

Goethe-Universität
Chancen =

POTENTIAL FOR BETTER RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA

MAIN FOCUS POINTS OF THE GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN

■ ■ ■ ● ● ● 2017-2022

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FOREWORD

Goethe University is characterized by a great diversity among its students and employees. To be effective and innovative in teaching and research, Goethe University works to provide the essential basis conditions in which the different personal potential of its members, their competencies, skills, commitment and creativity can develop and expand in a positive way. That requires sensitizing all university members with respect to their attitude towards differences, perceiving contrasting requirements and accepting them. Diversity-sensitive underlying conditions include opposing discrimination and supporting people exposed to discrimination in their struggle to overcome it.

For many years, Goethe University has been actively working to create a university culture based on equal opportunities and fairness. With its previous Plans for the Advancement of Women and its Diversity Concept passed in 2012, it has developed and implemented numerous measures promoting gender equality and diversity. In doing so, it has achieved a great deal: with regard to its Gender Equality & Diversity Policies, Goethe University has become a model for many other universities in Germany. Nevertheless, the glass is only half full: the pro-

portion of female Professors and women in leading research positions is only rising slowly, students and employees with disabilities are still unable to participate fully, an increase in racist discrimination is also detectable in the university, and "age" is an issue for researchers as well as for administrative staff – to name but a few areas with room for improvement.

In June 2016, Goethe University therefore decided to launch the campaign "Goethe University=OPPORTUNITY" as of 2017. The aim is to accelerate and expand its Gender Equality & Diversity Policies and increase sustainability. To this end, by using an inclusive approach, it has developed a comprehensive plan of action that will be implemented in the next six years. This brochure outlines the main focus points of Goethe-University's first Gender Equality & Diversity Action Plan, which will come into effect on January 1, 2017.

Enrico Schleiff, Vice President of Goethe University
Frankfurt am Main, September 2016



POTENTIAL FOR BETTER RESEARCH AND ACADEMIA

On the basis of its previous successes, Goethe University Frankfurt am Main is launching a new offensive in 2017 for the implementation of equal opportunity: Goethe University =OPPORTUNITY¹. With its first Gender Equality & Diversity Action Plan it is setting the course for the increased transformation of the university by firmly establishing Gender Equality & Diversity Policies as strategies for the development of the quality of teaching, research, and administration. Goethe University is thus the first German university to introduce a uniform equal opportunity strategy concept. The action plan, to be implemented by 2022, brings together all of the previous concepts² and initiatives associated with gender equality & diversity policies in an intersectional perspective.³ With the involvement of numerous actors, concrete measures were worked out in a participative process. They are geared to each other both in terms of content as well as processually and can therefore engender a great deal of self-assertion, multifaceted synergies, and a high degree of commitment and transparency for all members of the university.

Against the background of the social challenges that globalization and demographic change entail, Goethe University relies on the diversity of its members and the potentials associated with this diversity. All members of the university should experience appreciation and be able to study and work successfully, regardless of their social and ethnocultural background, their age, their sexual orientation and gender identity, their religion or worldview, or whether they have physical or mental limitations or are involved in the care of others. Goethe University assumes that a diversity-sensitive study and work environment has positive effects

¹ Goethe University Equal Opportunity.

² Plan for the Advancement of Women 2008–2014, equal opportunity concepts within the scope of the Federal-State Program for Women Professors I and II, as well as Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality of the German Research Foundation, the Diversity Concept 2011–2014, the Target Agreements for a Family-Friendly University 2015–2018.



on the satisfaction of all members of the university and their commitment to the institution. Only in this way can the potentials of all members of the university come into their own, and creativity and problem-solving skills be strengthened in all areas of the university. Gender equality and a supportive approach to heterogeneity will heighten equal opportunity and improve the quality of research and teaching.

As a research and educational institution in a region characterized by the internationality and diversity of its citizens, Goethe University considers itself responsible for being a pioneer and a source of ideas. It generates new knowledge about processes and mechanisms of social differentiation and inequality along the various categories of diversity, and attempts to make this knowledge productive for society. What can society, what can the university do so that its members are capable of developing their potentials to as great an extent as possible? How can discriminatory social structures be detected and counteracted without at the same time classifying individuals into groups and assigning them rigid identities?

Goethe University wants to convey a sense of respect for the dignity of others to its students and employees. Moreover, it wants to endow them with skills to challenge stereotypes, prejudices, and social inequality, to empower them in their examination of these, and to give them the means to deal appreciatively with heterogeneity.

The Gender Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2017–2022 is an instrument for achieving the objectives of equal opportunity and lived diversity.

³ The “intersectionality” approach was developed by the legal scholar Kimberl e Crenshaw. This concept, which can be situated between the disciplines of legal and social science, originated in Black Feminism and American Critical Race Theory of the 1980s and ‘90s. The intersectionality perspective focuses on the shared existence of an individual’s social attributes and the interconnection and overlapping of social inequalities. Often associated with this is the problem of multiple discrimination. As a fundamental aspect of the Goethe University’s Diversity Concept, intersectionality is understood as an approach for avoiding the strict classification of individuals based on static categories of identity.

OBJECTIVES

By launching its Goethe University "OPPORTUNITY" offensive, Goethe University wants to accelerate the transformation process that began with the Gender Equality & Diversity Policies towards becoming a gender- and diversity-friendly university at all levels. The overarching objectives are:

- Shape equitable organizational structures and processes: Change the structures and processes at the university in such a way that individuals have the same opportunities for admission and success, regardless of their social attributes.
- Change academic culture: Set up an organizational and academic culture that is sensitive to family-, gender-, and diversity-related issues.
- Develop potentials: Support students and employees in their development of existing potentials regardless of gender, social class, ethnicity, age, religion, etc., and the associated ascriptions.
- Reduce underrepresentation: Reduce underrepresentation, and in doing so further increase the share of women in top positions in research in particular.
- Work against discrimination: Counteract all forms of disadvantage and discrimination based on gender or other dimensions of diversity and their associated ascriptions.
- Promote gender- and diversity-related research: Promote gender- and diversity-related research and integrate it into teaching.
- Assure quality: Consistently assure and further develop the high quality of the university's equal opportunity and diversity policies through regular evaluations, scholarly reflection, and an exchange of good practice on an (inter) national level.



NEED FOR ACTION

In the area of gender equality & diversity policies, Goethe University is one of the most successful universities in Germany. This is testified by awards, the raising of third-party funds, and its active participation in networks.⁴ Some of its established gender equality and diversity measures have national model character. In the area of gender research, the university enjoys international recognition, in particular due to the Cornelia Goethe Center for Women's and Gender Studies (CGC), which has existed since 1997. Goethe University is moreover strong in the area of migration research.⁵ Nevertheless, as is the case for all other universities, there is still an enormous need for action in various areas. For example, the number of women in professorships and senior staff positions in research remains low. Furthermore, an actual transformation of academic and university structures and culture towards a lived awareness for issues related to equal opportunity, an improved work-life balance, and a productive, nondiscriminatory treatment of heterogeneity are only beginning to become apparent. By launching its Goethe University "OPPORTUNITY" offensive, based on its overarching objectives until 2022 Goethe University will consolidate its gender equality & diversity policies and intensify its efforts to implement them. The focus is on the structural and cultural transformation of the university. In doing so, it attempts to adopt an intersectional perspective—thus to focus on various dimensions of diversity simultaneously and to take into account their context-related links, mutual intensification, or their relativization. What is intended is to raise awareness for stereotyping and unequal treatment as well as the acknowledgement of changing, context-dependent affinities and self-determined

⁴Highest classification in "stage four" of the DFG's "Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality" in 2011 and 2013; certificate from the Beruf & Familie gGmbH every three years since 2005; successful involvement in the Federal-State Program for Women Professors I + II 2008 and 2013; "Total E-Quality Certificate" 2012 and 2015; member in, among others, the "Charta of Diversity," the "Bündnis für Familie" (Family Alliance), as well as the Best Practice Club "Familie in der Hochschule" (Family in Higher Education Institutions); spokesperson in numerous equality-political networks, such as, for example, Dual Career Netzwerk Deutschland, Netzwerk Gleichstellungscontrolling, Netzwerk Gender Consulting für Forschungsverbände.

⁵There are moreover various professorships whose object is the various dimensions of critical diversity research, such as inclusion or age.



identities. Within this framework, Goethe University is continuing many of its previous strategies and measures and at the same time setting new working priorities for the coming six years.

The focus of activity responds to specific expressions of need from members of the university that were gathered in workshops, elicited through surveys⁶, and were pointed out in discussions in committees. At the same time, they are also the result of transuniversity political emphases, which not lastly find expression in the approval of funding. Exemplary for this is the Federal-State Program for Women Professors II or the federal-state program "Starker Start ins Studium", which makes funding available for the improvement of students' situations in the initial phase of their studies.

Thus not all dimensions of diversity can currently be given the same amount of attention. The issues of gender equality, the inclusion of individuals with physical and mental limitations, as well as the intercultural opening of the university are more strongly addressed with courses of action. With respect to the dimension of "age," analyses and measures will be developed in the first three years of the action plan. Gender equality also includes the examination of the working situation of the larger-than-average group of female secretaries and clerks.

However, the majority of the measures in the action plan are not limited to individual dimensions of diversity. Rather, they are meant to contribute comprehensively to the creation of an environment in which all members of Goethe University can develop their capabilities without any ascriptions or obstructive structures. This is accounted for in particular by the priority "Nondiscriminatory University."

⁶Student survey 2013/14, graduate student survey 2014.

Nondiscriminatory University

The university has to—and wants to—actively confront the numerous opportunities as well as challenges associated with the growing heterogeneity of students and employees. Goethe University manifests as a social space that is not devoid of structural and individual discrimination along the various dimensions of diversity. Students experience discriminatory comments and behavior on the part of their fellow students, lecturers, and administrative employees. Students can also experience discrimination in everyday off-campus life: be it in their search for an apartment or a job, when dealing with officials and state institutions, in the transition from the university to a career, or in their leisure time. Employees can also be exposed to discrimination: be it during selection processes, by their superiors, other employees, or by students, for example in the social media. Besides discrimination based on sex or physical or mental limitations—there are already drop-in centers for both cases—problems associated with racist discrimination are currently being increasingly pointed out. Furthermore, for employees, the problem of age-related discrimination is gaining importance. This includes age limits for research funding as well as questions concerning health management or knowledge transfer.

Experiences of discrimination are often extremely taxing on students as well as employees. Only when protection against discrimination and support are experienced can the diversity of human life schemes and circumstances develop along with their positive potential for personal and social development. Unlike university staff, students are not protected by the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG). In order to protect and empower them, in the coming years Goethe




University will commit itself more than ever before to countering discrimination. Principle measures are:

- Establishment of an antidiscrimination center as a drop-in and clearing center for students, initially for three years
- Preparation of an antidiscrimination guideline for students and employees
- Preparation of a brochure on the drop-in centers and measures in the case of sexist discrimination and violence
- Range of supporting offers for students who have experienced discrimination, in particular racist and homophobic discrimination, such as, for example, empowerment offers⁷
- Preparation of an age antidiscrimination policy concept
- Examination of the visual language of the university's own media with respect to discriminatory content and preparation of an action guideline for one that is sensitive to gender- and diversity-related issues
- Preparation of a guideline for gender- and diversity-friendly language

Sustainable Implementation of Gender Equality

By integrating the Plan for the Advancement of Women according to Hessen's Equal Rights Act (HGIG) into the Gender Equality & Diversity Action Plan 2017–2022, special importance is placed on gender equality. At the same time, this accommodates the advanced policies that characterize the area of gender equality. With respect to gender relations, universities meanwhile have access to very differentiated data. These enable the respective honing of its planned measures, for example in connection with the issue of underrepresentation,

⁷ The "empowerment" of individuals means combining approaches to strengthen them with the goal of being able to independently articulate and shape their needs and interests. Conditions are to be created that give priority to individuals' strengths and promote self-determination.



which in view of other dimensions of diversity cannot yet take place in the same way.

Goethe University has undertaken numerous efforts in recent years to increase the share of female students, especially in mathematics, informatics, and the natural sciences and to win over and retain the well-qualified women for academics. Offers such as Girls' Day; advancing the careers of junior academics through specific mentoring, training, and coaching offers; family-supporting measures; as well as raising awareness among teachers for gender and diversity aspects is good practice. Yet the dropout rate for women is still high, in particular in the postdoctoral phase.

Besides the development of sustainable equality governance, key measures in this working priority therefore make reference to the advancement of women in managerial positions in academics and research as well as to the further increase of the share of women in those areas in which they are underrepresented:

- Career advancement of female academics on the path to professorships and in managerial positions in research
- Increase in the share of appointed women professors
- Increase in measures to support families
- Further increase of the share of women in mathematics, informatics, and natural sciences
- Raising awareness among professors and other senior staff in particular for gender and diversity aspects

A further focus is placed on the improvement of the working situation of the predominantly female administrative employees, in particular administrative assis-



tants and clerks. Their commitment is important for an efficient and competitive university, as is their level of satisfaction—they are the ones that often compensate for a lack of resources through their extraordinary efforts. Goethe University is therefore continuously working on increasing its attraction as an employer and giving its employees the opportunity to identify with the university and its functions. Equal opportunity, a climate of mutual respect and appreciation, family awareness, and good health management are important factors for job satisfaction. Goethe University wants to increase its efforts in order to further accommodate the needs of its employees.

These include measures such as:

- The appreciation of the qualifications of administrative-technical employees will be actively strengthened by means of various approaches, such as, for example, better communication and framework conditions for the transfer of knowledge.
- Certified modules will be developed for the continued and advanced qualification of administrative-technical employees—in particular for secretaries and assistants.
- A network of administrative-technical employees, above all in the secretarial and clerk areas, will be prepared with professional support through staff development.
- A health management scheme will be put in place for employees.



Intercultural Opening

Globalization is being accompanied by a rise in the share of individuals with migration experience. In Hessen, 28% of the population has a migration background; in Frankfurt it is even 50%. In universities, however, individuals with a migration background, in particular persons of color, are underrepresented.⁸ Goethe University therefore wants to actively win over high-school students with a migration background for a course of study, develop their potentials at the university, and offer them the preconditions for academic success, possibly even a subsequent career as an academic. At the same time, Goethe University is aware of the heterogeneity of this target group and their needs.

Not only international students and academics but also highly qualified refugees will be more systematically supported and advanced in their course of study and their work at the university. This will enable them to fully contribute their capabilities at Goethe University.

Measures include:

- Goethe University will develop a concept for the purpose of integrating diversity aspects into the university's high-school student projects.
- The advancement of students with heterogeneous educational and language acquisition biographies will be expanded and embedded, e.g., in the Writing Center and in the International Study Center.

⁸ There is already underrepresentation in the earning of university entrance qualifications.



- A course of training will be developed for academics and administrative-technical employees with counseling functions in order to raise their awareness for diversity and the communication of intercultural skills.
- The intercultural and diversity skills of students—especially teacher trainees—will be strengthened.
- The Academy for Educational Research and Teacher Training (ABL) offers diversity-sensitive counseling for teacher trainees, into which the previous counseling services will be integrated.
- Dual Career Services will be extended to include international PostDocs.
- The Goethe University’s program for refugees will be extended.

Inclusive University

In accordance with the United Nation’s Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, Goethe University will continue to extend the support of students and employees with physical and mental limitations. To this end, in the coming three years it will develop an action plan on the basis of an evaluation that above all reflects the situation(s) of students with disabilities. It will be managed by the AG Inklusion (Inclusion Working Group),⁹ initiated in 2015, in which all of those within the central administration participate who are responsible for the subject matter.

This decision is based on the project “Inclusive Universities” funded by the Hesse State Ministry of Higher Education, Research and the Arts (HMWK). Various

⁹Goethe University uses a very strict definition of inclusion that focuses on opportunities for participation for individuals with impairments.



studies have shown that among students, the share of persons with disabilities is high, and the range of limitations is wide. Thus, there is a major need for action, whereby it is important to take into account that this is not a homogenous group. The obstacles that can lead to withdrawal are also diverse: accessibility can apply to rooms, time structures, materials, or the way in which teaching content is communicated. Another key aspect is how sensitive all members of the university are for the subject. This applies in particular for the group of teachers that have to be able to accommodate the very different needs of their students.

The planned measures include:

- Preparation of an inclusion action plan for the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
- Expansion of information management (e.g., central accessible online platform with drop-in centers and accessibility on the campus).
- Revision of the Study Service Center's study guide for students with disabilities.
- Information about building accessibility at Goethe University will be assembled in an "Accessible Site Map."
- The IT support of students with various forms of impairments will be improved.
- Training sessions will be offered for raising the awareness of members of the university for an accessible, inclusive university, and public relations on the subject will be intensified.

IMPRINT

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Theodor-W.-Adorno-Platz 1, 60323 Frankfurt am Main, Germany

Editing: Dr Anja Wolde
Graphics and Layout: Grübelfabrik e.K., Anja Feix
Print: Buch- und Offsetdruckerei Häuser KG

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