



**MEDICAL INSTITUTE**

FOR NUTRITION SCIENCE  
& TECHNOLOGY

·R·I·G·A·

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## **Section 1: Publication and Official Endorsement**

### *1.1 Organizational Objectives and Desired Outcome of the GEP*

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of the foundation "Medical Institute for Nutrition Science & Technology" (hereinafter – MINST) aims to ensure gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men to ensure an excellence-oriented science and strategic science communication and implementation into life innovations and technologies to improve people's health and wellbeing. The primary objectives of this plan are to eliminate gender-based disparities, promote diversity, and create an inclusive environment that enables all individuals to thrive irrespective of their sex/gender identity. By implementing the GEP, we aim to achieve the following outcomes:

- Eliminate gender-based pay gaps and ensure equal opportunities for career advancement and professional development.
- Encourage diversity and inclusion at all organizational levels, promoting representation of underrepresented genders in leadership positions and decision-making roles.
- Create a supportive and inclusive work environment that fosters gender equality, respects individual choices, and addresses any forms of gender-based discrimination or harassment.
- Enhance awareness and understanding of gender-related issues within MINST and the broader community, fostering a culture of empathy and mutual respect.
- Collaborate with external stakeholders to support and advocate for gender equality initiatives in the academic and professional spheres.

### *1.2 Relevant Baseline Data and Targets*

To effectively measure the progress and impact of our GEP, we have conducted an in-depth analysis of relevant baseline data pertaining to sex representation, pay discrepancies, and parental leave/absence days within MINST. The data gathered from various sources has allowed us to establish quantifiable targets that will guide our efforts towards gender equality. We are committed to periodically reviewing and updating these targets to ensure continuous improvement and compliance with emerging best practices in the field of gender equality. Further the aims and goals set in the GEP will be monitored and evaluated annually. Based on this evaluation, adaptations will be made to the GEP to ensure an adequate and realistic plan, which suits the according situation of MINST, can be implemented.

### *1.3 Details of the Actions and Resource Allocation*

The successful implementation of the GEP relies on the comprehensive actions undertaken by MINST. We have derived a series of targeted interventions that address specific gender-related challenges and opportunities. These actions encompass a wide range of initiatives, including but not limited to:

- Implementing gender-sensitive recruitment and promotion practices to ensure fair and unbiased selection processes.
- Establishing mentorship programs to support the career growth of individuals from underrepresented genders.
- Providing training and awareness programs for staff and associates to foster an inclusive and respectful environment.
- Conducting regular reviews of policies and procedures to identify and eliminate gender biases. Creating basic policies and procedures to ensure a fair and inclusive environment.
- Investing in initiatives that support work-life balance, family-friendly policies, and childcare facilities to promote equal participation of all genders.

In line with our commitment to gender equality, we allocate dedicated resources, both financial and human, to execute these actions effectively.

### *1.4 Compliance with General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)*

We recognize the importance of data privacy and protection. As such, all data collected and utilized in the formulation and implementation of our GEP are handled in strict accordance with the provisions of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Safeguarding the privacy and confidentiality of individuals is integral to our efforts to create a secure and trust-based environment for all stakeholders involved.

### *1.5 Signed and Endorsed by Senior Leadership*

The GEP has been formally reviewed, signed, and endorsed by the chairman of the board. This endorsement signifies the highest level of commitment from our leadership to promote and drive gender equality initiatives throughout the organization. The senior leadership's dedication to the cause reinforces our collective determination to effect lasting change and advance gender equality in all aspects of our institution's operations

and culture. MINST is eager to pursue gender equality and is dedicated to achieving the outlined objectives and targets set forth in this plan. We believe that by fostering an inclusive and equitable environment, we will not only strengthen our institution but also contribute positively to society at large. Our progress and updates on the GEP will be periodically reported, reflecting our commitment to transparency and accountability in this transformative journey.

## **Section 2: Dedicated Resources**

Effective implementation of the GEP requires the allocation of dedicated resources to facilitate and drive the desired changes. MINST acknowledges the importance of committing both staff and financial resources to ensure the successful execution of the GEP. The following subsections outline the type and volume of resources to be dedicated.

### *2.1 Dedicated Gender Equality Function*

To ensure focused efforts and sustained progress, MINST establishes a dedicated Gender Equality Function. This function will serve as the focal point for all gender-related initiatives and act as a central coordinating body for GEP implementation. The designated personnel within this function will be responsible for overseeing the strategic planning, execution, and monitoring of gender equality actions and programs.

Hereinafter called Gender Equality Officer (GE Officer), who will lead this function, possesses advanced experience in integration. The appointed GE Officer is member of the board, which will lead to a more effective implementation of the GEP, as this position is at the top level. This expertise will enable the officer to effectively analyze and address gender-related challenges within MINST and integrate a comprehensive approach to promoting gender equality.

### *2.2 Wider Staff Time - Gender Equality Officer*

Recognizing the significance of gender equality and the specialized attention it requires, MINST will appoint a GE Officer. This individual will be entrusted with spearheading gender-related initiatives, advocating for inclusivity, and ensuring the effective execution of the GEP. To foster effective collaboration and integration of gender perspectives, the GE Officer will conduct mandatory training sessions for all staff members every half year. These training sessions will serve to raise awareness, sensitize staff to gender-related

issues, and equip them with the knowledge and tools to actively support the GEP's objectives.

### *2.3 Gender Budgeting*

Gender budgeting is a crucial aspect of resource dedication to the GEP. We acknowledge the need to examine our institution's financial allocations and expenditures through a gender lens. Gender budgeting will involve assessing how budgetary decisions impact genders differently and ensuring that financial resources are directed towards initiatives that promote gender equality and inclusivity.

As part of the annual evaluation of the GEP, statistical data will be periodically collected and evaluated to measure progress and impact. This statistical evaluation will provide valuable insights into the effectiveness of gender budgeting and the allocation of financial resources towards gender equality initiatives.

Additionally, MINST will conduct a statistical evaluation and generate a report every half year to assess the progress and impact of the GEP. This evaluation will help in identifying areas that require further attention and improvement to achieve the set goals.

After the annual evaluation of the GEP, necessary adjustments will be made to the plan to ensure its continued alignment with organizational goals and increased effectiveness in promoting gender equality.

## **Section 3: Data Collection and Monitoring**

Data collection and monitoring are essential components of the GEP to assess the current situation, identify disparities, and measure progress towards gender equality. MINST is committed to collecting, analyzing, and publishing disaggregated data on the sex of personnel and researchers, according to sex and gender identity, as part of its efforts to promote gender equality. The following subsections detail the data collection and monitoring process.

### *3.1 Selecting Indicators for Data Collection*

The selection of indicators for data collection will be tailored to MINST's specific profile, responsibilities, and activities. These indicators will break down the data further to

explore differences between women and men based on individual roles and responsibilities within the organization. Both qualitative and quantitative indicators will be utilized to measure experiences and perceptions of gender equality in MINST comprehensively.

### *3.2 Collection of the Data*

The GE Officer, together with the board members, will be responsible for gathering the initial statistical data. This process will involve the collection of sex-disaggregated data on personnel and researchers based on sex and gender identity. Data will be obtained through appropriate channels, ensuring compliance with data protection regulations and confidentiality.

### *3.3 Analysis of the Data*

Following data collection, the GE Officer will carry out an initial analysis of the gathered data. This analysis will establish an understanding of key differences and gaps between women and men within the organization. Identifying areas of relative strengths and weaknesses will help guide the establishment of key priorities for the GEP and allow for adjustments as the situation evolves over time.

In Latvia, specific legislation on gender equality is not currently in place. However, MINST remains committed to promoting gender equality within the organization.

### *3.4 Publishing Data*

To foster transparency and accountability, data on gender equality will be published on MINST's website as a dedicated webpage as annexes to the GEP. By making this data accessible to all stakeholders and the public, MINST aims to communicate its commitment to gender equality and demonstrate progress over time.

### *3.5 Monitoring the Data on an Annual Basis*

MINST will undertake regular monitoring and reporting of the data collected on gender equality. Periodical and annual reporting will provide valuable insights into progress made against the aims and objectives of the GEP. The data and reports will serve as critical inputs for reviewing the effectiveness of the GEP and informing decision-making by the

leadership.

### **Analysis of the Initial Statistics 25.06.2023:**

Upon conducting the initial analysis, it has been observed that MINST is a small organization in which women are underrepresented, particularly in the research sector and decision-making levels. The administrative sector shows satisfactory representation of women, but there is room for improvement. MINST recognizes the need to target efforts toward improving the representation of women in decision-making roles within the research sector.

Efforts to address gender imbalances will involve training all levels of research personnel on recognizing and addressing gender equality issues, implementing gender-balanced recruitment practices, and establishing prerequisites for gender equality in research sector development. However, the current limitation of resources may impact the speed of implementing certain measures, such as creating guidelines or codes of conduct for gender-balanced recruitment.

As a new organization, MINST has an opportunity to proactively prepare for gender equality-friendly processes, including career development and parental leave policies, while ensuring equal opportunities for all genders.

An initial statistic can be found in Annex A of the GEP in which the institution establishes a baseline statistic according to the current situation and the perpetrating areas of interest.

The following policies will be discussed and implemented organically by the GE Officer during the evaluation period:

- Set-up and implementation of
- Codes of conduct for recruitment and promotion
- Parental leave policy
- Flexible working-time agreement
- Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment
- Incorporation of the gender dimensions

### **Section 4: Training**

Training plays a pivotal role in fostering a gender-inclusive and bias-free environment within



MINST. The GE Officer is actively planning and organizing a series of trainings for all employees, with a focus on raising awareness of gender equality issues and unconscious gender biases. The following subsections detail the training initiatives to be undertaken:

#### *4.1 Unconscious Bias Training for All Staff and Leaders*

Unconscious bias training sessions will provide comprehensive information about the current situation and present evaluations of gender equality within the organization. These sessions will address arising issues, including gender equality promotion within the hiring process, and increasing the representation of female leaders in the directors of departments and the scientific council. The effectiveness of these training sessions will be further enhanced by setting mid-to-long-term targets, which will be periodically revised based on progress reports.

##### *4.1.1 Transparent and Gender-Balanced Recruitment and Promotion*

The GE Officer will establish a code of conduct for recruitment and promotion that outlines measures and guidelines to ensure fair opportunities for all genders during the recruitment process. This proactive approach will help address any biases that may arise and foster a more inclusive and diverse workplace.

##### *4.1.2 Work-Life Balance Training*

Recognizing the importance of work-life balance for employees with caregiving responsibilities, MINST will develop specific strategies to support these individuals. Initiatives may include flexible working arrangements, parental leave policies, and other family-friendly measures.

##### *4.1.3 Leadership Development and Biases*

As a new organization, MINST conducted an initial analysis of the current situation and evaluated any biases that may hinder the perception of women as leaders. With evidence-driven insights, the institute will address these biases and work towards creating a more equitable and supportive leadership environment.

#### *4.2 Communications and Engagement Activities with All Staff*

MINST aims to involve all staff in activities that raise awareness of gender equality. Upon publication of the GEP, a public session will be held to present it to staff, with participation from all members of the institution. Additionally, ongoing communication efforts will be employed to regularly update employees on external events and relevant information related to gender equality.

#### *4.3 Gender Dimensions in Research Design Training*

The training sessions for researchers and academics will focus on integrating gender dimensions into research design. Specific topics and best practices will be covered to ensure gender-responsive research, which will contribute to gender equality advancements within the organization.

#### *4.4 Other Gender Equality Training*

Targeted training programs will address specific topics or target groups, derived from the statistical evaluation and reports. These programs may include face-to-face training events and staff induction programs.

### **Evaluation and Ongoing Review**

The GE Officer will implement key performance indicators (KPIs) to evaluate the effectiveness of the training initiatives and their impact on promoting gender equality within MINST. Regular reviews of the training sessions will be conducted to assess the results and identify areas for improvement.

### **Addressing the Underrepresentation of Women in Research**

MINST acknowledges that the underrepresentation of women in research is a global problem and is committed to considering required steps to ensure a more equal representation within

its own organization.

### **Training Timeline**

The training sessions will be conducted every half year, and each session will include a review of the previous training's outcomes. Evaluation will be an integral part of the training process, allowing MINST to measure the effectiveness of the training initiatives and gauge progress towards achieving gender equality goals.

### **Annex A**

Statistics

### **Annex B**

Initial analysis

### **Annex C**

Outline