

Deltares Gender Equality Plan



Deltares Gender Equality Plan

Gender equality is an important element of the broader theme of Diversity and Inclusion, and in the ambition of Deltares to strengthen our inclusive culture. The Deltares ambitions for gender equality are formulated in this Gender Equality Plan (GEP).

Our GEP also supports the European Commission's [2020-2025 Gender Equality Strategy](#). The European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. The goal is a European Union where 'women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity,' are free to pursue their chosen path in life, have equal opportunities to thrive, and can participate in and lead our European society on an equal footing. This effort also contributes to the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG 5): achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.

The following paragraphs describe the ambitions and approach of Deltares with respect to gender equality.

We follow the structure suggested by the European Commission:

- Work-life balance and organisational culture
- Training
- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content
- Measures against gender-based violence including sexual harassment
- Data collection and monitoring
- Dedicated resources

The plan will be reviewed annually and updated if required.

Work-life balance and organisational culture

Work-life balance and the organisational culture are key factors that contribute to an enabling environment. It is about creating the work-life circumstances and organisational culture all employees, whatever their gender identity may be, need to have fulfilling careers and to have the same entitlements for a healthy work-life balance.

Our working conditions contribute to a healthy work-life balance of our employees:

- Part-time employment is possible for everybody, in every position and at every level.
- Employees have flexibility with respect to working hours and working location.
- Employees have 34 regular leave days (on a fulltime basis).
- It is possible to buy extra leave.
- Employees can take a sabbatical.
- Employees receive a vitality budget to work on vitality and sustainable employability.
- Employees have the possibility to take care of people in their near surroundings who are ill or need help. The short-term care leave takes up to a maximum of 10 days a year (70% paid).
- Deltares has different kinds of maternity and partner provisions (some of which include provisions over and above the Dutch legal minimum):
 - Pregnant employees are entitled to a minimum of 16 weeks (= pregnancy + maternity) paid leave for the purposes of the childbirth
 - 5 days of paid childbirth leave (on fulltime basis)
 - Additional childbirth leave, fully paid (addition)
 - Adoption leave (6 weeks), fully paid (addition)
 - Parental leave

In 2021, we added fully paid additional partner leave and a policy to facilitate working from home to our working conditions. When schools and day care were closed due to coronavirus in 2020 and 2021, Deltares offered its employees a total of up to 25 extra days (of 70% paid) for short-term care leave.

Turning to our organisational culture, the results of our 2019 Employee Survey showed that job satisfaction at Deltares is generally high, and that we have loyal and committed employees. We found that there were no significant differences on a general level associated with gender. However, when we looked at this area in greater detail, we did find a difference in job satisfaction. This related to the perception of equal opportunities among young women.

Even though the quantitative analysis found that indicators for men and women were comparable (no measured differences in pay, performance evaluation and promotion), we acknowledge that there is room for improvement in other areas such as the percentage of women in higher management and senior positions (equal outcomes) and perceived opportunities for development.

We take this very seriously, and we want to improve by working on a more inclusive organisational culture and moving towards more gender equality in our leadership and senior positions.

Measures and Targets

For 2022-2025, we have no specific targets for working conditions with respect to gender balance. We will monitor signals and make adjustments when they are required.

In terms of organisational culture, our ambition is to improve the awareness, knowledge and skills of all managers (decision-makers) and employees regarding not only gender equality but also other diversity and inclusion issues.

In 2022-2025, we will:

- Continue to use our Employee Survey to measure the disaggregation of gender and make it possible to respond to signals and possible differences;
- Invest in an inclusive organisational culture. We will support this by means of:
 - **Dialogue:** This is the most productive approach in terms of encouraging empathy and interaction with different groups, exchanging perspectives and creating awareness. We already organised dialogue sessions in 2021 and we will continue to do so in 2022-2025. Managers are encouraged and given support to initiate dialogue in their units and departments.
 - **Awareness:** We established a Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) intranet group in 2021 that provides information and is open for discussions about D&I for all employees. In 2022-2025, we will continue our awareness-raising activities, which include blogs, vlogs, lunch lectures, interviews & stories. We will devote particular attention to Diversity & Inclusion Day, International Women's Day and Coming Out Day (LGBTQ Awareness Day).
 - **Training** of management and all employees (for more information, see below).

Training

Deltares provides its employees with numerous training and development activities. Continuous development is crucial for personal and professional growth and for an innovative organisation like Deltares.

Deltares already provides courses for work-life balance and self-leadership for all employees. They include a Personal and Professional Development Programme (for Dutch nationals, international employees, support staff and senior professionals), a two-year Young Professional Programme, a Co-Creation Lab, an annual leadership development programme and time-management courses. These programmes focus on personal and professional growth, interpersonal skills and team development.

Measures and Targets

In 2022-2025, we will be paying specific attention to gender and cultural inclusion in our training activities by adding some new training modules and by including the topic of gender diversity and inclusion in our existing courses.

In 2022-2025, we will:

- Offer an awareness-raising course for staff and decision-makers / management about inclusive leadership & decision-making, gender equality and unconscious biases;
- Add awareness-raising e-learning courses (such as unconscious bias, gender diversity) that will be widely publicised and open to all employees;
- Include the training module “Becoming a global professional; intercultural perspective and gender” in our Young Professional Programme;
- Include Diversity & Inclusion dialogue sessions for project leaders in our course for Leading Project Teams;

Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

Gender balance in the Deltares management (leadership, decision-makers) represents substantive added value with respect to the quality of decision-making and it is essential to lead by example (for, among others, young female employees).

In 2021, we improved the gender balance in our leadership. We improved the gender balance in our management team, in our Scientific Council (from 0% to 50%) and the Young Scientific Council. In order to achieve this, we established a diverse selection committee for both the Scientific Council and the Young Scientific Council and adjusted the recruitment profile in a way that broadened the capabilities needed to attract more diverse profiles. In addition to this more equal gender balance, we also improved cultural diversity.

Deltares advisor/researcher gender balance	2021		2022	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Supervisory board	80%	20%	60%	40%
Board of Directors	67%	33%	67%	33%
Management Team	62%	38%	62%	38%
Department heads	69%	31%	68%	32%
Science Council	50%	50%	50%	50%
Young Science Council	57%	43%	57%	43%

Measures and targets

Our ambition for 2022-2025 is to:

- Further improve the gender balance in our leadership. We will take into consideration a combination of who is needed for the job and who is needed in the team and in the organisational context.
- Strengthen the knowledge and skills of the leadership and HR with respect to unbiased selection and recruitment processes.

Gender equality in recruitment and career progression

Deltares will continue to recruit a gender-balanced representation of the population based on the outflow of students who graduate from university with degrees that are relevant for Deltares. According to Statistics Netherlands in 2020, 55% of graduates in mathematics and natural sciences were men and 45% were women. The numbers for technical graduates were 67% men and 33% women.

We are on the right track for our junior advisor/researcher gender balance. However, in terms of career progression, we have found that balance between men and women is less equal.

Deltares genderbalance	2021		2022	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Junior advisor / researcher	58%	42%	51%	49%
Medior advisor / researcher	61%	39%	60%	40%
Senior advisor / researcher and higher	80%	20%	78%	22%
Support staff	57%	43%	54%	46%
Overall workforce	68%	32%	65%	35%

Measures and targets

in 2022-2025 we will:

- Improve our recruitment process to be more inclusive. This will be achieved by establishing more diverse selection committees for vacancies (including members with different ages, knowledge levels, gender etc.) and by using gender-neutral language in job advertisements. During the recruitment process, we will encourage selection committees to take team diversity into account explicitly and to watch an awareness video about unconscious bias. In our employer branding efforts on social media, we will also pay attention to gender equality in visuals.
- Increase the percentage of women at medior and senior levels and higher. This will mean:
 - Looking more closely at the outflow of women and responding to possible signals;
 - Strengthening the knowledge and skills of HR and leadership with respect to unbiased selection, recruitment & promotion processes.

Inclusion of the gender dimension in applied research and teaching content (capacity building)

In recent years, it has become clear how important inclusion is for our work, and gender is a very important factor in this area. The added value of including the gender dimension will lead to research and innovation that is better attuned and connected to the local conditions, increasing the acceptability and sustainability of research outcomes and therefore furthering uptake and innovation. It will allow research and innovation to be more responsive to the needs of society, to develop new ideas and to foster innovation. The inclusion of a gender dimension in research and innovation means that gender bias is more likely to be properly addressed and eliminated.

Deltares aims to have socially diverse and inclusive project teams (in terms of gender, age, experience and background) because we believe they contribute to a better perspective for inclusive outcomes that consider the impacts on vulnerable groups.

We strive to engage with and include a diverse group of stakeholders in the execution of our projects, and we also strive to have inclusive outcomes. This means that we must adjust the lens we use when looking at requests from our clients so that we understand the social, economic and environmental impact of our work in each case. This may include the effects on a wide range of possibly vulnerable groups.

In recent years, we have come across situations in which clients' decision panels and/or the group of stakeholders relevant to the project consisted of men only. In these situations, we devote extra attention to the inclusion of women on those decision panels and in consultations whenever possible. Furthermore, in our capacity-building activities, we explicitly state that women should be included.

In 2021, we conducted internal evaluations of inclusion and diversity in the processes and outcomes of some Master Plan projects and we have drawn some lessons from them. They include:

- The need for greater awareness and knowledge among our own staff with respect to the topic of D&I, particularly among project leaders;
- The need for more cooperation with NGOs and organisations with more expertise on the topic to complement our projects;
- Building on good practice in the past from our own projects, which means we need to share more good practices;
- Taking into account the topic of social inclusiveness and diversity in the proposal, even when the terms of reference do not mention it explicitly;
- The importance of a diverse team: interdisciplinary, gender-balanced and diverse cultural background.

Measures and targets

In 2022-2025, we intend to:

- Contribute to gender equality by proactively involving women in the stakeholder processes of our projects and capacity-building programmes. Particularly in projects where stakeholder involvement and interaction are crucial, such as master plans, integrated water and coastal management and in risk assessments. We will do this by working on understanding the local context and potential barriers to the inclusion of women, using the local language, more involvement of female colleagues in the process of engaging stakeholders and including the gender component in the definition of vulnerable groups in our analysis.
- Include gender factors in our technical approach and outcomes (assumptions, indicators, strategies, developed instruments, etc). Gender (bias) should be carefully considered in our projects with respect to the assumptions, indicators and data we use in our technical activities (such as modelling and experiments) if they may lead to different impacts on different groups of people. Being aware of the representativeness of our dataset with regard to gender bias is part of this.

Against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Deltares believes it is important to provide its employees with a pleasant and safe working environment. Deltares therefore monitors and addresses undesirable behaviour, which is considered all behaviour by an instigator that inflicts social, psychological and/or physical harm on a given employee and that, socially and objectively, may also be thought to be inappropriate, objectionable, hurtful or threatening. Such behaviour is unacceptable. On the basis of our Employee Survey, we know that the levels of undesirable behaviour at Deltares are lower than at most organisations in the Netherlands. However, we believe one case of undesired behaviour is one case too many.

Measures and targets

In 2022-2025, we will continue to:

- Measure, share and discuss types and levels of undesirable behaviour in our organisation using our Employee Survey;
- Share and discuss the annual report from our external confidential counsellor with our Works Council;
- Make information available to all employees about how to act when they encounter undesirable behaviour, who they can turn to for help and how to consult the external confidential counsellor.

Data collection and monitoring

Reports are produced annually about the following gender-disaggregated data and indicators relating to personnel:

- Gender balance for Deltares as a whole and for the Deltares management;
- Promotion of all staff, including gender disaggregation;
- Performance review (scores) for all personnel, including gender disaggregation;
- Absenteeism, including gender disaggregation;
- Employee Survey (bi-annual), including gender disaggregation.

Dedicated resources & responsibilities

Diversity & Inclusion (D&I) is one of our four strategic organisational development goals for 2022-2025. In 2021, we set up a gender-diverse and culturally diverse sounding board for D&I that consists of the Deltares managing director, the head of HR, three unit managers and a department head. The vision and goals are formulated, and decisions about subsequent steps are regularly evaluated.

Deltares established a core team for D&I in 2021. This diverse team includes members from different business units and the Human Resources department. The goal of the core team is to initiate and develop interventions to support the implementation of our vision of Diversity and Inclusion, starting with raising awareness and supporting an open dialogue with the initial focus on gender and cultural diversity.

Deltares approaches this subject as a journey, step by step. We take action and, based on the effects, we decide to add or alter the types of measures we implement.

In addition to the time invested by the D&I team, the budget earmarked for Diversity & Inclusion in 2022 is €110,000. It will be reviewed annually. This budget will be used for training and raising awareness.

We cooperate with and make use of external resources: learning networks, D&I experts, change consultants and trainers.

The responsibilities for the implementation of Diversity and Inclusion, and specifically gender, are secured in our operational processes. The Human Resources department facilitates the HR processes (such as recruitment, selection, onboarding, learning & development, career planning and training, the performance cycle, HR legal affairs & policy). We do this in joint responsibility with our strategic management team (including the board of directors, unit management and support management).

Diversity & Inclusion change team: Anne Spruijt (programme leader), Diana Morales Irato, Bouke Ottow, Sabine van den Boogerd, Shristi Vaidya, Raymond van der Meij, Désirée Plenker en Lisanne van Dijk. Mirjam Buurmeijer (sounding board leader), Ahmed Elkadi, Marijn Kuijper, Toon Segeren, Bianca Peters, Annemieke Nijhof.