

# **Faculty of Science Policy Document on Diversity and Inclusion**

**2021-2023**

*This document is a translation of the [diverseitsnota] of the Faculty of Science. In the event of any discrepancy between them, the text of the Dutch original prevails.*

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## **1. Introduction**

At the end of May 2019, the University of Amsterdam (UvA) adopted the Diversity Policy Document<sup>1</sup>, which establishes a framework for diversity and inclusion at the UvA. It also lays the foundations for the ambitions and strategic objectives in the Faculty of Science's policy document on diversity and inclusion.

### **1.1 Why focus on diversity and inclusion?**

The Faculty of Science would like to ensure an inclusive learning and working environment in which students and employees feel at home, as when everybody feels safe and well established, you create the best possible conditions for talent to flourish. In concrete terms, this means the Faculty of Science must become more attractive to potential talent that is currently under-represented, such as young prospective students from migrant backgrounds and women talented in science and the natural sciences. A diverse and inclusive environment enables optimum development of all available talent and reaps the substantial benefits provided by a wide range of perspectives and opinions. This boosts the quality of research and teaching and amplifies our social impact.

The scientific field is characterised by a competitive culture, and while this culture may promote individual success in the field of research, it also contributes to diminished attention to cooperation and connection. This is especially pertinent in the modern era, with cooperation becoming increasingly vital; for example, major European research programmes are increasingly becoming consortia. Furthermore, by ensuring a diverse team, you facilitate the development of multidisciplinary strategies to solve complex social problems, which is an increasingly vital factor within both teaching and research.

This focus on diversity and inclusion is by no means exclusive to our University: the businesses and organisations with which the Faculty of Science cooperates – such as Apple, the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO), ASML and the Rijksmuseum – also devote attention to diversity and inclusion in their organisational strategies. In addition, calls for research proposals are increasingly requesting attention to be paid to diversity.

Finally, the faculty feels the ethical and moral imperative to strive for an environment in which greater attention is paid to cooperation, connection and respect for each other's opinions and perspectives.

### **1.2 Ambition**

The Faculty of Science has approximately 1,500 employees and 7,500 students, among which 68 different nationalities are represented. The Faculty of Science aspires to be a diverse academic community, in which all staff and students feel at home, regardless of cultural and socioeconomic background, beliefs, skin colour, age, gender, disability or sexual orientation. Everybody's unique personality, background and talents make a vital contribution to our faculty, thus promoting a culture of inclusion on campus. Alongside excellent cooperation skills, including skilled navigation of interpersonal differences, this culture helps us to excel in the field of teamwork and international and/or interdisciplinary projects.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://medewerker.uva.nl/shared/studentensites/uva-studentensite/nl/nieuws/2019/09/nota-diverseiteit-en-instelling-ombudsfunctie-definitief.html>

### **1.3 Definition and basic principles**

The Faculty of Science endorses the definition of diversity as specified in the UvA policy document: 'Diversity is all about differences among people, some of which are clearly visible while others are less noticeable. We focus on all our students and staff members irrespective of, and with understanding for, these differences. This means that differences are recognised, discussed and considered during teaching and research activities, as well as in policy design. Specific measures have been developed focusing on the inclusion of particular students and staff members, as well as the organisational and cultural change that this inclusion requires.'

This definition reflects the fact that achieving diversity within the organisation is not the same as ensuring we optimally benefit from the diversity of staff and perspectives or that everybody feels welcome within the faculty: this is what inclusion is all about. The Faculty of Science views diversity and inclusion as two intrinsically interlinked factors.

We also subscribe to the points of departure specified in the UvA policy document concerning culture and organisation. This means that knowledge and expertise in the field of diversity is vital to us and that everything we do is as evidence-based or evidence-informed as possible. In accordance with research results<sup>2</sup>:

- we will strive to attain a *broad basis of support for and ownership* for the process of boosting diversity and inclusion, first and foremost among supervisors;
- the decision-making process must be transparent and accessible, and every supervisor must be willing to *take part in the discussion* concerning implementation;
- we will promote *cooperation* within diverse groups and teams;
- we do not deny that diversity can involve an increasing number of problems, although we ensure these problems are *open for discussion*, we set boundaries wherever necessary and we focus on opportunities;
- we select the most *practically applicable* diversity initiatives or training courses.

### **1.4 Responsibility**

Together with the institutes and the programmes, the Faculty Board is responsible for the design and implementation of the faculty's policy. Furthermore, the faculty's diversity officer serves as adviser to the dean and has the vital responsibility of identifying, supporting and encouraging initiatives that promote diversity. However, they can't do all of this on their own, as it is everybody's responsibility to realise a diverse and inclusive faculty. The countless ordinary interactions that take place every day have a massive influence on inclusion at the Faculty of Science: everybody matters and everybody is needed.

### **1.5 Strategic objectives**

Four strategic objectives are central to the diversity policies of the university and the faculty:

1. Accessibility and study success for students whose background makes studying at a university a less likely course of action for them.

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<sup>2</sup> Based in particular on Bohnet, I. (2016) *What Works: Gender Equality by Design*. Cambridge/Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; Dobbin, F., & Kalev, A. (2016). Why Diversity Programs Fail. *Harvard Business Review*, 94(7), 52-60; Homan, A. (2017). *Vier Verschillen! De vele gezichten van diversiteit* (Vive La Difference: The many faces of diversity). Amsterdam: University of Amsterdam, p. 4-24.

2. Successful cooperation within diverse groups and teams.
3. Recruitment, selection, appointment, encouragement and retention of staff from diverse backgrounds.
4. Identification and encouragement of good practices and knowledge exchange.

When it comes to these objectives, the Faculty of Science is certainly not starting from scratch. In addition to the Faculty of Science's existing policy, which focuses primarily on gender balance, the various institutes have already taken steps towards a more diverse and inclusive community. However, the main focus of this policy document is on existing activities – either ongoing or in development – rather than on new ones. Instead of reinventing the wheel for each separate institute within the Faculty of Science, we need to promote mutual exchange, learning and application of existing knowledge and experience: a practical strategy that requires everybody's willingness to share, to listen and to learn. As mentioned above, this policy document is an extension of the UvA Diversity Document, and therefore any activities specified in the UvA policy document are not repeated in this policy document.

### **1.6 Concretisation of the four strategic objectives**

The burning question is as follows: In what areas will we focus our attention in the next three years? If you try to do everything, you run the risk of doing nothing, or in any case not doing anything that has a tangible effect. The key is to find activities that truly take us further in the pursuit of our ambitions. The four strategic objectives are fleshed out in greater detail below, including specification of appropriate activities. The activities mentioned in this policy document certainly do not paint a comprehensive picture: they are just a small selection of the many interesting and encouraging activities within our faculty. Furthermore, this policy document only represents a snapshot in time: some activities contained therein may be terminated for compelling reasons and new initiatives can be added. When viewed in combination, they are an expression of how the Faculty of Science works to achieve the objectives.

This policy document intentionally steers clear of naming too many specific target groups, as this would entail a risk of exclusion. The policy that states the ambition and basic principles highlights a number of activities, including both top-down and bottom-up activities. After all, achieving our ambitions in the area of diversity and inclusion will require a joint effort.

## 2. Accessibility and study success for all students

### 2.1 Objective

- To maximise talent development, make the most of yourself and ensure every student steers a course that is best suited to their ambitions and talents, regardless of their social or cultural background.
- To identify and tackle social inequality and insufficient levels of integration within degree programmes or during students' academic careers.
- To reap the benefits of a student population with a diverse range of social and cultural backgrounds in order to boost our teaching, research and valorisation.

### 2.2 Explanation

This theme is closely interwoven with our ambition to improve the diversity of people and perspectives in order to boost quality and social impact. Research shows that talent and effort are not the only decisive factors for students' academic careers: their cultural and social capital and the assistance they receive from their parents are also important aspects. Once students arrive at university, satisfaction with the programme and a feeling of being at home are two important predictors of study success.<sup>3</sup> At all Dutch research universities, the intake and transfer rate of students with a migrant background and students with a non-academic parental background requires attention.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, offering opportunities to these groups of students will help boost diversity, including at the Faculty of Science.

### 2.3 Activities

#### Outreach activities (primary and secondary schools)

- One persistent area of concern in the strategy involving the regional educational chain is the need to clarify the career prospects of Faculty of Science programmes. After all, although Faculty of Science programmes offer above-average future prospects, these prospects are relatively unknown and abstract to groups such as first-generation students. A variety of outreach activities (see below) are being conducted to improve students' and parents' awareness of the prospects associated with natural science programmes.
- As part of the faculty's outreach programme, a programme has been set up together with Cybersoek, a social organisation based in the Amsterdam-Oost district ([www.cybersoek.nl](http://www.cybersoek.nl)). This programme focuses on primary school pupils from the Indische Buurt neighbourhood and provides an after-school programme focusing on coding (described as a 'digital playing field'). In week 4 of the programme, the pupils go on a field trip to a business or institution (possibly a UvA institution), to which the pupils can also bring their brothers/sisters.
- The Faculty of Science is a participant in Girlsday, the LHTO's national event that sees girls aged 10 to 14 visit the faculty to get to know its natural science programmes.

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<sup>3</sup> Pascarella, E.T., & Terenzini, P.T. (2005). *How College Affects Students (Vol. 2): A Third Decade of Research*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

<sup>4</sup> Education Inspectorate (2018). *Onderwijsverslag. De Staat van het Onderwijs (Education Report: The State of Education)*. De Meern: p. 24-27.

- Together with VU Amsterdam and 46 schools, the Faculty of Science is a participant in Bètapartners. The objective of Bètapartners is to ‘prepare students to make an informed choice of natural science programme on the basis of substantive experiences and insights, which will increase study success.’ These activities also reach students who have not yet come into contact with the Faculty of Science’s natural science programmes, for example through the Personal Teaching Assistant programme, as part of which Faculty of Science students act as teaching assistants to secondary-school teachers following completion of a course in didactics.
- In the discipline of astronomy in particular, projects have been set up to promote academic participation among children and students with non-Western and/or Islamic backgrounds. The Altair programme – initiated by Professor Sera Markoff – focuses on children aged nine to 12; the ASPIRE programme facilitates research opportunities for students of colour, female students and students from less prosperous socioeconomic backgrounds; and the biennial Advancing Theoretical Astrophysics Summer School reaches out to young researchers from under-represented groups/countries (from both Western and non-Western backgrounds). The summer school ‘prioritises a supportive, cooperative, and diverse learning environment’.
- StudieHub – organised by the Diversity Talks foundation – offers assistance with homework to secondary school students who can’t easily afford tutoring or other forms of assistance with homework or preparing for school-leaving examinations. The Faculty of Science provides the facilities required for these meetings.

#### **Activities as part of Faculty of Science programmes**

- In June 2019, the Faculty of Science – led by former College of Science director Dr Jeroen Goedkoop – was awarded an ECHO grant to set up the Student Impact Centre at the Faculty of Science. The main goal of this project is to set up a platform created both for and by students of the Faculty of Science with a focus on boosting diversity within the regional educational chain and the level of inclusion within the Faculty of Science’s teaching.
- The Faculty of Science’s Master’s programmes attract a large number of international students. International classrooms involve a variety of expectations and communication issues that can present an obstacle to students’ talent development: unfamiliarity with everyday matters and difficulty feeling at home can result in study completion delay for international students. The Graduate School of Life Sciences, for example, plans to incorporate international and intercultural aspects into its curriculum. As experience shows that community building helps to boost the sense of belonging, the question of how to attract both international students and Dutch students with a non-Western background is a vital topic for discussion with the study associations and the Faculty Board.
- The visibility of role models provides positive examples of what these groups are capable of in all fields, including teaching, research and management. A person can act as a role model in all kinds of areas, including gender, skin colour, background or disability. For example, to inspire existing and future female students, you can pay attention to the visibility of female scientists both in the prospectuses and in the degree programmes.
- The Grassroots Science4all programme will be continued. This programme enables staff and students to apply for financial support for various types of activities to promote diversity in the community.

- In consultation with the Teaching and Learning Centre, the faculty will ensure that both existing and new didactics courses pay attention to diversity and dealing with heterogeneity and cultural differences in tutorial groups.
- The Faculty of Science aspires to be a place where all students can prosper. In relative terms, students with an Autism Spectrum Disorder are overrepresented among the Faculty of Science's student body. In addition to the services offered by the student psychologists (see the UvA's [Student psychologists](#) website), the Faculty of Science has developed a support programme for students with an ASD. This programme helps students with planning and organisation, enables sharing of experiences in small groups, provides extra assistance with thesis writing, etc.
- The faculty will organise bias training for the boards of the study associations.
- During Pride, the Congo study association organises an open day, enabling accessible discussion of any and all LGBTIQ+ issues.

## **2.4 Roles and responsibilities**

The role of the faculty is to stimulate and support the aforementioned activities. Some of these activities are initiated by the faculty itself, while others are organised by other parties with the support of the faculty. The activities are partly funded from the budgets for the outreach unit, Aspasia, faculty funds for Grassroots or Echo. In addition, the faculty stimulates such initiatives as increasing the visibility of role models to serve as an example for students in a variety of areas, such as gender, skin colour, background or disability.

### 3. Successful cooperation within diverse groups and teams

#### 3.1 Objective

- To use the diversity within groups (of either staff and/or students) to boost academic quality and as a source of inspiration.<sup>5</sup>
- To work on knowledge, skills, attitudes and incentives that will promote successful and inclusive cooperation with students and staff with diverse backgrounds based on the principle of equality.

#### 3.2 Explanation

Talent development is usually approached from an individual and competitive perspective, although there is a growing demand for 'soft skills'. In our complex world, innovation is increasingly being derived from cooperative situations, marking a shift from individual competition to working in teams and on projects. This is the case across the board: in degree programmes (especially interdisciplinary programmes), research and valorisation. The major European research programmes are increasingly becoming consortia, requiring greater levels of cooperation. The 2019 letter to Parliament on research and science (*Wetenschapsbrief*) identifies this development:

*'The Netherlands wants to be able to maintain its position as a world leader in the academic sector. This requires cooperation at the national and international levels, among academic and social parties and with the business sector. A strong Dutch system with good research facilities improves the position of our researchers so that they can work together with leading academics from other countries on global challenges.'*<sup>6</sup>

The Faculty of Science wishes to establish a culture that respects differences. Cooperation comes easier to some staff members than others, partly depending on the context, team, group and/or assignment. Paying specific attention to successful cooperation *despite* and *thanks to* differences between people makes a decisive contribution to our ambitions. It is not a given that everybody will find their place or receive the opportunities or latitude they deserve. Factors such as heavy workloads, a lack of diversity within teams, etc. create a risk of too many automatic assumptions being made about what constitutes a pleasant cooperation, which jokes help connect or indeed divide people, or what may or may not be an issue. Discussing such matters and showing empathy for each other contributes to everyone experiencing an inclusive culture.

Leadership, exemplary behaviour and support measures are vital preconditions for achieving an inclusive culture characterised by effective cooperation within diverse teams. While leadership is an inherent aspect of the work of managers and supervisors, by displaying personal leadership, all staff and students can contribute to these objectives. To ensure successful cooperation within a diverse team, all team members must:

- set the standard and establish boundaries;

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<sup>5</sup> See the *Midterm Review van het Instellingsplan 2015-2020* (Midterm Review of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan) (2018). University of Amsterdam, p. 15.

<sup>6</sup> OCW (2019). Letter to Parliament on research and science entitled *Nieuwsgierig en betrokken – de waarde van wetenschap* (Curious and Engaged: The value of science). The Hague: Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, p. 8.

- clearly indicate what type of behaviour, communication and cooperation they wish to see;
- discuss issues while they are still minor;
- make issues an acceptable topic of discussion. Don't try to find a solution straight away: open up the discussion, including with people who have difficulty with this issue;
- pay attention to the views of all students and staff, not just the most outspoken ones;
- listen to everybody with an open mind;
- do not dismiss any opinions as irrelevant;
- understand and accept that people are different, even if they are angry or disappointed;
- support people who are different and ensure they do not become isolated.

### 3.3 Activities

#### Activities at the faculty level

- In consultation with Career Support, the faculty will pay more attention in both existing and new leadership courses to diversity and cooperation in diverse teams.
- At the moment, staff members are not able to select how they wish to be addressed (Mr, Mrs, Ms, Miss, or no such form of address); consultation is currently taking place with staff in the main UvA organisation to see whether this situation can be rectified.

#### Other activities

- A variety of spontaneous and small-scale initiatives are organised throughout the organisation, such as walks, games nights, pizza lunches or days out. A culture in which people organise activities together helps to promote a sense of togetherness and these kinds of social gatherings facilitate informal discussions.
- An Inclusive AI (IAI) community has been set up within Computing Science. IAI is working to establish an inclusive space to help retain various groups of academics for the scientific community (i.e. to '*directly combat the infamous leaky pipeline found in academia*'). For this purpose, a code of conduct and a mentoring system have been introduced. See <https://uva-iai.github.io/> for more information.
- The Anton Pannekoek Institute (API) has achieved good results by investing in mutual communication and cooperation between diverse teams under the guidance of an external expert.
- Efforts are under way to broaden horizons and expanding perspectives through partnerships with non-Western universities, so that the academic qualities of diverse teams can be leveraged to the full. For example, IBED works with universities in Kenya, South Africa, Ghana, Mauritius, Ethiopia and Tanzania, and API works with a university in Namibia.

### 3.4 Roles and responsibilities

The faculty is actively conducting a policy of organising training courses with a focus on cooperation in diverse teams. Cooperation is a factor at all levels within our departments and institutes. It is in this area that our motto of 'Everybody matters and everybody is needed' holds especially true. Fostering a cooperative culture requires a joint effort by students, teaching staff, support and management staff and researchers. Naturally, the faculty's various departments and institutes play a leading role when it comes to ensuring smooth cooperation in diverse teams. An example of this is the Inclusive AI community set up by the Ivl. In addition, it is important that experiences with organising such activities are shared within the faculty. There are various bodies to facilitate this,

such as the diversity officer's focus group or the consultations between the operational managers of the various institutes.

## 4. Recruitment, selection, appointment, promotion and retention of staff

### 4.1 Objective

- To increase the diversity of the workforce in order to reinforce our core tasks (teaching, research and valorisation).<sup>7</sup> The Faculty of Science aims to provide a diverse academic environment in which talented employees are given equal opportunities to develop themselves and be promoted to more senior positions.
- To promote inclusion. The Faculty of Science aims to offer a working environment in which everyone can feel at home.

### 4.2 Explanation

This theme is closely interwoven with our ambition to improve diversity with regard to people and perspectives within our staff in order to boost quality and social impact. Without taking direct action, the desired development of the workforce will be insufficient and/or take too long. Generally, awareness of the added value of diversity and the will to work towards it are more decisive factors in the successful realisation of this objective than the lack of opportunities and/or instruments, although any such existing opportunities and instruments must of course be grasped and actively used.

### 4.3 Activities

For many years, the faculty has actively encouraged diversity, especially in relation to gender balance.<sup>8</sup> The following is an overview of various activities.

#### Activities at the faculty level: new

- We must step up efforts to ensure a ‘soft landing’ for new international staff. The Faculty of Science will review the processes of information provision to international staff in order to identify and implement any possible improvements. Furthermore, we will investigate whether – and if so which – facilities can be made available for their partners. Many institutes operate a buddy system for international staff. The diversity officer can support them with advice.
- The UvA Executive Staff Office has created a talent programme that provides seven tenure positions for Dutch postdocs with a non-Western migrant background<sup>9</sup> and the Faculty of Science is very happy to participate in this programme.
- A guideline is in place stating that at least one female member must be included in every Doctorate Committee. Given the workload of female staff and the high number of doctorates conferred within the faculty (approx. 120 per year), deviation from this guideline is permitted on solid grounds.
- In addition to improving awareness and skills in relation to bias, the experiences with bias training have also identified a need to actively apply knowledge on inclusive selection procedures in practice. This will be integrated into future bias training.

<sup>7</sup> *Midterm Review van het Instellingsplan 2015-2020* (Midterm Review of the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan) (2018). University of Amsterdam, p. 17.

<sup>8</sup> <https://medewerker.uva.nl/fnwi/content-secured/az/diversiteit-aan-de-fnwi/diversiteit-aan-de-fnwi.html?origin=mRGBazhNQ4SjC72X5Oqv8w>

<sup>9</sup> The term ‘migrant background’ refers to first- and second-generation migrants in accordance with the Statistics Netherlands definition (people born either in the Netherlands or abroad who have at least one parent originating from Africa, Latin America, Turkey or Asia [not including Indonesia or Japan]).

### **Activities at the faculty level: continuation and expansion**

- In 2019, the faculty ran the MacGillavry programme for the third time. The negotiations with the candidates selected for a MacGillavry fellowship resulted in six female fellows joining the faculty. We are currently examining whether another programme can be conducted within the duration of this policy document.
- The faculty organises bias training for faculty employees. In due course, proposals for promotions or permanent appointments will only be processed if the majority of the committee members have completed bias training.
- The faculty will periodically develop a package of courses tailored specifically to the interests and needs of female academic staff, as a means to fully encourage and facilitate talented women.
- When academic staff with a permanent appointment leave, the faculty will hold exit interviews as standard to learn why and whether issues relating to diversity and inclusion are involved.
- The five chairs of the Béta Plus Foundation at API, IoP, HIMS, Ivl and SILS, which were established to improve the gender balance, have all been filled. Only the sixth chair at IBED remains vacant. The foundation has also established a seventh chair for all institutes, including those that have already been allocated a gender chair. This chair has been designated to HIMS and a candidate will be appointed shortly.
- The faculty has reviewed its appointment and promotion criteria for assistant, associate and full professors. In addition to individual performance, the new criteria focus more strongly on team performance and cooperation. The guidelines that accompany the criteria describe how they should be applied, with greater attention paid to diversity and work-life balance.
- It is vital to take differences into account during the appointment and promotion processes: in general, women appear to be less likely to suggest themselves as candidates for positions or promotions, feeling that they do not meet all of the specified requirements, while other staff members may overestimate themselves and believe they can do anything. This creates a challenge for supervisors, who must raise the issue for discussion and either encourage or dissuade as appropriate.
- When forming an appointments committee, the vacancy holder will be asked to consider the issue of diversity by inviting at least one woman to sit on the committee; in committees of five members, two women must be invited (one may be external). If no women can be appointed to the selection committee, the vacancy holder will inform the institute director of efforts made in this regard and their outcome.
- As a rule, recruitment for faculty posts is open. Requests for closed recruitment will be considered only if the justification explicitly factors in the impact on diversity at the institute in question.
- When inviting job applicants for interviews, the vacancy holder will be instructed to make an explicit effort to invite diverse candidates. If there is a vacancy for an assistant, associate or full professor for which no female candidates are invited, the vacancy holder will be expected to notify the institute director (in the case of a full professorship: the dean) and to explain why. Subsequently, a decision will be made regarding whether to advance the procedure with the selected candidates or to seek further suitable candidates. Another possible option is to broaden the scope of the vacant position. Furthermore, a ‘wild card’ experiment is being mooted. This ‘wild card’ would involve the committee inviting an atypical candidate who only partially meets the criteria. Candidates with a divergent life history or career path may make a valid contribution to a team, even if this is not expected at the outset.

- Finally, diversity is a choice: if three candidates satisfy the criteria, the ‘best’ candidate is not per se the ‘best’ candidate if this means the principles of diversity are not respected. If we truly consider diversity to be important, we must factor in this aspect.

### **Other activities**

- In the event of open recruitment and selection, a variety of institutes make use of the networks of researchers in order to publicise the job vacancy among talented professionals, reaching a different, wider and higher quality audience. A personal approach can also add value to this process.
- Job advertisements for assistant, associate and full professors are made gender-neutral by conducting linguistic checks (on job titles, requirements and the use of gender-specific pronouns, such as ‘he/she’). In 2018, the Faculty of Science network for editing job advertisements was set up, consisting of members trained in formulating gender-neutral job advertisements. The goal of this network is to make job advertisements more attractive to both female and male academics. The effectiveness of the network will be evaluated in 2021.
- All job advertisements will include a diversity statement.
- Generally speaking, it is vital to any academic career that academics keep up with their research during the stage of their lives when they decide to start a family. To promote this, the Faculty of Science will by default include a clause in its tenure track contracts specifying that the duration of the track will be extended and assessments may be deferred if the candidate qualifies for pregnancy, maternity and/or parental leave. In addition, pregnancy and maternity leave are specifically highlighted as factors to take into consideration in the guidelines to the reviewed appointment and promotion criteria.<sup>10</sup> In the coming period, the information on child-related leave facilities and schemes will be made more visible on the faculty website.
- As parenthood is not a matter for the mother alone, but also for her partner, a law was adopted in July 2020 to provide for five weeks’ additional birth leave for the mother’s partner in the period surrounding the birth. The UvA has made a conscious decision to keep partners on full pay for the duration of their birth leave.
- The chief diversity officer’s team has prepared a document with recruitment tips. This document is available [online](#) and can be used by all vacancy holders in preparation for the recruitment and selection process.
- The process of boosting the visibility of female academics takes place at a variety of levels. For example, ILLC devotes part of the Aspasia budget to invite female speakers to workshops and seminars.
- Networks help staff members to encourage and engage each other regarding pertinent topics and experiences. These networks sometimes develop within individual units, while in other cases, they transcend the boundaries of units, organisations and academic disciplines. Facilitating networks like these has a positive impact on inclusion.
- The ‘Women in the Faculty of Science’ (WIF) network will receive support from the faculty, partly via the allocation of an annual budget for activities that the network wishes to develop.

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<sup>10</sup> From the guidelines to the appointment and promotion criteria, Faculty of Science 2019 (p. 4): ‘It is not unusual for academic staff to take special leave at certain stages in their career or to work part-time. Absence due to long-term leave and part-time work have an impact, for example, on the “quantity” of research output and achievements. Needless to say, in the assessment and review against the applicable criteria, the situations described above should be taken into account and the quantitative achievements should not be benchmarked against a full-time staff member who has not taken special leave.’

- The Korteweg-De Vries Institute (KdVI) achieved effective results by extending the recruitment period until a sufficient number of interesting candidates (female or otherwise) had applied.

#### **4.4 Roles and responsibilities**

Most of the activities are related to the policy of the university or the faculty itself. In turn, the implementation of that policy is a matter for the departments and institutes. This means that, once again, a joint effort is required at all levels of the faculty to recruit and retain a diverse workforce.

## **5. Identification and encouragement of good practices and knowledge exchange**

### **5.1 Objective**

- To the greatest possible extent, the measures, process and results relating to the increase in diversity and inclusion at the Faculty of Science must be evidence-based or evidence-informed.
- By conducting research and exchanging knowledge and experience, we boost support, commitment and ownership.
- We ensure that problems are made fully open for discussion and we focus on opportunities and support in making the transition from problem to opportunity.

### **5.2 Explanation**

Every institute and department is different, with its own individual context, needs and status quo. However, a number of processes and activities relating to diversity and inclusion have many similarities. The exchange of knowledge and experiences may speed up the implementation process and enable a greater platform to be created for smaller developments, helping them to become part of wider faculty policy. In this regard, application and action are essential factors in achieving results. Furthermore, information exchange can help to keep everybody on their toes and achieve evidence-based or evidence-informed development. While the first three strategic objectives mainly emphasise *what* needs to be done, the promotion of good practices and sharing of knowledge and experience must be firmly based on the evidence for the working methods.

### **5.3 Activities**

Since 2016, the faculty's diversity officer – with support from various units within the faculty – has been responsible for the exchange of knowledge and experience via meetings, grassroots projects and a focus group, and by creating a network of diversity officers both within the UvA and with other universities. One idea proposed by the diversity officer and the focus group is the development of a 'best practices resource collection' via a special web page for the Faculty of Science community (including students). This will make a wide range of knowledge, experience and instruments accessible, such as practical guidelines in the area of diversity and inclusion, advice on how to recruit candidates with awareness of diversity and excellent teaching skills, the development of training courses and examples of ongoing activities. One area of concern in this regard is how to keep the page relevant via maintenance and updating of content.

In 2020, the diversity officer, together with the focus group, organised the first-ever diversity day at Science Park entitled *Faces of Science Park: Diversity and Inclusion in Science*. The programme, which consisted of lectures and workshops, focused on boosting diversity and inclusion within the faculty community.

This practical approach – fewer meetings and less paperwork, more action – is very appealing to many students and staff within the faculty community. There is no need for every institute to do exactly the same thing, provided we all work towards an institutional consensus, and there is no need to worry about occasional friction or awkwardness along the way. Information exchange will create opportunities by capitalising on the existing knowledge and experience within the faculty derived from the many experiences and ongoing activities: we can learn from each other instead of repeatedly reinventing the wheel. Although many people will be on board with this strategy, the

process of learning from each other cannot be taken for granted, so the question of how to facilitate this in practice should be viewed as a separate theme in the identification and cultivation of good practices and knowledge exchange.

#### **5.4 Roles and responsibilities**

The Faculty of Science's diversity officer has a key role when it comes to identifying and stimulating good practice. The diversity officer maintains contact with faculty students and staff through such bodies as the focus group. The diversity officer advises the dean of the Faculty of Science on matters pertaining to diversity and inclusion.

## **6. Monitoring and funding**

This policy document applies to the period from 2021 until 2023. Progress reports concerning this policy document will be provided via the faculty's annual report. Similarly, the Colleges/Graduate Schools will report on their contribution to achieving the UvA vision on teaching and learning in their annual reports. One of those ambitions is as follows: 'The UvA strives to be an open and diverse community where all students feel at home and enjoy equal opportunities.' As for the research institutes, they will discuss the topic of diversity and inclusion during the Strategic Management Meeting (*Strategisch Bestuurlijk Overleg*, SBO), an annual strategy meeting between the director and operational manager of the research institute and the Faculty Board. An interim evaluation will be conducted midway through the validity period of this policy document (spring 2022), and the entire policy document will be evaluated at the end of 2023.

The research institutes will monitor progress on the targets with regard to improving the gender balance every six months by reporting the number of females among their senior academic staff. The UvA does not keep a record of any other characteristics, such as cultural and socioeconomic background, religion, skin colour, disability and sexual orientation, nor do we intend to monitor these among our staff. At the end of the day, our objective is to make people feel comfortable and appreciated by striving for an inclusive culture in which we respect each other's opinions. Information on how 'well' the faculty is doing may be gleaned from one or more questions in the Employee Monitor, the National Student Survey and any issues highlighted in these surveys.

The basic principle of this policy document is that a diverse and inclusive faculty is a matter for us all: everybody matters and everybody is needed. This means that agreements, activities and policy proposals are a matter for the various bodies that form the faculty's existing organisation. Any costs involved in specific activities or policy proposals are to be absorbed by the regular budgets of the Colleges and Graduate Schools, the research institutes and the faculty service departments. The faculty's diversity officer is an exception to this rule. Given that the promotion and sharing of best practices within the faculty is one of the diversity officer's key tasks, a specific budget will be set aside for this.

### **In conclusion**

Inclusion can't simply be crystallised into management strategies: the mechanisms and culture within the Faculty of Science that promote (or hinder) inclusion decisively affect how much students and staff feel at home and are able to develop. It's more than just a single moral issue: our countless daily interactions all make a difference. The convictions, efforts and sensitivity of everybody within our faculty community are a vital ingredient in fulfilling the Faculty of Science's role as a place of learning that prepares students and junior staff for the increasingly diverse and mutually interdependent world of tomorrow.