

Gender equality plan (GEP) for Akvaplan-niva AS

This document constitutes the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) for Akvaplan-niva (APN). The plan has been approved by the management group in Akvaplan-niva.

Akvaplan-niva is a research-based, independent limited company that offers advice, monitoring and research related to aquaculture, the sea, the coast and the freshwater environment. Akvaplan-niva's headquarter is in Tromsø. Akvaplan AS was founded in 1984, and in 1991 Akvaplan entered into a strategic alliance with the Norwegian Institute for Water Research (NIVA) and the name was changed to Akvaplan-niva. By virtue of this, Akvaplan-niva has become a participant in the Framsenderet (Northern Area Center for Climate and Environmental Research) in Tromsø. Akvaplan-niva is part of the NIVA Group and was approved as a research institute in 2013. As part of the NIVA Group, we are a national leading player in water research and consultancy in the aquatic environment.

Akvaplan-niva started as a purely consulting company but developed in the 90s into the direction of a strong research-based company where research for decision support became central in assignments for business and the public sector. The strong growth in the number of employees and turnover in the last 10 years is largely due to the fact that we have hired many researchers during this period.

Throughout its history, Akvaplan-niva has been an organization characterized by diversity through both gender and age composition and many different nationalities. In 2020, APN won the Ministry of Labour and Social Inclusion's regional diversity award for large and medium-sized enterprises (Region North). The European Commission's and the Norwegian Research Council's requirements for action plans for gender equality (Gender Equality Plans GEP) are an inspiration and important premises for continuing and furthering the objectives we have worked on over time. The work and activities described in our GEP are related to the work of fulfilling the purposes of the Gender Equality and Discrimination Act, which addresses diversity issues where gender equality is a central theme. The law shall contribute to real equality and requires employers to work actively and systematically to promote equality and prevent discrimination.

Our ambition is that:

In Akvaplan-niva, everyone should have equal opportunities for development, equal conditions and good working conditions, regardless of gender, ethnicity, age and disability. We will actively work to ensure diversity in all phases of the employment relationship from recruitment, through career development and through facilitation in various phases of life for all employees. No one should be subjected to harassment and violence.

Current situation gender balance

The overall gender balance in the Akvaplan-niva is satisfactory with a gender distribution of 44% women and 56% men. We have a good gender balance in both top and middle

management, in the board, as well as in most professional positions. We have great diversity with 42% non-Norwegian employees from 21 nationalities and a good age spread that covers all age groups from 20 years and up to seniors of 70+. A number of senior researchers and senior advisers have in recent years been internally recruited for section leader positions, but we still have an even distribution of female and male senior researchers. Among younger researchers and advisers, there are more women than men, this is due to the fact that we have recruited more women than men to these positions in the last two or three years. We have the biggest imbalance in senior advisers, which is largely due to recruitment back in time and the fact that these have built up long seniority in the organization. We do not have salary differences related to gender in the various job categories.

Objectives for gender equality work:

Our goal is to recruit and develop more women into senior researchers and senior advisers so that we maintain the gender balance at all job levels. Recruitment and promotion to senior positions will also help maintain the gender balance in recruitment to management positions at several levels. Through career development and opportunities for promotion for more younger women, we also ensure a good salary development that equals both sexes.

We will achieve this through:

- 1) Life phase thinking that includes all employees
- 2) Diversity in the work environment; mapping and follow-up in accordance with adopted objectives
- 3) Further develop systems that capture, process, evaluate and continuously work with gender equality measures

Responsibilities and resources

Akvaplan-niva's management team has the overall responsibility for preparing and following up on gender equality plans. Chief of Staff and HR are responsible for coordinating and ensuring that procedures are in place and carried out as intended. Line management is responsible for following up the action plan within their respective areas and for their employees. The management includes shop stewards in the work with gender equality through established structures for cooperation between the parties. Process descriptions and procedures for gender equality work are included in the management system and follow adopted guidelines for reporting, including annual reports that are being approved by the board.

In Akvaplan-niva's strategy towards 2025, it has been decided that we will have a competitive organization and a good working environment. Action plans have been prepared and goals for gender equality work will be included in the same plan.

Action points for the period 2022-2027

Life phase thinking: plans and measures adapted to employees at different stages in their careers, different age groups and in different social life situations will, for example, include flexibility in working hours and organization of tasks, career plans adapted to the individual employee in line with the organization's objectives. The combination of work and career for parents of young children will be key. Continue and improve existing measures for women returning after maternity leave.

A good working environment includes both physical and psychosocial conditions. To achieve the goal, we will improve our tools and systems to map specific conditions that prevent gender equality and contribute to harassment and lack of development opportunities.