

Braining's Strategy for Diversity & Inclusion

Gender Equality Plan (GEP)



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1. Introduction

As part of our commitment to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and equitable workplace, Braining proudly introduces our Gender Equality Plan, aligned with the European Commission's Roadmap for Women's Rights (2025) and adapted to **promote equality for all genders, including non-binary individuals**. The Roadmap sets a clear and ambitious vision for achieving gender equality across Europe, addressing challenges such as technology-facilitated discrimination, gender-based violence, and persistent biases in professional environments. While the Roadmap emphasizes women's rights, this plan applies its principles to promote equality for all genders, including non-binary individuals, ensuring that everyone can thrive.

Braining recognizes the need for continuous effort and collaboration with our stakeholders, including employees, partners, and civil society organizations, to ensure that gender equality remains an ongoing priority in our workplace and throughout our business practices. Through this plan, we pledge to take concrete actions towards eliminating gender disparities, promoting diversity, and creating a safe and supportive environment for all.

2. Implementation & Transparency

- A. Public access to the plan: The Gender Equality Plan, Policy and Statement will be published on Braining's website, and any updates or modifications will also be made publicly available. This ensures transparency and accountability for all stakeholders.
- B. Regular reporting of workforce data: Braining will produce an annual report that includes workforce statistics, such as recruitment, promotions, pay levels, and retention, as well as data on trainees and interns. In addition, a semi-annual internal report will be prepared to monitor progress and identify areas for improvement.
- C. Publication timeline: The plan, policy and statement and its updates will be completed and published in line with the timelines established by the organization's internal protocols and relevant legal or regulatory requirements.

3. Objectives

- i. Promote gender balance in all levels, particularly leadership: Achieve at least 40% representation of each gender in all management levels within 3 years, while ensuring fair recruitment and promotion practices.
- ii. Eliminate gender-based discrimination, harassment, and bias: Reduce reported incidents of gender-based discrimination, harassment, or bias by 50% within 2 years, through training, awareness campaigns, and strengthened grievance procedures.
- iii. Provide equal opportunities for career advancement and professional development: Ensure that 100% of employees, regardless of gender, have equal access to training, mentoring, and development programs annually.
- iv. Raise awareness and create a supportive work environment: Deliver at least 2 mandatory awareness and inclusion sessions per year for all employees, reaching 100% participation, and implement a feedback system to measure effectiveness.

4. Policy Commitment

The organization commits to:

- Upholding the principles of equal treatment, fairness, and respect for all genders as stated in our Gender Equality Policy.
- Ensuring that all policies, including hiring, promotion, training, and compensation, are free from gender bias.
- Implementing clear anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policies that address gender-based issues.
- Reviewing and revising internal policies regularly to ensure compliance with gender equality standards and to address any potential gaps.

5. Key Actions and Strategies

i. Non-Discrimination

Objective: Ensure that no individual is treated less favourably due to their gender, whether they are employees, contractors, interns, partners, or otherwise engaged with the organization.

Implement and maintain policies to prevent gender discrimination in all workplace practices, including hiring, promotion, and daily operations. The policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if required due to changes in law, organizational practice, or emerging best practices, to ensure it remains effective, up-to-date, and aligned with Braining's commitment to gender equality.

Educate employees and management on unconscious bias, gender stereotypes, and the importance of creating an inclusive environment for all genders.

Monitor all decisions related to recruitment, performance evaluations, and promotions to ensure they are free from gender bias.

ii. Equal Pay for Equal Work

Objective: Eliminate unjustified gender pay disparities.

Conduct annual gender pay audits to identify and address any in compensation among all employees, regardless of gender identity, who perform the same or similar work.

Take immediate corrective action if any unjustified pay gaps are identified, which may include adjusting salaries, reviewing promotion or bonus decisions, implementing targeted development or mentoring programs, and addressing systemic factors contributing to the discrepancy to ensure equal compensation for equal work.

Ensure transparency in pay structures and policies, making it clear that all employees receive fair pay based on skills, experience, and performance, not gender.

iii. Recruitment & Promotion

Objective: Ensure transparent and gender-neutral recruitment and promotion processes.

Develop and implement clear guidelines for recruitment and promotion that are free from gender bias.

Where possible, create balanced shortlists (where legally and practically feasible) that include candidates of all genders to ensure diverse representation.

Provide training to hiring managers and decision-makers on how to avoid gender bias in interviews, assessments, and selection processes.

Regularly assess recruitment and promotion outcomes to ensure gender equality is being achieved.

iv. Work-life Balance

Objective: Provide equal opportunities for work-life balance without negatively impacting career progression.

Ensure that parental leave policies are inclusive, offering paid leave for parents.

Implement flexible working arrangements, including remote work, part-time hours, and flexible scheduling, ensuring that these options are available to all employees, regardless of gender.

Guarantee that taking advantage of these policies does not negatively impact career progression, promotions, or professional development opportunities.

v. Training & Development

Objective: Ensure equal access to professional development, mentoring, and leadership opportunities.

Offer equal access to training and development programs for all employees, with particular attention to ensuring gender equity in leadership training and opportunities.

Establish mentorship programs where employees of all genders have the opportunity to connect with senior leaders for career guidance and development.

Promote equal opportunities for career advancement, ensuring that gender does not hinder an employee's access to promotions or leadership roles.

vi. Safe Working Environment

Objective: Enforce a zero-tolerance approach to harassment, bullying, and gender-based violence.

Adopt and communicate a zero-tolerance policy for harassment, bullying, or any form of gender-based violence.

Ensure that all employees are aware of the proper procedures for reporting incidents and make sure that all complaints are investigated promptly and confidentially.

Provide ongoing education and training to staff on maintaining a respectful, safe workplace, and on how to intervene in situations where harassment or discrimination is occurring.

No employee will suffer retaliation for reporting or witnessing harassment or discrimination.

vii. Support for Victims of Gender-Based Violence

Objective: Provide appropriate support and workplace adjustments for employees affected by gender-based violence.

Offer workplace adjustments (e.g., leave, flexible hours, modified duties, remote work) for employees who are victims of gender-based violence, ensuring their privacy and dignity are respected.

Ensure that these adjustments do not impact career progression, performance evaluations, or job security.

Provide access to resources, such as counselling, legal support, and external services, to employees facing gender-based violence.

6. Monitoring & Evaluation

- A. Establish a Gender Equality Office responsible for overseeing the implementation of the plan.
- B. Collect and analyze data on gender representation, pay equity, promotions, and training participation.
- C. Conduct annual reviews of the Gender Equality Plan to assess its effectiveness and make necessary adjustments.
- D. Publish a semestral report on gender equality progress and share it with employees to maintain transparency.

7. Communication and Accountability

- A. Regularly communicate the importance of gender equality to all employees through internal newsletters, meetings, and events.
- B. Set clear accountability for managers and senior leaders to drive the goals of the Gender Equality Plan.
- C. Encourage feedback from employees to continuously improve gender equality practices.

8. Timeline and Milestones

Objective 1

Promote gender balance in all levels, particularly leadership

Month 1: Conduct baseline assessment of current gender representation in all levels. KPI: % of women, men, and non-binary employees in leadership positions.

Months 2–6: Implement unbiased recruitment and promotion procedures. KPI: Number of leadership roles filled through transparent, unbiased selection processes; % of gender-balanced shortlists.

End of Year 1: Review progress toward 40% representation target. KPI: % of women, men, non-binary in management; gap vs. 40% target.

End of Year 2: Mid-plan review and adjustments, including mentoring or development programs. KPI: % representation; number of interventions implemented.

End of Year 3: Achieve 40% representation target in management levels. KPI: % of each gender in leadership roles; % of promotions filled equitably.

*Starting in January 2026

Objective 2**Eliminate gender-based discrimination, harassment, and bias**

Month 3: Launch annual mandatory awareness and anti-bias training. KPI: % of employees completing training.

Month 3: Establish confidential reporting channels & grievance procedures. KPI: Number of reports received; % resolved within 10 working days.

Quarterly: Monitor and review incidents. KPI: Number of incidents reported; reduction vs previous quarter/year.

End of Year 1: Conduct employee survey on perceived fairness, safety, and inclusion. KPI: Survey scores on fairness, safety, and inclusion.

End of Year 2: Target 50% reduction in reported incidents. KPI: Number of incidents; % decrease vs baseline.

Objective 3**Provide equal opportunities for career advancement and professional development**

Month 2: Identify and communicate all training, mentoring, and leadership opportunities accessible to all employees. KPI: % of employees with access to development programs.

Months 3–6: Implement equal access to development programs for all employees. KPI: Participation rates in training, mentoring, or leadership programs by gender.

Quarterly: Monitor promotion and development outcomes. KPI: Promotion rates by gender; employee satisfaction scores related to career development.

End of Year 1 & Annually thereafter: Review progress to ensure 100% access target is met. KPI: % of employees of all genders accessing programs; % satisfaction with development opportunities.

Objective 4**Raise awareness and create a supportive work environment**

Month 3: Implement anonymous reporting system & support mechanisms.

KPI: Usage rate of reporting system; employee satisfaction with support.

Every 6 months: Conduct semi-annual inclusion and engagement survey. KPI: Survey scores on workplace inclusivity, engagement, and support.

Bi-annually: Deliver at least 2 mandatory awareness and inclusion sessions for all employees. KPI: Training completion rate by gender; session feedback scores.

Annual: Evaluate and adjust programs based on feedback and KPI results. KPI: Improvements in engagement and inclusivity scores.

Ongoing: Introduce initiatives to foster inclusion (events, mentoring, resource groups). KPI: Number of initiatives implemented; participation rates.

9. Conclusion

This Gender Equality Plan is a **commitment to creating a fair, equitable, and inclusive workplace** where all employees have equal opportunities to succeed. By implementing this plan and an ongoing monitor process, the organization will ensure that gender equality is embedded in its culture, operations, and decision-making processes.

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