

	Gender Equality Plan (GEP)	Owner: Director	Date approved <u>23.06.26</u>
		Adopted by: Management Team	Version 2.0
	Signature 	Next review date <u>30.06.27</u>	

Purpose

Gender balance and an inclusive, diverse workplace are valuable in themselves and strengthen the research environment at Ruralis. Ruralis strives to achieve gender balance and equal pay where work, responsibilities, experience, qualifications and scientific output are all equal. Ruralis reports on the state of gender equality to the Board, the national research statistics authorities and the Research Council of Norway.

Ruralis shall provide a safe, supportive and inclusive working environment for everyone, regardless of ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability. This value is enshrined in the Institute's ethical guidelines, reflected in its health, safety and working environment objectives, and identified as a high-priority objective in the current strategic plan. Ruralis has zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and harassment.

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) (this document) is the procedure that ensures Ruralis works systematically on equality, inclusion and non-discrimination. The plan is reviewed annually.

As a private foundation with fewer than 50 employees, Ruralis is subject to (1) a duty to work actively to promote equality and prevent discrimination and (2) an internal duty to document this work.

Documents relevant to this procedure are:

- The Equality and Anti-Discrimination Act
- The Working Environment Act
- Ruralis' Strategic Plan 2025–2027
- Ruralis' Ethical Guidelines
- The Health, Safety and Working Environment Handbook

Status 2025: equality and gender balance

Position type/role	Number of women	Number of men	Proportion of women
Board	5	4	56 %
All employees	19	13	60 %
Management	3	1	75 %
Research positions*	16	10	62 %
Administration***	3	2	50 %
Project managers – number of people	11	7	61 %
Project managers – number of projects	21	39	35%
Researcher 1	1	2	33 %
Senior Researcher*	7	2	77 %
Researcher, PhD	6	4	60 %
PhD position	1	1	50 %
Researcher (without a PhD)	1	0	100 %
Research Assistant	0	1	0%
Administration (excluding managers)	2	2	50 %
Part-time positions (permanent employees)	4	0	100 %
Temporary positions**	1	0	100%

As of 31 May 2026. * Includes Heads of Research. ** Visiting researchers and hourly contracts are not included.

*** Includes the Director of Finance.

Employee follow-up has actively identified female senior researchers who are close to qualifying for the position of Researcher 1, as well as undesirable pay disparities (see equal pay). The Institute's management team consists of three women and one man. The Director is a man, the Director of Finance is a woman, and both Heads of Research are women. The Chair of the Board is a woman.

As the table above shows, Ruralis has a gender imbalance in research positions. On the one hand, the predominance of women in the Senior Researcher category means that more women are progressing

towards qualifying for the position of Researcher 1. On the other hand, Ruralis needs to prioritise recruiting male researchers in the coming years.

Binding principles for Ruralis' work on equality and non-discrimination

Ruralis shall actively promote equality and non-discrimination in accordance with the following principles:

- Ruralis has zero tolerance for discrimination, bullying and harassment.
- Ruralis shall provide a safe and supportive working environment in which employees feel that they belong, are given opportunities and are recognised and heard, regardless of their gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation or disability.
- Ruralis shall strive for gender balance at all levels of the organisation (Board, management, project management and employees) and across research position categories.
- Whenever possible, Ruralis shall provide work training for people who NAV has identified as needing such training.
- At Ruralis, there shall be equal pay for equal work, equal responsibility, equal experience, equal qualifications and equal scientific output.
- The work on equality and non-discrimination shall involve employee representatives and the Working Environment Committee (AMU).
- The Director shall report annually to the Board on the state of equality at the Institute.

The following measures shall ensure that Ruralis works systematically on equality and non-discrimination:

- As part of Ruralis' annual cycle, annual training shall be provided on the working environment, ethical guidelines and the whistleblowing procedure.
- As part of Ruralis' onboarding procedure for new employees, training shall be provided on the working environment, ethical guidelines and the whistleblowing procedure, among other topics.
- An inclusive working environment is a priority in the current strategic plan.
- A procedure for offboarding in connection with extended leave (such as parental leave), and a procedure for reboarding employees returning from extended leave (such as parental leave).
- Ruralis shall monitor the organisation's gender balance annually and identify and implement mitigating measures where necessary. The assessment and identification of measures shall take place in connection with the annual review of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and the preparation of action plans under the Strategic Plan 2025–2027.
- An annual standing meeting shall be held in the second quarter between the Director, employee representatives and the safety representative. The agenda shall cover equality, gender balance and inclusion in the organisation, as well as the need for any mitigating

measures. This meeting will form the basis for the annual review of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

- Normally Ruralis shall conduct a working environment survey every two years. The previous regular working environment survey was conducted at the end of 2024.
- The Board's annual report shall include a description and assessment of the state of equality at the Institute.