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HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY AND PLAN

- 2024-2027 -

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Preamble:

INCDFT-IFT Iaşi complies with all European and national laws and regulations concerning equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, and promotes them at all levels and in all areas of its activity.

The provisions of this Gender Equality Strategy and Plan do not infringe upon the privacy of employees or other individuals to whom it applies.

The measures adopted within this Gender Equality Plan aim to: a) Promote mutual respect and ensure equal opportunities for employees and third parties;
b) Recognize differences as a potential source of both individual and organizational development and growth, while promoting and valuing diversity;
c) Adopt positive measures designed to address and prevent inequalities, promoting—both internally and externally—values that ensure equal opportunities and gender equality in the research-development-innovation sector.

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ART. 1. DEFINITIONS, COMMITMENTS, PRINCIPLES

(1) In accordance with the provisions of Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment for women and men, "sexual category" shall be understood as the set of biological and physiological characteristics that defines women and men, while "gender" shall refer to the set of: role, behavior, features, and activities that society considers appropriate for women and, respectively, for men.

(2) INCDFT-IFT Iași aims to ensure equal opportunities for women and men in research, administration, and leadership activities, to provide equal working conditions, non-discriminatory access to resources, training courses, and study programs at all levels, regardless of sex, as well as equal gender representation in what concerns the nomination of members and/or participants in any committee, research group, or other managerial and/or ethics committees.

(3) INCDFT-IFT Iași is committed to train and raise awareness about gender stereotypes, which are understood as organized systems of beliefs and consensual opinions, perceptions, and prejudices regarding the role and characteristics that women and men have or should have.

(4) The principles guiding INCDFT-IFT Iași in ensuring equal rights and opportunities are as follows:

a) **Inclusion** – promoting a culture based on respect for human dignity, equality, differences, and combating stereotypes, discrimination, harassment, and violence (in any form);

b) **Diversity** – promoting mutual respect and a framework that integrates cultural, religious, or ideological differences; undertaking initiatives that enhance the understanding of diversity and, consequently, knowledge transfer;

c) **Gender Equality** – institutionally promoting practices and policies that ensure balanced representation at all decision-making levels;

d) **Equality** – promoting institutional processes that ensure equal and effective opportunities and access throughout the career path, from recruitment to career development;

e) **Work - Personal Life Balance** – promoting individual or collective measures that reconcile family life with professional life;

f) **Transparency and Integrity** – developing practices that ensure institutional transparency through the application of principles of excellence, equal opportunities, and diversity;

g) **Freedom** – developing and encouraging critical and creative thinking by protecting freedom of expression; promoting a healthy and safe work environment;

h) **Personal development** – supporting the achievement of individual potential by promoting personalized measures.

ART. 2. EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AND TREATMENT IN EMPLOYMENT, RECRUITMENT, RETENTION, AND PROMOTION OF STAFF

(1) The management of INCDFT-IFT Iași understands that equal opportunity and treatment between women and men in labour relations means non-discriminatory access, with respect for human dignity, in the case of:

a) Employment in all positions or vacant jobs and at all levels of the professional hierarchy;
b) Equal remuneration for work of equal value;
c) Access to professional information and counselling, internships, and training courses;
d) Promotion at any hierarchical and professional level;
e) Employment and working conditions that comply with occupational health and safety regulations, according to the provisions of applicable legislation, including conditions for dismissal;
f) Benefits other than those of a salary nature, granted in accordance with the law or the provisions of applicable collective labour agreements;
g) Access to employers' organizations, trade unions, and professional bodies, as well as to the benefits granted by them;
h) Social benefits and services granted in accordance with applicable legislation.

(2) The announcement, organization of competitions or of exams, as well as the selection of candidates for vacant positions are carried out in such a way to do not favour or disadvantage persons of a particular sex or gender.

(3) It is also prohibited to issue any ordinance, directive, or decision that discriminates against a person on the grounds of sex or gender.
Viorel Vulturescu,
(4) Family and marital status can not constitute grounds for discrimination. Marital status refers to whether a person is single, married, divorced, or widowed. Family status refers also to whether a person is in a relationship of kinship, marriage, or adoption with another person.

(5) The recruitment, retention, and promotion of staff are determined by the criteria of professional competence, scientific and academic performance, and compliance with standards of moral conduct.

(6) Progress in guaranteeing gender equality in terms of recruitment, maintenance of the job, promotion, or remuneration of human resources is monitored based on the following indicators:

a) Consideration of gender non-discrimination objectives in the procedures for recruitment, motivation, promotion, and remuneration of staff;
b) Periodic participation of employees and employers in face-to-face and/or online training sessions (e.g., e-learning) regarding cognitive distortions (automatic patterns of negative or biased thinking) involved in the creation and preservation of gender inequalities in the context of recruitment, motivation, promotion, and remuneration;
c) Low and non-systematic differences in the proportion of employed women;
d) Low and non-systematic differences in staff retention;

e) Low and non-systematic differences in career progression indicators between women and men (e.g., average number of years spent in research assistant positions after PhD granting);
f) Low and non-systematic differences in staff remuneration.

ART. 3 EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES AND TREATMENT IN MANAGEMENT AND RESEARCH COORDINATION STRUCTURES

(1) INCDFT-IFT Iași is committed to create an environment favourable to the recruitment, retention, and career advancement of women researchers, entirely respecting EU legislation on gender equality, through measures aimed at addressing gender imbalances in decision-making processes and strengthening the gender dimension in research programs.
With this aim:

a) Equal opportunities for the underrepresented gender will be ensured within structures involved in recruitment, career advancement, and in the establishment and evaluation of research programs;
b) Tools will be adopted to increase gender equality awareness at the leadership level to assess whether institutional changes are necessary;
c) The implementation of gender policies and actions at the institutional level will be monitored.

(2) In accordance with the provisions of Law no. 206/2004 on good conduct in scientific research, technological development, and innovation, the following actions are prohibited when committed based on gender:

a) Discrimination in evaluations on the grounds of age, ethnicity, sex, social origin, political or religious orientation, sexual orientation, or other forms of discrimination;
b) Deliberately hindering, obstructing, or sabotaging the RDI (Research, Development, and Innovation) activities of other individuals, including by unjustifiably blocking access to RDI spaces through damage, destruction, or manipulation of experimental equipment, devices, documents, computer programs, electronic data, organic or inorganic substances, or living matter necessary for other persons to carry out, complete, or finalize their RDI activities;
c) Abuse of authority in order to obtain authorship or co-authorship of publications produced by subordinates;
d) Abuse of authority in order to obtain salary, remuneration, or other material benefits from research-development projects led or coordinated by subordinates;
e) Abuse of authority in order to unjustifiably impose one’s own theories, concepts, or results on subordinates;
f) Obstructing the activity of a committee during the analysis of violations related to equal opportunities and treatment.

ART. 4. ENSURING WORKING CONDITIONS THAT ALLOW FOR WORK-FAMILY BALANCE

(1) INCDFT-IFT Iași recognizes the multiple social roles and responsibilities of its employees and promotes a flexible work and study environment that enables the balance of both professional duties and aspirations, as well as family commitments. Thus, actions stipulated by the Labor Code will be pursued to ensure flexible working hours for employees with family responsibilities, both women and men, whenever possible;

(2) Progress in ensuring working conditions that allow for balance between family life and profession will be monitored based on the following indicators:

a) Maternity and paternity policies that support participation of parents in professional activities;
b) Number of individuals who have received administrative support from the institute in case of maternity leave / childcare leave, etc.

ART. 5. MEASURES TO PREVENT GENDER-BASED HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE

(1) Gender-based harassment and violence are considered serious acts that may affect the reputation of INCDFT-IFT Iași. Gender-based violence refers to acts of violence directed at a person, based on gender discrimination. INCDFT-IFT Iași condemns all such acts regardless of where or when they occur.

(2) Sexual harassment is any gender-based behaviour that has the purpose or the effect of violating a person's dignity while creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment.

(3) Moral harassment at the workplace represents any behaviour related to work relationships directed at an employee by a hierarchical superior, a subordinate, and/or a peer which aims to or results in the deterioration of work conditions by violating the employee's rights or dignity, affecting their physical or mental health, or compromising their professional future. This behaviour may manifest in any of the following forms:

a) Hostile or unwanted conduct;
b) Verbal comments;
c) Actions or gestures.

(4) Moral harassment at the workplace is also considered any behaviour that, through its systematic nature, may harm the dignity or physical/mental integrity of an employee or group of employees, which may endanger their work or degrade the work environment.

(5) All forms of harassment and gender-based violence are prohibited in employee relations.

(6) Every employee has the right to a workplace free from moral harassment.

(7) No employee shall be sanctioned, dismissed, or discriminated against, directly or indirectly—including in terms of salary, professional training, promotion, or contract extension—because they were subjected to or refused to be subjected to moral harassment at work.

(8) Employees who commit acts of moral harassment at the workplace will be subject to disciplinary sanctions; such acts will be considered serious misconduct. Disciplinary liability does not exclude contravention or criminal liability for the accountable employee.

(9) Sexual harassment, defined as any unwanted behaviour of a sexual nature, whether physical, verbal, or non-verbal, intended to or resulting in violation of a person's dignity—especially by creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating, or offensive environment—is prohibited.
An employee who is the victim of gender-based discrimination, gender-based moral harassment, or sexual harassment may report the situation to the Gender Equality Officer, the Ethics Committee, the Human Resources Department of INCDFT-IFT Iași, and/or to the Institute's Management.

(10) Persons who consider that they have been discriminated against on the basis of sex have the right to file complaints with the employer, or against the employer if directly involved, and may seek support from employee representatives to resolve the situation at the workplace. Persons who assist the victim in this matter have a duty of confidentiality regarding all facts and information learned in this capacity.

(11) It is the responsibility of the Gender Equality Officer GEO) and the Gender Equality Working Group, appointed by decision of the NIRDTP Iasi General Director to:

a) Propose measures to raise awareness about sexual and moral harassment, recognize abuses, identify and differentiate types of behaviour, and define limits and concepts;
b) Analyze the context of gender-based discrimination and violations of the principle of equal opportunities between women and men, and recommend legal compliance solutions;
c) Issue recommendations/observations/proposals to prevent, manage, or resolve risk situations that could lead to violations of the principle of equal opportunities and treatment, while respecting confidentiality.

(12) Progress in combating gender-based harassment and discrimination will be monitored using the following indicators:

a) Existence and effective dissemination of a transparent, simple *procedure for filing* harassment and discrimination complaints;
b) Existence and effective dissemination of a transparent, simple *procedure for resolving* harassment and discrimination cases;
c) Existence and effective dissemination of a transparent, simple *procedure for protecting* victims of gender-based harassment and abuse, as well as those reporting such abuses;
d) Access to internal legal counseling and professional psychological services for victims of gender-based harassment and discrimination.

ARTICLE 6. DOCUMENTATION, MONITORING AND PERIODIC REPORTING ON THE PROGRESS OF ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY

(1) INCDFT-IFT Iași supports the development, monitoring, and implementation of strategies

aimed at improving equal opportunities among its employees. This approach requires an accurate and detailed understanding of relevant data on gender equality, as well as an understanding of its evolution over time.

(2) Furthermore, in order to ensure the transparency and effectiveness of the actions proposed to improve gender equality, INCDFT-IFT Iași commits to promote strategies and policies based on scientific evidence.

With this aim in view, the following actions can be implemented, without the list being exhaustive:

a) the development of a procedure for the periodic collection of data by the Human Resources Department (HRD), or direct data collection by appointing the Scientific Secretary of INCDFT-IFT Iași as the Gender Equality Officer, with collection carried out in collaboration with the HRD. The aim is to collect and make available data disaggregated by sex/gender regarding:
    (i) employees;(ii) persons applying for research and administrative positions, both fixed-term and open-ended;
    (iii) gender distribution of employees (administrative staff, research staff);
    (iv) gender distribution of management positions;
    (v) gender distribution of applicants for advertised positions and of their subsequent appointment;
    (vi) the comparative gender situation with regard to career advancement and remuneration;
    (vii) the comparative gender situation of indicators of competitiveness and excellence in research;
b) periodic reporting by designated staff within INCDFT-IFT Iași on the current situation and trends in the evolution of gender equality.

(3) Progress in documentation, monitoring, and periodic reporting on the evolution of gender equality achievement will be monitored based on the following indicators:

a) monitorization of relevant information and data on gender equality issues, disaggregated by gender, concerning employees by the Gender Equality Officer and the Gender Equality Working Group;
b) preparation of annual reports to the management of INCDFT-IFT Iași;
c) periodic analysis of trends over time in key indicators, in order to substantiate decisions related to the actions and measures of the Gender Equality Plan of INCDFT-IFT Iași.

INCDFT-IFT Iași Approach to Gender Equality

The Gender Equality (GE) Strategy for the period 2024–2027 developed by INCDFT-IFT Iași addresses to all employees working in research, employees in research support structures, as well as to the administrative staff.

The GE Strategy is built on the provisions of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*, the *European Gender Equality Strategy* 2020–2025, and the guidelines of the *Horizon Europe* programme on gender equality plans. Additionally, it also takes into account the transposition of the provisions of the National Strategy on Promoting Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment between Women and Men and Preventing and Combating Domestic Violence for the period 2021–2027.

The motivation for developing the Institute's Gender Equality Strategy stems from the need to ensure a safe environment for all staff and from the fact that all activities and processes carried out comply with the principles of equality, diversity, inclusion, and non-discrimination.

For the implementation of the mission of INCDFT-IFT Iași and of the Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Equality Plan, the Institute's management assumes, ensures, and promotes equality and diversity of knowledge, as well as the acquisition of skills and competences for all employees.

The objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy are implemented through specific actions aimed at protecting an equal and inclusive organizational culture, as well as promoting gender equality at all levels.

The Gender Equality Strategy and the Gender Equality Plan of INCDFT-IFT Iași proactively enable *increased awareness of gender equality, skills, and competences; the development of an organizational culture that leads to a balance between professional activity and private life, gender balance in decision-making structures and processes, including recruitment, the integration of the gender dimension throughout the entire research process, as well as measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.*

The new European regulations require:

- alignment and revision of existing policies and procedures, as well as the development of new ones, to cover all identified areas of intervention;
- training and education of staff regarding gender equality;
- active and effective communication on relevant gender-related actions and measures;
- the development of a Gender Strategy and a Gender Equality Plan for the period 2024–2027, with clear actions and targets and designated responsible persons, in accordance with the legislation in force.

National legal framework:

According to Law no. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men, as subsequently amended and supplemented, equal opportunities and equal treatment between women and men in employment relations mean non-discriminatory access to:

- the free choice or exercise of a profession or activity;
- employment in all vacant positions or jobs and at all levels of the professional hierarchy;
- equal pay for work of equal value;
- information and vocational guidance, qualification, training, specialization, and professional retraining programs;
- promotion at any hierarchical and professional level;
- working conditions that comply with occupational health and safety standards, in accordance with the provisions of the legislation in force;
- non-wage benefits, within public and private social security systems;
- social benefits and services granted in accordance with the legislation in force.

Following the development of a gender-structured monograph at the level of INCDFT-IFT Iași, the key indicators of interest at the beginning of 2024 are presented as follows:

Application field	**Total employees**	**Female**	**Male**
R&D (including engineers, auxiliary personnel, technicians, workers)	50	20	30
Human Resources, Legal, Financial-Accounting, Administrative, etc.	17	8	9
Total	**67**	**28**	**39**

Women / Men ratio in management positions at INCDFT-IFT Iași:

Position	**F**emale	**M**ale
General Director	1	0
Dept. / Laboratory Coordinator	1	1
Economic Director	1	0
Scientific Secretary	0	1
Innovation manager	1	0
Total	**4**	**2**

A. Research and Development personnel:

Position/research degree	**Total**	**Female**	**Male**
R4 (CS I)	5	2	3
R3 (CS II)	6	2	4
R2 (CS III)	11	4	7
R1 (CS)	7	4	3

Research Assistant (ACS)	4	3	1
IDT	0	0	0
Specialist Engineeer	3	1	2
Engineer	4	0	4
Auxiliary staff	10	4	6
Total	**50**	**20**	**30**

B. Administrative staff:

Position	**Total**	**Female**	**Male**
Economic Director	1	1	0
Legal Advisor / HR	1	1	0
Economist	2	1	1
Internal auditor	1	1	0
Engineer	3	0	3
Occupational medicine doctor	1	1	0
Casher	1	1	0
Cleaning attendant	2	2	0
Security officer	5	0	5
Total	**17**	8	9

C. Total employees on maternity/paternity leave as of 01.01.2024:

M: 0 / P: 0

D. Situation of employees who opt for participation in courses/trainings of professional interest in 2024:

Staff category:	**Female**	**Male**
R & D staff	15	18
Administrative staff	3	2
Total	**18**	**20**

E. Situation of ongoing research projects as of 1.01.2024 in terms of gender equality of project managers/directors:

Total projects/programs	**Female**	**Male**	**Observations**
14	7	7	1 F = 2 Projects 3 B = 2 Projects

Based on the above analyses, the *Gender Equality Strategy* includes the following areas of intervention and objectives for the period 2024-2027:

Areas of intervention ***(recommended by the EC for Horizon Europe programmes)***	**Objectives**
Work-life balance and organisational culture	Impact of work-life balance and organisational culture on gender equality
Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	Promoting gender equality in institutional culture, processes and practices
Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Promovarea proceselor care să favorizeze și să susțină recrutarea și progresul în carieră
Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content	Promoting processes that foster and support recruitment and career progression
Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment	Raising awareness of the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity

The management of the institute mandated the position of **Gender Equality Officer** at the institute level and a **GE Working Group** through Decisions of the General Director, in order to develop the 2024-2027 *Gender Equality Strategy and Plan*.

The GE working group includes male and female representatives from the INCDFT-IFT Iași leadership, researchers, representatives of the institute's administration and support services.

The gender equality strategy of the National Institute for Research and Development for Technical Physics-IFT Iași targets the following areas of intervention and objectives for the period 2024-2027:

Areas of intervention (recommended by the EC for Horizon Europe programmes)	**Objectives**
Work-life balance and organisational culture	1. Promotion of an environment conducive to the integration of professional life with family and personal life. 2. Consolidation of positive attitudes towards diversity and inclusion in all areas of activity of INCDFT-IFT Iași.
Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	1. Promotion of gender equality in institutional culture, processes and practices. 2. Ensuring gender balance in decision-making and management structures.
Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	1. Promoting processes to foster and support recruitment, career development and appointment at all levels.
Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content	1. Promoting a gender and sex perspective in the research process. 2. Promoting the integration of the sex and gender perspective in research activity.
Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment	1. Raising awareness of the importance of equality issues and strengthening positive attitudes towards diversity. 2. Preventing any form of violence and/or moral or psychological harassment based on gender, including sexual harassment.

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of the National Institute for Research and Development for Technical Physics – IFT Iași includes key actions and measures to achieve the strategic objectives specific to each intervention area, the target group targeted by these measures, implementation deadlines, responsible persons, as well as indicators for measuring progress.

The policy of equal opportunities and treatment between men and women targets the following activities:

Acțiune/Măsură	**Termen**				**Indicator(i)**	**Responsabil(i)**
	2024	2025	2026	2027		
Appointment of the Gender Equality Officer (GEO)	X	✓	✓		Gender Equality Officer (GEO) appointed	Director General (DG), Human Resources (HR)
The establishment of a Working Group with a proactive and/or consultative role, responsible for monitoring and ensuring that workplace procedures and practices uphold gender equality	X	✓	✓		Working group appointed	DG HR
Development of the Management Commitment Statement concerning the Gender Equality Policy and the Gender Equality Plan (GEP)	X	✓	✓		Strategy of INCDFT-IFT Iași. Approval of the present document.	DG
Diagnosis – Conducting an analysis of the current situation (identifying the main issues)	X	X	X	X	Analysis report	GEO, HR, GE working group
Adoption of the Gender Equality Policy	X				Gender Equality Policy	DG GEO
Finalizing the Gender Equality Plan (GEP)	X				Gender Equality Plan (GEP)	GEO
Implementation of Gender	X	X	X	X	Assessment of	GEO

Equality Plan (GEP)					the Gender Equality Plan's alignment with existing approved strategies.	
Monitoring and evaluation	X	X	X	X	Evaluation Reports	GEO

Monitoring and Evaluation of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) within the institute: progress towards the goals and objectives of the Gender Equality Strategy is assessed periodically, through regular meetings.

The implementation of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) will be permanently monitored by the Gender Equality Officer and the Gender Equality Working Group of the institute, established by Decision of the Director General.

The Gender Equality Officer together with the Working Group are responsible for collecting data and inputs. They will conduct a first analysis of the progress of the GEP against the established indicators, collect knowledge and feedback.

The Gender Equality Officer together with the EG Working Group will finalize findings reports (once a year), which are then presented to the institute management and discussed. These meetings will provide valuable conclusions on the implementation of the GEP. These meetings will also provide comments and recommendations that will allow adjustments and improvements to the GEP interventions for the following year.

Periodic reports allow for the ongoing review of the impact of the GEP, as well as keeping employees informed and engaged in progress towards gender equality. The review of progress reports includes qualitative information as well as quantitative data, such as updates to gender-disaggregated human resources data and monitoring data to track the implementation of key actions.

After completion and adoption by the research institute’s management, the periodic (annual) progress report on gender equality (GE) is published on the institute’s website.