University of Zurich UZH

Implementation Plan for the UZH Diversity Policy: Promoting, Practicing, and Benefiting from Diversity

Enacted on 13 August 2019 by the Executive Board of the University by means of ULB 2019-350.

1 Background

The "Diversity Policy: Promoting, Practicing, and Benefiting from Diversity" entered into force on 1 September 2018 as a central steering instrument at UZH. The policy formalizes UZH's commitment to actively and systematically promoting diversity and preventing discrimination. The University thus recognizes diversity as a basic principle for fostering a respectful and inclusive environment for all its members, not only in research, teaching and learning, but also in the organization of its academic units and administrative bodies. Diversity is considered key in attaining excellence.

Via its decision (ULB 2018-110) of 13 March 2018, the Executive Board of the University mandated the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity to develop an implementation plan for the Diversity Policy that takes the work of existing offices and expert reports into account. This implementation plan fulfills that mandate.

2 Diversity as a University-Wide Responsibility: Opportunities and Benefits

Through its Diversity Policy, UZH anchors and communicates its commitment to fostering diversity as a core value. UZH's Diversity Policy is a steering instrument that aims to systematically strengthen the strategic relevance of diversity and inclusion throughout the university. Such efforts are aligned with the relevant legal bases (for example, the University Act, University Statutes, Employment Ordinance of UZH) and UZH strategies and policies (e.g. Strategic Principles, Internationalization Strategy, Leadership and Management Principles, Gender Policy Code of Conduct, Sustainability Policy).

The topic of diversity brings with it a collective responsibility that applies to all areas and members of the UZH community. In recent years, numerous measures have been developed at UZH that address various aspects of diversity such as age, disability, gender, gender identity, nationality, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, social or occupational position and language.[1]

UZH has also anchored diversity as a university-wide commitment on an organizational level: On 1 August 2018, UZH established the position of Vice President of the University, who is responsible for the following areas: Evaluation, quality management in teaching and learning, accreditation, gender equality and diversity, and sustainability. Furthermore, on 1 February 2019, the mandate of the Office for Gender Equality was expanded to encompass matters of gender identity and sexual orientation. The office was thus renamed the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity.

By means of decision ULB 2018-110, the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity has been instructed by the Executive Board of the University to assume the necessary coordination and outreach tasks related to the Diversity Policy and the accompanying Implementation Plan.

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[1] Cf. appendix 1 (Diversity@UZH_2019). (Please note: All appendices are available in German only.)

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Promoting, Practicing, and Benefiting from Diversity
Central and De-Central Measures for Implementing the Diversity Policy

3 Central and De-Central Measures for Implementing the Diversity Policy

In developing this implementation plan, the participation of a range of UZH units and members was a key priority. To this end, the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity, in conjunction with the Diversity Policy Steering Group, carried out two participation workshops.[2] In a broad, participative process, the workshop participants identified needs and developed initial measures; these reflect and address the situation as it stood in the spring of 2019.

This implementation plan distinguishes between *central measures* and *de-central measures*:
- ***Central measures*** are measures that have a direct coordinative function in the implementation of the Diversity Policy. They are initiated and coordinated by the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity, which bears overall responsibility for the measures. In part, this work is carried out with the Diversity Policy Steering Group and other relevant UZH units. The central measures are described in points 3.1 to 3.3 of this implementation plan.
- ***De-central measures***[3] are measures that are planned and implemented by other UZH units; these units bear direct responsibility for the measures. The de-central measures were developed, discussed and selected on the basis of the needs identified in a non-representative survey at the workshops with the participating UZH units. The list of needs[4] is UZH specific and identifies areas that require action. The de-central measures illustrate that diversity is indeed a university-wide obligation that affects all units and members of UZH. Throughout the participation workshops, the first opportunities for cooperating on the realization of de-central measures were identified.

The central and de-central measures target the following *goals*:
- To establish suitable structures and processes for implementing the Diversity Policy in line with other strategic documents and processes at UZH;
- To effectively link already existing services and de-central diversity measures in order to benefit from synergies;
- To develop university-wide expertise and opportunities for action on diversity issues; and
- To foster a cultural change toward better promotion of UZH as a diversity-friendly organization.

It is already clear that UZH will have to regularly re-examine and re-align its diversity measures in order to stay abreast of scholarly and societal developments.

The following section lists **coordinative central measures** for implementing the UZH Diversity Policy. They are applicable at both a strategic and operative level.
The measures cover the *three key areas* of "Coordinating and Collaborating" (3.1), "Advising and Informing" (3.2) and "Raising Awareness and Sharing Know-How."

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[2] Appendix 2 (participation workshops) lists the participating UZH units.

[3] Appendix 2 (participation workshops) lists the de-central measures, i.e. measures planned and implemented by individual UZH units (as at July 2019).

[4] Appendix 3 (needs) provides a list of needs broken down into the areas of learning, teaching, research, further education, governance and administration/operations. The identified needs in the six different areas are presented in conjunction with the relevant de-central measures outlined in appendix 2 (participation workshops).

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3.1 Coordinating and Collaborating

3.1.1 Ongoing Mandate and Coordination of the Diversity Policy Steering Group

The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity bears overall responsibility for managing processes related to the implementation of the Diversity Policy. As such, it is responsible for coordinating the activities of the Diversity Policy Steering Group in regard to strategy, content and schedule. The Office will examine whether the Steering Group should be expanded to include other units that are of strategic and operational significance.

3.1.2 Establishment and Coordination of a Network for "Diversity at UZH"

The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity will establish a network for "Diversity at UZH" and be responsible for planning, organizing and running its meetings. Such events serve not only to bring together the various agents of diversity at UZH, but also to present the ongoing diversity projects to the broader UZH community, to regularly explore aspects of diversity in more detail, and to stay abreast of diversity needs among the UZH community.[5] The network events are scheduled to take place once per semester; all members of the UZH community are welcome to attend. Where appropriate, the events can take place in conjunction with the meetings or events of other networks.

3.1.3 Regular Exchange with the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity regarding UZH Strategy and Management

The Vice President meets regularly with the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity to discuss developments in the management and strategy of UZH. The Office for Gender Equality ensures that the results of these exchanges are reflected in the work of the Diversity Policy Steering Group and regularly updates the Vice President on developments in the implementation of the Diversity Policy. The Vice President regularly updates the Executive Board of the University and the Extended Executive Board of the University on current developments in the implementation of the Diversity Policy and identifies needs and concerns raised by those bodies. The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity and the Diversity Policy Steering Group ensure that such needs are taken into account in the ongoing implementation of the Diversity Policy.

3.1.4 Consultation with Faculties and Committees

Successful implementation of the Diversity Policy necessitates the active involvement of the faculties and committees. To this end, the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity maintains active dialogue with the Deans of all faculties and with the relevant UZH committees. The members of the Diversity Policy Steering Group regularly update the committees in which they are active about developments in the implementation of the Diversity Policy; they also identify relevant needs raised by the committees. UZH committees and UZH units may invite members of the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity and of the Diversity Policy Steering Group to report on current diversity developments.

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[5] For example, via presentations from experts, workshops, or other participative events.

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3.2 Advising and Informing

3.2.1 Consultation and Information on Diversity

The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity supports other UZH units to develop and implement de-central measures that foster diversity. It thus advises faculties, committees, institutes and offices on operative matters as well as on strategy and process development.

To further strengthen UZH's advisory services in relation to diversity matters, the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity and the Diversity Policy Steering Group recommend going through a step-by-step assessment of the following possibilities with the relevant units:

– Expansion of the existing services at the various advisory centers to address diversity as a relevant factor, i.e. in particular regarding forms of discrimination that might be related to aspects of identity listed in the Diversity Policy, and provision of visible communication about such services;[6]

– Optimization of networking and collaboration, and clear definition of roles and responsibilities between the various already existing advisory centers in addressing cases of intersectional or single-dimension discrimination;

– Expansion of advisory services to include a contact point for UZH employees with a disability or a physical or mental impairment and clarification as to where such a service should be established;

– Establishment of a contact point within the relevant units for students affected by discrimination and clear communication that such a service exists; and

– Provision of transparent information on discrimination complaint procedures[7] (e.g. online provision of clearly defined processes and procedural steps in the event of discrimination).

3.2.2 UZH Community Information and the Development of Needs-Based Measures Addressing Issues of Gender Identity and Sexual Orientation

In accordance with its service mandate (ULB 2019-38), the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity informs the UZH community about the relevance of gender identity and sexual orientation as diversity issues in every-day work and study at the university. As the need arises, the Office develops (independently or in cooperation with other UZH units) suitable measures for raising awareness of these issues and their relevance to the University's core areas of teaching, learning and research. In addition, the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity offers support for administrative units and managers upon request. The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity works with external advisory centers on issues related to gender identity and sexual orientation when appropriate and beneficial. The Office networks within Switzerland and abroad in order to keep abreast of developments in knowledge and expertise.

3.2.3 Information Material on the Diversity Policy and Its Implementation Plan

In cooperation with the Diversity Policy Steering Group, the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity provides UZH units and members with supporting materials on the Diversity Policy and its implementation plan (e.g. PPT slides, diversity video, etc.). These materials can be requested from the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity; their contents are context-sensitive and updated at regular intervals.

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[6] Good examples are seen on the platform "health@uzh" and the "family at UZH" portal, https://www.health.uzh.ch/en.html and https://www.families.uzh.ch/en.htm.

[7] This is already required by some international partners for international cooperation programs and student exchanges.

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Reporting on the Implementation of the Diversity Policy

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3.2.4 Language Policy Measures at UZH

The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity and the Diversity Policy Steering Group support measures to implement the language policy of UZH. Multilingualism (at a minimum German and English) is a component of non-discriminatory communication and a prerequisite for enabling non-discriminatory access to information within an international institution such as UZH. The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity and the Diversity Policy Steering Group recommend undertaking an evaluation of whether and in which areas translations (e.g. guidelines, forms, etc.) could be beneficial.

3.3 Raising Awareness and Sharing Know-How

3.3.1 Awareness-Raising Services Offered by the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity

The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity provides services for UZH units to raise awareness of issues such as gender equality, diversity, gender-neutral and inclusive language, and unconscious/implicit biases. Such needs-based services, which may include input suggestions, lectures, courses, training sessions or workshops, are run by the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity independently or in cooperation with other UZH units. They may lead to the development of new, de-central diversity measures. In commitment to excellence, the employees of the Office for Gender Equality and Diversity foster exchange with national and international counterparts and are willing to continually further their education and share their expertise (e.g. in the form of publications) with the UZH community and other relevant parties.

4 Reporting on the Implementation of the Diversity Policy

The Office for Gender Equality and Diversity prepares regular reports on the implementation of the Diversity Policy. In doing so, it works together with other relevant units and committees, in particular those that are represented in the Diversity Policy Steering Group or that are leading de-central measures to promote diversity.

Each report includes recommendations on the development of new measures (where appropriate) that reflect the current needs of UZH and support the ongoing implementation of the Diversity Policy. Such developments focus on the strategic and operative measures addressing issues listed in the Diversity Policy on the one hand, and the intersectional measures and university-wide responsibilities at UZH on the other. In developing new measures, current findings such as those from the employee survey (June 2019) should be taken into account. The aim of such efforts is to ensure that the identified needs are current and thus to develop measures appropriate to the ongoing implementation of the Diversity Policy.

The report is prepared every three years and is submitted to the Executive Board of the University for approval. An interim report will be submitted to the Executive Board of the University 18 months after the implementation plan enters into force.

5 Financial Resources

Funding for de-central measures to promote diversity is to be applied for according to the usual UZH processes by the UZH unit responsible for carrying out the relevant measure. The Diversity Policy Steering Group may support applications upon request by the relevant unit if the documents are presented for assessment in advance.

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Implementation Support by the Communications Office

University of Zurich, Office for Gender Equality and Diversity

6 Implementation Support by the Communications Office

The Communications Office supports the long-term implementation of the Diversity Policy by providing ongoing communication services. It regularly publicizes activities promoting diversity at UZH[8] and fosters a communication style within the University that is diversity-friendly and inclusive. In particular, the Communications Office counters the perpetuation of stereotypes in its use of language and visual images in UZH media and ensures that all UZH members have barrier- and discrimination-free access to information.

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[8] E.g. via media reports on research fields and findings, relevant persons, offices and departments, and events.