



Lakeside Labs GmbH Gender Equality Plan

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Issued by the directors

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Prelude

Lakeside Labs is a non-profit company for the scientific research and development of self-organizing networked systems. The goal is the application and improvement of self-organization methods in the fields of IoT, robotics, production and transportation.

The management is strongly committed to the principles of *equality* and *transparency*. Every employee actively contributes to a corporate culture and an open attitude towards all people to reflect diversity in everyday professional and personal life and to prevent discrimination, harassment or bullying.

The management considers *diversity* as a fundamental value and opportunity. A team of highly-qualified experts with different biographical and cultural backgrounds is one of our essential assets to come up with new scientific questions and solutions and to generate innovations.

A central concern is an open and transparent communication among each other, based on tolerance, appreciation, consideration, and mutual support. Inequities based on gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity or culture, religion, social or educational background, age, or disability are not tolerated. Equality between women, men, and other gender identities are in all functions. It is the responsibility of the management and all employees to create this environment, to protect against discriminatory and degrading behavior, promote equal opportunities, and eliminate underrepresentation. Despite the low proportion of women in engineering and computer science, the equality of all employees has been established in many areas for years through numerous measures and examples.

This equality plan shows the status quo and *seven specific objectives* with some measures to achieve these goals. Gender equality is an iterative and living process, which will be evaluated and adapted to current and future changes. We aim to support the individual life situations and career plans of our employees.

The process will make sure that the GEP is based on quantitative and qualitative data, will be embedded in the Lakeside Labs strategy, the results will be evaluated and communicated within the organization, and the mentioned objectives will be monitored.

Finally, we would like to thank our employees for giving our feedback, so that Lakeside Labs is able to develop and progress to provide a gender-equal workplace.

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Objective 1 : Strive toward gender balance

Current situation: Lakeside Labs has 17 employees as of March 2022. The percentage of women is 39 %. In management positions, the ratio of women versus men is 1 :1 (one managing director, one scientific director). In scientific positions, one third of employees is female, which is above the Austrian average for IT being 18%¹ and a little bit below women among scientists in the higher education sector being 40%².

In the case of job advertisements and appointments, potential and qualified female applicants are motivated to apply and given preferential consideration in the case of equal qualifications. Lakeside Labs is committed to the principle of high quality applicants when filling positions and defines the specific job requirements in advance in a transparent, objective and non-discriminatory manner. The recruiting team always consists of team members from the project for which the applicant is applying to ensure that the person "fits" into the team.

Goal and action items: The Lakeside Labs management strives for 50 % : 50 % in gender diversity. Measures to achieve this goal include actively recruiting women, offering jobs for female students and summer interns, and participating in events to introduce young women and girls to the job profile in our field.

Objective 2: Maintain flexible working time and good work-life-balance

Current situation: Lakeside Labs offers flexible working time ("Gleitzeit") and part-time models, parental leave for women and men, "Papamonat" as well as teleworking and home office options. We support flexible working time models for mothers and fathers to reconcile work and raising children. All these offers are well received. The compatibility of family, private life, and career is complemented by unbureaucratic processing of applications.

Goal and action items: Maintain the current situation.

Objective 3: Continue measures for career planning

Current situation: Lakeside Labs offers positions and careers in scientific research, research management, research engineering, and support. At certain levels, both researchers and research managers can take different roles, like project management. These roles are not gender related. Measures to promote careers are identified at the annual performance review ("Mitarbeitergespräch"). The scientific director serves as mentor for some researchers on a voluntary basis.

Goal and action items: Continue with the established measures. Refine career options.

¹ <https://sheconomy.media/it-branche-hat-stark-an-bedeutung-gewonnen/>

² Gender Equality in Science and Research in Austria, A. Wroblewski, A. Striedinger, S. 99, 2018

Objective 4: Strictly avoid gender payment gaps

Current situation: The Lakeside Labs management negotiates salaries with newly hired staff, discusses about salary increases, and decides about the annual indexing of the employees. The salaries of the Lakeside Labs managers have been negotiated with the owners. Emphasis is set to equal and fair payment of all employees, taking into consideration experience and qualification of each person. Starting salaries for scientific positions, both at the level of researcher and senior researcher, are based on the salaries paid in national FWF projects. The general income report is collected every two years, as required by law, and shows the income differences between women and men. Thanks to the small size of Lakeside Labs, differences are seen very fast and the gap will be closed. Lakeside Labs makes no difference between genders in payment but on the level of experience, qualification, performance and engagement, and responsibility within projects (e.g. project lead roles).

Goal and action items: Continue with the established measures.

Objective 5: Offer a strictly discrimination-free working environment

Current situation: The Lakeside Labs management does not tolerate any direct or indirect immaterial discrimination (due to gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or cultural affiliation, religion, social background, educational background, age, or disability). All forms of harassment are considered undesirable, inappropriate, derogatory, offensive, and will not be tolerated. All employees should be able to develop independently according to their talents and personal preferences irrespective of gender. No one should experience violence, discrimination, or stereotypical prejudice.

The offers of Lakeside Labs are all equally accessible to employees regardless of gender. All employees are equally reimbursed (e.g., reimbursement of expenses). Comments on gender, sexual orientation, etc. during discussions and/or meetings is not permitted. Gender, sexual orientation, etc. are irrelevant when assessing the quality of work and the distribution of tasks. Management will not tolerate any form of harassment, bullying and behavior that violates human dignity.

Goal and action items: Continue with the established measures. Raise awareness among new employees and student staff.

Objective 6: Managing director acts as "gender officer"

Current situation: Due to the small company size there is no dedicated gender officer yet. Currently the management is executing and monitoring the gender equality in all aspects of the company. An open-door policy allows every employee to address issues and requested measures for change. An anonymous post-box for suggestions is not implemented as it would be easy to trace back to a person.

Goal and action items: Formally establish managing director as gender officer.

Objective 7: Participate in training on diversity and team leadership

Current situation: The Lakeside Labs management and some employees attended training courses on team leadership, team work, diversity, and intercultural communication. The Lakeside Labs management did not receive any specific training on gender-related aspects.

Goal and action items: To promote a gender-sensitive environment, we plan to offer (additional) training for the gender officer and project leaders in the topics of equality, gender, and diversity. Specialists will do the training.

Summary of main action items

The management identified the following topics for improvement of gender equality at Lakeside Labs for the upcoming years:

Strategy and monitoring

Already in place:

- Performance figures collected and reported

Need for action & measures:

- Inclusion of the priority areas of the gender equality plan in the annual strategy of the Lakeside Labs

Personnel: Ratio of females and males

Already in place:

- Currently 33% female researchers are working at Lakeside Labs GmbH
- Job advertisements with an explicit request for female applicants
- Gender-equitable composition of the interview committee

Need for action & measures:

- Target job advertisements even more explicitly to women and thus increase the proportion of female researchers to 50%
- Keep at least the current proportion of women at Lakeside Labs

Salaries

Already in place:

- Payment is not dependent on gender.
- New hired experts are paid according to yearly-published FWF salary tables and comparable positions at the University of Klagenfurt in order to avoid competition.

Need for action & measures:

- Analysis and monitoring of a gender-fair salary for all employees

Trainings

Already in place:

- Self-study regarding gender issues via the Internet, etc. by the management

Need for action & measures:

- Workshops for management and project leaders (e.g. unconscious bias training, gender-based violence, etc.)
- Awareness raising for all employees to gender and diversity

Contact

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