



Maastricht University

Gender Equality Plan

Maastricht University - Diversity & Inclusivity Office



 Maastricht University



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Background

The European Commission is committed to ensure gender equality is practiced at all levels of the EU community. Through a large body of legislation, several efforts have been made to actively promote this, in terms of equal pay, work-life balance, health and safety at work, social security, access to goods and services and protection from human trafficking, gender-based violence and forms of gender-based crime. With the establishment of the [European Research Area](#) (ERA), the [EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#) and funding instruments such as [Horizon 2020](#) and currently Horizon Europe 2021-2027, the Commission aims to strengthen and support gender equality work in the areas of research, innovation and technology, given the disparities that still exist at the European research level that require a structural and collective approach. In further support of these efforts, the Commission has made it a pre-requisite for every legal entity, including research or higher education institutions, seeking to be eligible for funding from the new [Horizon Europe Framework Programme for Research and Innovation 2021-2027](#) to have a publicly accessible Gender Equality Plan (GEP) by January 2022. The design of such GEPs is guided by both mandatory and recommended areas of focus provided by the EC in their [Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans](#). This entails that for the mandatory requirements, a GEP must:

1. be a formal and publicly available document;
2. stipulate specific resources that have been dedicated to implement the plan;
3. contain efforts to collect, evaluate and monitor gender-specific data;
4. integrate anti-gender bias training and capacity-building;

Alternatively, diversity and inclusivity strategies already in place at the legal entities that tackle the abovementioned mandatory requirements may serve as a substitute to the GEP.

UM Approach to the Gender Equality Plan

Maastricht University (UM) consists of approximately 22.000 students and 4.500 staff members from all over the world, who each bring their individual talents, competences, knowledge, perspectives and voices with them, as shaped by their own personal backgrounds. Together, they contribute to the diversity that characterizes the UM community and that strengthens the UM community as a learning and working environment. The [UM Executive Board](#) wholeheartedly subscribes to the importance of both equity and equality in academia, in order for such diversity to flourish. As part of the UM Strategic Program 2017-2021, titled "[Community at the CORE](#)", the UM has committed to ensure an inclusive environment within its own research institution. This commitment is continued in the [UM Strategic Program 2022-2026](#), where the UM further commits to being an inclusive, diverse, caring and sustainable university, where every member feels safe, recognized and valued.

The Horizon Europe GEP guidelines refer to the [gender glossary and thesaurus](#) for definitions provided by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). This glossary defines gender as "social attributes and opportunities associated with being female and male and to the relationships between women and men and boys and girls, as well as to the relations between women and those between men." The UM focuses on both gender and sex in its gender equality efforts. When possible,

the UM refers to and monitors self-identified gender including non-binary options. However, for the monitoring of population statistics the UM relies on sex registration in passports.

Furthermore, it is recognized that gender always intersects with other social categories of exclusion (e.g. age, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, social class). Therefore, the EU strongly encourages intersectional approaches in the GEPs. To support this approach to the mandatory GEP requirements set by the European Commission and to encourage a streamlined approach to the design of GEPs among Dutch universities, the Dutch Advisory Committee Diverse and Inclusive Higher Education and Research (abbreviated in Dutch: *DIHOO*) has drafted an [additional GEP guideline](#). This guideline suggests four areas of proposed measures that can support sustainable change at universities, namely: measures for a sound infrastructure at the organizational level; measures aimed at increasing gender equality in terms of numbers; measures aimed at changing cultural and structural organizational processes that produce and sustain gender inequality; and measures focused on making knowledge production and dissemination of research and education inclusive.

This intersectional approach is more in line with the UM's vision and efforts to reduce gender disparities and to create a diverse, and equitable work and study environment for all UM community members. This UM Gender Equality Plan is therefore to be regarded as part of the UM's [Diversity and Inclusivity Policy and Strategy 2020-2023](#), where gender equality efforts are embedded in existing broader and intersectional diversity and inclusivity policies at the university.

This webpage outlines how the UM meets the mandatory GEP requirements set by the European Commission, expands on the four proposed measures by the *DIHOO*, where applicable, and provides an insight on focus areas for the UM to consider in the coming years that are relevant to this topic.

Glossary:

Concept	Definition
Diversity	Embracing and taking into account the differences between individuals and groups of people.
Equality	Being equal in status, rights and/or opportunities.
Equity	Adjusting for need in order to achieve equality.
Gender	A social construct classifying a person as a woman, man, or other gender identity.
Inclusive Environment	An environment that does not leave any part or group excluded. One in which all members feel respected by, and connected to, one another. All members contribute to the formation of the group's goals and to the realization of those goals.
Inclusivity	The practice or policy of including people who might otherwise be excluded or marginalized.
Sex	Assigned to people at birth based on physical and physiological features.

Dedicated Resources and Funding

The Dutch Advisory Committee Diverse and Inclusive Higher Education and Research emphasises the importance of having a sound infrastructure at the organizational level to support further measures for sustainable change. To this end, a GEP must have dedicated resources and expertise in gender equality to implement the plan. This section will illustrate how the UM meets this requirement through the establishment of D&I expertise and its collaboration with other UM departments and networks.

Diversity at the CORE

As part of the revision and revitalization of the Human Resource Management (HRM) policy “Create Your Future” by the UM HR department in 2017, a first attempt was made to explore the topic of diversity at the UM in a working group. The efforts of this working group resulted in a preliminary advice¹ to the UM Board of Executives on the development and realization of UM-wide diversity policies, which considered the concept of diversity beyond its traditional confines of age, gender and nationality. In this advice diversity within the UM community was deemed essential for a thriving working and learning environment that would benefit all members. As a result, the Board of Executives has allocated both structural and financial support for the further development and realization of diversity and inclusivity (D&I) policies at the UM and has adopted and incorporated the advice in the UM Strategic Program 2017-2021.

Establishing the Diversity and Inclusivity Office

What started with the appointment of [the UM’s first Diversity Officer in 2018](#), has since grown to the establishment of a [Diversity & Inclusivity Office](#) in 2020 consisting of one managing director, three policy advisors and three student assistants. Together, and in collaboration with other UM departments, faculty boards and grassroots organisations, the D&I Office aims to diversify the UM staff and student population and create an inclusive atmosphere in which all talents and competencies can be mobilized for the wellbeing of UM community members and for the wellbeing of the institute itself. To achieve this, four core areas of action are identified and incorporated in the [D&I Strategy 2020-2023](#):

- (1) Attracting and retaining talent;
- (2) Fostering cultural change;
- (3) Strengthening diversity competencies;
- (4) Making life-phase-friendly HR policies.

The D&I Office is embedded in the portfolio of the current UM President, [prof.dr. Rianne Letschert](#). She is also the chair of the [D&I Advisory Council](#), the governance body supporting the development and realization of the D&I objectives mentioned above. The D&I Office has regular meetings with the Advisory Council to inform them on the progress of their activities and publishes regular progress

¹ Document: Diversity at the CORE: Diversity & Inclusivity at Maastricht University (2017)

reports. Current allocated funds will sustain the direct and indirect activities of the D&I Office until 2023.

D&I Networks

The D&I Office supports UM-wide work to ensure intersectional equity and equality standards are dispersed and upheld at all UM levels through broader initiatives, events and diversity policies. Therefore, it closely collaborates with other UM departments, such as [Human Resources](#) (HR), the [Knowledge Centre for International Staff](#) (KCIS), the [Student Service Centre](#) (SSC), the [Centre for Gender and Diversity](#) (CGD) and established organizations such as the [Female Empowerment Maastricht University \(FEM\) Network](#) and the [Maastricht Young Academy](#) (MYA) and the student chaplaincy [the InnBetween](#). Furthermore, the D&I Office welcomes staff and student networks within the UM that aim to bring the UM Community together through events, activities or projects. These [organizations](#) and networks represent the versatility that diversity can embody within the UM community. As such, connective platforms are provided through their representation and by their activities for interdepartmental awareness raising, support and collaboration at the grassroots level. Some examples of the many that are currently involved in intersectional (gender) equality approaches are:

- [FEM Network](#): the FEM network is an all staff network that includes both academic and administrative staff from all faculties and from diverse disciplines at the UM. This network has become an integral part in efforts to eliminate gender disparities and to create a diverse and equitable UM work environment. Since its establishment in 2018 from a D&I grant (see below), it has grown into a well-established organization funded by all UM faculties. The network organizes regular lunches, events and trainings to raise awareness and provide information in relation to gender disparities. A full overview of their work can be found in its recent [yearly report](#).
- [Feminists of Maastricht](#): (FoM), a student organisation aimed to promote and raise awareness on intersectional feminism on the political, economic and social level in Maastricht and that constitutes a platform for fact-based gender equality education.
- [WeCare](#): a student-run organisation founded by UM Alumni that raises awareness on sexual violence and that provides a safe space for survivors of sexual violence.
- [African-Caribbean Maastricht University Society](#) (ACMUS): aimed at empowering students of African and Caribbean descent by creating a safe and supportive community.
- [UM Pride](#): an LGBT+ network aimed at providing a safe, inclusive and supportive space for all LGBT+ and allied UM staff and students.
- [Maastricht Student Association \(MSA\) Nour](#): a student network uniting followers of the Islam religion and aimed at forming a bridge between Muslim and non-Muslim students.
- [UnliMited Network](#): a network for UM staff and students with visible and/or invisible disabilities, created under the umbrella of the [Taskforce "Obstacle-free studying and working at UM"](#).
- [Kaleido](#): a community network and platform for international students in Maastricht where a range of cultural activities are organised to share knowledge and skills that can empower others to do the same.

D&I Grants

Additionally, funding opportunities are provided through annual [D&I grants](#) that support the realization of research projects and activities complementing the broader institutional efforts in the D&I strategy. This encourages the promotion (or flagging the lack) of diversity, inclusion, equality and equity from the bottom-up through innovative initiatives and projects. The FEM Network is a good example of how such grants are able to facilitate initiatives that can have a longterm impact across the university. Some other relevant examples of [prior D&I grant projects](#) that have completed or that are currently being executed in this context are:

D&I Grant Project	Description
Entrepreneurial Thinking for Female Researchers (2019)	Project aimed at tackling the gender gap in the academic labour market through workshops on entrepreneurial thinking for female researchers.
Women in Data Science Conference (2019) Update: recently had their third edition WiDS Datathon at Maastricht.	Inspired by WiDS conferences by Stanford University, this conference aims to support women in the field and educate data scientists regardless of gender.
Empowerment Training for People of Colour and People with a Migration Background (2019)	Initiative aimed at empowering staff and students of colour and/or with a migration background experiencing racism at the UM.
The Impostor Syndrome among PhDs: Feeling Like I'm Faking It (2020)	Research on the Impostor Syndrome (IS) among PhD students, which is known to be more pronounced among women and members from underrepresented groups.
Implementing an evidence-based sexual assault resistance programme (2020)	Evidence-based (EAAA) training program for prevention measures on sexual assault.
All for One & One for All (2020)	A project aimed at raising awareness to the exclusion of certain groups groups from research, which impacts its societal relevance. It aims to promote best practices of inclusive research methods to combat this exclusion.
Diversifying Course Materials (2020)	A project aimed at developing a toll that will give course coordinators guidelines and examples on how to make their course more inclusive, diverse and representative for students and staff.
Free Menstrual Products (2021) Now renamed: Bloody Serious	A one-year pilot provision of free menstrual products in UM bathrooms plus educational campaigns on period poverty and its prevalence within the UM Community.

Data Scientist MINDSETS podcast (2021)	Data science podcast aimed at promoting the visibility, recruitment, and/or retention of traditionally minoritized, marginalized, and underrepresented groups in data science (i.e. gender, religion, sexual orientation, ability, country of origin etc.)
Treat it Queer (2021)	Workshop series aimed at encouraging a more welcoming and informed medical treatment environment for the queer community by enabling health professionals to further diversify their competencies.
Admission procedures (2021)	A research project on how the admission procedures of bachelor programs relate to the composition of the student population in terms of inclusivity and diversity.

The D&I Office monitors the granted projects during the funding period. At the end of the funding period, each project submits a written report on their impact, future plans and possibilities, and general experiences of the project.

Point of Attention:

The D&I Office has recently discussed with the Advisory Council to provide regular updates on the status, development and (if applicable) the impact of granted projects (e.g. to the Advisory

Incidentally, the D&I office also supports larger D&I research proposals. Such is the research on [‘Helpers’ and ‘Doers’](#), for example, on the role of service work for success in Dutch academia that aims to change the manner in which academics are valued. This research is part of a larger UM initiative on [Recognition & Rewards at the UM](#). As a result of the overall collaboration and (in)direct structural and financial support for such initiatives and activities, many policies are already in place at the UM organizational and procedural level that support gender equity and equality efforts through broader diversity policies.

Some faculties at UM also offer funding or structural support for their (female) research staff. For example, the School of Business and Economics (SBE) supports the [Elinor Ostrum Fund](#), a fund that is intended to [support female academics](#) at the start of their careers through grants and other activities. Furthermore, it raises awareness related to gender diversity at SBE. At the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences (FaSOS), research support is available after pregnancy.

Data Collection, Monitoring and Evaluation

The second area of measures recommended by the DIHOO regards increasing gender equality through numbers (e.g. in recruitment, advancement, retention and visibility). A lack of gender diversity in terms of numbers may indicate a lack of inclusivity, especially if the numbers show a pyramid construction. To this end, organizations must collect sex/gender disaggregated data on personnel and students with annual reporting based on relevant indicators. This section will illustrate how the UM has progressed towards a more intersectional collection and analysis of data by including gender and nationality specific data and combining them with UM data that is already being monitored. Furthermore, this section addresses how the UM promotes a better gender balance for specific positions at the top through broader efforts.

Intersectional Data Collection

The UM monitors the needs of UM employees through the Sustainable Employability Monitor (UM-SEM), a biennial survey for UM staff that focuses on the sustainable employability of UM staff, the inclusivity and diversity of the UM and the work pressure within the UM. Furthermore, collective efforts from the D&I Office, the FEM network, FEM ambassadors and allies have resulted in the development of the FEMonitor, a UM-wide data monitor aimed at providing insights in the current male-female distribution of students, research staff and support staff at Maastricht University and potential gendered equity and equality gaps overtime. Some of the indicators included in this monitor are related to recruitment and retention; study/career advancement; contracts and payment; UM support structures for staff and students; and changes in staff numbers overtime (leaky pipeline). The FEMonitor is expected to launch this year (2022) and is intended to become an annual monitoring tool. At the faculty level, bi-annual meetings² take place with the UM Executive Board, where strategic personnel reports are discussed. Academic Affairs and the HR department, in consultation with the D&I Office, ensure that these reports now contain gender and nationality specific data for all scientific positions and non-scientific decision-making positions. This encourages faculty leaders to look at intersectional patterns within their own faculty environment that might need specific attention. Further monitoring tools that are expanded with a diversity component contain UM-wide student surveys and staff surveys. The UM also participates in the annual monitor developed by the Dutch Network of Female Professors, henceforth LNVH. The LNVH monitor tracks the progress of the targets set by Dutch universities to obtain female professors. At Maastricht University, this target is set at 37% by the year 2025 with an increase of 1% female professors per calendar year until then. According to the LNVH monitor's latest 2021 publication, which excludes medical faculties, the UM is currently ranked second of all participating Dutch universities with 32.6% female professors.

It should be noted that the registration of the gender of a person at the UM is derived from the registration in the person's passport. Registration on non-binary in an international environment is limited due to restrictions imposed by governments. In addition, the *DIHOO* advisory committee is

² Voorjaarsoverleg (VJO) en Najaarsoverleg (NJO)

currently looking into monitoring diversity more widely in education and research, including social safety and inclusion. This is one of the five goals in their [2020 National Action Plan for Greater Diversity and Inclusion](#) for which the advisory committee will provide input to the education and research sector.

Preferential Gender Policies

The UM has participated in broader efforts, such as the [Westerdijk Talentimpuls program](#) in 2017-2018. This program encouraged the collective increase of 100 appointed female professors at Dutch universities with the precondition that female professors would be offered a tenure contract. Maastricht University appointed 9 female professors through this program. Aside from the internal target set to obtain 37% female professors by 2025, the UM does not have a central preferential gender policy as such, but some faculties are looking into this due to the [provision provided by Dutch law](#) that encourages the increase of female personnel for employers.

Points of Attention:

- While a target number is set for female professors, no quotas are set for other (top) positions within the UM.
- The data incorporated in the FEMonitor can assist in revealing the personnel and student data that currently is and is not collected, monitored and published across UM faculties and making them comparable. This might stimulate UM faculties to collaborate more closely in streamlining their methods.
- The UM should look into monitoring internal gender budgeting and the equal distribution of material resources for female academics through the FEMonitor.

Fostering an Inclusive Environment: Organizational Culture, Procedures and Facilities

The third area of measures entails changing cultural and structural organizational processes that produce and sustain gender equality and support the effectiveness of gender policies. If an institution succeeds in attracting underrepresented or marginalized groups, it will need to facilitate an inclusive and supportive environment for all employees to avoid the 'revolving door effect'. This requires the engagement of the whole organization, particularly decision-makers, in activities, communication, representation, awareness raising and unconscious bias trainings. As the collective work of the D&I Office together with collaborating UM departments and networks reaches broader audiences, more visibility is generated for problems encountered by underrepresented groups in existing physical or procedural structures at the UM. These collective efforts have contributed to adaptations and revisions in some of these existing structures. This section details the developments that have supported both cultural and structural organizational changes at the UM through broader D&I policies, initiatives and activities. Furthermore, it addresses what structures are currently in place at the UM to facilitate a safe and inclusive environment for UM staff and UM students.

UM Facilities

The UM has established specific facilities to reflect the needs of specific groups within the UM community. Thus, in addition to baby-changing rooms at each faculty, the UM also has all gender and accessible toilets as well as toilets that contain free menstrual products. The UM is currently also expanding on lactation-and resting rooms at faculties. The D&I Office has produced a [map](#) to locate all these facilities at UM locations.

Incidentally, UM buildings are also used to draw attention to specific topics. Some examples of this are [pictures](#) taken by photographer Robin de Puy to represent the diversity of the university, which are located at the Tapijnkazerne building. Another example was an art exhibition at the UM on women in mathematics for which the UM hired a curation team. Because of the D&I Grant project “*Bloody Serious*”, that is currently piloting, all UM toilets now contain free provision of menstrual products to bring attention to period poverty.

Points of Attention:

- The D&I Office should monitor that faculties update (when necessary) and create new breastfeeding and resting rooms.
- The D&I Office should include wheelchair-accessible entrances at UM locations in the map.

Inclusive Language and Recruitment

The D&I Office has produced a Gender Inclusive Language guide in both English and Dutch, in line with the UM’s Gender Inclusive Language Policy. The impact of these efforts are noticeable by the increased use of pronouns by staff members and students, as well as by updates in digital registration systems at the UM that now include an expanded list of pronouns. In collaboration with YUFE WP7, the D&I Office has also developed a D&I glossary of terms to encourage the use of more inclusive language in the UM communication; be it internal, external or in personal communication.

Through collaborative efforts between the HR department, the D&I Office and the FEM Network, a guide is developed for writing inclusive vacancy texts that is accessible to all members of the UM community.

Furthermore, staff members can have their vacancy text checked for gender-inclusive language and recommendations by the D&I Office through checkmyvacancy@maastrichtuniversity.nl.

Points of Attention:

- The UM is currently looking into possibilities to include gender inclusive language for PhD certificates, ceremonies and regulations.
- The UM is looking into how the whole recruitment cycle can be more inclusive.

Diverse Representation in Committees, Panels and Decision-Making

Bodies

Fostering an inclusive and stimulating work and study environment can also be tackled through diverse representation, particularly in positions at the top. The UM sets a prominent example with a Board of Executives that currently, and for the first time, consists of a majority of female members. The UM appointed its first female *Rector Magnificus*, [prof. dr. Rianne Letschert](#), in 2016 who became the first female President of Maastricht University in November 2021. As of February 2022, the role of *Rector Magnificus* will be fulfilled by [prof. dr. Pamela Habibović](#). The UM also requires that a gender balance is maintained for advisory committees at the UM. Informally, the importance of diverse representation in such bodies and panels is now more recognized and taken into account when appointing members or in external UM communication. This is also encouraged at other levels for the composition of (research) teams or other collaborative efforts. For applicants of D&I grants, for example, the requirements encourage a diverse composition of the teams that is representative of the diversity within the UM community (i.e. preferably a collaboration between faculties and consisting of both students and staff).

Through various internal and external channels, the UM ensures that both staff and students are exposed to a diverse pool of people in leadership positions. Be it through [events](#) organized by the D&I Office or D&I Organizations, activities organized by [Studium Generale](#), faculty initiated events, or [bi-monthly lunches and mentorship programs organized by the FEM Network](#), to name a few. In addition, the independent newspaper [the Observant](#) that is distributed across all UM faculties, assists in the exposure of the diversity within the UM community through their interview segments with people from the community.

Points of Attention:

- UM Departments should carefully consider a diverse composition of their committees and decision-making boards/staff.
- The UM should look into possibilities to make the selection procedure of applicants more transparent (i.e. number of male/female applicants in general, those shortlisted for an interview and those chosen for the job).

UM Community Capacity Building and Training

The UM's HR department has recently introduced a [new vision on sustainable employability](#) at the UM. This vision supports all employees to invest in their future mobility by providing a safe learning and development environment at the UM. As a result, UM managers have a duty to facilitate this process with their employees in every possible manner. The UM offers a number of trainings to staff and students through various internal and external channels. These trainings are aimed at building academic skills and qualities, strengthening communication and raising awareness on behavioural-related topics. Examples of UM providers of workshops, trainings and initiatives are listed below.

In past efforts, the D&I Office has looked into outsourcing gender bias trainings (Goodlads) for UM staff as a pilot. Through the collaboration with the YUFE network, the D&I Office also had the chance

to pilot an online anti-bias training. Based on the evaluation of this pilot the UM is currently looking into alternative manners to include relevant competencies into existing training trajectories. The UM D&I [webpage](#) offers information specifically aimed at inspiring, educating and supporting people by providing topical literature, specific tools and other resources that people can refer to at their own pace.

The FEM Network organizes tailored workshops and trainings for the UM community and focuses on areas where women face disadvantages. They have offered workshops on enhancing negotiation skills for women in collaboration with the [UM Staff Career Centre](#), which has become part of the regular offer by the UM Staff Career Centre since 2021. To lower the financial burden to participate in this workshop, the FEM Network covers 25% of the cost per participant. The FEM Network also provides trainings and workshops on the topic of gender equity and inclusivity for students and PhD candidates, as well as on topics such as anti-bias and intervention techniques for bystanders. In December 2021, the UM Staff Career Centre provided and co-funded a pilot workshop on active bystanders, which will be part of the regular offer by the UM Staff Career Centre in 2022, sponsored partially by the FEM Network and MYA.

The [Maastricht Young Academy](#) (MYA) hosted a series of intercultural training workshops in 2020 and 2021. These trainings were designed for individuals who wanted to become familiar with how cultural norms can determine behaviour and interactions with colleagues and students. Furthermore, they hosted a screening and panel discussion of the "[Picture a Scientist](#)" documentary in 2020, which addressed the experiences of older generation of women in STEM who advocated for the equality of representation, pay and working space for women in science. As from 2020, the MYA initiated a local chapter of the [event series Growing Up in Science](#) (GUS), which they continued in 2021.

The MYA academic citizenship initiative seeks to facilitate a university-wide conversation on how to be a good academic citizen. The initiative includes five focus areas: human resources, leadership, mentoring, community and service.

Faculties are also initiating events on diversity awareness and inclusion. For example, the UM Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences (FHML) organized an educational event in 2021 titled: "*How Aware is FHML of Diversity?*" This event aimed to tackle diversity in the medical field for which it brought health professionals together to exchange best practices and expand their horizon.

The UM Taskforce Professional Leadership Development, which included the D&I Office, has developed the UM Leadership Academy to help UM employees grow as professionals, equip them for the tasks they face, and support them in the challenges encountered which includes diversity components. The launch of the [UM Leadership Academy](#) is planned for 2022.

Points of Attention:

- The UM should look into opportunities to professionalize key staff (e.g. the council for academic advising and student guidance at UM ([SuMA](#))) in gender literacy.
- The UM should look into addressing inclusive competencies in all relevant training for staff and students (e.g. University Teaching Qualification, Continued Professional Development, leadership trainings, training for boards of student associations/organizations)

Inclusive Research and Education

The *DIHOO* points out that failure to acknowledge gender differences when setting up and carrying out a research project can lead to costly errors (e.g. medical research). Thus, to further support an inclusive environment, an institution should ensure a better integration of the gender dimension in the education curriculum and the set up of research projects.

As a form of empowering women in academia, the FEM Network designed a [leaflet](#) summarizing Dutch and EU grants, awards and fellowships specific for women. It has also developed a citation bias guide which is expected to be released in 2022. The UM also offers tips for researchers and funding advisors involved in writing research proposals to reflect on whether the intended research addresses relevant diversity and inclusivity questions and needs. Addressing these dimensions is increasingly required by funding schemes (e.g. the gender dimension for Horizon Europe). The toolkit goes beyond the traditional gender balance component in team compositions and sample populations or sex balance in animal models and cell lines. UM's network UMPride has also produced an [educative video on sex versus gender](#) that will be distributed UM-wide.

The [Centre for Gender and Diversity](#) plays an important role in teaching and research on gender studies and diversifying study curricula at the UM. This is further supported by [D&I grant projects](#), such as: *All for One & One for All* (2020); *Diversifying Course Materials* (2020); *Data Scientist MINDSETS* (2021); and *Treat it Queer* (2021) that aim for representative and inclusive teaching and research at the UM. . At some faculties, teaching staff (and students) are looking into possibilities to include a diversity component in post-course evaluations as a means to ensure inclusive and representative teaching and learning through continuous course developments.

The UM President signed the [Declaration of Intent of Dutch Institutions for Higher Education](#) in 2020, by which it has committed to accessible and inclusive education for UM students with (in)visible disabilities. This commitment includes three key pillars, namely: actively involving students with disabilities; drawing attention to flexibility in the curriculum; and improving the expertise of all employees.

The [Maastricht University for Education Innovation](#) (EDLAB) aims to increase the engagement of both students and staff (co-creation) with the education process. To this end, EDLAB plays a vital source in further encouraging diversity and inclusiveness in UM-wide innovation and education projects and teacher trainings. They have developed and offer trainings on decolonizing the curriculum, the international classroom and diversity. The D&I Office and EDLAB collaborate to

provide a sustainable offer of diversity related activities. An example of this is a pilot project for the master program Globalization and Development Studies (GDS) at the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. This is a collaboration from the GDS program officers, the D&I Office and EDLAB and involves an educational development project about bringing diverse perspectives into GDS courses by including alumni and students of this master program. EDLAB will also host the first [UM Education Day](#) in 2022. This event is meant to learn, share and exchange ideas and new practices regarding educational design and delivery, assessment and feedback, research innovation, international classroom and diversity, excellence programs, mentoring and advising for and by the UM teaching and learning community.

Point of Attention:

The D&I Office should look into closer cooperation possibilities with EDLAB for diversity trainings for UM staff (and perhaps students).

Recognition and Rewards

In 2019, the UM President signed the [Declaration on Research Assessment](#) (DORA), which marked the UM's official endorsement of a new approach to assessing academics. This culminated in the current national [Recognition and Rewards initiative](#), co-led by the UM President. The FEM Network has highlighted on the disproportionality in how female academics are valued and rewarded at the UM through [publications](#). The MYA has also offered critical reflections in a [position paper](#) to support the further development of this policy from the perspective of a young academic. The Recognition and Rewards initiative remains a priority in the [UM Strategic Program 2022-2026](#).

Point of Attention:

The UM Recognition & Rewards system is currently only targeting the career paths for academic staff. The UM should look into starting a similar program for UM support staff. Furthermore, it is important to pay attention to gender equality in the implementation of the new policy to stay alert to the possibility of 'gendered' career tracks.

Supporting a Healthy Work-Life Balance

The UM has specific family and lifephase-friendly facilities and ([HR](#)) [policies](#) in place to ensure the sustainable employability of UM staff and the successful study completion for UM students. In general, UM employees are provided with an individual choice model that allows them to adapt their working hours by buying or selling hours of leave. The UM provides support to staff and students with visible and invisible disabilities under the umbrella of the [Taskforce Obstacle-Free Studying and Working](#). The [Student Service Centre's Disability Support Office](#) and the D&I Office are closely working together to develop inclusive policies and improve accessibility for this group. The [UnliMited Network](#) is the youngest network at UM and is dedicated to both staff and students with a disability or chronic disorder, whether visible or invisible. The [UM Cares Project](#) aims to facilitate UM staff and

students with caring responsibilities. To this end, different types of leave are available for parents and carers, which they can discuss with their respective UM manager or HR officer. The collective labour agreement for universities allocates time to parents who breastfeed their children. Furthermore, a network of parents and carers (PAC Network) is set up at the UM, where [staff](#) and [students](#) with caring responsibilities can find support and other services, depending on their needs. The FEM Network has called specific attention to the disproportionate impact of Covid-19 on [caregivers](#) and on [border workers](#). These statements are taken into consideration as the UM navigates the future of working at the UM and the balance between working from home and working on campus.

Points of Attention:

- The D&I Office should explore possibilities to strengthen the Parents and Carers (PAC) Network and utilize its potential for its current members.
- The UM will continue a proposal for dual career policy development.

Social Safety & Security

In accordance with the [UM Integrity Code of Conduct](#), which is based on several [other codes of conduct](#), the UM does not tolerate any form of inappropriate/undesirable behaviour or unequal treatment in the work and study environment. This includes any form of sexual harassment and assault, aggression and violence, a dispute, bullying and discrimination based on race, nationality, gender, religion and sexual orientation.

General Codes of Conduct and Complaint Procedures for Undesirable Behaviour

For UM community members that experience or witness such behaviour, the UM has central Confidential Advisors in place for UM students, UM employees and one per faculty for all PhD candidates at the UM. Confidential Advisors are trained mediators and can monitor the interest of those that need support. In addition, both UM employees and students can turn to the UM Ombudsperson, in case of legal issues. The Ombudsperson is to act impartial and independent and has the right to information as well as the power of investigation. Should none of these options result in a fruitful solution, one can proceed with filing an official complaint (either with or without the support of a Confidential Advisor) with the UM Executive Board. UM employees may refer to the Regulation on Undesirable Behaviour for the precise procedure. Furthermore, the Regulations of the Joint Complaints Committee for Undesirable Behaviour also applies. The UM Executive Board has installed an independent Inappropriate Behaviour Committee to deal with complaints. For UM students, a flowchart is available to navigate their way in support options and procedures when reporting an incident as a student. UM students may also refer to the step-by-step plan that allows them to file a formal objection, appeal or complaint with the Complaints Service Point (CSP), for which the UM Student Deans can be contacted for legal questions.

Points of Attention:

- The UM should ensure both the Confidential Advisors and the Ombudsperson have the necessary and appropriate background and skills to execute their tasks across the spectrum of “undesirable behaviour” dimensions.
- The UM should ensure a diverse composition of the taskforce dealing with complaints and the people drafting regulations regarding inappropriate behaviour at the UM.
- The UM works on offering a central complaint point for staff and a flowchart of complaint options and procedures.

Sexual Harassment, Assault and Violence

The UM has organized [a conference on the topic of sexual violence and sexual harassment among UM students](#) in 2021, at which the UM President signed a [manifesto](#)³ drafted by Amnesty International Netherlands and #LetsTalkAboutYES. With this gesture the UM pledged itself to uphold the six promises contained in this manifesto. These promises are aimed at equipping staff and students with the knowledge and skills to combat sexual harassment, assault and violence and to ensure the university has appropriate infrastructures in order to provide tailored guidance and support for survivors of sexual harassment. The D&I Office has dedicated a separate [support webpage](#) providing information for survivors of sexual harassment, assault and violence and providing tools for those seeking to support survivors. The student organization [WeCare](#) raises awareness on sexual violence and provides a safe space for survivors of sexual violence. They work closely together with the [Sexual Assault Center](#). Catcalls of Maastricht (Instagram handle: @cat.calls.of.maastricht) raises awareness for sexual harassment and street intimidation and provides a support network for people subjected to this.

The *Universiteiten van Nederland* recently raised awareness for university staff who are increasingly being subjected to threats, violence and hatred due to media-related or otherwise public engagement or the position they execute. To encourage support structures at universities for staff encountering such behaviour, a guide (in Dutch) was developed and signed in 2020. Special attention therein was given to early career researchers, women, people with migration backgrounds, disabilities and or people from the LGBTQ+ community, who are disproportionately affected by such acts and may need additional support. Dutch universities, including the UM, are currently in the process of implementing this guideline.

Point of Attention:

The UM should look into what protection measures are in place for researchers doing fieldwork abroad (i.e. [Fieldwork Initiative](#)).

³ Document: #LetsTalkAboutYES manifesto

Current Resources and Training

UM managers can draw upon existing UM guidelines containing concrete advice on how to deal with [aggression](#), [work-related conflicts](#), [\(sexual\) intimidation](#) and [bullying](#). These guidelines have also been drafted for UM employees encountering [aggression](#), [work-related conflicts](#), [\(sexual\) intimidation](#) and [bullying](#). The D&I Office, in collaboration with [ECHO](#), is currently developing social safety training videos and a toolkit for UM staff and students, which is co-financed through a grant by [SoFoKles](#). These videos will address uncomfortable situations of undesired behaviour that could occur in the university work or study environment. The toolkit is meant to guide conversations between UM community members on how to recognize and handle situations of unwanted behaviour. In follow-up to the UM Conference on sexual violence and sexual harassment among students, the Student Service Centre provides trainings for board members of student associations and organizations in Maastricht. The UM also offers the only evidence-based sexual violence resistance training, [Flip the Script TM](#), to female identifying students.

Points of Attention:

- The UM currently only has Dutch supporting guidelines for managers and employers and should look into having English versions as well to be more inclusive to their employers.
- A supporting guideline specific to how to handle discrimination based on race, nationality, gender, religion and sexual orientation seems to be missing in the current compilation of guidelines for managers and employers.