

Frequently asked questions

The toolbox is an online information system that presents selected real-life examples of gender equality measures within the German research system. The examples shown here illustrate the possible breadth of measures and provide ideas which users can apply in their own working environments. The models in the toolbox are selected in a quality-assured process – both to ensure that the chosen examples are of high quality and sufficient diversity and to prevent duplication in terms of content.

Background

How did the toolbox come about?

The toolbox was developed in 2009 as part of the concept to implement the DFG's Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality. Its aim was to improve equal opportunity in the German research system, or in concrete terms, to significantly increase the proportion of women at all career levels in the German research system.

To support the implementation of the Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality, the DFG set up the toolbox – a database of selected examples of gender equality measures. It also describes how these models work and the framework in which they operate. The searchable measures are exemplary – in other words, they can usually be readily and fully adapted to other research institutions and are not dependent on a specific framework. The toolbox therefore enables users to search for measures that could be implemented at their own institutions.

The toolbox is not a complete database of all gender equality measures implemented in the German research system, but a quality-assured selection of real-life examples of good practice that serve as models for other groups.

In July 2013 the DFG's General Assembly decided to revise and modernise the toolbox in order to continue providing the service at the same high level of topicality and quality. The new toolbox went online in spring 2014 with a new design, improved functionalities and a varied selection of new, high-quality equal opportunity measures.

Following the launch of the revised toolbox, all universities, higher education institutions and non-university research institutions are invited to propose measures. These are evaluated and selected in a quality-assured process to ensure that the chosen examples are of high quality and sufficient diversity and to prevent duplication in terms of content.

There is an ongoing quality inspection process in all thematic clusters to keep the toolbox up to date and integrate recent developments in equal opportunity in German research into the database.

The English version of the toolbox, launched in August 2015, is based on this enhanced version. In 2018, the toolbox has been expanded by examples for gender equality measures from universities of

applied sciences, universities of art/music as well as non-university research institutions.

The toolbox is programmed and hosted on behalf of the DFG by GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. GESIS is responsible for programming the toolbox database, hosting the website, and the compilation and quality assurance of the measures listed by the Centre of Excellence Women in Science (CEWS).

[DFG Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality](#)

What can I find in the toolbox?

The toolbox presents a wide range of exemplary real-life models from German higher education institutions as well as non-university research institutions in a searchable database format. Exemplary ideas from non-university research institutions can also be included in the database. Making equal opportunity a sustainable reality in the research community requires a comprehensive concept for gender equality and increasing the proportion of women at all levels of academia. The toolbox provides a structured information base for all research institutions and in particular equal opportunity officers, showcasing ways in which gender equality measures can be implemented and refined in practice. The selected examples in the database are intended to provide ideas as well as information about the latest developments and trends in gender equality at German universities and research institutions. Information about searching in the toolbox, the different online views, and output formats can be found under "Search".

[→ Search](#)

What kinds of models are included in the toolbox?

The measures contained in the toolbox are researched and verified by GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences. The final decision of whether to include a model in the toolbox is made by the DFG. GESIS then makes the data available in a searchable form. For the 2014 toolbox update, preference was initially given to measures implemented by institutions that have achieved stage 3 or 4 in the evaluations based on the DFG Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality. These stages reflect a particularly exemplary and successful implementation of the standards. In selecting these examples, the DFG also seeks to highlight outstanding efforts to promote gender equality at German higher education institutions. Successful institutions in the Women Professors Programme II were also included. Following the launch of the revised toolbox in 2018, the final-reports of DFG from 2013 can no longer be used due to the lack of topicality. The University ranking according to equal opportunity, published every two years by the CEWS, provides a current basis for research and will be used instead of the final reports. Consideration is only given to those measures taken by universities, which have been grouped into the groups one to four of the ranking.

In addition to the selected models, the toolbox includes similar measures to illustrate the breadth of equal opportunity measures. Similar measures are measures which are judged to be of a high enough quality to be added to the database, but not of the same exemplary character as the selected models. These are not model examples, but are included here to complement the selected models they are linked to. They appear with the name of the institution, the title and a link to the measure and can be found using the keyword search by entering the name of the institution.

Following the launch of the revised toolbox in 2018, all universities, higher education institutions and non-university research institutions are again invited to submit measures.

[DFG Research-Oriented Standards on Gender Equality](#)

[Women Professors Programme II \(BMBF\)](#)

[→ Submit a measure](#)

What kind of information is included about a model?

To present a model in sufficient detail, the following is included:

- Information about the leading institution: Name, type and state of the university or the non-university institute, responsible department and contact details (switchboard number, e-mail address of department and institution's website)
- Information about the measure itself: Classification in defined topics and action areas, target groups and subject groups, general description of the measure (content, structure, time frame, etc.), description of goals, results and effectiveness of the measure, collaborations and networks, link/URL

If there are similar measures in the database, these are also shown along with the title, name of the institution and link/URL.

This information is shown in the detailed view.

The quick view shows only the title of the model, the name of the institution, the classification in the defined topics and action areas, target groups and subject groups, if applicable the name of the university or non-university-institution that offers a similar measure, and the goals of the model.

In the English version, the following information is displayed in the quick view: Title of the model, name of the institution, thematic category, target groups and subject groups, if applicable the name of the institution offering a similar measure. The detailed view also includes the following information: Description of the measure, results and effectiveness, leading institution (name, type of institution, federal state), responsible area with e-mail address, link to institution, link to measure, if applicable similar measure with title and link. Links to pages in German are identified by a corresponding symbol.

Does the toolbox also include federal and state measures?

No. The toolbox only includes measures that are not directly initiated and funded by the federal or state governments. This is because measures of this type cannot be readily transferred to other research institutions due to the fact that they often depend on inclusion in federal or state programmes or funding. This is not in keeping with the aim of the toolbox, which is to provide models that can be readily implemented. However, to provide information about this topic, a number of measures funded by the federal or state governments are listed by way of example in this PDF:

[Measures at the federal and state level](#)

What other databases are available?

The web portal currently being developed in the EU project GenPORT (an internet portal for sharing knowledge and inspiring collaborative action on gender and science) will make it possible to organise the wealth of research findings, concrete measures and strategic information relating to equality in science and academia and make it available efficiently. In this way the portal is intended to make it easier for policymakers, researchers and equal opportunity officers throughout Europe to exchange ideas.

GenPORT

[GenPort](#)

The database "Gleichstellungsprojekte an Hochschulen in NRW", offered in German only, provides a systematic overview of equal opportunity projects at higher education institutions in the state of North Rhine-Westphalia. These projects range from taster programmes for school pupils to mentoring programmes for female doctoral researchers and dual career centres for female and male researchers. These opportunities may be offered by individual faculties, individual institutions or groups of institutions.

Gleichstellungsprojekte an Hochschulen in NRW ● ○ ○ ○ ○

[Gleichstellungsprojekte](#) an Hochschulen in NRW

The EU project "JERRI - Joining Efforts Joining Efforts for Responsible Research and Innovation" aims to systematize the development of the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft and TNO organisations in various dimensions of responsible research and innovation and to carry out pilot activities. The project is led by the Fraunhofer Institute for Systems and Innovation Research ISI. The Fraunhofer Institute for Industrial Engineering IAO works on the dimension of "equal opportunities". This has resulted in the Gender Diversity Toolbox, a collection of practical examples from and for research organizations on the topics of gender diversity and improving equal opportunities between the sexes.

JERRI 

<https://www.gender-diversity-toolbox.de/>

Search / Navigation

How can I search for measures?

To facilitate your search for models and similar measures in the toolbox there are three filters, which can be combined if required. Under "Select" there are various classifications and action areas. The search box allows you to enter specific words. "Limit search" allows you to further specify the categories you are interested in.

A summary of the selected options appears above the list of results. You can use this to remove individual filters again.

[→ Search](#)

How does the select function work?

"Select" allows you to search for particular classifications and action areas. You can search for the following classifications:

- Staff / early career researchers
- Work / life balance
- Research / academic culture
- Organisational development
- Gender in research & academia
- Quality assurance

Each of these classifications includes various action areas. When you have selected a classification you can then select one or more action areas.

[→ Search](#)

How does the search function work?

Here you can enter one or more terms to search the toolbox. Entering several terms will produce a longer list of results because the search terms are connected by the logical operator OR. So searching for "Mentoring Postdoc" will generate hits for both "Mentoring" and "Postdoc".

However, you can also specify your own logical links. The available options are:

- Logical operators: AND, OR and NOT
- Brackets for grouping
- Truncation with *
- Exact phrases with quotation marks

Entering the name of a measure that contains punctuation marks, numbers, etc. (e.g. "mea*sure") may not produce the desired result in the keyword search. This is because certain characters have a function in the keyword search (for example, * is used to truncate a search term).

[→ Search](#)

What are "innovative models"?

The toolbox allows you to search for particularly outstanding models. These models differ from the rest in that they address current problems or offer new and innovative approaches. By selecting "Innovative models" you can limit the results to this category of models. These models are indicated by a blue flag.

As part of the ongoing quality assurance process, the status "innovative model" may be removed. If this happens, the relevant institution will be notified.

→ [Search](#)

How can I further narrow down the selection and/or search?

To further narrow down your results you can combine various criteria. For example, in addition to the classifications and action areas under "Select" or a search term, you can select target groups, subject groups and/or states.

The humanities and social sciences, life sciences, natural sciences and engineering sciences disciplines correspond to the DFG's classification system.

 [DFG classification of scientific disciplines into subject groups](#)

→ [Search](#)

How can I remove a filter?

If you want to deactivate a filter or filters, there are three ways of doing this:

1. Clicking on "New search" will remove all filters.
2. You can remove individual filters from the list of all selected filters above the list of results by clicking on the plus sign.
3. You can also remove filters by clicking again in the column on the left where you first selected them.

How does the list of results work?

If no filters are selected, all models are shown in the list of results. When you select a filter or enter a search term, the list of results is narrowed down.

You can view the results one page at a time. You can also specify how many results are shown on one page and how they are sorted. You can sort by title or date and in ascending or descending order.

How can I view the detailed information about a model?

In the list of results you can click on the title of a model to open a detailed description of the measure. At the end of the detailed information is a link which allows you to open the detailed view in a new window or tab, depending on your browser setting.

How can I print out a list or the description of an individual measure?

There are two print icons at the top right of the list of results: one to print the list with short descriptions and one to print the list with detailed descriptions.

If you open the detailed view of a measure in a new window, you can print the description by clicking on the print icon in the top right-hand corner.

How can I create a link to a model?

The link to the detailed view in a separate window does not change, so it can be used as a permanent link, for example on your website. You can use this URL address to create a link to your model on your institution's website. You can also download the logo below to draw attention to a model on your own website.



If you use the logo, please inform the DFG by sending an e-mail to instrumentenkasten@dfg.de.

To find out how to open a model in a separate window and retrieve the corresponding URL, please refer to "How can I view the detailed information about a model?".

Submit a measure / Feedback

How can I submit a model for inclusion in the toolbox?

Submitting gender equality measures that have been tested at your institution is essential to the toolbox. New measures and updates to existing measures keep the tool topical and interesting. Equal opportunity officers at higher education institutions and non-university research institutions in Germany are encouraged to actively submit examples of relevant measures using the "Submit" section. Here you will find a form and guidelines on submitting models.

First the proposal is checked. If there are any questions or the information provided is incomplete, it is returned for revision. After the proposal has been checked, GESIS prepares an evaluation which is used by the DFG to decide whether to add the measure to the database. You will receive a notification from the DFG as to whether your measure was chosen for inclusion or not.

If the decision is positive, the measure will be translated into English and added to the toolbox in both German and English. The toolbox is updated on a quarterly basis, so it may take up to three months before a selected model becomes available online. You will receive a message from GESIS when your measure is available online. GESIS – in coordination with the DFG – reserves the right to remove models again or change their status if necessary. You will be notified if this happens.

→ [Submit](#)

→ [Contact](#)

What criteria are used to select measures?

Gender equality measures included in the toolbox go through a quality-assured selection process carried out by GESIS – Leibniz Institute for the Social Sciences and the DFG. The aim is to showcase the variety of tested and innovative real-life examples and make them accessible in a searchable database.

Selection is based upon a summary assessment process which initially identified measures from publicly accessible sources. GESIS has prepared and categorised these sources. Thus, the researched measures are not evaluated, but analysed and appraised on the basis of the available information.

The key selection criteria are, where apparent:

- the coherence of the concept,
- the innovative character or long-term testing of the measure,
- accessible documentary evidence of quality assurance (monitoring, reports, evaluations, etc.), and
- the structural framework (integration in a wider concept, link-in within the institution, implementation, etc.).

The presentation of an institution's equal opportunity activities on the web and the scope of published information about the assessment criteria listed above also play an important role. The content of the toolbox is selected according to the principle of "variety, not bulk".

As part of the expansion of the instrument box in spring 2018, a separate quality assurance concept was developed for non-university research institutions due to the low comparability with universities and colleges. Although this concept is based on that for the universities, it is adapted and reduced. The measures taken by the research institutions are therefore only compared with each other and not with the measures already taken by the universities.

The appraisal process also incorporates thematic clusters, which group together measures that are thematically similar. Measures within a cluster are examined and weighted in a separate assessment process. For example, the Mentoring cluster is subject to the quality standards of Forum Mentoring, such as the suitability of mentoring, institutional integration, forms of mentoring, selection process, and the content of the mentoring process. Established quality standards also apply in other clusters, for example the standards of Dual Career Network Germany.

[Forum Mentoring](#)

[Dual Career Network Germany](#)

How can I submit updates and give feedback?

The content of the toolbox is continually reviewed and updated. However, we need your help to keep the information correct and up to date and to steadily increase the breadth of gender equality measures.

Please use the e-mail address instrumentenkasten@dfg.de for feedback and messages of any kind. This applies:

- to queries about measures you have proposed using the form on this site;
- if the information given about a model at your institution has not been correctly or fully entered in the toolbox; please indicate this with the word "Change" or "Addition" in the subject line.
- to information about tested or innovative measures funded by the federal or state governments; to submit a measure, please use the words "Federal/state measure".

Technical information

What kind of browser do I need?

The site programming is based on CSS validated to W3C standards, which can be used with standard browsers (such as Firefox 25 or Microsoft Internet Explorer 9.0) in the standard configuration (CSS and JavaScript enabled) without adaptations.

Do I need JavaScript?

Yes. However, in the interests of accessibility the user interface has been designed to allow operation without a mouse. To make any changes to the search you must activate a button or explicitly confirm a link.

What software is used for the toolbox?

The toolbox is based solely on open source software.

- Management and presentation of gender equality measures: [DSpace](#), version 5.1
- Search information: [jQuery UI](#)
- Highlighting of search terms in list of results: [jQuery Highlight Plugin](#)

Is the toolbox fully accessible?

The toolbox offers a high level of accessibility and intuitive usability. The level of accessibility has been verified by a BITV test and scored 97.25 out of 100 points.

It features the following elements, which comply with the Ordinance on Accessible Information Technology (BITV) introduced in Germany on 24 July 2002:

The toolbox supports readability through high contrast font and the option of controlling the font size. A clear structure is achieved through the separation of content and design and the consistent identification of hyperlinks.

How do I change language settings?

You can switch back and forth between the German and English versions on any page of the toolbox. Click on "English" or "Deutsch" in the top right-hand corner of the page to access the English or German version of the toolbox.

The English language version of the toolbox went online in August 2015. This increased the visibility of the toolbox and the models showcased in it and enlarged the circle of users in Germany and abroad. For the DFG and the institutions represented in the toolbox, this provides the opportunity to present their offerings and activities in the area of equal opportunity on an international level. Conversely, interested parties in other countries can gain an insight into exemplary equal opportunity efforts in Germany.

Because the toolbox is designed to showcase examples of good practice in the German research system, only higher education institutions and non-university research institutions in Germany can submit measures for inclusion in the database. To ensure consistency, measures that have been previously added and those that are newly added are translated by the DFG. In the English version of the toolbox, the models are published in a slightly shortened form.