

# Gender Equality Plan

## Center Glas

Registered in the Republic of Slovenia

Adopted on: 01.02.2026

Valid for period: 2026–2029

Approved and signed by: Director

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## 1. Introduction and Legal Basis

Center Glas (hereinafter referred to as "the Institute") is a non-profit organisation (zavod) registered in Slovenia and operating in accordance with Slovenian law and applicable European Union legislation. In anticipation of organisational expansion and the recruitment of employees, collaborators, and project staff in the coming years, the Institute hereby adopts this Gender Equality Plan (GEP) to establish the framework and principles that will govern all aspects of gender equality as the organisation grows.

This GEP is adopted in compliance with Article 157 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Directive 2006/54/EC on the implementation of the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment of men and women in matters of employment and occupation, Directive (EU) 2019/1158 on work-life balance for parents and carers, the Slovenian Equal Opportunities for Women and Men Act (Zakon o enakih možnostih žensk in moških, ZEMŽM), the Slovenian Protection Against Discrimination Act (Zakon o varstvu pred diskriminacijo, ZVarD), and the requirements under Horizon Europe and other European Union funding programmes that mandate the establishment and publication of a GEP.

The Institute is committed to ensuring full equality between women and men and preventing all forms of discrimination based on gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or any other protected characteristic. The Director recognises that gender equality is not merely a legal obligation but a fundamental principle that strengthens organisational effectiveness, enhances innovation and creativity, and contributes to a fair and inclusive working environment.

This GEP is a public, formal document that is published on the official website of the Institute and made accessible to all future staff members, collaborators, project partners, research institutions, funding bodies, and the general public. The Plan is signed by the Director, who bears ultimate responsibility for its implementation and enforcement.

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## PART I – MANDATORY PROCESS-RELATED REQUIREMENTS

### 2. Publication and Formal Adoption

This GEP has been formally adopted by decision of the Director of the Institute. It constitutes an official policy document that is binding upon the Institute and all persons who will be employed,

engaged, or otherwise associated with the Institute in the future. The Plan is published on the official website of Center X in a location that is readily accessible and clearly signposted, ensuring that all interested parties, including prospective employees, collaborators, funding agencies, project partners, and the general public, can easily locate and review the document.

The Institute commits to maintaining the public availability of the GEP throughout its period of validity. Any amendments or updates to the Plan shall likewise be published on the Institute's website and communicated to all relevant stakeholders. The Plan shall be reviewed at least every three years, or more frequently if significant organisational changes occur, to ensure that it remains aligned with current legal requirements, best practices in the field of gender equality, and the evolving needs and structure of the Institute.

The Director retains ultimate responsibility for the implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of this GEP. This responsibility includes ensuring that adequate resources are allocated, that appropriate governance structures are established as the organisation expands, and that progress toward gender equality objectives is regularly assessed and reported.

### **3. Allocation of Dedicated Resources**

#### **3.1 Governance Structure**

The Institute recognises that effective implementation of a GEP requires dedicated human resources and clear lines of responsibility. While the Institute currently has no employees, the Director commits to establishing appropriate governance structures as soon as the organisation begins to grow. Once the Institute employs at least two individuals, or engages regular collaborators on a sustained basis, a Gender Equality Officer shall be designated. The Gender Equality Officer may be an internal staff member with designated responsibilities in this area or an external expert engaged on a consultancy basis, depending on the size and resources of the Institute at that time.

In addition to the Gender Equality Officer, the Institute shall establish a Gender Equality Committee composed of a minimum of two members. The Committee shall, to the extent feasible given the size of the organisation, be gender-balanced in its composition. The responsibilities of the Gender Equality Officer and the Gender Equality Committee shall include monitoring the implementation of the GEP, advising the Director and management on matters related to gender equality and non-discrimination, preparing annual monitoring reports on progress toward the objectives set forth in this Plan, reviewing and updating policies and procedures to ensure compliance with gender equality principles, and handling confidential complaints or concerns related to discrimination, harassment, or other violations of this Plan where applicable.

Until such time as the Institute has sufficient staff to establish a Gender Equality Committee, the Director herself shall assume the responsibilities of the Gender Equality Officer and shall ensure that all provisions of this Plan are implemented in good faith as the organisation expands.

#### **3.2 Human Resources**

The Institute commits to allocating designated working hours on an annual basis for the implementation, monitoring, and review of the GEP. The specific allocation of hours shall be proportionate to the size and complexity of the organisation and shall increase as the Institute grows and employs more staff. As a minimum, the Institute shall ensure that sufficient time is made available for conducting annual data collection and analysis, preparing monitoring reports,

organising training and awareness-raising activities, and reviewing recruitment and employment practices for compliance with gender equality principles.

The Institute shall engage internal or external expertise in the field of gender equality where such expertise is required and is not available within the organisation. This may include consultants, trainers, legal advisors, or other specialists who can provide guidance on best practices, assist in the development of policies and procedures, deliver training programmes, or support the Institute in conducting gender audits or impact assessments.

When the Institute begins to recruit employees or engage collaborators, it shall ensure that all recruitment panels include at least one member who has received training in unconscious gender bias and inclusive recruitment practices. This requirement shall apply regardless of the size of the recruitment panel and shall be implemented from the first recruitment process conducted by the Institute.

### **3.3 Financial Resources**

The Institute commits to allocating a dedicated annual budget line for activities related to the implementation of the GEP. This budget line shall cover expenditures related to training and awareness-raising activities, engagement of external expertise where required, monitoring and reporting activities, production and dissemination of awareness materials, and any other costs directly associated with the implementation of gender equality measures.

The allocation of financial resources shall be proportionate to the overall size and financial capacity of the Institute. At the current stage, when the Institute has no employees and limited operational activities, the budget allocation may be modest and focused primarily on maintaining compliance with publication requirements and planning for future expansion. As the Institute grows and recruits staff, the budget allocation shall be increased to reflect the greater need for training, monitoring, external expertise, and other implementation activities.

The Director shall review the adequacy of the budget allocation on an annual basis and shall ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet the objectives set forth in this Plan.

## **4. Data Collection and Monitoring**

The Institute recognises that evidence-based decision-making is essential to the effective implementation of gender equality policies. Accordingly, the Institute commits to systematic collection, analysis, and monitoring of gender-disaggregated data. While the Institute currently has no employees and therefore has no data to collect, the following framework shall be implemented as soon as the Institute begins to employ staff or engage collaborators.

### **4.1 Gender-Disaggregated Data Collection**

From the moment the Institute employs its first staff member or engages its first collaborator, the Institute shall collect and maintain gender-disaggregated data on an annual basis. The data to be collected shall include, at a minimum, the number of employees disaggregated by gender, contract type (permanent, fixed-term, freelance, or other), and working time arrangement (full-time or part-time); the gender distribution in management positions and decision-making roles; recruitment data including the number of applicants, shortlisted candidates, and selected candidates disaggregated by gender for each position advertised; salary distribution by gender, calculated on a full-time

equivalent basis where applicable, to enable monitoring of potential gender pay gaps; participation in training and professional development activities disaggregated by gender; and the uptake of work-life balance measures, including parental leave, flexible working arrangements, and other family-friendly policies, disaggregated by gender.

If the Institute engages students, interns, researchers, volunteers, or other categories of individuals who are not formal employees, gender-disaggregated data shall also be collected for these groups where it is legally permissible and relevant to do so. All data collection shall be conducted in full compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Slovenian data protection law. Personal data shall be processed only for the purposes of monitoring and promoting gender equality, shall be stored securely, and shall be accessible only to individuals with a legitimate need to access such data for the purposes of implementing this Plan.

## **4.2 Monitoring and Reporting**

The Institute shall prepare an annual internal Gender Equality Report that analyses the data collected, evaluates progress toward the targets set forth in this Plan, identifies any areas of concern or inequality, and proposes corrective measures where necessary. The annual report shall be reviewed by the Director and, once established, by the Gender Equality Committee. Based on the findings of the annual report, the Director shall adopt any measures necessary to address identified gaps or challenges and to ensure continued progress toward gender equality objectives.

Key performance indicators shall be established and monitored on an annual basis. These indicators shall be tailored to the size and nature of the Institute's activities but shall, at a minimum, track gender balance in recruitment, gender balance in leadership and decision-making, uptake of work-life balance measures, participation in training and development, and any incidents of discrimination or harassment. The Director retains the authority to establish additional indicators as the Institute grows and as new areas of focus emerge.

Where the monitoring process reveals persistent patterns of inequality, underrepresentation of a particular gender, unexplained pay gaps, or other concerns, the Director shall take immediate action to investigate the causes and implement corrective measures. Such measures may include targeted recruitment efforts, revision of salary structures, additional training for staff and management, or other interventions as appropriate.

## **5. Training and Awareness-Raising**

The Institute is committed to fostering a culture of gender equality, respect, and inclusion through regular training and awareness-raising activities. These activities shall be implemented as soon as the Institute begins to employ staff or engage collaborators and shall be mandatory for all individuals associated with the Institute.

### **5.1 Target Groups**

Training and awareness-raising activities shall be provided to all staff members regardless of their position, contract type, or working time arrangement. The Director and any future members of management or decision-making bodies shall participate in training programmes as a matter of priority, recognising that leadership commitment is essential to the successful implementation of gender equality policies. Members of recruitment panels shall receive specific training on unconscious gender bias, inclusive recruitment practices, and gender-neutral language. Project

leaders, principal investigators, and other individuals with supervisory or managerial responsibilities shall receive training on inclusive leadership, prevention of harassment and discrimination, and the promotion of work-life balance.

## **5.2 Content of Training**

Training programmes shall cover the following topics, adapted as necessary to the specific context and needs of the Institute. First, training shall address the fundamental principles of gender equality, including legal frameworks at the European and national levels, the Institute's obligations under this GEP, and the business and ethical case for gender equality. Second, training shall address unconscious gender bias, including how stereotypes and implicit assumptions can influence decision-making in recruitment, promotion, performance evaluation, and day-to-day interactions. Third, training shall cover inclusive leadership practices, including strategies for creating a respectful and supportive working environment, recognising and addressing microaggressions, and promoting equal opportunities for career development. Fourth, training shall address the prevention of gender-based violence, harassment, and sexual harassment, including definitions of prohibited conduct, the Institute's zero-tolerance policy, reporting mechanisms, and the rights and protections available to individuals who report such conduct. Fifth, training shall cover work-life balance rights, including entitlements to parental leave, flexible working arrangements, and other family-friendly measures, as well as the importance of respecting boundaries and avoiding the expectation of constant availability.

## **5.3 Implementation of Training**

The Institute commits to organising at least one awareness-raising or training activity per year. The format of these activities may vary depending on the size of the organisation, available resources, and the specific learning objectives. Activities may include workshops, seminars, webinars, e-learning modules, discussion sessions, or other formats. Participation in training activities shall be mandatory for the Director and any future members of management. All other staff members shall be strongly encouraged to participate, and participation rates shall be monitored as part of the annual Gender Equality Report.

Training materials shall be documented and made available to all participants. Attendance at training activities shall be recorded to enable monitoring of compliance and to identify any individuals or groups who may require additional support or follow-up training. Where the Institute does not have in-house expertise to deliver training on specific topics, external experts, trainers, or consultants shall be engaged to ensure that training is of high quality and reflects current best practices in the field of gender equality.

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# **PART II – RECOMMENDED THEMATIC AREAS WITH MEASURES AND TARGETS**

## **6. Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture**

The Institute recognises that achieving gender equality requires not only formal policies but also the cultivation of an organisational culture that values work-life balance, respects the diverse needs and responsibilities of individuals, and actively supports all staff members in balancing their

professional and personal lives. As the Institute grows, it shall implement the following measures to promote work-life balance and foster an inclusive organisational culture.

The Institute shall offer flexible working arrangements to all staff members where such arrangements are compatible with the nature of their work and the operational requirements of the Institute. Flexible arrangements may include flexible starting and finishing times, compressed working weeks, remote work or telework options, and other arrangements that enable individuals to manage their work schedules in a manner that accommodates their personal and family responsibilities. Access to flexible working arrangements shall be available to all staff members regardless of gender, and the Institute shall monitor uptake by gender to ensure that flexible arrangements are not disproportionately used by one gender, which could inadvertently reinforce traditional gender roles.

The Institute shall ensure equal access to parental leave and other family-related leave for all genders. While statutory entitlements to parental leave are established by Slovenian law, the Institute shall actively encourage all eligible individuals to take the leave to which they are entitled and shall ensure that taking parental leave does not negatively affect an individual's career progression, performance evaluation, or standing within the organisation. The Institute shall also consider offering enhanced parental leave provisions beyond the statutory minimum where resources permit.

Workload allocation shall be transparent and equitable. The Director and any future managers shall ensure that tasks, responsibilities, and projects are distributed fairly among team members, taking into account individual capacities, contractual working hours, and other commitments. The Institute shall respect normal working hours and shall not create an expectation of constant availability outside of agreed working times. Communication policies shall be established to discourage emails, messages, or other work-related communications outside of working hours unless there is a genuine emergency.

The Institute establishes the following targets for the period 2026 to 2029. First, the Institute shall maintain gender-balanced uptake of flexible working arrangements, with neither gender accounting for more than seventy percent of individuals using such arrangements. Second, one hundred percent of staff members shall be informed on an annual basis about their rights to work-life balance measures, including parental leave, flexible working, and other entitlements. Third, the Institute shall maintain a zero-tolerance policy for discrimination or adverse treatment related to family responsibilities, pregnancy, parental leave, or the use of work-life balance measures.

## **7. Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making**

The Institute is committed to achieving gender balance in leadership positions and decision-making bodies. While the Institute is currently led by a female Director, the Institute recognises that as the organisation expands and additional leadership roles are created, it is essential to ensure that opportunities for leadership are accessible to individuals of all genders and that decision-making processes benefit from diverse perspectives.

Selection procedures for all leadership roles, including management positions, project leaders, principal investigators, committee chairs, and other positions of responsibility, shall be transparent, merit-based, and conducted in accordance with the principles of equal opportunity. Job descriptions and selection criteria shall be clearly defined, published in advance, and applied consistently to all

candidates. The Institute shall actively encourage individuals of the underrepresented gender to apply for leadership roles and shall take steps to address any barriers that may discourage certain groups from putting themselves forward for such positions.

Where the Institute establishes committees, working groups, advisory bodies, or other decision-making structures, the composition of such bodies shall be gender-balanced to the extent feasible. This does not mean that every committee must have a perfectly equal number of men and women, particularly in a small organisation, but rather that the Institute shall make good faith efforts to ensure diverse representation and shall avoid situations where decision-making bodies are composed entirely or overwhelmingly of one gender.

The Institute establishes the following targets. First, the Institute shall strive to achieve at least forty percent representation of each gender in all decision-making bodies, management positions, and leadership roles by the end of the 2026 to 2029 period. This target is aspirational and recognises that in a very small organisation it may not always be mathematically possible to achieve this balance; however, the Institute commits to making demonstrable efforts toward this goal. Second, the gender composition of leadership and decision-making bodies shall be monitored on an annual basis and reported in the annual Gender Equality Report. Third, gender equality objectives shall be included in the performance evaluation of individuals in leadership positions, ensuring that leaders are held accountable for promoting equality within their areas of responsibility.

## **8. Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression**

The Institute is committed to ensuring that all recruitment processes are fair, transparent, and free from gender bias. From the first recruitment process that the Institute conducts, all job advertisements, selection criteria, and recruitment procedures shall comply with the principles set forth in this section.

All job advertisements shall use gender-neutral language and shall avoid terminology or phrasing that may appeal more to one gender than another or that may inadvertently reinforce gender stereotypes. Job titles, role descriptions, and lists of required qualifications shall be reviewed to ensure that they do not exclude or discourage candidates of any gender from applying. The Institute shall avoid requiring qualifications or experience that are not genuinely necessary for the position, as such requirements may disproportionately disadvantage certain groups.

Selection criteria for all positions shall be transparent, objective, and directly related to the requirements of the role. Criteria shall be documented in writing prior to the commencement of the recruitment process and shall be applied consistently to all candidates. All recruitment panels shall include at least one member who has received training in unconscious gender bias and inclusive recruitment practices. In cases where the Institute is conducting its first recruitment and no panel member has yet received such training, the Director shall ensure that training is completed before interviews or final selection decisions are made, or shall engage an external advisor to support the process.

The Institute adheres strictly to the principle of equal pay for equal work. Salary levels for all positions shall be determined on the basis of objective criteria, including the level of responsibility, required qualifications and experience, complexity of tasks, and market rates for comparable roles. Gender shall never be a factor in determining salary, and the Institute shall conduct regular reviews to ensure that no unjustified gender pay gaps exist. If any pay gap is identified that cannot be

explained by objective, non-discriminatory factors, the Institute shall take immediate action to rectify the situation.

The Institute establishes the following targets. First, one hundred percent of job postings shall use gender-neutral and inclusive language. Second, selection criteria shall be documented in writing and applied transparently in one hundred percent of recruitment procedures. Third, the Institute commits to maintaining zero unjustified gender pay gap, meaning that any differences in pay between genders shall be fully explainable by objective, non-discriminatory factors such as differences in qualifications, experience, or role requirements.

## **9. Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Project Activities**

Where relevant to the mission and activities of the Institute, gender perspectives shall be integrated into research design, data collection and analysis methodologies, project proposals, educational or training content, and other substantive work undertaken by the Institute. The integration of the gender dimension is a recognised principle in European research and innovation policy and is increasingly required in applications for European Union funding.

At the outset of each project or research activity, the Institute shall conduct an assessment to determine whether the gender dimension is relevant to the subject matter. This assessment shall consider whether the research topic, target population, or expected outcomes have any gender-related aspects that should be taken into account. Where the gender dimension is found to be relevant, the Institute shall ensure that research questions are formulated in a manner that considers potential gender differences, that data collection methods allow for gender-disaggregated analysis where appropriate, that analytical frameworks are sensitive to gender issues, and that project outcomes and dissemination activities reflect awareness of gender considerations.

The Institute recognises that not all research or project activities have a relevant gender dimension. In fields where gender is not a significant variable, or where the subject matter does not relate to human populations or social phenomena, the gender dimension may not be applicable. However, the Institute commits to conducting a good faith assessment in every case and to documenting the rationale for determining that the gender dimension is or is not relevant.

The Institute establishes the following targets. First, a gender relevance assessment shall be conducted in one hundred percent of proposals submitted for European Union funding or other external funding that requires consideration of the gender dimension. Second, where the gender dimension is found to be scientifically or socially relevant, it shall be integrated into the project design, methodology, and expected outputs. The Institute shall monitor compliance with this target through the annual Gender Equality Report.

## **10. Measures Against Gender-Based Violence and Sexual Harassment**

The Institute adopts a zero-tolerance policy toward all forms of gender-based violence, harassment, and sexual harassment. The Institute is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and dignified working environment for all individuals, and will not tolerate any conduct that undermines this commitment.

Gender-based violence includes physical, sexual, psychological, or economic harm inflicted on an individual on the basis of their gender. Harassment includes unwelcome conduct related to gender that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile,

degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment. Sexual harassment includes unwelcome verbal, non-verbal, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that has the same purpose or effect. The Institute recognises that such conduct may be perpetrated by colleagues, supervisors, clients, project partners, or any other individuals with whom staff members interact in the course of their work.

The Institute shall adopt a Code of Conduct that includes specific provisions prohibiting gender-based violence, harassment, and sexual harassment. The Code of Conduct shall apply to all individuals associated with the Institute, including employees, collaborators, interns, volunteers, contractors, and visitors. The Code shall set out clear standards of behaviour, provide examples of prohibited conduct, and explain the consequences of violations.

The Institute shall establish a confidential reporting mechanism through which individuals can report incidents of gender-based violence, harassment, or sexual harassment. Reports may be made to the Gender Equality Officer, to the Director, or to another designated individual, depending on the circumstances and the preferences of the reporting individual. The Institute shall ensure that individuals who report such conduct in good faith are protected against retaliation, adverse treatment, or victimisation. All reports shall be taken seriously and investigated promptly, impartially, and confidentially.

Where an investigation confirms that prohibited conduct has occurred, the Institute shall take appropriate disciplinary action, which may include warnings, suspension, termination of employment or engagement, or other measures proportionate to the severity of the conduct. In cases involving criminal conduct, the Institute shall refer the matter to the competent authorities in accordance with Slovenian law. The Institute shall also take steps to support individuals who have been subjected to such conduct, which may include offering access to counselling services, adjusting working arrangements, or taking other measures to ensure their safety and well-being.

The Institute establishes the following targets. First, one hundred percent of staff members shall be informed on an annual basis about the Institute's zero-tolerance policy, the definition of prohibited conduct, and the procedures for reporting incidents. Second, all reported incidents shall be investigated immediately and handled in accordance with the Institute's procedures. Third, the procedures for handling complaints shall be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that they remain effective, accessible, and compliant with legal requirements.

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## **11. Implementation Timeline**

The implementation of this GEP shall proceed according to the following timeline. In the year 2026, the Institute shall establish the Gender Equality Committee as soon as staffing levels permit, collect baseline data on gender-related indicators as soon as the first employees or collaborators are engaged, and conduct the first training or awareness-raising activity. In the year 2027, the Institute shall prepare a mid-term monitoring report that evaluates progress toward the targets set forth in this Plan, identifies any challenges or obstacles encountered during the initial phase of implementation, and proposes adjustments to measures or targets as necessary. In the year 2028, the Institute shall review the targets established in this Plan in light of the mid-term evaluation, adjust measures as needed to address any areas where progress has been insufficient, and continue to collect data and monitor implementation. In the year 2029, the Institute shall conduct a full evaluation of the GEP, prepare a comprehensive final report on the outcomes achieved during the

2026 to 2029 period, and commence the process of renewing or updating the Plan for the subsequent three-year period.

This timeline is indicative and may be adjusted in response to the actual pace of organisational growth. If the Institute grows more rapidly than anticipated, implementation activities may be accelerated. Conversely, if growth is slower, certain activities may be delayed. However, the Institute commits to adhering to the overall framework and principles set forth in this Plan regardless of the specific timing of individual measures.

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## **12. Review, Validity, and Amendment**

This GEP enters into force upon signature by the Director and shall remain valid for a period of three years, covering the period from 2026 to 2029. The Plan is subject to annual monitoring through the preparation of internal Gender Equality Reports, as described in Section 4 of this document. The Director shall review the Plan and the progress reports on an annual basis and shall adopt any corrective measures necessary to ensure effective implementation.

At the conclusion of the three-year period, the Plan shall be comprehensively reviewed and either renewed for a further period or replaced with an updated Plan that reflects the current size, structure, and activities of the Institute as well as any changes in legal requirements or best practices. The Institute may also amend this Plan at any time before the expiration of the three-year period if significant organisational changes occur, if new legal requirements are introduced, or if monitoring reveals that certain provisions of the Plan are not effective and require revision.

Any amendments to this Plan shall be adopted by decision of the Director, published on the Institute's website, and communicated to all staff members, collaborators, and other relevant stakeholders. The Institute commits to maintaining transparency and accountability throughout the implementation, monitoring, and review of this GEP.

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Polonca Frelih  
Director, Center Glas

Ljubljana, 01.02.2026