



Gender Equality Plan
SIOS Knowledge Centre
2022-2026

19 August 2022

Revision history

Version	Date	Comment	Responsible
Vs 1	2022-08-19	Approved by SIOS Svalbard AS	C Hübner
Vs 0.1	2022-08-16	First draft	C Hübner

1. Introduction

Svalbard Integrated Arctic Earth Observing System (SIOS) is an international partnership of research institutions studying the environment and climate in and around Svalbard to develop an efficient observing system, share technology, experience and data, close knowledge gaps and decrease the environmental footprint of science.

SIOS is a distributed research infrastructure organised as consortium. The consortium consists of member institutions and its cooperation is based upon non-legally binding statutes and a MoU. Currently the number of SIOS partners amounts to 28 member institutions from 10 countries. The SIOS Knowledge Centre (SIOS-KC) is the central hub of SIOS and offers coordinated services for the international research community. SIOS-KC has currently six staff members employed at SIOS Svalbard AS, the legal entity of SIOS.

In 2021, the SIOS Board of Directors adopted a diversity statement, which states: «SIOS believes that a diverse and inclusive environment provides a variety of viewpoints and is a prerequisite to solving the grand societal challenges that SIOS aims to address. Personal identity should not be a barrier to one's full participation and success in science in general and SIOS activities in particular.».

It recognised that insufficient effort has been made to implement these values within SIOS-KC in the past (numbers are total % in each category):

- SIOS-KC staff (August 2022): 33% women
- The last 2 recruitment processes:
 - 37 % female applicants,
 - 38% females invited for a job interview
 - 33% female participants in the recruiting committee

In addition, SIOS-KC works with a large consortium and must continue to work to rectify the imbalance in gender composition within this work:

- August 2022 all leading positions in SIOS were filled with men (SIOS Director, Chair of SIOS Board of Directors, Chair of SIOS General Assembly, Steering board and General Assembly leader for SIOS Svalbard AS)
- SIOS working groups (August 2022):
 - Participants: 29 % women
 - Chairs/Vice-Chairs: 57 % women
- SIOS task forces (August 2022): 36 % female participants
- Beneficiaries of SIOS funding programmes
 - SESS report lead authors (issues 1-5): 30 % women
 - PIs in access programme (2017-2021): 45 % women
 - PIs in airborne campaigns (2020,2021): 33 % women
 - PIs in Data Curation Calls (2021, 2022): 20 % women

- Speakers in SIOS webinar series: 35 % women
- Speakers in remote sensing online conferences (2020, 2021): 35 % women
- SIOS workshops (2018-2022): 40 % female participants
- SIOS remote sensing training courses (2019-2022)
 - 37 % female participants
 - 21 % female teachers
- Early Career Researchers associated to SIOS (SESS report Editorial Board, Remote Sensing Working Group): 86 % women

The objective of this Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is to formalise and give continuity to already existing efforts in the SIOS-KC as well as plan and design new concrete efforts, resulting in a coherent plan with the goal to eliminate obstacles and biases that hamper equity, diversity and inclusion of SIOS-KC staff and all people in the SIOS community.

The time frame for this GEP is 4 years. The content will be adapted based on both internal and external experience and feedback, and as the implementation of actions advances.

This document has been approved by the board of SIOS Svalbard AS on the 19 August 2022, which also adapts to the document in its work.

2. Gender equality in recruitment, wages and work processes

Actions already in place

- Ensure that job advertisements are written in a language that does not implicitly favour candidates of any particular gender or ethnic background.
- Make special effort to encourage candidates of underrepresented genders to apply for vacant positions.
- Ensure qualified male and female candidates are interviewed for every position by committees with balanced composition.
- Ensure all new employees have equal access to necessary information and are introduced to work processes and conventions.
- Ensure that all employees have equal opportunities for job trainings to develop their skills and careers, independent of gender, ethnical or cultural background.

Actions to be implemented

- When recruiting a new employee always consult the GEP and implement the actions listed in the plan.
- Offer male and female contact persons in job announcements.
- Ensure the equality aspects are always taken into consideration when deciding on wages in order to avoid salary discrepancies due to gender or any other discriminatory aspects.

- Develop good statistical routines/Key Performance Indicators as bases for an annual assessment of procedures and practices to identify occurring gender biases and needs for additional actions to correct these biases.

Goals to achieve by 2026

- Monitor and implement full gender balance.
- Ensure that gender or ethnical background does not affect individuals' wages.
- Ensure that all staff have equal access to information regarding work and development.

3. Work-life balance, parenthood, and organisational culture

Actions already in place

- Employees have the possibility to work remotely when need arises.
- Flexible working hours following Norwegian regulations.
- Maternity and paternity leave following Norwegian regulations.
- Possibility to bring children to work for short periods.
- Equal opportunities and inclusion as a fundamental value of the organisational culture.
- Meetings are scheduled within working hours whenever possible¹ to ensure that parents do not need to make special arrangements.

Actions to be implemented

- Discuss roles and challenges with employees to avoid assumptions, support employees in their choices, if reasonable.
- Map competences, work aptitudes and wishes of the team in order to fully unleash the resources of the individuals and the team.
- Provide training to strengthen the gender culture in the team.
- Evaluate possibilities for Norwegian courses for non-Norwegian employees and work towards reliable availability of such courses in the local community.
- Evaluate further work-life facilitation for parents.
- Schedule external meetings in a way that avoids travel during weekends whenever possible.
- Ensure that also senior employees have equal possibilities to be recruited and develop themselves during their employment.
- Ensure that all employees regardless of life situation, gender, race, sexual orientation and otherwise, feel desired and appreciated for their work-place achievements.

Goals to achieve by 2026

- Develop a strong culture of equal opportunities and inclusion.

¹ SIOS has partners from Europe and Asia

- Prevent gender stereotypes and enhance diversity.
- Extend work-life balance opportunities.
- Improve protection of parenthood.

4. Training activities to promote gender equality

Actions already in place

- The SIOS diversity statement is openly available on the SIOS web portal and shared with new employees.

Actions to be implemented

- Provide regular and obligatory training with experts to enhance the awareness within the team, including themes like gender equity, gender identity issues, assumed gender roles, mobbing, and other discrimination.
- Collect feedback and input from the team to align future activities with the needs and feelings of the team.
- Integrate a gender equity and diversity perspective in communication and outreach.

Goals to achieve by 2026

- Increase the knowledge, awareness and sensitivity of the entire team concerning gender and diversity related topics.

5. Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Actions already in place

- SIOS-KC has a zero-tolerance policy towards harassment, intimidation, and discrimination. This is also reflected in the code of conduct for SIOS online meetings.
- SIOS-KC follows the [notification routines](#) of the University Centre in Svalbard which also provides a point of contact.

Actions to be implemented

- Establish disciplinary measures against gender-based violations.
- Evaluate the need of preventive actions against sexual harassment with special emphasis on the potential offender.
- Inform new employees about the Gender Equality Plan, the notification routines, and the zero-tolerance strategy concerning any violence.

Goals to achieve by 2026

- Maintain a work environment free from any gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

6. Implementation and resources

The SIOS Director has the responsibility to follow up this GEP and ensure that sufficient resources are dedicated to the task involving the entire staff of SIOS-KC. SIOS-KC has resources to organise relevant training and will additionally follow the measures implemented by its mother company, University Centre in Svalbard. In 2022 an evaluation will be made on how resources can be allocated to support the delivery of the plan in future annual budgets.