

# Gender Equality Plan



## Content

<b>I. Gender Equality at TU Darmstadt: Principles and Framework</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>II. TU Darmstadt's Gender Equality Targets</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>1. Gender mainstreaming</b>	<b>6</b>
1.1 Resources and responsibilities	8
1.2 TU in-house guidelines, strategies and processes	9
1.3 Departmental responsibility through financial incentives	10
1.4 Interlinking of the decentralised and central gender equality activities	11
1.5 Gender equality expertise in a cross-section of the University	12
1.6 Monitoring of specifics at the departmental level	13
1.7 Equal opportunity and gender diversity competence	13
<b>2. Increasing the proportion of female professors</b>	<b>14</b>
2.1 Active recruiting of female professors	16
2.2 Gender equality-oriented professorial appointment procedures	16
2.3 The Visiting Female Professor Programme	17
2.4 Opportunities for female professors	18
<b>3. Recruiting women for STEM subjects and for scientific careers</b>	<b>18</b>
3.1 Opportunities for female pupils and students	20
3.2 Opportunities for female doctorates and postdoctorates	21
<b>III. Opportunities for Female Employees and Staff in the Science-Support Areas</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>IV. Compatibility of Professional and Private Areas of Life</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>V. Conclusion and Prospects</b>	<b>26</b>
Imprint	28

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Dear Members of the University,



TU Darmstadt is a place of realised and desired diversity. For us at TU Darmstadt, a central concern is to increase the proportion of women, especially in the STEM subjects (Sciences, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). On the whole, too few women begin a degree programme in these subjects - despite excellent school-leaving qualifications. If we look at the dwindling proportion of women in each qualification level, it becomes evident that the targeted promotion of career development for female scientists is necessary. In particular, after the doctorate, we lose excellently qualified scientists for academia.

In recent years at TU Darmstadt, numerous gender equality policies for the career development of female scientists and students have been established and developed further. Sustainable gender equality work includes also reflection on and changes of discriminatory structures and cultural practices.

We are all called upon to make gender equality possible, in that we consider gender perspectives and equal opportunity at every level of the University: among others, during the development of study

programmes and teaching, the development of research questions, the development of processes, strategies and concepts, the planning and implementation of events, trainings, research group meetings, when executing press and public-relations work, when using language, etc.

We can all behave gender and diversity-aware and contribute by questioning and breaking down presuppositions about genders and role models.

Get involved and actively shape TU Darmstadt with us!

The President of Technical University of Darmstadt,  
Prof. Dr. Tanja Brühl

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity,  
Prof. Dr. Heribert Warzecha


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## I. Gender Equality at TU Darmstadt: Principles and Framework

The Gender Equality Plan presents the TU Darmstadt Gender Equality Strategy, the objectives derived of it and its resulting policies and activities. Its intention is to illustrate the initial situation and general conditions, the existing central gender equality policies and their development potential and also the priorities for the coming years. The Gender Equality Plan addresses all members of the University and is equally intended for internal and external use. It constitutes the finalisation of a multi-year assessment process which was initiated in conjunction with the TU Darmstadt's application for inclusion in the Professorinnenprogramm des Bundes und der Länder (Programme for Female Professors of the Federal Government and the German States). Furthermore, it incorporates the standards and recommendations for developing gender equality plans which are relevant at the European level.

TU Darmstadt demands and promotes a research, working, teaching, and learning culture in which all members of the University are able to develop their potential and experience the same opportunities for participation. Gender equality means that women have equal access to all positions in research, teaching, and administration and that discrimination of any kind against any gender is being abolished. The questioning and breaking down of stereotypes, existing structures,

and supposed rules within the scientific community forms the basis of the gender equality work at TU Darmstadt. The objective of gender equality work is to reinforce an appreciative, respectful, and discrimination-free university culture, which is realised by its students, employees and staff, supported by the corresponding structures, and accompanied by measures. TU Darmstadt's profile is characterised by its focus on engineering and natural sciences. In these subjects, female scientists and students are often severely underrepresented. In terms of the degrees completed by women, their underrepresentation is an unacceptable loss of potential for the (natural) sciences. In this respect, TU Darmstadt uses the opportunities offered by the Professorinnenprogramm des Bundes und der Länder (Programme for Female Professors of the Federal Government and the German States) in order to promote and finance its objectives. The programme promotes gender equality between women and men in higher education through a dual strategy. Initial funding for professorships which are filled with women shall be linked to structural changes and a target-group specific advancement of women students and scientists in higher education.

Thanks to the **"Forschungsorientierte Gleichstellungs- und Diversitätsstandards"**  (research-oriented standards on gender equality) of Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG – German Research Foundation), personnel and structural standards and minimum requirements have been defined which researchers and research at TU Darmstadt must fulfil.

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TU Darmstadt is moreover oriented towards the Kaskadenmodell der Gemeinsamen Wissenschaftskonferenz (the cascade model of the Joint Science Conference (GWK)), which permits discipline-specific objectives regarding the proportion of women at each successive qualification level.

In particular, the following legal provisions are used for shaping the gender equality work: the Grundgesetz (GG – German Constitution), the Hessische Gleichberechtigungsgesetz (HGIG – Hessian Equal Rights Act), the Hessische Hochschulgesetz (HessHG – Hessian Universities and Higher Education Act), the Allgemeine Gleichbehandlungsgesetz (AGG – General Equal Treatment Act), and a groundbreaking change in the Personenstandsgesetz (PStG – Civil Status Act) that reinforces the right of protection of sexual self-determination. For collecting information regarding gender, four options have been specified: male, female, diverse, no entry.

It has become clear that gender equality work extends beyond the legal mandate for promoting female staff in the areas in which they are underrepresented (Section 1 HGIG).

The realisation of equal opportunity involves every gender. Unequal treatment is permissible where specific promotion of individuals or groups is adopted in order to compensate for disadvantages (Section 5 AGG).

Gender equality work at institutions of higher education is carried out in an environment of conflicting interests, demands and resources. Equal living and working conditions as well as access to resources and possibilities to participate are a fundamental democratic principle based upon a non-negotiable right to equity. Additionally, there is the increasing relevance of equalisation as a competitive factor in university rankings, distinctions and the allocation of external funding.

## **II. TU Darmstadt's Gender Equality Targets**

The recruitment, advancement and motivation of women to study and pursue scientific careers in the STEM subjects constitute the core of TU Darmstadt's gender equality strategy. In addition to target-group specific opportunities, the design of structures and processes is relevant for promoting equal opportunity in study, research and teaching. The organisation, implementation and evaluation of gender equality plans have contributed significantly to the development and establishment of opportunities. In view of a renewed participation in the Programme for Female Professors, the gender equality policies were assessed from a variety of perspectives in a multi-stage process. Members of the University from diverse fields (research,

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teaching, studies, counselling, administration, training) and external experts were involved. During the various process steps, numerous ideas emerged for the continued development of activities to implement the three gender equality targets:

1. Gender mainstreaming
2. Increase the proportion of female professors
3. Acquisition of women for STEM subjects and for scientific careers

## 1. Gender mainstreaming

Gender mainstreaming is a governance task which combines normative standards and competitive orientation. It is the key to the required cultural transformation whose aim is a change in the working, research, and interactive culture. Intersectional correlations, gender diversity and the existence of multiple forms of discrimination illustrate that gender must be considered together with other diversity aspects (gender-diversity approach).

In order to sustainably increase the possibilities for women's participation and equal opportunity, equal opportunity structures and stakeholders on every decision-making level and in central fields of

activity are needed. The following principles describe the maxim for action used for gender equality work at TU Darmstadt:

**Gender equality is an inherent part of the University's overall strategy and is demanded by law and of the management. To this end, it requires resources and responsibilities:**

- Gender equality and diversity anchored at the Executive Board level
- Advisory Council on Research-oriented Equality of Opportunity
- Central Gender Equality Officer
- Specialist Team Gender Equality Office

**Standards which have been defined by law and programmes will be implemented on the basis of TU-internal guidelines, strategies and processes.**

- Frauenförder- und Gleichstellungsplan (Plan for the advancement of women and gender equality)
- Gender Equality Plan
- Guideline against Sexualised Discrimination and Assault
- Guideline against Discrimination
- Equal opportunity as benchmark in strategy papers, guidelines, target agreements and processes

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**Departmental responsibility will be reinforced through financial incentive schemes.**

- Women's advancement funds for the respective departments
- Gender equality as an indicator for performance-based allocation of funds
- Franziska Braun Prize for innovative approaches to gender equality
- Athene Special Award for gender and diversity-sensitive teaching

**The integration of decentralised and central structures ensures quality.**

- Decentralised gender equality officers of the departments and central services
- Gender equality plans of the departments and central services
- Institutional evaluation of the departments and central services
- Gender consulting for collaborative research

**Gender equality expertise is being established across the University through the establishment of gender equality-relevant positions and gender equality-related projects in the University Administration.**

- Gender and diversity appropriate teaching in the Centre for Educational Development and Technology (HDA)
- Girls' projects in the Central Student Advisory and Orientation Office (ZSB)
- Gender controlling in the Strategic Controlling unit

**Through monitoring, specifics on the departmental level will become visible and specifically be taken into consideration when setting gender equality policies.**

- Gender Data Report
- Statistical profile of the departments

**Equal opportunity in daily university life requires equal opportunity-oriented structures and gender diversity competent members of the University. Promoted by:**

- Awareness programmes (e.g., workshops, lectures, films on bias topics)
- Manuals and checklists (e.g., about gender and diversity-sensitive language)
- Diversity Strategy

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## 1.1 Resources and responsibilities

### Executive Board

#### Responsible for the overall strategy and operative management

The President is responsible for the overall strategic topics and professorial appointments. The Vice President for Academic Affairs and Diversity is responsible for the operative establishment of gender equality topics.

### Advisory Council on Research-oriented Equality of Opportunity

#### Advisory and decision-making administrative body

The Board advises the Executive Board on strategic decisions and developments related to gender equality activities. The council is composed of three internal and three external members and determines the awarding of the Franziska Braun Prize and recommends recipients for the Re-entry Scholarship.

### The Gender Equality Officer

#### Advisory and contact point for students, employees and staff

The Gender Equality Officer is a confidential point of contact which is not subject to the directives of others. She has a statutory mandate and is head of the Gender Equality Office. As such, she assists in appointment and selection processes, advises the Executive Board, represents gender equality topics in administrative bodies, connects female executive managers and provides counselling on career development and gender equality.

### Gender Equality Team

#### Conception and implementation of gender equality policies

- Provides advice for departments, central services, administration and collaborative research, students and scientists, decentralised gender equality officers
- Reviews strategies, processes and structures with focus on disadvantages
- Continued education and training, networking and counselling for women regarding professional and personal development
- Raising awareness and provision of information on the topic of gender equality



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## 1.2 TU in-house guidelines, strategies and processes

### Frauenförder- und Gleichstellungsplan

#### Plan for the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality

The Frauenförder- und Gleichstellungsplan is mandatory and statutorily based upon the provisions in the Hessian Equal Rights Act (HGIG). The measures taken at TU Darmstadt apply to job postings, personnel selection processes, education, training and continued professional development, compatibility of study, career and family and reporting. In addition, it contains an evaluation of the present situation and targets regarding the filling of positions and the legal framework.

### Gender Equality Plan

#### Continued development of the central gender equality plan

The Gender Equality Plan describes the central gender equality strategy and the corresponding gender equality policies and points of contact. The document constitutes the finalisation of a multi-year assessment and developmental process, and it is the working basis for the central gender equality work at TU Darmstadt.

### Guidelines against Sexualised Discrimination and Assault

#### achTUng! on Campus

TU Darmstadt values cooperation based on trust and a respectful and appreciative interaction with each other. The guidelines represent a zero-tolerance stance against sexist behaviour and transgressions and specify clear sanctions. Opportunities for reflection and training for students and employees support the required culture of mindfulness, respect and civil courage against every-day sexism. Counselling for the concerned students and employees is available at the achTUng! team's points of contact.<sup>1</sup>

### Guidelines against Discrimination

#### Respect on Campus

TU Darmstadt is committed to assuring that during their time at the University, no person will be discriminated against, in particular for reasons of racial attributes or because of ethnic or national origins, nor due to gender, religion or world view, impairment, age, social background or status, sexual identity or outward appearance. The Guideline obliges the University to take preventative, structural and compensatory measures and enables sanctions in addition to the right of complaint. A new addition is the Anti-Discrimination Office, which has been offering counselling since 2022.

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<sup>1</sup> achTUng! points of contact = Counselling services for employees of TU Darmstadt as well as Anti-Discrimination office

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## **Equal Opportunity in Strategy Papers**

### **All Genders Welcome**

The voluntary commitment to the consideration of equal opportunity is a well-established standard procedure in central processes, strategy papers, concepts and reports. Individuals of all genders are taken into consideration, e.g., students and employees of all genders can register a name change.

## **1.3 Departmental responsibility through financial incentives**

### **Frauenfördermittel**

#### **Funding for the advancement of women**

EUR 100,000.00 per year is allocated among the departments according to defined parameters and related to the proportion of women. National funding is to be used for the advancement of women – for the professional promotion of women of all status groups and for programmes for creating awareness about aspects of gender.

### **Percentage of women as indicator**

#### **For performance-based allocations of funds (MIR)**

MIR is designed as an allocation model which allocates the available funding among the departments based on the number of counted

professorships in each department as well as the indicators for load/demand and performance. The measuring of workload and performance as well as their departmental-specific weighting is oriented as much as possible towards federal reference values. The percentage of women is used as a reference value in the basic configuration.

### **Franziska Braun Prize**

#### **Financial recognition of gender equality innovation**

The Carlo and Karin Giersch Foundation at TU Darmstadt honours innovative approaches to gender equality every two years with a prize of EUR 25,000.00. The prize is awarded for best practice models for the recruitment of women at all levels of qualifications in and for research and teaching at TU Darmstadt.

### **Athene-Special Award**

#### **For gender and diversity-sensitive teaching**

Since 2010, the Carlo and Karin Giersch Foundation of TU Darmstadt has awarded a special prize for gender and diversity-sensitive teaching as part of the “Athene-Preis für Gute Lehre – Athene Award for Teaching Excellence”. This includes the contents and organisational structure of education and the methodical structure of the teaching processes. The prize is awarded each year and is endowed with EUR 5,000.00.

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## 1.4 Interlinking of the decentralised and central gender equality activities

### Decentralised Gender Equality Officers

#### Multipliers with creative leeway

Each of the departments and the central services appoint decentralised Gender Equality Officers. They support selection procedures, are members of the departmental council, make recommendations for the allocation of women's advancement funds, advise and set field-specific incentives through projects and activities of their own.

### Gender Equality Plans

#### Self-concept of the departments and central services

The departments and central services formulate their values, motives and objectives regarding gender equality with reference to the central gender equality plan. An analysis of the present situation is considered in the development of departmental-specific gender equality activities and policies. The gender equality plans are updated every three years.


### Institutional Evaluation

#### Quality management with a participatory approach

With its institutional evaluation, TU Darmstadt has established a sophisticated instrument for quality development with which departments, central services, the University's management and administration jointly create ongoing strategic developments within the scope of integrated quality management. Gender equality is a component in all four phases: Self-evaluation and self-reporting, assessment by an external evaluations commission, agreement on objectives between the President and the departments, implementation and monitoring.

### Gender Consulting

#### Gender equality expertise for collaborative research

The service unit Gender Consulting advises and initiates gender equality activities for all coordinated DFG programmes, LOEWE-programmes, and also EU and BMBF funded networks, and it supports researchers in every phase of the application process and during inspections. The **Research-Oriented Equity and Diversity Standards of the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft**  (DFG – German Research Foundation) form an essential basis which factors in diversity aspects since their amendment.

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## **1.5 Gender equality expertise in a cross-section of the University**

### **Gender and Diversity in Education**

#### **Synergy effects on studies and teaching**

The Centre for Educational Development and Technology (HDA) is a central service where gender and diversity-reflective questions and aspects are established as cross-sectional dimensions within the area of key competences, training in higher education and consultation, evaluation and e-learning.

### **Female Pupils' Projects**

#### **Focus on transition school to career**

A coordination and advisory office in the Central Student Advisory and Orientation Office (ZSB) consolidates central and departmental activities for the recruitment of girls and women for STEM subjects. One of the aims of the ZSB is to make female role models visible in connection with STEM degree programmes, for instance as role models in Social Media (#studentsofTUdarmstadt).

### **Gender Controlling**

#### **Integration in the University's strategy**

The Strategic Controlling unit performs a systematic analysis of key performance indicators on gender equality and of the development of the representation of women. It also compiles relevant numbers for TU Darmstadt's reports and public relations work.

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## 1.6 Monitoring of specifics at the departmental level

### Gender Data Report

#### Annual monitoring

This is an instrument for observing gender-specific qualifications and selection processes with changing focal points, including: leaky pipeline, early-career researchers, internationality and appointment procedures. Tables, supplemented with graphic evaluations and interpretations enable a quick assessment of the representation of women in different status groups over a period of time and in comparison with the TU9 universities.

### Statistical Profile of the Departments

#### Basis for gender equality plans

Because of its focus on the gender differences according to the volume of work, type of contract and grade, this analysis represents an important working and discussion basis for departmental Gender Equality Officers.

## 1.7 Equal opportunity and gender diversity competence

### Opportunities for awareness training for all members of the University

Gender diversity competence is characterised by the consideration of gender and diversity-related questions in the respective practices in research, teaching, studies and work. Exclusion mechanisms in structures as well as departmental and social cultures become apparent and challenged when (unintentional) discrimination, stereotypes and conduct are recognised. Programmes to strengthen awareness take place in the forms of workshops, lectures, films, online-tutorials etc.

### Recommendations and tips for acknowledging gender diversity in language, writing and images

The gender and diversity-inclusive use of language and images is essential for sharpening the awareness for diversity, and especially gender diversity. Language does not only reflect reality and social values; it shapes these as well. Language is variable and, thus, contributes to change. With a quick guide and additional training opportunities, every member of the University is encouraged to contribute.

## 2. Increasing the proportion of female professors

### Percentage of women in new professorships

Time period	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percentage of women in new Professorships incl. AP/JP	35 % 8 out of 23	25 % 5 out of 20	35 % 6 out of 17	54 % 14 out of 26	42 % 5 out of 12	41 % 7 out of 17	37 % 7 out of 19	39 % 7 out of 18

Unit IA / Gender Data Report

TU Darmstadt has voluntarily committed itself to fill a minimum of one out of three new professorships with women. The share of female professors can only be increased for the long-term, if their share of new appointments lies above the present percentage of women in professorships. Growth in the percentage of women newly appointed for professorships is therefore essential.

In 2023 TU Darmstadt employs 77 female professors (including 10 Junior Professors (JP) and Assistant Professors (AP)).<sup>2</sup> This is equivalent to a share of 23% and varies considerably depending on

the department. Female professors are underrepresented especially in engineering and natural sciences.

Various factors are responsible for the increase in the share of female professors. Among these are consequent and gender equality-oriented appointment procedures supported by concrete programmes for active recruitment.

<sup>2</sup> In the Hessian Higher Education Act (HHG), the Junior Professorship has been replaced by Qualification Professorship. Since 2016, the formerly used Junior Professor has been replaced by Assistant Professor at TU Darmstadt.

## Female Professors<sup>3</sup> – including assistant or junior professors

Department		2015			2021			2023		
		Σ	Women	Women %	Σ	Women	Women %	Σ	Women	Women %
01	Law and Economics	22	4	18%	16	4	25%	20	5	25%
02	History and Social Sciences	22	7	32%	29	15	52%	29	15	52%
03	Human Sciences	15	4	27%	15	6	40%	21	10	48%
04	Mathematics	29	4	14%	28	3	11%	26	4	15%
05	Physics	30	4	13%	29	5	17%	33	5	15%
07	Chemistry	22	4	18%	27	7	26%	27	6	22%
10	Biology	15	4	27%	19	3	16%	17	3	18%
11	Material and Earth Sciences	23	2	9%	28	5	18%	28	4	14%
13	Civil and Environmental Engineering	27	1	4%	24	4	17%	22	6	27%
15	Architecture	16	6	38%	12	6	50%	16	8	50%
16	Mechanical Engineering	28	1	4%	32	2	6%	29	2	7%
18	Electrical Engineering and Information Technology	31	3	10%	28	2	7%	34	4	12%
20	Computer Science	33	3	9%	25	4	16%	33	5	15%
<b>Total Departments</b>		<b>313</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>15%</b>	<b>311</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>334</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>23%</b>

Source: Accountability Report of the Executive Board of TU Darmstadt, due each year on 01. Feb.

<sup>3</sup> Headcount incl. on leave w/o visiting and substitute professors. The type of funding or load of work are no criteria. In the case of organisational multiple assignments, the individuals are shown in their respective areas. In total, they are only counted once (TU Darmstadt Data Warehouse).

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## 2.1 Active recruiting of female professors [↗](#)

Active recruiting is aimed at systematically expanding the pool of female applicants and thereby increasing the percentage of women in the appointment process over the long term. The following standards have been established at TU Darmstadt:

- Designation of potential female candidates in the approval request as a requirement for the approval of a professorship
- Documentation of early and targeted activities for finding qualified female applicants in all appointment committee reports
- Recruiting funds for the identification of potential female candidates throughout the globe and for recruiting female candidates for STEM Professorships
- Guidance concerning active recruitment of female professors
- Consultation for appointment committees on active recruitment

## 2.2 Gender equality-oriented professorial appointment procedures

In view of equal opportunity in the professorial appointment procedures, it is important to reflect on diverse perceptions, to question stereotypes and to explicitly exchange thoughts about them. The conclusions derived from observations in teaching demonstrations, subject-related lectures and committee meetings are decisive. How are criteria such as age, qualifications history and academic performance weighted and evaluated? In order to counteract **“gender bias”** [↗](#) and establish the consideration of gender equality aspects even before planning new positions, TU Darmstadt considers the following to be important:

- Consultation on requirement profiles
- Review of job posting texts for gender sensitivity
- Guideline for the appointment procedures including good practices on gender equality
- Potential-oriented selection criteria
- Standards for conducting selection interviews
- Training about professional appointment procedures and unconscious bias for members of the Professorial Appointments Committee
- Projekt “Chancengerechtes Berufungsmanagement”



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## 2.3 The Visiting Female Professor Programme [↗](#)

The Visiting Female Professor Programme takes into account the peculiarities of appointments at a technical university. In order to make the academic career path for women coming from the industrial sector more transparent and increase the visibility of excellent female scientists, the visiting professor attains insights into the everyday life of a professor over a period of two semesters. In terms of content, a visiting professorship should be compatible with a research area within the Departments of Materials and Earth Sciences, Civil and Environmental Engineering, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering and Information Technology and/or Computer Science. The programme is intended for excellent talents in their fields with a doctorate who come from research and development-related departments in industrial enterprises and who could perspectivevely be considered for filling a professorship. They are given the opportunity to gain experience within the areas of research and teaching at a university and raise their profile in view of a professorship. The objective is to provide an innovative impulse regarding recruiting and appointing women from the industrial sector in academics and to stimulate a change in thinking. The Visiting Professor Programme unites various approaches to a modernisation of the appointments culture and reinforces equal opportunity. It is a pilot project for testing innovative standards and approaches:

- Open-topic job postings for international and interdisciplinary openness
- Deliberate and active addressing of candidates through female professors
- Transparency within the appointment procedures through public processes and time lines
- Potential as a significant criterion in the selection procedure
- Option of a part-time or full-time visiting professorship
- Making TU Darmstadt visible as an attractive employer through accompanied on-boarding
- Emphasising the advantages provided by the location in the Rhine-Main area and the universities within the region

## 2.4 Opportunities for female professors

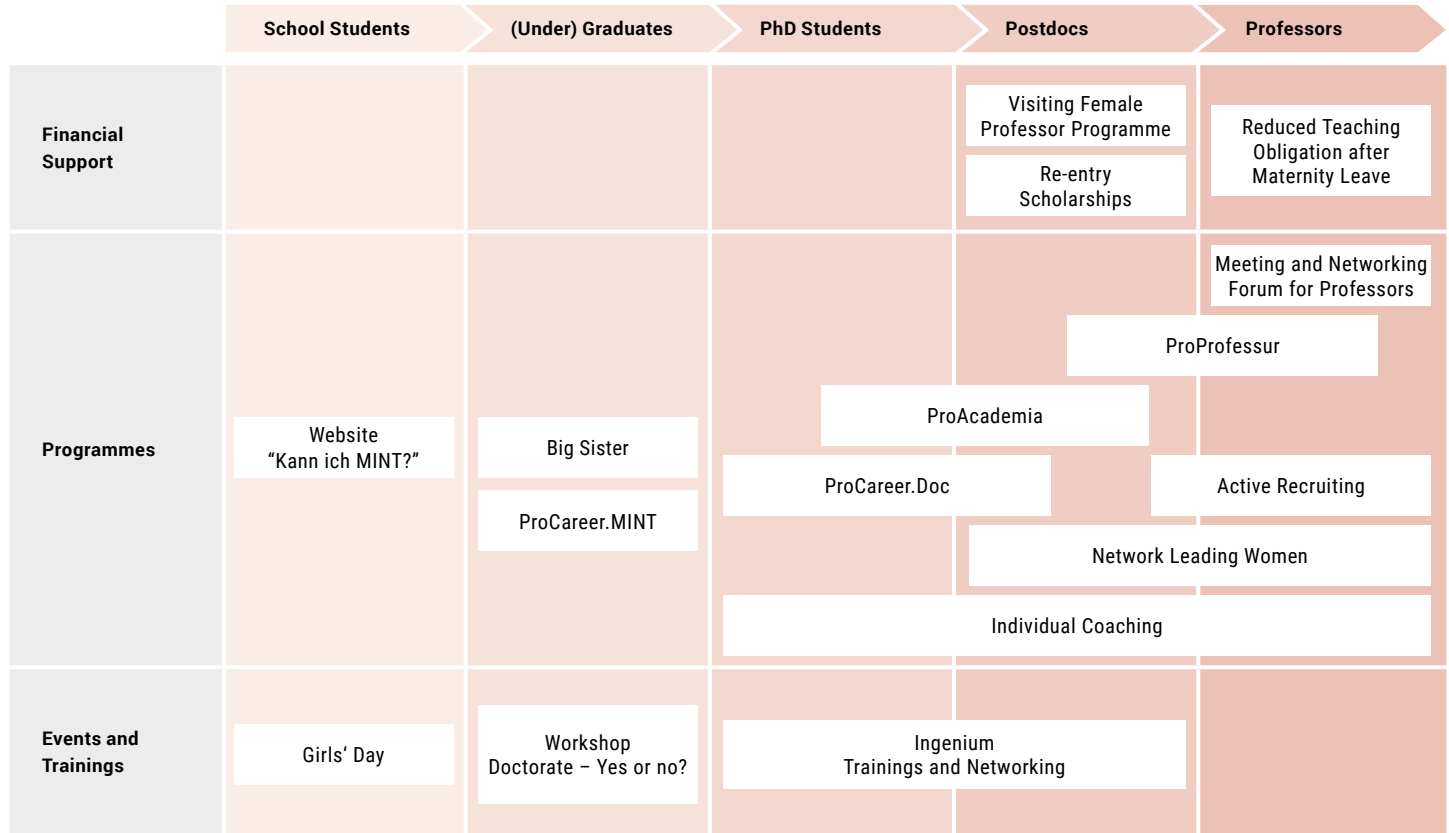
Coaching	Meeting and Network Forum	Reduction of teaching load
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Individual counselling for placement in work and research areas</li><li>• Clarification of various roles, reflections on styles of leadership and communication</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Collegial exchange about self-chosen topics with a host professor</li><li>• Newly appointed female colleagues are specifically invited</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reduction of teaching loads after the birth of a child</li><li>• Funding for the allocation of teaching assignments</li></ul>

In order to recruit female professors and retain them for the long run, there are numerous opportunities and programmes that foster a positive welcome culture, appreciative working conditions and an excellent work-life balance. Among these are the leadership development programme (ProFührung) for all professors at TU Darmstadt and the Dual Career Service which supports the partners of newly appointed professors. Taking into consideration the needs of female professors, specific opportunities have been established in view of a gender equality-oriented career and human resources development. Reflection on gender equality topics (stereotypes, role models, role model function, “one of the few women in the team”) is integrated according to need.

## 3. Recruiting women for STEM subjects and for scientific careers

TU Darmstadt’s objective is to acquire more women at all qualification levels in studies, teaching and research. On the one hand, the underrepresentation of women in the STEM subjects is extremely evident; on the other hand, these subjects represent TU Darmstadt’s point of focus. That is why the TU places special focus on activities concerning this topic. Targeted potential and career development is essential in order to increase the proportion of women in STEM subjects and in top scientific positions. Furthermore, target group-specific gender equality policies enable additional tailor-made opportunities **“from female student to female professor”**.

## TU Darmstadt's Central Gender Equality Policy Chain of Funding Opportunities



(Gender Equality Office 2024)

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### 3.1 Opportunities for female pupils and students

In the departments, there are numerous initiatives and programmes for acquiring female STEM-students. One of these is the “Consecutive Girls’ Project Days” in the Department of Electrical Engineering and Information Technology which was awarded the Franziska Braun Prize in 2020. Central Services have established a coordination point for opportunities available to female pupils in the Central Student Advisory and Orientation Office (ZSB) Opportunities for female pupils and students are broad and aim particularly at interlinking gender equality topics with STEM, interculturality as well as with a professional and scientific career development.

#### **Recruiting female pupils for science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM)**

In addition to the explicit appeal to female pupils through the Girls’ Day or the website “Kann ich MINT?” (Can I do STEM?), female pupils are targeted specifically in the course of central programmes such as in Schüler\*innen Mentoring (mentoring for pupils), TU Day, Students@School, the studentsofTUdarmstadt’s blog & social media channels, also in addition to the podcast fuTUre students. The objectives are to break up stereotypes and increase the interest among female pupils to study STEM subjects and reinforce this decision through an appropriate choice of majors (in school).

#### **Big Sister**

##### **Female STEM-students with migration backgrounds or from abroad**

A needs-based mentoring and network programme has been established for this target group. Each year, about 20 female students at TU Darmstadt are individually supported by a student mentor when organising their courses and upon arrival. This is accompanied by various workshop opportunities and regularly scheduled group meetings. Mentees and mentors reinforce their intercultural competence and reflect on their experiences related to gender and migration.

#### **ProCareer.MINT**

##### **Female students in natural and engineering sciences**

TU Darmstadt participates in the Hessian universities’ joint project Mentoring Hessen which contributes to the career development of women in the STEM subjects. The mentoring programme ProCareer.MINT is targeted explicitly towards female students in the natural and engineering sciences. In the form of mentoring, training, and networking, it offers individual support for their studies and career starts. Each year, about 30 female students at TU Darmstadt participate in this programme.

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## **A Doctorate – Would this be something for me?**

### **Female Master's students from all disciplines**

Ingenium offers workshops each year with competent academic counselling regarding doctoral opportunities for female students.

## **3.2 Opportunities for female doctorates and postdoctorates**

After completing a doctoral programme, there is a high risk that talented women will drop out of the science careers. The underrepresentation of female professors and women in management positions in institutions of higher education and research facilities makes it clear that female scientists are still experiencing structural and cultural discrimination. TU Darmstadt stands for a differentiated and top-rate promotion of early-career researchers. The principles of equal opportunity and the compatibility of family and qualifications are taken into consideration when promoting early-career researchers.

Early-career researchers will be particularly promoted in those fields in which they are underrepresented when comparing the proportions of women and men in the previous qualification phase. The aim is to keep the gender ratios stable throughout the qualification phases. Early-career researchers with families are supported and the time-based structuring of a doctoral or postdoctoral phase is designed to ensure compatibility with family responsibilities.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Guidelines on the Promotion of Early-Career Researchers by Ingenium - Young Researchers at TU Darmstadt 2019

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There are numerous opportunities for the various target groups, for example, Ingenium's qualification and networking programmes, career counselling and special postdoc funding programmes (inter alia, Athene Young Investigator, Adolf Messer Foundation Prize, mentoring by senior scientific advisors, postdoctoral career programmes). Ingenium – Young Researchers at TU Darmstadt is the umbrella organisation for the promotion of early-career researchers in collaboration with departments, graduate schools and research training groups. Ingenium, in close cooperation with the Gender Equality Office, incorporates and advances gender equality perspectives. The mutual objective is the establishment of professional career development opportunities.

### **ProCareer.Doc, ProAcademia, ProProfessor**

#### **Mentoring, Training and Networking for Female Scientists**

Mentoring Hessen is a joint project of Hessian universities which, through its various lines of support, offers tailor-made mentoring, training, and networking formats for the individual, and practice-related career development of female doctoral or postdoctoral candidates, candidates aiming for a postdoctoral lecturing qualification or assistant professors. Each year, approximately 30 female scientists at TU Darmstadt participate as mentees in the programmes offered by Mentoring Hessen.

### **Coaching for career planning**

#### **For female postdoctoral and doctoral candidates**

The objective is to empower female scientists on their career paths, who aspire to attain professorships and management positions in science. Common topics are the professional and personal positioning in job and research fields in which women are extremely underrepresented.

### **Re-Entry Scholarships**

#### **For post-doctoral women after care periods**

Female scientists, who have suspended their research because of care responsibilities and who want to return to science, have the opportunity to prepare their own proposal and position application. The 10-months' scholarship allows the preparation for remaining in or returning to research and teaching and opens flexible paths of action as a result of financial bridging options.

### III. Opportunities for Female Employees and Staff in the Science-Support Areas

Within the status group of administrative/technical employees and staff, there are two groups of employees and staff at TU Darmstadt with very different proportions of women: technical and non-technical employees and staff, the latter group tending to show a very high proportion of women. They contribute to the University in a variety of ways, in some cases in specific functions and offices (staff council, representation for administrative bodies, gender equality officers of

departments and central services etc.). They know the processes and structures within their areas of work and they are important multipliers and interfaces, and they contribute significantly to the implementation of gender equality. There are diverse developmental measures related to the promotion, strengthening and visibility of potential which are addressed specifically to female employees, especially in science-support areas. Human Resources and Organisational Development (POE) is an important cooperation partner in the execution and implementation of these programmes.



Women's Programme	Women's General Assembly	Network Women Leaders	Women's Advancement Funds	Counselling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In-house training for female employees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centrally, 1 x every year for all female employees</li> <li>Additionally in the individual departments and the central services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network of female leaders in administration and science</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Funding for the structural advancement of women in all status groups</li> <li>Raising awareness for all genders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Counselling through the central Gender Equality Officer and the Gender Equality Office</li> <li>Collegial counselling for Gender Equality Officers of the departments and central services</li> </ul>

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## IV. Compatibility of Professional and Private Areas of Life

Achieving a successful balance between one's professional and private life results in an improved individual quality of life which will lead to increased motivation and satisfaction. In addition to the gender equality targets, the compatibility of profession/studies and family as well as a job organisation that is appropriate for the current phase in life is an important matter at TU Darmstadt. Even though women's career progress is still frequently impacted by starting a family, according to TU Darmstadt's self-perception, family and compatibility is not exclusively a woman's topic. Equal participation of women in their professional lives and equivalent career opportunities require an equal distribution of family responsibilities between women and men. In spite of this, it can make sense to offer women additional opportunities for the development of their careers in specific life-phases.

### Compatibility of family and career/studies


TU Darmstadt has been certified as a family-friendly university by the berufundfamilie Service GmbH since 2005, undergoing regular re-certification audits. The University is also a founding member of the nation-wide Best Practice Club "Familie in der Hochschule e.V." which was founded in 2018. To implement this objective, the Executive Board established the service unit Family Service, which addresses its programmes to students, employees and staff at TU Darmstadt and supports them in their endeavours to organise their career and family responsibilities. At the centre of the measures for compatibility of family and career is a comprehensive regular **child care programme**  for children between the ages of one to six years old. This is supplemented with a flexible child care programme for all ages which covers different times of day and can also be used during the university holidays or in ad-hoc situations as well as during congresses. **Prof. Sorin Huss Fonds**  supports students and doctoral candidates at TU Darmstadt in funding child care, especially in financially critical situations.

Within the scope of training, coaching, advisory/counselling programmes, a large number of aspects relevant to students', employees' and staffs' lives are addressed, including: career path with child, time management, compatibility, family, stress, career and getting older.




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In practice, temporary employment contracts, irregular working hours, expected mobility and changing working locations make it harder to reconcile a scientific career with family responsibilities. In order to balance the disadvantages for Phd-students and Post-docs with family responsibilities or physical disabilities, the Gender Equality Office has initiated the **Equality Grant** in cooperation with Ingenium and the service unit Family Service. In the context of research-relevant activities within the scope of continued scientific development, it is possible to apply for a grant for care giving time periods and expenses.

The strategic measures towards compatibility are not only focused on individuals with children but are also aimed at all University members who have the responsibility to care for other individuals, e.g., care-dependent relatives. Several programmes support employees, staff and students who need to assume responsibility for care-dependent relatives. In-House **“Pflege-Guides”**  (care guides) are available as the first points of contact as are annual seminar cycles on the compatibility of care and career/studies.

### **Organisation Culture and Working Culture**

Flexible working time models and the extensive facilitations for working remotely offer room to manoeuvre for individual private situations. TU Darmstadt values family-friendly working and meeting/committee times. This is supplemented by the broad range of

programmes offered by the department of Human Resources and Organisational Development (POE), which take a critical look at the culture of respectful cooperation and promote the competences and potentials of all employees and staff. **Management Guidelines** , which were developed in a participatory procedure, guide the actions of the senior managers at TU Darmstadt. They embrace diversity as an opportunity to ensure gender equity and use the different points of view, experiences, and cultures to drive creativity and innovation. “Ensuring interaction on equal terms involves establishing an equal and cooperative team culture that is free of discrimination or prejudice”.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to extensive in-house training programmes, POE offers leadership and organisational development and coaching for all employees and staff as well as a Dual Career Service. This assists the partners of newly appointed professors in achieving their own professional objectives and career aspirations in the Rhine-Main area.

<sup>5</sup> Management Guidelines of TU Darmstadt

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## V. Conclusion and Prospects

In the past years, TU Darmstadt has compiled a broad portfolio in the area of the advancement of women and gender equality. The combination of structural measures and individual measures continues to be necessary in order to drive the three gender equality targets: gender mainstreaming (1), an increase in the percentage of female professors (2), and recruiting women for the STEM-subjects and scientific careers (3).

(1) In the coming years, the gender equality strategy will be even more intensely interlinked with the organisational structure and the many and varied departmental cultures. To anchor equal opportunity at all University levels, gender equality policies are increasingly challenged with regard to their structural and cultural impact. The basic premise is that there will be a long-term positive effect in those areas that impact the general conditions for women in science. Because of the underrepresentation of female students and scientists in most departments, our focus continues to remain on gender perspectives, even as diversity aspects are being considered in the interest of intersectionality. The Female Professors' Programme III enables the implementation of gender equality projects which correlate explicitly with the respective discipline's culture.

(2) A focus on the structural aspects in the professorial appointment procedures will be funded through a project position in PP III. For gender equality-oriented appointment procedures to sustainably raise the proportion of women in professorships, an essential prerequisite is that the professorial appointment procedures are transparent and quality is assured. Reinforcement bias-awareness is equally as important as stipulating standards in guidelines and debating the weighting of selection criteria, potential and the tailoring or the fundamental realigning of professorships.

(3) Targeted advancement of women can support an equalisation of opportunities for academic and professional careers. Regarding the promotion of scientific careers, the combination of prioritised content in the areas of gender diversity and STEM offers potentials for TU Darmstadt that have not yet been exhausted. The funding of open-topic calls for applications with gender-STEM relevance to promote qualification positions or the connection of visiting professorships with gender-STEM aspects offer further approaches for actions in the years ahead. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of gender equality work to question perceived standards for academic career paths and reveal the inherent gender aspects therein, e.g., in the weighting of publications or the "necessity" of periods abroad during

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phases of starting a family. The exit of excellent women from science due to discrimination is an unacceptable loss of potential and perspectives, which can detrimentally impact competitiveness and innovative capacities.

policies which take into account the different departmental cultures and subject-related departmental gender equality policies which lie in the autonomy and creative freedom of the departments.

Gender equality also means organisational development in an environment of conflicting priorities between the constitutional mandate, rankings, programmes and social innovation. Competition-oriented logic must be aligned with strategic objectives and normative-ethical basic assumptions. Gender and diversity issues have a common ground, i. e., they bring attention to the unequal distribution of power and the inclusion and exclusion mechanisms resulting from this - with the goal to change these. New developments bring also new challenges for gender equality work, such as with the topic of digitisation. Regarding users and programmers, awareness and reflection are required so that, for example, prejudice and stereotyping based on gender etc. are not reproduced in the digital realm (e.g., racial profiling, algorithms...).

The following is clear: gender equality, anti-discrimination work and diversity are interlinked and can profit from each other strategically. Within the context of the Rhine-Main Universities (RMU), and with a view on the Excellence Initiative, innovative pilot projects are being implemented which take up current topics. Furthermore, TU Darmstadt puts great value on long-term central gender equality

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