



Gender Equality Plan

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1. Introduction and Commitment

The Anticancer Fund is an international non-profit under Belgian law, and has established its headquarters (HQ) in Meise, Belgium. The ACF aims to impact the lives of cancer patients, on the long term by supporting non-commercial research and on the short term by providing information on treatment options to patients and healthcare professionals.

The Anticancer Fund is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable, and inclusive workplace where all employees, regardless of gender, can thrive. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) aligns with the Horizon Europe guidelines and reflects our dedication to embedding gender equality in all aspects of our operations, from research and governance to organizational culture.

Everybody, regardless of gender, gender identity, nationality, ethnical background, religious or political convictions, age and position must be able to flourish and develop. In all, the ACF wishes to build a culture where people feel they can bring their whole selves to work.

2. Objectives

2.1. Recruitment and Career Progression

The recruitment process at the Anticancer Fund is gender neutral. All vacancies are open to all genders. Hiring is based upon competencies needed for the job function, not on gender or race.

Job descriptions and advertisements use inclusive language, and are focused on the desired qualifications, skills and knowledge.

Staff is encouraged to develop their skills and expertise. For soft skills, all staff members are informed yearly about the new program of FeBi.

FeBi is a platform that offers free trainings to all employees of PC337 and all staff allowed to follow trainings according to their needs. In consultation with the line manager, everyone can also follow technical trainings or attend conferences.

2.2. Leadership and Decision-Making

The Anticancer Fund strives for gender parity in decision-making bodies and leadership positions. The director's committee currently consist of two men and two women and also the Board had a representation of 2 women out of 6.

2.3. Work-Life Balance and Organizational Culture

At the Anticancer Fund, we prioritize a healthy balance between work and personal life. Our organizational culture reflects this commitment through the following measures:

- **Telework and Leave Options:** Staff members can telework up to 60% of their working time. They can also benefit from all types of temporary leave as provided by Belgian or Flemish government regulations. Additionally, contractual adjustments to alternative work schedules, such as part-time work, are supported upon request.
- **Flexible Working Hours:** Staff are encouraged to structure their working hours flexibly to avoid traffic congestion or accommodate personal appointments during the day.



- **Overtime Management:** Overtime is not encouraged. If work outside regular hours is necessary, it must be discussed and agreed upon in advance with the line manager. Approved overtime, in line with Belgian legal requirements, is compensated with rest time.
- **Right to Disconnect:** Recognizing the importance of disconnecting from work, ACF adheres to articles 15 to 17/1 of the Belgian Law of 26 March 2018 on strengthening economic growth and social cohesion. Employees are not penalized for not responding to work-related communications outside normal working hours. Staff are offered trainings on the responsible use of digital tools to mitigate risks such as stress and burnout via the FeBi platform.
- **Support for Pregnant Staff Members:** In compliance with Belgian law, pregnant employees are protected against dismissal, exempted from hazardous tasks, and may be restricted from overtime or night work under certain conditions. They are entitled to paid absence for prenatal medical appointments that cannot be scheduled outside working hours. Additionally, all employees benefit from free hospitalization insurance, which covers costs related to childbirth and other medical needs.
- **Holidays and Absences:**
 - Staff members are free to schedule their paid holidays while ensuring continuity for critical tasks.
 - Unpaid leave can be requested for compelling social, family, or personal reasons, for up to 10 days, as outlined in CLA No. 45 of 19 December 1989.
 - Beyond statutory holidays, ACF offers extra holidays, including seniority leave, moving leave, medical appointment leave, conventional holidays, and two additional annual bridge days.

2.4. Equal Pay

In Belgium, the text of Collective Labour Agreement No. 25 of 15 October 1975, offers guidance on equal pay for all genders. Equality of remuneration entails that, for equal work or for work of equal value, all gender-based distinctions be abolished. The ACF has a strong compensation policy, which covers all aspects of remuneration and is based entirely on non-discriminatory, fairness principles. The ACF offers the same compensation package (meal vouchers, eco-cheques, pension plan,...) to all staff members at a certain level. The ACF provides equitable and consistent remuneration to staff members in accordance with their assigned duties and responsibilities

2.5. Prevention of Sexual Harassment and Discrimination

- The ACF has a zero-tolerance policy for sexual harassment and discrimination.
- The Belgian Constitution guarantees the exercise of the rights and freedom of all citizens without any discrimination. This also covers the rights and freedoms of the ideological and philosophical minorities. The following are the main three Acts that contain anti-discrimination provisions that apply within the workplace in Belgium: ➤ General anti-discrimination Act of 10 May 2007 (“the General Act”) ➤ Act of 10 May 2007 on discrimination between men and women (“the Gender Act”) ➤ Act of 30 July 1981 (adapted by Act of 10 May 2007) on punishing certain actions characterised by racist or xenophobic motives. (“The Racism Act”) In addition, staff members are protected against discrimination based on their current or future health status under Collective Bargaining Agreement No. 95 regarding equal treatment during all phases of the employment relationship. In line with the above Belgian laws, the ACF undertakes to refrain from any possible form of discrimination (for example, but not limited to, the basis of sex, age, disability, religion, race, or ethnic origin), both direct and indirect.

2.6. Gender in Research and Advocacy



The research funded or conducted by ACF integrates gender perspectives where relevant. The ACF ensures that all funded clinical trials are gender-neutral where possible and are non-discriminative.

3. Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

- Monitoring and data gathering: The available data can be found in the social balance sheet (the so-called “Bilan Social” released by the Social Secretariat). This is published annually and filed with the National Banque of Belgium by the ACF at the end of every fiscal year, together with ACF’s annual accounts.
- The HR Coordinator takes up the role as Gender Equality Officer responsible for overseeing the implementation and progress of this plan. Every two years, this plan will be evaluated. For this evaluation, a task force will be composed. If deemed relevant, a survey might be conducted to assess the organizational culture and to identify barriers to gender equality.

4. Communication and Dissemination

- The GEP is publicly available on the ACF website to ensure transparency and accountability.
- The GEP’s objectives and actions are communicated to all employees during a team meeting and the document is shared with new employees during the onboarding.

5. Conclusion

The Anticancer Fund’s Gender Equality Plan represents our ongoing commitment to creating a workplace and research environment that values diversity and inclusivity. By implementing this plan, we aim to foster a culture of equity and support that enables all employees to contribute to our mission of improving outcomes for cancer patients.