Gender Equality Plan (GEP)
for the Scientific Center of Innovative Research (SCIR), 2026–2030

1. Purpose and continuity

This Gender Equality Plan covers 2026–2030 and continues the commitments, governance model, and core safeguards established under the SCIR GEP 2020–2025. The 2020–2025 cycle focused on building a proportionate compliance baseline for a platform based, internationally networked organization, with emphasis on public availability, defined responsibilities, aggregated monitoring, and role specific training. The 2026–2030 cycle shifts from foundation building to consolidation, quality improvement, and measurable institutional change across publishing, conferences, learning provision, and internal governance. The Plan applies to SCIR personnel and affiliated contributors and sets expectations for authors, editors, reviewers, conference participants, instructors, and learners interacting with SCIR through its digital platforms.

2. European policy alignment for 2026–2030

SCIR aligns this Plan with the Horizon Europe approach to Gender Equality Plans, including the four mandatory process related requirements: a public document, dedicated resources and expertise, sex or gender disaggregated monitoring, and training and awareness raising. The Plan also follows the recommended thematic areas commonly used in European practice, while adapting measures to SCIR's operational profile as a publisher, conference organizer, and learning provider. In addition, SCIR takes into account the European Research Area Policy Agenda 2025–2027 emphasis on implementation, monitoring, evaluation, and an intersectional approach to gender equality in research and innovation.

3. Principles and commitments

SCIR commits to equal opportunities and non discrimination in recruitment and role allocation, editorial assessment and peer review, event governance, and learning provision. SCIR commits to procedural fairness, transparency of criteria, and accountable decision making, because these mechanisms shape access to opportunities and professional

visibility. SCIR commits to evidence based management through annual monitoring, publication of a concise public progress summary, and corrective actions when risks, disparities, or barriers are identified. SCIR commits to safe environments in both online and offline interactions through clear conduct rules, predictable reporting channels, confidentiality safeguards, and timely response procedures.

4. Governance and resourcing for 2026–2030

Implementation is coordinated by a designated GEP Coordinator supported by a small cross functional working group representing publishing, conferences, learning, and internal administration. The Coordinator is responsible for annual planning, data aggregation and interpretation, training delivery oversight, and public reporting. Dedicated resources are ensured through allocated staff time, continuous improvement actions embedded in platform workflows, and planned updates to forms and procedures where monitoring identifies gaps. SCIR maintains a dedicated contact point for safe environment concerns to receive reports related to discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate conduct, applying confidentiality principles and clear escalation pathways.

5. Objectives for 2026–2030

SCIR defines five objectives for this cycle, each linked to measurable outputs and annual review.

1. Consolidate fair assessment and bias mitigation across editorial and peer review workflows.
2. Strengthen balanced representation in decision shaping and high visibility roles across platforms.
3. Embed safe environment standards and reliable incident response in conferences and learning.
4. Improve the integration of the gender dimension in research and teaching content when scientifically relevant.
5. Upgrade monitoring and evaluation by improving data quality, coverage, and actionability, including an intersectional lens where feasible and lawful.

6. Priority areas, actions, and platform implementation

6.1 Work life balance and organizational culture

SCIR maintains flexible work organization compatible with international collaboration and introduces clearer workload allocation rules for recurring editorial, conference, and learning tasks. The 2026–2030 emphasis is on reducing invisible labor and uneven administrative burdens by standardizing task descriptions, deadlines, and rotation practices. SCIR will implement annual staff and key contributor feedback checks focused on workload, wellbeing, and perceptions of fairness, and will use results to adjust procedures.

6.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision making

SCIR promotes balanced representation in decision shaping roles, including editorial leadership, volume editors, programme committees, chairs, moderators, and lead instructors. In 2026–2030, SCIR will operationalize this commitment through transparent selection criteria, planned rotation, and active outreach to diversify pools of candidates for visible roles. Where feasible, SCIR adopts a target of avoiding single gender dominance in committees and leadership structures, with a practical benchmark of at least 40 percent representation of each gender in key governance bodies and public facing roles, while preserving competence based selection in discipline specific contexts.

6.3 Equality in recruitment and career development

SCIR applies gender neutral wording, transparent criteria, and documented decisions in recruitment and role assignment. The 2026–2030 cycle strengthens career support through structured mentoring and onboarding for early career contributors in editorial, conference, and teaching roles. SCIR will also introduce a competency development pathway for roles that influence evaluation and gatekeeping, such as editors, reviewers, and committee members, with periodic refreshers on fair assessment.

6.4 Gender dimension in research, publishing, and teaching content

SCIR promotes the integration of the gender dimension into research and learning content when it is scientifically relevant and methodologically appropriate. Compared with 2020–2025, the 2026–2030 cycle moves from general guidance to clearer prompts and quality checks. SCIR will introduce concise author and editor prompts encouraging transparent

reporting on whether sex or gender considerations were relevant to the research design, sampling, analysis, and interpretation. In learning activities, SCIR will implement course design guidance that supports inclusive pedagogy, avoids stereotyping, and encourages balanced representation in examples and case materials.

6.5 Zero tolerance for harassment and gender based violence
SCIR applies zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, and gender based violence, including sexual harassment, across all activities. In 2026–2030, SCIR will strengthen prevention and response by standardizing codes of conduct for events and learning environments, ensuring visible reporting channels, and documenting response timelines and outcomes in aggregated form for organizational learning. SCIR will prioritize timely and confidential handling of reports and will apply non retaliation safeguards.

7. Monitoring, indicators, and public reporting
SCIR monitors progress annually using aggregated indicators and procedural metrics suitable for a platform based organization. Monitoring is designed for trend analysis and procedural improvement rather than individual profiling and is implemented in compliance with applicable data protection requirements.

Minimum indicator set for 2026–2030:
- Representation indicators: gender balance in key roles and committees across publishing, conferences, and learning.
- Process indicators: training coverage for decision shaping roles, participation patterns in conferences and learning, and selected aggregated workflow indicators for editorial processes.
- Safe environment indicators: presence and visibility of codes of conduct and reporting channels, number of reports in aggregated form, and response time metrics.
- Content quality indicators: uptake of gender dimension prompts where relevant, and completion of inclusive pedagogy guidance in learning activities.

Public reporting will be issued annually as a concise progress summary describing headline indicators, actions implemented, gaps identified, and corrective actions planned for the following year.

8. Implementation pathway by year, 2026–2030

2026: baseline refresh following the 2020–2025 cycle, confirmation of governance roles, updated training modules, and harmonized platform references to the Plan and reporting channels.

2027: consolidation of role selection and rotation practices, strengthened monitoring of representation and workflow indicators, and full embedding of conduct standards in conferences and learning.

2028: quality improvement phase, including targeted actions where monitoring shows persistent imbalance or risk, and refinement of prompts for fair assessment and gender dimension integration.

2029: evaluation and external informed self assessment of effectiveness, with emphasis on whether procedures translate into measurable change and safer participation.

2030: end of cycle review, publication of a synthesis report, and preparation of the next GEP cycle based on evidence, stakeholder feedback, and the evolving European policy environment.

9. Publication, review, and contact

This Plan is published as a public policy document and reviewed annually. Updates may be introduced to reflect changes in European guidance, organizational structure, or platform workflows.

References (APA style)

1. European Commission. (2020). A Union of Equality: Gender Equality Strategy 2020–2025. https://commission.europa.eu/strategy-and-policy/policies/justice-and-fundamental-rights/gender-equality/gender-equality-strategy_en

2. European Commission, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation. (2021). Horizon Europe guidance on gender equality plans. https://erc.europa.eu/sites/default/files/document/file/GEPs_in_HE_guidelines.pdf

3. European Institute for Gender Equality. (2026). Horizon Europe gender equality plan eligibility criterion. https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear/horizon-europe-gep-criterion

4. European Commission. (2025). Gender equality in research and innovation. https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/strategy/strategy-research-and-innovation/democracy-and-rights/gender-equality-research-and-innovation_en

5. European Commission. (2020). Horizon Europe support for gender equality and the European Research Area policy agenda. https://european-research-area.ec.europa.eu/horizon-europe-support-gender-equality