

# Gender Equality Plan

HeiGIT gGmbH

Heidelberg, 2025

**HeiGIT gGmbH**

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## Preamble

HeiGIT (Heidelberg Institute for Geoinformation Technology) performs applied research relating to geographic information. Results and data are made freely available for the benefit of the environment and society through stakeholders such as researchers and aid organizations & associations.

The core foci of HeiGIT range from supporting humanitarian missions with customized geodata, to developing intelligent routing solutions for disasters or heatwaves. HeiGIT also implements innovative methods from the fields of spatial data processing and machine learning to analyze, enrich, and visualize geodata (e.g. OpenStreetMap data), as well as offering practical data analysis for climate protection initiatives.

HeiGIT gGmbH was founded in 2019 as an affiliated institute of Heidelberg University, with core funding from the Klaus Tschira Foundation.

HeiGIT employs its own staff and hosts students as well as visiting scientists from other institutions.

## Equality at HeiGIT

Equality describes the totality of measures to equalize the living conditions of groups to be treated equally in all areas of life.

As an internationally oriented research institute, HeiGIT gGmbH is committed to research and the support of young scientists.

It is a matter of course for us to offer all people working at HeiGIT the same opportunities to thrive in a scientific environment in which everyone can develop freely, regardless of gender, sexual orientation, age, nationality, and religion.

Integrity and sustainability, social responsibility in a dialogue with the public, international orientation, mutual respect, family friendliness and diversity are cornerstones of our institute.

The following is an overview of the measures already implemented and planned to ensure equality at HeiGIT, in terms of gender and beyond.

## Goals

This plan is intended to focus on and ensure the implementation of the German Federal Equality Act (BGleG) and its objectives:

- Equality of women, men and non-binary persons.
- Elimination and prevention of existing discrimination based on gender.
- Improving family friendliness and the compatibility of family, care, and work.

The data in the table below was collected for the first time in September 2025 and is updated annually. The equality plan is reviewed and updated at least every three years with regard to the measures and their impact.

Diversity at HeiGIT in numbers (as of 09/2025)

	Total 2025	Thereof women 2025
<b>HeiGIT total</b>	72	28
<b>HeiGIT Non-Admin</b>	59	21
<b>Administration</b>	6	4
<b>Management</b>	6	3
<b>Students + Interns</b>	27	11
<b>Part time (non students)</b>	25	9

HeiGIT is a research institute that is committed to diversity. Women, men and non-binary people work here. The number of women is stated separately in the table.

Science loses many female employees on the career path from first-year student to doctorate and to scientific employees<sup>1</sup>.

We will continue to focus on and prioritize achieving parity in the recruitment of students and employees.

## Measures

### Workplace and hours

We strive to accommodate our employees' individual needs regarding work-life balance, as well as career and life planning, as best as possible. To this end, we encourage open dialogue and try to meet on equal footing.

HeiGIT support the best possible work-life balance by offering our employees flexibility in structuring their working hours. This applies to

- number of working hours (full-time/part-time). In accordance with German law, flexible working hours and opportunities for part-time work can be agreed individually with the supervisors. We offer easy change of weekly hours.
- distribution of working hours across weekdays. Working hours at HeiGIT are flexible. In line with our family-friendly working hours, meetings take place between 9 am and 4 pm where possible. This is to enable everyone at HeiGIT to attend important internal meetings while balancing childcare and family commitments. work location (office, remote/home). We enable location-flexible working within Germany for a maximum of 50 % of working hours in agreement with the supervisor.
- helping employees implement suitable parental leave and part-time work models. In accordance with German law, HeiGIT offers the possibility of part-time employment

within the framework of parental leave. Flexible working hours and opportunities for part-time work can be agreed individually with the supervisors.

## Hiring criteria and salary

Staff are selected and paid regardless of gender. We use a gender-independent pay scale for salaries.

Qualifications and suitability are taken into account when selecting applicants, regardless of gender.

Our job advertisements are always formulated in a (gender) neutral way. HeiGIT sees itself as an institute where equal opportunities are practiced.

The consideration of facets of diversity in applications for advertised positions is planned.

## Communication

We emphasize the importance of respectful and gender-sensitive language in presentations, publications, on the internet and in social media. To this end, we have developed our own guidelines that are binding for official communication. In addition, we sensitize everyone at HeiGIT to this topic. In our internal communication (emails, intranet etc.) from management or central services (admin) we also use gender-sensitive language.

Current information on topics such as family friendliness can be found on our intranet. The relevant intranet pages offer presentations, guidelines, further links as well as information on contact persons.

Recently, we started to offer awareness training courses at HeiGIT for all employees ("AGG und Gleichstellung"). We are planning on offering them annually.

We raise awareness among our managers with personnel responsibility to identify unconscious biases that may lead to unequal treatment or inequality between genders.

## Offers for professional development

During annual reviews, HeiGIT employees discuss the past working year and future tasks with their supervisors. Work results are evaluated, goals agreed and training needs identified. Thereby we ensure that the goals listed above are tailored to the individual needs of our employees and that wishes for individual development can be realized in the best possible way. We assign a mentor (so called "buddy") to all new employees who advises them on content-related issues and questions.

In science, exchange with other working groups is important and career-enhancing. HeiGIT supports this exchange both within the Institute and with external scientists. Among other things, we facilitate participation in conferences, workshops and other events that promote scientific and interpersonal exchange.

To support individual career paths all employees are entitled to qualification measures on an annual basis.

The topic of our annual retreat (2 days) for all employees in 2025 was “communication”. The goal was to optimize communication and to raise awareness for differences in communication which might be due to many kinds of diversities within staff (e.g. intercultural).

## Other Benefits

HeiGIT offers a wide range of social benefits and health promotion measures:

- As part of a private supplementary health insurance, every employee can take advantage of preventive medical check-ups, which are included in the catalog of Individual Health Benefits.
- As part of our social benefit system, we offer financial support for childcare.
- There is a subsidy on membership fees for a large gym chain in the region.
- The institute offers a subsidized lunch, which includes vegetarian options and a selection of fresh fruits every day

In the event of conflicts within the team or with superiors, it is possible to call in external consultants as mediators. There is also one mental health first aider who can provide advice.

If necessary, we support coaching to overcome communication barriers in teams. The management and the HR team are available to assist in the search for a suitable coach.

A whistleblower system is in place to find help in cases of severe unlawful conduct within the company. Violations in the areas of data protection, finances, equal treatment and Good Scientific Practice can be reported here via an external consultant. Those reports are treated strictly confidentially.

## Evaluation and monitoring

We will update our gender-specific data analyses annually. Based on their results, development and success are monitored, from which new measures are derived if necessary. This task is the responsibility of the management, who receives support in data analysis from the head of administration and HR.

Heidelberg, 17.09.2025



Alexander Zipf, Managing Director



Gesa Schönberger, Managing Director