



## Department of Life Sciences

Equality Plan of the Department of Life Sciences

### Equal Opportunities 2020

This document also functions as the Statement of the Department of Life Sciences (Department 2) on TU Braunschweig's Final Report on the DFG<sup>1</sup>'s Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality 2013

#### Preliminary remarks

The Department of Life Sciences is committed to providing equal opportunities in the sciences and supports the implementation of the equality directive as it is set out in §3 Sect. 3 NHG (Niedersächsisches Hochschulgesetz, Lower Saxony Higher Education Act). For this reason, the Department of Life Sciences has developed this Decentralised Equality Plan, which also serves as the department's statement on the Final Report of the DFG's Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality. This Decentralised Equality Plan is a department-specific supplement to the university's Central Equality Plan. It will form part of TU Braunschweig's Final Report on the DFG's Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality.

The targets for gender relations set forth in this Decentralised Equality Plan – as well as in all the other decentralized equality plans and in the Central Equality Plan – are to be met by 2020. This timing was defined to enable significant changes, in particular in the area of professorships: comparatively few new appointments are scheduled for the period from 2013 to 2016, but starting in 2017, a larger number of professorial positions will become vacant at TU Braunschweig.

The Department of Life Sciences is committed to the following targets (Section 1) and measures (Section 2) in the areas structural basis of equality (Section 2.1), closing the gap of underrepresentation (Section 2.2), becoming a family-friendly university (Section 2.3), and the

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<sup>1</sup> Translator's Note (TN): The DFG (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft) is the central self-governing research funding organisation in Germany (source: [http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg\\_profile/index.html](http://www.dfg.de/en/dfg_profile/index.html)).

incorporation of gender into research, teaching and administration (Section 2.4).

## 1. Targets for 2020

Qualification level	Actual figure, 2012	Target for 2020
Entering female students	On 15/12/2012: 61%	61%
Current female students	On 15/12/2012: 66%	66%
New female graduates***	2012 summer semester: 58%	58%
Female doctoral graduates	2011 calendar year: 57%	57%
Female habilitation <sup>2</sup> graduates	2011 calendar year: 29%	–*
Female junior professors	On 01/12/2012: -	–*
Female professors (total)	On 01/12/2012: 20%	25%**
Female C4/W3 <sup>3</sup> professors	On 01/12/2012: 20%	25%**
Women in executive positions at the departmental level****	29%	29%

\* The number of cases is very low.

\*\* including appointments up until 31/12/2020

\*\*\* excluding State Examinations (figures not available to the Department)

\*\*\*\* Dean and Heads of Department

## 2. List of measures

The following measures are intended to ensure that equality and family-friendliness become integral parts of the organizational culture in the Department of Life Sciences, and that the set targets are met.

### 2.1 Structural anchoring of gender equality

In the interest of the advancement of equal opportunities, gender equality will be anchored in our department's structure.

#### 2.1.1 Responsibility at the executive level

Equal opportunities are a value that should be upheld by each and every member of the

<sup>2</sup> TN: A habilitation is a post-doctoral qualification and the most common path for obtaining a professorship in Germany.

<sup>3</sup> TN: C4 and W3 are the highest salary grades for university professors.

Department of Life Sciences, with the department's leadership bearing special responsibility for ensuring this value is put into practice.

### 2.1.2 Equality and Family Working Group and Jour Fixe

The Dean of the Department of Life Sciences takes part in the Equality and Family Working Group (AG Gleichstellung und Familie) and the Equality and Family Jour Fixe (Jour Fixe Gleichstellung und Familie, an annual meeting). The Working Group comprises the deans of the university's departments, the heads of the administrative departments, the chairperson of the "TUBSundFamilie e.V." association, the Family Office Advisor, the Dual Career Couples Advisor, the chairperson of the Gender Equality Commission as well as the Equal Opportunities Officer. The purpose of the Working Group is to coordinate activities relating to gender equality and family-friendliness in order to achieve synergies. It meets once every summer semester. The Equality and Family Jour Fixe is a meeting attended by the Working Group and TU Braunschweig's President. It takes place once every winter semester.

### 2.1.3 Decentralised Equal Opportunities Officers

Department 2's Decentralised Equal Opportunities Officers have a say in all of the department's staffing and appointment procedures. Department 2's institutes ensure that the Decentralised Equal Opportunities Officers are freed up from their everyday duties as needed to fulfil their tasks.

### 2.1.4 Gender assessments

The Department of Life Sciences regularly reports gender relations at all qualification levels in its statistics. It practices gender assessments, a top-down management process to ensure the achievement of gender equality. Academic achievements are recorded by gender.

## **2.2 Closing the gap of underrepresentation**

In its efforts to reduce the underrepresentation of women, the Department of Life Sciences considers the specific characteristics of each discipline. At the professorial level, women are underrepresented across the board. At all other qualification levels, the percentage of women is already above average. Within this context, the Department of Life Sciences is taking the following steps to keep the gender ratio at its current level for entering students, current

students, new graduates and completed doctorates, and to increase women's opportunities for advancement to the professorial level.

#### 2.2.1. Recruiting and supporting female secondary school students

At the Agnes Pockels Pupils' Laboratory, children and adolescents are introduced to the natural sciences. Special emphasis is placed on reaching a gender balance here. The Biotechnological Secondary School Students' Laboratory (Biotechnologisches Schülerlabor, BioS) has the same goal. BioS is financed by TU Braunschweig and the Helmholtz Centre for Infection Research (HZI).

Department 2 also takes part in projects coordinated by the Equal Opportunities Office: "Future Day for Girls and Boys" (Zukunftstag für Mädchen und Jungen) and "Mentoring for Female Secondary School Students" (Mentoring für Schülerinnen).

#### 2.2.2 Supporting female students

Department 2's professors regularly urge suitable female students and recent graduates to consider enrolling in a Master's degree or doctoral programme and/or to apply for doctorate or habilitation positions. New faculty members are made aware of this. Female students are also regularly nominated for awards

Department 2 is also involved in the female students projects coordinated by the Equal Opportunities Office: "Tailored Career" (Karriere nach Maß), which offers key competency and mentoring for female students, and fiMINT, which offers various qualification opportunities for women in STEM fields.

#### 2.2.3 Supporting female doctoral students

Department 2's professors regularly urge suitable female scientists to consider taking up and/or pursuing a career in science. Female scientists with a completed doctorate are regularly encouraged to apply for habilitation positions, junior professorships or post-doc positions at the local, national and international levels. Female early career scientists are included in research alliances. Suitable female candidates are nominated for competitions and awards on a regular basis.

Department 2 also participates in the qualification courses and networking opportunities offered by the fiMINT programme.

#### 2.2.4 Supporting female habilitation students

At Department 2, female habilitation students receive intensive guidance and individual support. The department is also involved in fiMINT's qualification courses and networking opportunities for young female scientists. Female habilitation graduates are urged to apply for professorships. These recruitment efforts must be accompanied by measures that promote our university's family-friendliness since habilitation typically falls in that period in a person's life when he or she wants to start a family.

#### 2.2.5 Active recruitment of female professors

The Department of Life Sciences actively recruits female professors. This applies to the entire department, but in particular to those disciplines where the percentage of women at professorial level is less than 10% (chemistry and biosciences). Appointment committee members are regularly made aware of this. These recruitment efforts must be complemented by measures that promote the university's family-friendliness.

### **2.3 Family-friendly university**

The Department for Life Sciences actively advocates for a balance between family life and studying or working, for the benefit of its students, scientific, technical and administrative staff. The concept of family-friendliness means above all that TU members have the chance to adequately care for their children or dependant relatives.

#### 2.3.1 Supporting scientific staff with family responsibilities

Department 2 supports its employees who are on parental leave by keeping in touch with them and continuing to involve them in the department's planning procedures. Employees with family responsibilities are offered flexible work arrangements (for example the option of working from home). Where possible, we extend qualification times as specified in the Academic Fixed-Term Contracts Act (Wissenschaftszeitvertragsgesetz).

### 2.3.2 Family-Friendly University Audit

The Department of Life Sciences advocates for our continued development towards being a family-friendly university. It regularly takes part in the audit process of the same name.

## **2.4 Incorporation of gender into research, teaching and administration**

The Department of Life Sciences strives to intensify the inclusion of gender into research, teaching and administration.

### 2.4.1 Gender in research and teaching

Department 2 explicitly supports the incorporation of gender into research and teaching as practiced at the Department of the History of Science and Pharmacy. The department welcomes further projects that explore gender-related issues.

### 2.4.2 Gender and diversity as a communications and managerial skill

The Department of Life Sciences supports the development of courses to raise awareness of gender and diversity in current and future managers and HR personnel.

### 2.4.3 Gender-neutral language

Department 2 continues to use sufficiently gender-neutral language.