

KTH guide on Horizon 2020: Gender Aspects

Gender equality is a priority in the European Research Area and a cross-cutting issue in Horizon 2020. This entails fostering gender balance in research teams, ensuring it in decision-making, and integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content. Gender equality is included in Horizon 2020 monitoring and evaluation.

When designing a research project for Horizon 2020 you must consider gender aspects at two levels:

- gender balance in research teams at all levels
- gender dimensions in research and innovation content

Gender balance in research teams at all levels

Applicants to Horizon 2020 are encouraged “to promote equal opportunities in the implementation of the action and to ensure a balanced participation of women and men at all levels in research and innovation teams and in management structures”. To reinforce applicants’ engagement at proposal level, gender balance in the research team has been included among the ranking factors to prioritise proposals with the same scores. In particular, by signing the grant agreement, beneficiaries will commit to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of their action. They will also commit to aim, as far as possible, for gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

- In the proposal template, under ‘Members of the consortium’, applicants are asked to specify the sex of the persons who will be primarily responsible for carrying out the proposed research and/or innovation activities.

Gender dimension in research and innovation content

Integrating the gender dimension in research content means taking into account the biological characteristics of both females and males (sex) and the evolving social and cultural features of women and men, girls and boys (gender). Applicants are encouraged to develop a gender dimension in their projects whenever relevant. A topic is considered gender relevant when it concerns individuals of groups of persons and/or when its findings may affect individuals or groups.

The gender dimension is explicitly integrated into several topics across all sections of the Horizon 2020 Work Programme. In these cases, applicants will describe how sex and/or gender analysis is taken into account in the project’s content. Topics with an explicit gender dimension are flagged, to ease access for applicants. This should not however prevent applicants to a non-flagged topic from including a gender dimension in their proposal, when the topic and/or its findings may affect individuals or groups of persons. Recognising gender differences has important implications for scientific knowledge and actively contributes to the production of goods and services better suited to potential markets.

- In the proposal template, under ‘Concept and approach’, applicants are asked the following question: “Where relevant, describe how sex and/or gender analysis is taken into account in the project’s content”.

Gender Training

In Horizon 2020 gender training is included among the eligible costs of an action. The aim is to help researchers to further develop and share gender expertise in relation to the funded project. The annex of the Work Programme explicitly refers to the possibility of including gender training as an activity in proposals as well as to the type of costs that would actually be eligible.

Here are a few example questions to help you address gender equality and gender balance, and determine the relevance of sex and gender in your research project:

- Are women and men included in all levels of decision-making? Are both women and men team-leaders? Are both women and men represented in top management?
- Make sure you understand the analytical distinctions between “sex” and “gender”.
- Potential consumers of technology have different characteristics (gender identities, sex, age, ethnicity, profession, occupation, education, income, household and living arrangements, familiarity with and attitudes towards technology, etc.) What role, if any, do sex and gender play with regard to the developing technology?
- Are there basic anatomical and physiological differences between women and men that should be considered (e.g. in height, strength, range of motion, etc.)? Are there further anatomical and physiological differences between women and men that should be considered (e.g. in vision, hearing, voice pitch, sense of touch, smell, and taste, pro-prioceptors, muscular tension, temperature perception, etc.)?
- What are the potential application areas of the technology (e.g. professional life, leisure activities, home, etc.)? Do these contexts suggest different patterns of use by different groups of potential consumers (e.g. women and men)?
- Might different groups of potential consumers (e.g. women and men) have different expectations regarding the interface? Do certain features of previous innovations reinforce existing gender inequalities, gender norms, or stereotypes?
- Is there a risk of stereotyping or offending potential consumers through the exterior design (e.g. imposing role models, avatars, different forms of sexism, etc.)?
- Is there a risk of excluding certain groups (e.g. men or women) through the technology design?
- Would certain configurations reinforce existing social roles (e.g., gender segregation in the work force; men associated with engineering and women with domestic technologies, for example)?
- Is it possible and/or necessary to establish a usability lab or to run ergonomic tests? What additional tools might you use for monitoring (questionnaires, workshops, etc.)?

- Have you ensured diversity within test groups (in terms of age, sex, gender identity, height, etc.)?
- Have you identified the particular gender expertise you require?
- Do your internal and external teams include the needed gender expertise? If not, what efforts are your teams making to bring in gender specialists?

All questions are borrowed from checklists available at: http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/methods/engineering_checklist.html

Links:

The Gendered Innovations project develops practical methods of sex and gender analysis for scientists and engineers and provides case studies as concrete illustrations of how sex and gender analysis leads to innovation: <http://genderedinnovations.stanford.edu/index.html>

GenPort is the online community of practitioners for sharing knowledge and inspire collaboration: www.genderportal.eu

Responsible Research and Innovation, including gender: <http://www.rri-tools.eu/gender-equality>

The Vademecum on Gender Equality in Horizon 2020 provides all the actors involved in the implementation of Horizon 2020 with practical guidance on the effective application of the new gender equality provisions: https://ec.europa.eu/research/swafs/pdf/pub_gender_equality/vademecum_gender_h2020.pdf