

## **IHE Delft diversity and inclusion plan**

### Introduction

IHE Delft Institute for Water Education envisions a world in which people manage their environmental resources, especially water, sustainably and equitably. To support this vision and overcome the most pressing challenges, IHE Delft strongly believes that a wide range of knowledge, skills and experiences are needed. For this reason, we closely collaborate with water sector organizations in low- and middle-income countries, as well as actively encourage and support diversity among its staffing. To further this, the Institute finds it important to take an intersectional approach to encourage diversity in various forms, including gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and differently abled individuals. IHE Delft realizes that diverse staffing also requires careful guidance to nurture an inclusive working culture within the organization, in which everyone feels safe and supported. For this purpose, the Institute has guidelines and procedures in place to operationalize and monitor its ambitions relating to diversity and inclusion.

Moreover, IHE Delft recently established a task-force to further this agenda and to position the Institute as an equitable and inclusive organization. This task-force is currently developing a detailed strategic plan to identify concrete, progressive actions to further improve the diversity among staff and the working culture within the organization. This document provides an overview of the procedures and measures already in place, as well as outlines the preliminary priorities identified for the coming years.

### Specific areas of attention

As ample of studies have shown, diversity is important for any organization to function well. To achieve diversity, it is crucial to analyze and contextualize which groups are underrepresented in a particular organization and sector at large. When it comes to the water and development sector, two specific processes of potential exclusion deserve special attention.

Traditionally, the water sector throughout the world has been dominated by men. Despite an increased number of women graduating in engineering and natural sciences, and a growing understanding of the relevance social sciences hold in addressing water challenges, little progress has been made in achieving gender balance in water sector organizations. Besides adversely affecting the careers of female professionals, it also casts a huge shadow on the perspectives and needs of women, which, we believe, are crucial in tackling water-related challenges.

Development-oriented organizations are largely led and staffed by people originating from high-income countries, even though they aim to solve development-related challenges in low- and middle-income countries. Such organizations then, unintentionally, prolong colonial legacies and often lack the knowledge and expertise that is crucial in contextualizing issues and finding meaningful solutions. Moreover, it contributes to wider inequities in job opportunities based on race and ethnicity.

Also at IHE Delft, women and people-of-color are currently still underrepresented, both in terms of overall numbers and in managerial and leadership positions. The Institute realizes that diversity does not come by itself, but rather needs active encouragement and support. Therefore, we would like to invest particularly in recruiting, retaining and supporting the careers of women and people-of-color professionals through progressive, affirmative measures in the coming years. By welcoming and providing opportunities for women and people-of-color, the Institute enriches its knowledge base as well as directly contributes to redressing wider structural inequities.

## Compliance with donor requirements: gender equality

IHE Delft is largely dependent on public funding and funding from donor organizations. For this reason, it is crucial for the organization to collaborate and comply with the requirements set by these funding organizations, including those related to diversity and inclusion.

Among others, the Institute fully supports the European Commission gender equality ambitions and, in this context, has taken the necessary measures to meet the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) eligibility criterion for Horizon Europe funding.

The Institute will kick off a broader Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) program that all elements of a GEP will be an integral part of. IHE Delft has developed a strategy and measures to address the EC four mandatory process-related requirements, which will further strengthen and promote gender equality at the Institute. Some, such as training opportunities, raising awareness on gender equality and equity, and specifying targets and deadlines and policy measures to ensure inclusive recruitment and career development, will be developed further in 2022. This process will also actively introduce and/or build on existing processes related to the five recommended thematic areas: work-life balance and organizational culture, gender balance in leadership and decision-making, gender equality in recruitment and career progression, integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content and measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

In this document, we will outline the measures, activities and policies that have been and will be developed in the near future specifically addressing the promotion and strengthening of gender equality at IHE Delft. These steps are just one part of a larger review of gender and diversity/inclusion of the D&I program that will continue in 2022-2023, which will address these issues at a more structural level.

### **Dedicated Resources**

The HR department has included gender equality as a priority for 2022 as part of the D&I program and budgeted time for this. Thanks to the Policy Officer on Diversity and Inclusiveness and the members of the Diversity & Inclusion task-force, the GEP will be further developed and implemented within this framework. Selected staff will work on topics such as recruitment & selection, career perspectives and policies to improve the inclusion of women throughout all layers of the Institute. Activities will include raising awareness and sharing knowledge on diversity and inclusion, and to create networks and communities specifically for women at the Institute.

### **Data collection and monitoring**

The Institute collects and monitors gender related data on personnel and students on a quarterly basis and will start annual reporting based on disaggregated data and indicators in 2022. The Managing Board uses this data to have meetings with managers of departments and support units to make agreements, set goals and monitor targets. In 2022, a D&I monitoring, evaluation and learning plan will be developed in which these data will be shared.

### **Training**

IHE Delft strives to be a gender-balanced institution, where its staff members have equal access to participation in leadership and other decision-making roles, irrelevant of their sex. Establishing gender quotas and targeted gender training will contribute to a gender balance.

In 2022, we will offer training opportunities to raise awareness on gender equality and unconscious biases (e.g. during recruitment & selection processes) for all staff. In the coming two years we will

continue to develop and offer trainings that give tools and skills on how to avoid/diminish the biases in regular work processes, including inclusive leadership, inclusive communication and active bystander.

The Rectorate has approved a budget of €15,000 for 2022 to plan trainings and hire external expertise on diversity and gender equality.

### **Work-life balance and organizational culture**

IHE Delft is aware that organizational culture and work-life balance are key components for establishing an environment where both men and women can thrive and have equal opportunities in building a fulfilling career. Organizational culture and work-life balance are broad thematic areas that covers issues such as:

1. Gender-sensitive communication;
2. Childcare provisions;
3. Maternity/paternity/parental leave provisions.

The Institute offers measures (mentioned below) and is formulating targets on several topics, including a healthy work-life balance. We already offer regulations to work remotely (from home or, especially for employees with family abroad; working from abroad) and a company fitness program.

In combination with another priority for 2022: workload and work-related stress, we will provide further measures and share additional knowledge with staff on, for example stress management and time management. These measures can contribute to a healthy work-life balance.

The right to maternity leave applies both before and after childbirth; a pregnant employee is entitled to 16 weeks of leave. Within certain limits, a pregnant employee can determine how many weeks of leave she will take before and after childbirth. Following the birth of a child, a partner is entitled to paid birth leave equal to the number of hours worked in one week. Said partner is also entitled to five weeks of (partially paid) additional birth leave to be taken within six months after childbirth. Both parents are entitled to 26 weeks of parental leave, of which 13 weeks will be partially paid, and 13 weeks will be unpaid.

Employees are eligible for care leave if they have a partner, a parent or child who is ill and requires them to provide care or home care. Care leave is also possible for brothers, sisters, grandparents, grandchildren, household members and acquaintances. During the Coronavirus crisis, the Institute provided so-called "Corona Leave Childcare", to assist staff with school children to balance work and home care/schooling duties by allowing them to take paid time off to care for their children who were unable to attend school or day care.

### **Gender equality in recruitment and career development**

At IHE Delft, we find it important that our environment is free of gender bias. This is why we take several measures to ensure gender equality in the recruitment process and during career development. In 2022, we will train HR staff and managers of departments and support units on inclusive recruitment and career development.

The Institute requires gender equality in recruitment and career development, and it monitors statistics throughout the Institute. In January 2022, 48% of our total staff and 36% of our academic staff were women. In that month, there were 29% female Associate Professors and 23% female Professors at IHE Delft.

The Institute aims to eventually have 50% female Associate Professors and Professors. In the next strategic plan period, we aim at 50% female Associate Professors and Professors in all our upcoming vacant positions. This should result at the end of the next strategic plan period, ultimo 2028, in target figures for IHE Delft to employ 40% female Associate Professors and 35% female Professors.

The Institute currently employs 22% female managers. The aim is to eventually have 50% women in management positions. At the end of the next strategic plan period, ultimo 2028, the target figure for the Institute is to have 40% women in management positions. This percentage is based on achieving a good representation of the current (February 2022) number of women at IHE Delft.

### **Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content**

IHE Delft strives to be a socially responsible institution that successfully integrates and proliferates gender conscious research and education.

We will integrate the gender dimension into research and teaching content through the implementation of a D&I monitor, evaluation and a learning plan as well as utilizing a proposal on inclusive education. We will structurally monitor diversity (especially the male/female ratio) in grant applications.

### **Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment**

At IHE Delft, gender-based violence is not tolerated. We have developed several measures to eliminate gender-based violence (including sexual harassment) within our community. As part of our Code of Conduct, we have a regulation on Undesirable Behavior which defines sexual harassment and gender-based discrimination as unacceptable. We also have confidentiality counselors for staff and students, and will install an Ombudsperson early in 2022.

### **Public document**

This is the [link](#) to a letter by the Managing Board of IHE Delft in which they support and commit to these goals and proposed measures supporting the implementation of this diversity and inclusion plan, including specific efforts outlined above promoting and strengthening of gender equality at the Institute.