



**Academy of  
Entrepreneurship®**

# **GENDER EQUALITY PLAN**

## **2023-2025**

**ACADEMY OF ENTREPRENEURSHIP**

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## 1. Introduction

The present report illustrates the strategy of the Academy of Entrepreneurship with regards to addressing and promoting gender and equality at organizational level, encompassing a specific plan for implementation. The implemented actions concern both the staff of the Academy of Entrepreneurship and beneficiaries.

The [Academy of Entrepreneurship](#) (AKEP) is non-governmental, non-profit training and research organization, founded in 2007. AKEP's mission is the cultivation of entrepreneurial mindsets and the enhancement professional skills in the private and public sectors in Greece and at EU level with strong focus on boosting employability and entrepreneurship competence through non formal education initiatives for individuals and other organizations. AKEP designs and participates in EU-funded projects and implements training programmes to achieve social inclusion and prosperity for all, having as guiding principles to raise awareness and strengthen the values diversity, inclusion and equality, from local to EU level.

The Gender Equality Plan serves as a strategic tool for AKEP, addressing various aspects of gender inequality and working towards creating a more inclusive and equitable environment. This plan includes the strategic Areas of intervention, as agreed by the internal committee which was formed in December 2022 to design, implement and evaluate the GEP over a three years period i.e. 2023-2025.

The strategy takes into consideration Gender Equality as core value of the EU, a fundamental right and key principle of the European Pillar of Social Rights, also linked to the European Commission's European Strategy for Gender Equality 2020-2025. Furthermore, Gender Equality is also one of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 5), which depicts the importance of mainstreaming gender equality initiatives and practices to strengthen democratic and equal societies at global scale. In addition, Greece follows the strategic lines of the European Strategy for Gender Equality and the requirements of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention), which are reflected in the new National Action Plan for Gender Equality 2021-2025 and has established the law 4604/2019 on Substantial Gender Equality, where Article 17 is promoting substantive equality between the sexes and combating gender-based violence, encourages universities and research centers to integrate gender in their teaching and research activities.

The present document addresses the mandatory requirements as well as recommended fields for action as underpinned by the Horizon Programme standards. It is also foreseen to integrate the planned actions in functions of the quality management system that the organization is implementing in line with the requirements of the ISO 9001:2015 awarded certification, subject to annual audits by an external auditor.

Specifically, Chapter 2 describes the organizational structure of the Academy of Entrepreneurship, key employees, as well as projects and networks that the organization has developed to strengthen its capacity for implementing gender sensitive interventions.

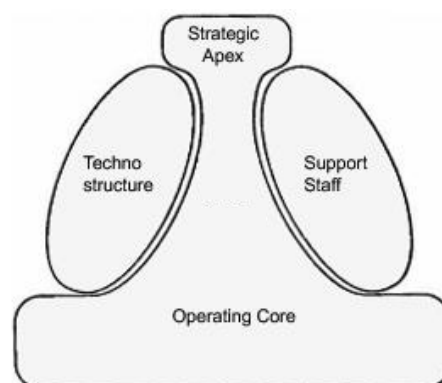
Chapter 3 depicts the strategic areas and specific objectives of the plan to address issues from a gender perspective.

Chapter 4 illustrates the implementation of the plan, including specific actions, timelines, appointed persons of AKEP's staff, KPIs and monitoring procedures.

## 2. State of-the-art and relevant projects

### 2.1 Organisational structure

In January 2023, AKEP's organizational structures consists of 8 individuals (4 male and 4 female) possessing diverse professional skill sets. With these individuals are strategically allocated to fulfill essential functional domains, including management, education, research, project management, administration, and communication, adopting Mintzberg's model (due to size, the middle line of the model is omitted). This structure is be illustrated in the following chart:



(source: Accaglobal.com – [link](#))

In the strategic apex is made up of 3 people, with central role in the formation of business strategy and mission alignment: the Managing Director and President, Mr. Andreas Stefanidis, the Social Innovation Director Mr. Alessandro Carbone and the Senior Project Manager Mrs. Kalliopi Christopoulou. The operating core team, who is also involved in the technostructure component is comprised by Ms Vicky Axaopoulou, Ms Olympia Amvrazi and Ms Aliko Anagnosti who undertake projects implementation and training activities. Last but not least, the support staff component includes Mr. Giannaros as an IT expert and Mr. Sarris for financial monitoring. According to specific needs, AKEP has a pool of experts who serve as support professionals for business activities (e.g. trainers/mentors/policy experts).

However, it should be stressed that all employees are involved in the decision-making processes, adopting a flat hierarchy and a participatory approach. This visualization rather depicts areas of responsibilities among the core members of AKEP's team.

## 2.2 Projects & collaborations

The Academy of Entrepreneurship is dedicated to advancing gender equality and women empowerment not only within the organization but also externally. Since 2020, has participated in three projects centered around the theme of gender equality. These projects strive to enhance and advocate for the fundamental principles of gender equality, providing support, empowerment, and guidance to diverse individuals and organizations in their efforts to become more gender-inclusive and supportive. Specifically:

**EUROTHON- European Hackathon: shaping youth ideas on the future of Europe** (2020-2-IT03-KA205-019469) is a project focused on Europe as a great motherland of the future with learning resources and debates on roots to explore and discuss the values of Europe. Training is offered on pressing social topics, with special focus on diversity and inclusion.

**GreenY - Promoting Youth-led Women Entrepreneurship for the development of Inclusive Green Economy** (618886-EPP-1-2020-1-EL-EPPKA2-CBY-ACPALA) aims to foster cooperation between countries in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. In the context of the project, women youth workers and young people belonging to vulnerable contexts were trained with key competencies and practical skills that promote their entrepreneurial spirit and increase their employment opportunities within the various sectors related to the green economy model. The development of these capacities will allow them to be empowered in the face of the

challenges of the global context and can be considered as active agents of change within the framework of emerging sustainable development models.

**MOVE UP-MOtherhood Valorisation and Empowerment for professional development – Upskilling Pathways** (101087412 - ERASMUS-EDU-2022-PI-FORWARD-LOT3) intends to develop a flexible upskilling pathway for unemployed mothers, offering the opportunity of assessing, validating, and further developing their prior learning and enhancing their professional competences. The focus is on the Personal, Social and Learning to learn competence (PSL) that they gained/are gaining thanks to their role of parent. The project fosters innovation in Adult Education and contributes to mothers' empowerment and upskilling for facilitating their access to training and the labour market.

For staying updated with latest news, methodologies and initiatives around gender equality, diversity and inclusion, AKEP has shaped partnerships with organization and networks from local to EU level. These relationships have created a positive impact and pool of information, resources and learning activities that can benefit both the staff and AKEP's community. News about such activities is shared internally, via social media and newsletters. Indicatively, AKEP collaborates with: Anna Lindh Foundation, Women Do Business and is a member of Euclid Network & Catalyst 2030.

### 3. Working methodology & Key Areas of focus

The Gender Equality Plan for AKEP is the result of 3 brainstorming sessions, analyses and assessments carried out within the organization, using internal resources (both financial and human). Specifically, a Gender Equality committee was formed in November 2022 and is comprised by 4 members of AKEP. The committee members are 2 males (the president and 1 senior manager) and 2 female delegates (1 senior manager and 1 project manager) to ensure representation by gender/sex and different seniority levels. Their selection was based on a) expertise on gender equality topics, b) years of experience in managing employees/teams and c) problem solving skills and proactive approach and d) diversity & complementarity with regards to background.

It is foreseen that the committee will meet at least twice a year to assess the results and apply any additional measures if required. Adopting a horizontal and participatory approach, the plan draft was presented to all employees of AKEP during the last strategic meeting of 2022,

so to be in effect from February 2023-onwards, after integrating a few feedback points that were emerged during the consultation process with staff. In addition, the plan is also foreseen to be integrated in the internal quality management system by the end of 2024 and be assessed by an external evaluator as part of the annual quality audit for ISO 9001:2015.

The process started with an analysis of the state-of-the-art of the key organizational procedures and business activities taking into account existing policies and aspects of the company culture that affect the gender perspective. During the initial year of executing the Gender Equality Plan for AKEP, it is essential to develop a "roadmap" outlining significant milestones. This roadmap focuses on establishing policies and tools aimed at addressing gender equality issues at the organizational level, which have been already within the organization's culture but haven't been consolidated in a concrete plan and procedures. The GEP aims to address prior detected needs related to:

- ✓ Enhancing dissemination and increase competence about equality, diversity, and inclusion within the organization and in its diverse network
- ✓ Capitalizing on findings & results of European projects and other training initiatives to boost gender equality, equity and inclusion
- ✓ Eliminating stereotypes that influence recruitment and career development
- ✓ Support for women at all stages of their careers
- ✓ Ensuring work-life balance, with particular emphasis on child care
- ✓ Equal representation for beneficiaries in local research & training activities, and mobilities abroad.
- ✓ Combating violence, discrimination and harassment

Following the above-mentioned needs, AKEP's gender equality plan is structured on **6** strategic areas, each one having a number of specific objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to be monitored and achieved within the 3-years period.

### **Area 1: Training and awareness programs to strengthen capacity on Gender & Equality and remove biases**

Objective 1.1: Design of/Participation in trainings and provision self-paced material on gender equality and unconscious biases for all staff members & trainers

Objective 1.2: Expanding collaboration with organizations that promote gender equality through a co-design approach



Objective 1.3: Elaborating training and communication actions on the importance of gender equality and improve the use of gender-neutral language

**Area 2: Gender Equality in Hiring and Career progression:**

Objective 2.1: Executing a transparent recruitment process that ensures gender-neutral job descriptions, unbiased selection of candidates and diverse selection committees.

Objective 2.2: Implement a fair and transparent promotion process.

**Area 3: Gender Balance in leadership and decision-making**

Objective 3.1: Ensure equal representation in strategic meetings and decision-making processes

**Area 4: Facilitating work-life balance**

Objective 4.1: Providing flexible working hours and remote working options.

Objective 4.2: Establishing parental leave policies that support both genders

**Area 5: Equal opportunities for participation of beneficiaries in training/research & mobilities**

Objective 5.1: Ensuring equal representation in training/research activities

Objective 5.2: Setting up a transparent process for selection in mobilities and limited-seats training (when applicable)

**Area 6: Combating harassment and discrimination for staff and learners**

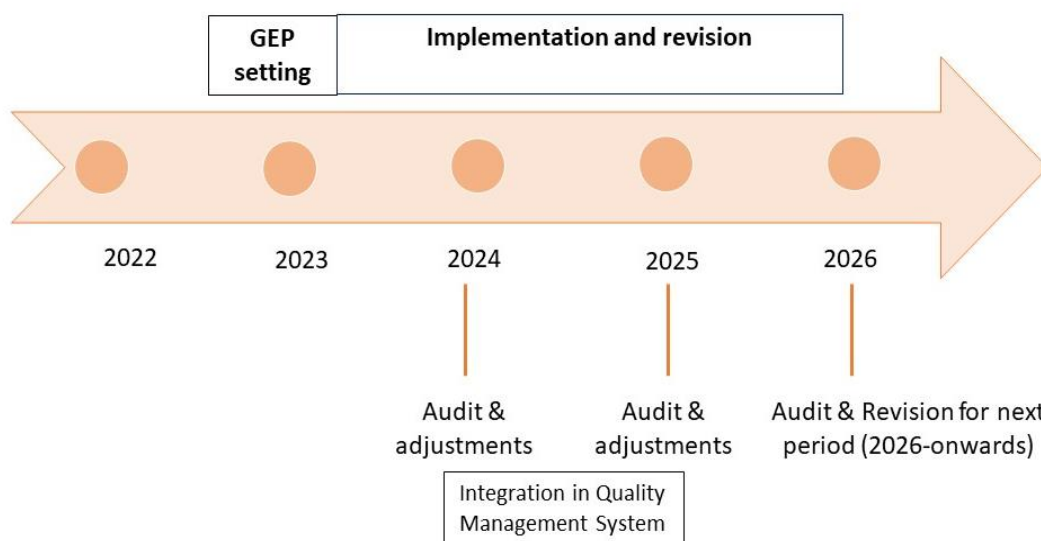
Objective 6.1 Establish clear policies and procedures to avoid and react properly on incidents

Objective 6.2 Foster a supportive environment where staff feel safe to voice concerns and seek assistance

## 4. Implementation of Gender Equality plan & Monitoring

Based on the defined areas and specific objectives per area as identified by the Gender Equality committee, an action plan was created so as to define specific measures, timelines, staff responsible for coordinating implantation and monitoring of KPIs associated with each objective.

The following figure illustrates the timeline of implementation process for the present plan by the Academy of Entrepreneurship.



About the monitoring process for the implementation of the plan, the gender equality committee will organize bi-annual meetings and conduct an annual audit, within one month after the end of each year. For this purpose, a specific audit tool will be used, available via the project Plotina ([plotina.eu](http://plotina.eu)). Leveraging results from EU-funded the committee will also utilize the quality standards booklet which was developed in Gender Equality (GE) Academy project (<https://ge-academy.eu/>) and support material, as well as other tools from the Plotina project.

Once the plan is in effect, the monitoring process will include:

- Regular progress reviews on established objectives and metrics: bi-annual meetings to review initiatives, milestones, and performance against established metrics.
- Data collection and analysis: Collection of relevant data on gender diversity, representation, promotions, training/research participation, and other relevant indicators and analysis to identify trends, gaps, and areas for improvement in gender equality within the organization.

- Employee feedback mechanisms: anonymous surveys and/or focus groups to gather input on the effectiveness of gender equality initiatives and the overall workplace climate
- Review of policies and practices: Review of existing policies, practices, and procedures to ensure they are aligned with the objectives of the gender equality plan including identification of any potential barriers or biases that may hinder progress towards gender equality
- Report and communication: Preparation of reports after annual audits on the implementation of the gender equality plan which will be shared with all employees, transparent and open discussion during strategic meetings about successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement
- Continuous improvement: Review and refinement of the gender equality plan based on monitoring findings, feedback from employees, and changes in the external environment. Strategies and initiatives will be adapted as needed to ensure continued progress towards gender equality goals.

As an integral part of this plan, the gender equality committee has compiled a detailed action plan for each identified key area and specific objectives, establishing concrete measures and clear targets, referent persons for implementation and monitoring, and KPIs for measuring each of the defined objectives per year. The action plan can be seen in detail below.

Key area	Objectives	Measures/ Actions	Direct target	Indirect target	Person(s) responsible	KPIs	Timeline & Results (2023- 2025)
<b>1. Training and awareness programs to strengthen capacity on Gender &amp; Equality and remove biases</b>	1.1 Design of/Participation in trainings and provision self-paced material on gender equality and unconscious biases for all staff members & trainers	To offer and guide staff/trainers to attend trainings on those topics  To create a repository with learning/ supporting material on how to implement gender sensitive training & how to design training/research taking into account use of sex and gender perspective	AKEP staff, volunteers, trainees	Beneficiaries/ learners, stakeholders	Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director  Vicky Axaopoulou, PM	No of trainings attended by staff ≥ 3  No of supporting material in repository available to staff ≥ 10 files	2023: 3 trainings, repository of supporting material (10 files) 2024: TBD 2025: TBD

Key area	Objectives	Measures/ Actions	Direct target	Indirect target	Person(s) responsible	KPIs	Timeline & Results (2023- 2025)
	1.2 Expanding collaboration with organizations that have expertise on gender equality through a co-design approach	Co-design and implementation of training projects/activities  Extend the network with relevant organisations at local/national EU level	AKEP staff, Partners/ Collaborators at EU level	Beneficiaries/ learners Educators Other training institutions	Alessandro Carbone, Senior PM	No of implemented projects on gender equality, diversity and inclusion $\geq 1$  No of new partnerships $\geq 3$	2023: 3 projects, 6 new partnerships  2024: TBD  2025: TBD
	1.3 Elaborating training and communication actions on the importance of gender equality and improve the use of gender-neutral language	Promoting gender equality via social media posts/ website content  Creation and delivery of training curricula incorporating the gender & sex dimension in content  Elaboration of an informative toolkit for the use of	AKEP staff (especially marketing experts), volunteers, trainees, researchers, AKEP audience	New partners, existing and new learners	Kalliopi Christopoulou, Senior PM	No of relevant SoMe posts & website articles $\geq 10$  No of trainings $\geq 2$  Information toolkit (Yes/No)	2023: 18 posts and articles, 4 trainings, Yes  2024: TBD  2025: TBD

Key area	Objectives	Measures/ Actions	Direct target	Indirect target	Person(s) responsible	KPIs	Timeline & Results (2023- 2025)
		gender sensitive language					
<b>2. Gender Equality in Hiring and Career progression</b>	2.1 Executing a transparent recruitment process that ensures gender-neutral job descriptions, unbiased selection of candidates and diverse selection committees	Guarantee equal opportunities in recruitment of new staff members  Balanced composition of interview committee	Candidates Staff Interns Volunteers Hiring Manager	Clients, Stakeholders, Underrepresented Groups	Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director  Kalliopi Christopoulou, Senior PM	Establishment of assessment criteria per vacancy (Yes/No)  Balanced ratio of interview committee (Yes, No)	2023: Yes, Yes 2024: TBD 2025: TBD
	2.2 Implement a fair and transparent promotion process	Establishment of assessment criteria for promotion and creation of document	AKEP staff, Senior management	Staff's families	Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director  Kalliopi Christopoulou, Senior PM	Promotion criteria documentation, accessible to all employees (Yes/No)	2023: Yes 2024: TBD 2025: TBD
<b>3. Gender Balance in</b>	3.1 Ensure equal representation in strategic meetings	Strategic team meetings composition: balanced in terms	Managing Director, Senior Managers, Staff	Experts Trainers	Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director	Balanced composition in strategic	2023: Yes, 87% 2024: TBD

Key area	Objectives	Measures/ Actions	Direct target	Indirect target	Person(s) responsible	KPIs	Timeline & Results (2023- 2025)
<b>leadership and decision-making</b>	and decision-making processes	of gender and seniority level  Annual survey among employees to measure the perception of equality in decision making			Alessandro Carbone, Senior PM	meetings (Yes/No)  Level of satisfaction on equal representation and decision making ≥ 85%	2025: TBD
<b>4. Facilitating work-life balance</b>	4.1 Providing flexible working hours and remote working options.	Flexible options for remote work, arrangements connected to children care, adjustment of working hours according to specific needs	AKEP staff	Staff's families	Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director	Establishment & application of relevant policy (Yes/No)	2023: Yes 2024: TBD 2025: TBD
	4.2 Establishing parental leave policies that support both genders	Additional days of parental leave apart from the days foreseen by the national law  Back to work training to get	AKEP staff	Staff's families	Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director	Extra days of parental leave (maternity & paternity) ≥ 14  Back to work training (Yes/No)	2023: N/A, N/A 2024: TBD 2025: TBD

Key area	Objectives	Measures/ Actions	Direct target	Indirect target	Person(s) responsible	KPIs	Timeline & Results (2023- 2025)
		informed about recent developments					
<b>5. Equal opportunities for participation of beneficiaries in training/research &amp; mobilities</b>	5.1 Ensuring equal representation in training/research activities	Establishing a transparent, fair and inclusive selection process	Project Managers, Researchers, beneficiaries/learners, interns, volunteers	Underrepresented Communities, educators, policy makers	Alessandro Carbone, Senior PM  Vicky Axaopoulou, PM	Comparison: No of men, women, non-binary gender participants in training activities  No of men, women, non-binary gender participants in research activities	2023: Training: 72 men, 125 women, Non-binary: N/A  Research: 25 men, 35 women, Non-binary: N/A  2024: TBD  2025: TBD
	5.2 Setting up a transparent process for selection in mobilities and limited-seats training.	Definition of selection criteria	Project managers, trainers	Underrepresented groups, local community	Kaliopi Christopoulou, Senior PM  Vicky Axaopoulou, PM	Criteria checklist (Yes/No)	2023: Yes  2024: TBD  2025: TBD



Key area	Objectives	Measures/ Actions	Direct target	Indirect target	Person(s) responsible	KPIs	Timeline & Results (2023- 2025)
<b>6. Combating harassment and discrimination for staff and learners</b>	6.1 Establish clear policies and procedures to avoid and react properly on such incidents	Creation of Anti-harassment & Anti-discrimination Policies and processes	AKEP Staff Learners Visitors	External experts/trainers	Vicky Axaopoulou, PM	Anti-harassment Policy document (Yes/No)  Anti-discrimination Policy document (Yes/No)  Incident log (Yes/No)  No of incidents= 0	2023: Yes, Yes, Yes, 0  2024: TBD  2025: TBD
	6.2 Foster a supportive environment where staff feel safe to voice concerns and seek assistance	Promoting psychological safety  Provision of Resources and Support:	AKEP staff	Support experts/professionals	Vicky Axaopoulou, PM  Andreas Stefanidis, Managing Director	Open-Door Policy (Yes/No)  Access to resources and support services (Yes/No)	2023: Yes, Yes  2024: TBD  2025: TBD

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