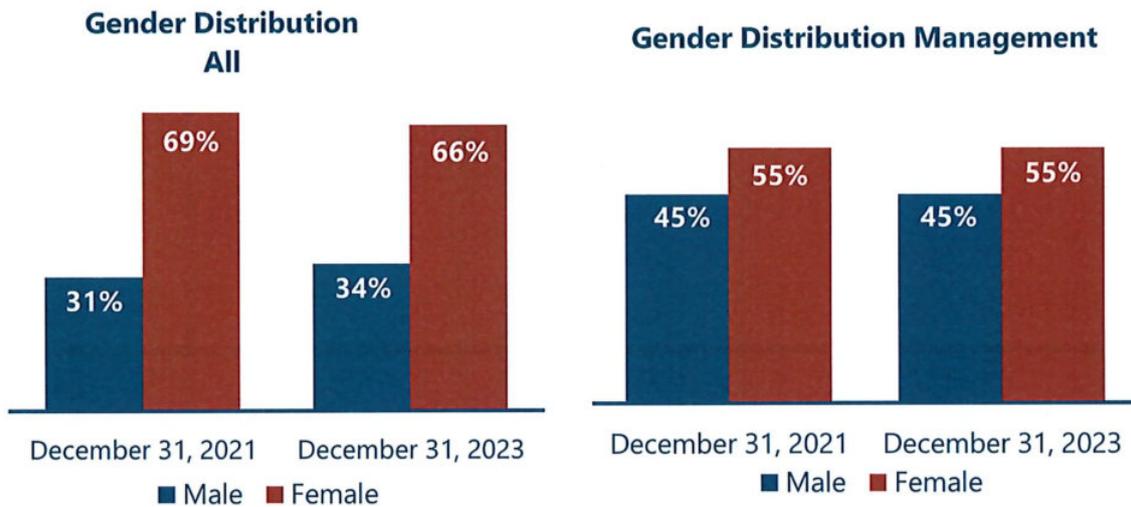

Figure 2: Overview of gender distribution among TRON employees (left) and management (right). The management includes department and unit leaders and their deputies. Data is based on genders employees registered themselves with. From Dec 2021 on, it will be possible for new staff to register themselves as a gender other than male or female.

As described in Section 4.1, TRON aims to provide equal opportunities to its applicants and employees. Our successful recruitment and career progression strategies have led to a majority of female employees and females are also well represented in leadership positions (Figure 2). Nevertheless, TRON continues to assess its recruitment and promotion processes to ensure fairness and justice in the distribution of benefits and responsibilities and to maintain gender equality and diversity.

4.2.2 Goals

TRON aims to promote equal recruitment practices and to ensure equal career opportunities at all levels. TRON also strives to remove obstacles that may prevent career advancement for all genders.

4.2.3 Measures
- Formulate job advertisements in a gender-neutral way

- Clear and transparent criteria will be defined for recruitment processes to ensure that the merits of each applicant are equitably assessed
- Include Gender option "Other" on registration form for new staff
- Clear and transparent criteria will be defined for selecting candidates for internal promotions
- People of all genders will be represented in committees
- The same level of work, qualifications and professional experience will be considered in the same range of salary regardless of gender, age, religion, race, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition
- Employees that have been working at TRON for at least 1 year will be awarded for good performances (Leistungsorientierte Vergütung) regardless of gender, age, religion, race, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition.
- Employees will receive individualized training opportunities regardless of gender, age, religion, race, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition
- Employees will be acknowledged at scientific events independent of profession and regardless of gender, age, religion, race, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition
- TRON supports the combination of family and work and facilitates staff to take parental and other care leave in the framework of legal regulations
- TRON is taking all efforts to provide employees the opportunity to return to the same or equivalent position despite absence due to parental and other leaves and regardless of part-time or full-time status
- TRON allows flexible working hours

4.2.4 Criteria/indicators to measure success
- TRON will compile staff statistics (e.g. salary range per staff category divided by sex) for internal evaluations
- Proof of training in clear and transparent hiring criteria of staff who are hiring others
- Proof of training on clear and transparent criteria for selecting candidates for internal promotions
- Feedback about career progression (e.g. training opportunities) will be collected in annual employee appraisal.
- TRON will collect data about leave taking (e.g. leave time divided by sex)

4.2.5 Responsibilities (roles)
- Departments are responsible for
    o Preparing job advertisements
    o Reviewing and selecting candidates and conducting interviews
- Human Resources (HR) are responsible for
    o Providing a general job advertisement template

- o Reviewing job advertisements
- o Posting job advertisements
- o Overseeing and monitoring recruitment process
- o Collecting staff statistics (salary and leave characteristics) and sharing it with the GED Team
- o Checking compliance with all legal requirements for leave-taking of the employees
- o Career advancement monitoring of TRON employees
- o Make recommendations about equality and diversity to GED Team
- GED Team is responsible for
  - o Collecting anonymized staff statistics (salary range per staff category divided by sex) from HR
  - o Proposing clear and transparent criteria for recruitment processes and internal promotions

4.3 Gender equality and diversity in leadership and decision-making

4.3.1 What is leadership at TRON and what is its gender distribution?

The leadership of TRON constitutes of individuals in management positions or bodies/committees with decision-making authority on different organization levels. The highest level, the management circle, consists of the managing directors, the department heads, their deputies, the head of HR, the head of project management, and the head of controlling. Another management level consists of the unit heads and their deputies. The current gender distribution is displayed in figure 3. Although we have more women in leadership positions (Figure 2), they are underrepresented in the highest management levels.

Managing Directors   Management

■ Female ■ Male   ■ Female ■ Male
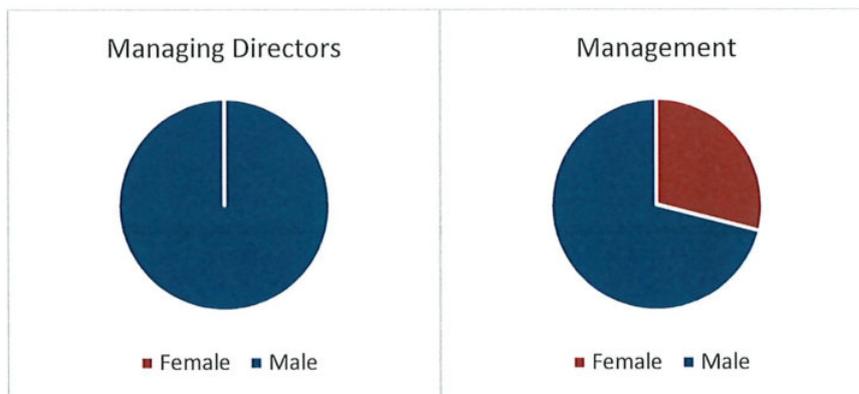
Figure 3: Gender diversity among leadership. The red color refers to females, the blue color to males.

4.3.2 Why is gender equality and diversity important for decision-makers?

Leadership is affecting directly or indirectly all organizational and work processes with considerable impact, such as organization strategy, work implementation, work culture, training and hiring of employees (11). Ensuring diversity among leadership and decision makers can in turn ensure that the decisions are mirroring this diversity and are free of bias (12). Moreover, the management should lead by example and hence has an important role model function in realizing equal opportunities that other employees can follow and further propagate in the organization. In addition, individuals with decision making authority and managerial responsibility are in a position of power compared to their subordinates and this power can be potentially misused, for instance in the context of sexual harassment (further discussed in section 4.4).

Although TRON has defined unit leaders, we would like to emphasize that the hierarchy is very flat and as such, the leaders do not have a classical position of power.

4.3.3 Goals

TRON aims to promote gender equality in leadership and decision-making by providing equal opportunities for employees of all genders to reach and maintain leadership positions. Moreover, TRON strives to raise awareness about the role of gender aspects in decision-making and to ensure that salaries for leadership positions are not gender-biased.

4.3.4 Measures
- Clear and transparent criteria will be defined for selecting candidates for internal promotions
- Gender equality and diversity themes will be included in training programs for leadership to raise awareness about equality issues among leadership
- All employees are able to take career training based on their needs (e.g. leadership development programs)
- Explore possibilities to set up leadership mentoring programs
- Employees will be acknowledged at scientific events independent of profession and regardless of gender, age, religion, race, sexual orientation, political belief, economic, medical or social condition
- People of all genders will take part in thesis-advisory committees

4.3.5 Criteria/indicators to measure success
- Proof of training on clear and transparent criteria for selecting candidates for internal promotions
- Record of attendance to Gender Equality and Diversity in Leadership Training
-
- Statistics regarding gender equality and diversity in leadership positions
- Perform survey to gain information about perceived equality in career options

4.3.6 Responsibilities (roles)

- PhD coordinator and Student Program Coordinator are responsible for:
  - o Employing Gender Equality and Diversity specialist for GED lecture during PhD and student courses/events
- HR is responsible for
  - o Employing Gender Equality and Diversity specialist for GED lecture during leadership and other trainings
  - o Collecting statistics regarding equality and diversity of leadership and sharing them with the GED Team
  - o Career advancement monitoring of all staff
- GED Team is responsible for
  - o Collecting anonymized statistics about leadership training attendance
  - o Conducting an anonymous survey about equality in career options and documenting results.

4.4 Measures against discrimination and harassment

4.4.1 Why is the topic discrimination and violence in the workplace important?

TRON wants to provide a safe working environment for all of its employees and as such tries to prevent discrimination and violence such as sexual harassment. TRON has defined a series of preventive measures and will appoint persons to act as confidants in case of complaints.

4.4.2 Goals

TRON wants to guarantee an equal, fair, polite, and respectful treatment of employees regardless of gender, religion, age, sexual orientation, national origin, culture, language or disability. TRON states that the responsibility to respectfully treat others rests with EACH employee and discrimination and violence in any form will not be tolerated (see AD-01-001-A01 "Code of Conduct").

TRON therefore aims to prevent discrimination and violence and aims to confidants in case of complaints. Two confidants will be elected among all staff members and TRON will make sure that there are candidates of different genders. These confidants shall receive appropriate training (internal guidelines about the election process, responsibilities of confidants, the procedure how to act in case of complaints is described in detail in AD-01-006-000 "Procedure for AGG §1 Complaint at the Workplace" and AD-01-006-A01 "Documentation Complaint according to AGG §1".

4.4.3 Measures

Preventive Measures:
- Informing employees about their responsibility to treat others respectfully, the confidants, and the GED Plan during the company's Town hall Meeting
- Election of confidants as central point of contact for issues like discrimination and violence including sexual harassment
- Providing information material about measures against discrimination and harassment on the internal Blackboard server, including the contact details of the two confidants and external advisors (e.g. Helpdesks, victim protection organisations, federal antidiscrimination office)
- Trainings for managers and confidants

Measures/Actions to be taken in case of complaint about discrimination and violence:
- Conversation with victim and (supposed) offender
- Investigation of case
- In case of actual discrimination or violence, take appropriate disciplinary action (depending on severity):
  - Informal measures
  - Formal measures

In case of no discrimination or violence, take measures to resolve conflicts. Depending on the case, measures may be taken to prevent further cases.
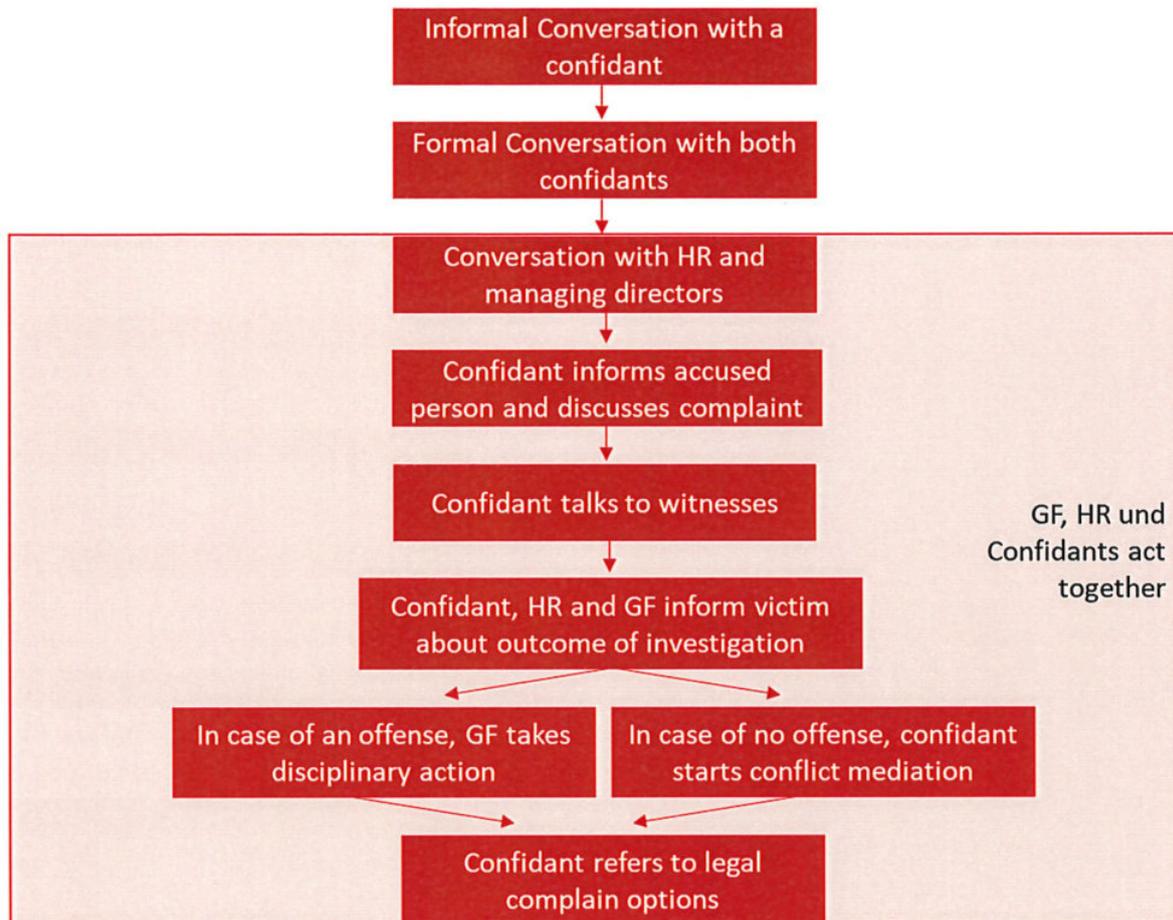
Figure 4: Procedure after complaint about discrimination or violence.

4.4.4 Criteria/indicators to measure success

- Proof of training on discrimination and violence prevention
- Collection of data on complaints
- Monitoring of actions in response to a complaint

4.4.5 Responsibilities (roles)

- Gender Equality and Diversity Team is responsible for
    - (Together with confidants) Informing new employees about GEP and confidants
    - Informing employees about prevention of discrimination and violence during the company's Town Hall Meetings and posting information material on internal Blackboard server
    - Organizing Confidant elections
    - Collects anonymized information about complaints (if any) and advice from confidants related to discrimination and violence prevention strategy
- Confidants will be responsible for
    - (Together with GED team) Informing new employees about Gender Equality Plan and confidants
    - Being first point of contact for victims of discrimination and violence
    - Informing victims about their rights and procedures
    - Documenting conversations

- o Informing managing directors and HR
- o Informing the accused person
- o Talking to potential witnesses
- o Objective investigation of complaints
- o (Together with HR and managing directors) Discussing the case
- o (Together with HR and managing directors) Informing the victim about the outcome of investigation
- o Conflict mediation
- o Advising Gender Equality and Diversity Team about policy and measures
- HR is responsible for
  - o (Together with confidants and managing directors) Consultation with the confidants and managing directors about case, investigation and disciplinary actions
  - o (Together with confidants and managing directors) Inform the victim about the outcome of investigation of discrimination and violence
- Managing directors are responsible for
  - o (Together with confidants and HR) Investigation of the case
  - o Taking disciplinary actions in case of offences
  - o (Together with confidants and HR) Informing the victim about the outcome of the investigation

4.5 Gender equality and diversity and research and teaching content

4.5.1 Why is gender equality and diversity important for research and teaching?

An increasing number of studies show sex differences in disease and treatment outcomes, including for research areas that are of interest to TRON. In cancer research, sex differences are known to affect cancer susceptibility, progression, survival, and therapeutic responses. Whereas for most tumor entities men have higher incidence and mortality rates, various chemotherapy regimens result in a higher toxicity and higher response rate in women. Moreover, women show longer post-treatment survival than men do, but seem to respond worse to cancer immunotherapy. The observed differences are not only due to the regulation of sex hormones but also involve molecular differences, which all together can influence cancer biology and treatment outcomes (13).

Another area of research interest to TRON is immunology. Here, sex differences have been described in both innate and adaptive immune responses. However, not only sex but also age and the reproductive status influence the immune responses, which leads to varied susceptibilities to infection diseases or autoimmune disorders. In addition, men and women are reported to respond differently to vaccination (14).

Sex differences have also been reported for the cardiovascular system as the incidence of cardiovascular diseases is higher in older women than in age-matched men. Although the same mechanisms that regulate blood pressure and cardiovascular function appear to be present in all sexes, these systems appear to be shifted towards cardioprotective pathways in women in their reproductive years. Notably, the sex chromosome complement can act independently of sex hormone effects, resulting in sex-specific, age-specific, and tissue-specific differences in gene expression (15).

In machine learning, selection of training data is particularly important. In the past, machine learning models were often trained with data from a specific subset of people, which may lead to discrimination (e.g. Twitter algorithm that for its image previews preferentially selected white people; (16)).

Next to gender inequalities, studies have pointed out that there are ethnic disparities in clinical trials and patient samples (17). For instance, Asian, black, and Hispanic patients were underrepresented compared to Caucasian subjects. This is of particular importance in the field of bioinformatics, where publicly available datasets are used (e.g. TCGA, 1000 Genomes, GTEx), in which often Caucasian patients are overrepresented. In addition, cultural and socio-economic factors (such as education level) may affect health (18).

We at TRON appreciate the sex differences and aim to increase awareness of the possible biases in research among our employees and strive for gender equality and diversity in research to ensure representative results.

In addition, teaching and education of pupils, students, and young scientists is of great importance to TRON. Next to achieving excellence, we aim to provide an inclusive teaching environment by using gender-sensitive language and imagery as well as diverse role models to ensure equal opportunities and personal development. Recent studies have suggested that gender role portrayal and ethnic stereotypes can affect whether girls pursue a career in science (5,19). At TRON, the majority of employees are female. Although the overall statistic shows that genders are equally represented in leadership positions, women are not equally represented in the top management (Figure 3, 4).

4.5.2 Goals

TRON aims to integrate the gender and diversity perspective in teaching, research, and working conditions. The overall goal of teaching at TRON is to maintain a learning and research environment that is free from discrimination and sexual harassment. Supervisors from all genders should be available at all career levels. Furthermore, we aim to increase the awareness of TRON researchers of possible gender and ethnic biases in their research. GED Analysis will be incorporated throughout the entire Research & Innovation cycle.

4.5.3 Measures
- TRON aims to increase awareness of the impact gender and ethnic bias can have on research and education by including this topic in the quarterly Town hall meeting, where all employees are invited. During this event, results from the GED surveys will be presented. In addition, gender equality themes will be included in training programs for leadership, the PhD program and master students.
- TRON aims to integrate a gender perspective into courses and programs at all levels (e.g. non-stereotyped images, inclusive language)
- Courses will be presented by teachers of all genders
- We will (continue to) collect information on:
    o the sex and genetic background of the animals used in research
    o the sex and ethnic origin of the patients donating samples whenever it is possible
    o the sex and ethnic origin of the donors from which cell lines were derived if available
- Employees are encouraged to:
    o integrate data on sex and ethnic origin in their research questions
    o stratify their research results based on gender and ethnic origin data

4.5.4 Criteria/indicators to measure success
- Data about gender distribution and ethnic diversity of patient samples and experimental animals are used to identify possible gender and ethnic biases.
- Record of attendance to gender equality trainings for staff
- Teaching courses will be evaluated with surveys to assess the integration of the gender and diversity perspective (female-friendly teaching, diverse role models)
- We will collect data about gender distribution and ethnicity of PhD program supervisors and composition of thesis-advisory committees

4.5.5 Responsibilities (roles)

- PhD coordinator is responsible for
    o Employing Gender Equality and Diversity Specialist for lecture about this topic during PhD and student courses
    o Reminding teachers to review materials for representative (non-stereotypic) images and inclusive language
    o Conducting evaluation surveys to assess the integration of the gender and diversity perspective after courses and sharing results with GED Team
- Unit leaders together with management are responsible for
    o Encouraging employees to integrate the sex and ethnic origin data in their research questions and analysis

- The animal affairs manager of FU "Animal Models and Imaging" is responsible for:
  - o Monitoring the animal's sex in research studies and
  - o Reporting an overview once a year to the GED team
- The Biosampling Unit is responsible for
  - o Recording gender and ethnic data of patients/participants donating their biospecimens in the LIMS system when available. In the future, this information will be shared by default with research teams using those biospecimens.
  - o Once a year, an overview will be shared with the GED team.
- The Cell Culture Unit is responsible for
  - o Monitoring gender and ethnicity of donors from which cell lines were derived if available and documenting this in the cell catalogue.
  - o Once a year, an overview will be shared with the GED team.
- GED Team is responsible for
  - o Collecting data on the gender of the supervisors of the PhD and other students and composition of thesis-advisory committees
  - o Collecting data on the integration of the gender and diversity aspect into teaching
  - o Collecting data on gender and ethnicity of animals used in our studies and human tissue present in our institute.
  - o Analyzing results and (together with leadership) decide on further measures
  - o Presenting results from Gender Equality and Diversity Survey during the company's Town hall meeting

4.6 Work-life balance and organizational culture

4.6.1 Why is work-life balance and organizational culture important?

Differences in gender roles have impacted the combination of work, studies and family life. The ideology of separate spheres – public life for men and domesticity for middle-class women - arose in the 19th century and gender roles continue to be constructed around these masculine/public and feminine/private dualities (10). Although more fathers have begun to take parental leave in Germany in recent years (20), women (i) take in most cases longer parental leaves, (ii) are still mainly responsible for domestic labor and childcare (21), and (iii) also perform most of the emotional work in families (for example, listening to and comforting children, giving emotional support to partners, doing things to improve or maintain relationships (22)). Indeed, women report more problems maintaining a work-life balance than men, throughout the entire duration of their career (10). This may indirectly weaken women´s status at work and reduce their chances of career advancement.

It is important to note that not all families consist of two parents of different gender; there are also single-parent families, same-sex parents, multi-parent families and stepfamilies. This diversity gives rise to a wide range of issues involving the reconciliation of work and family life. TRON works actively towards creating working conditions that enable employees of all genders, of all family types, and at all levels to share responsibility for children and the home.

Furthermore, it is important to note that responsibilities may not only include childcare, but also, for example, care for partners or elderly parents. At TRON, employees are able to adjust their working hours to their family situation: there are currently about 55 different part-time work arrangements for about 207 employees (~43% of all employees is working part-time, see figure 5).
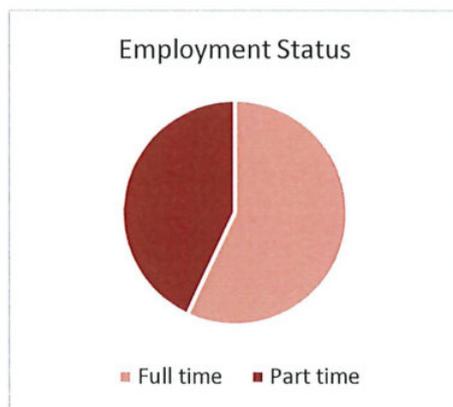

Figure 5: TRON allows flexible working hours

4.6.2 Goals

TRON aims to provide room and flexibility for its employees to reconcile work and family regardless of the gender of the employee and the type of family. TRON supports various flexible working model arrangements to meet the individual needs of employees in their respective family situation. TRON always has an eye on the equality of all employees, so that no one is disadvantaged by the opportunities offered to individual colleagues, for instance that there will be no impact to the distribution of duties within a team, and that rewards for services or career advancement will not be affected by a person taking leave. TRON employees should become aware of their options regarding parental leave and possible

return to work concepts regardless of gender and position within TRON. The German parental leave law/act provides a good basis for this.

4.6.3 Measures
- TRON makes it possible for all employees to work in a flexible way according to their individual needs/circumstances; the management board of TRON is supporting this regardless of gender, family type, and level.
- TRON management will also endorse flexible arrangements required for the reconciliation of work and family life when the employee or student provides care to children, elderly parents or a partner.
- TRON is taking all efforts to provide employees the opportunity to return to the same or equivalent position despite absence due to parental and other leaves and regardless of part-time or full-time status.
- TRON maintains contact with employees during parental and other leaves; employees will remain on the general employee mailing list and as such are informed about what is happening at TRON even if they are not working.
- TRON will enable employees of all genders to take parental and other leaves and takes every effort to prevent that there will be an impact on research work, or graduation of a PhD student.
- TRON supports employees to implement individual time-outs for a longer period than a holiday/vacation (e.g. sabbaticals).

4.6.4 Criteria/indicators to measure success
- Length of care leave for people of all genders will be documented internally.
- Feedback about work-life balance, workplace satisfaction, as well as support and opportunities for promotion will be obtained using surveys.

4.6.5 Responsibilities (roles)
- HR is responsible for
  - Collecting staff statistics and checking compliance with all legal requirements for leave-taking of the employees.
- Unit leaders together with management are responsible for
  - Taking any effort that employees can return to their old positions or comparable when coming back from parental and other leaves.
- GED Team is responsible for
  - Conducting surveys about work-life balance, workplace satisfaction, as well as support for opportunities for promotion.

5 Handling of deviations

Deviations of the procedure described here should be documented and reported to the GED Team. Cases of discrimination, violence and harassment need to be reported to the confidants, who will inform human resource officers and the directors. These parties decide on appropriate actions. If necessary, processes and infrastructure will be adapted. The data that will be collected in the framework of the gender equality plan will be evaluated by the Gender Equality and Diversity Team and, after discussion with responsible parties, department leaders and managing directors, may lead to adaptation of the Gender Equality and Diversity plan, internal processes and infrastructure.

6 Document history

Reason for revision

Version No	Revision	Valid from
01	First Version	26AUG2022
02	Data and general revision	19FEB2025