

## SDU's GE vision statement

SDU is a diverse organization, where inclusive and welcoming conduct is promoted and where there is room and respect for differences. We continuously strive to minimize bias in decision making as well as adverse effects of intersecting diversity parameters such as gender, race and social background. We actively, purposefully and continuously strive to be an organization free of sexism, unwanted sexual attention or other types of harassment.

Resting firmly on the principles of free, independent and critical research, SDU's strategic Gender Equality (GE) focus contributes to SDU's overall [strategic goals](#): "to create value for and together with society; to develop talents that encourage unique, innovative solutions; and to contribute to breaking down barriers and shaping a sustainable future"

SDU's strategic GE-focus includes all diversity parameters through an explicit attention to gender equality and inclusion. GE at SDU applies to all aspects of SDU's endeavours: through its close coupling to specific challenges and considerations, SDU's GE efforts support its study- and working environments as well as the execution of the university's primary tasks. SDU continuously works to offer structures and terms that promote equality and inclusion in our study- and working environments and in our research and teaching – and to continuously convey these aspects in our endeavour to attract strong students and employees. SDU's GE efforts ensure that SDU meets external requirements regarding equality, diversity and inclusion – nationally as well as internationally.

SDU acknowledges that striving for increased gender equality is an endeavour that involves the entire organization and requires necessary structural changes. That is why SDU's GE efforts are *informed*, *consistent* and *conscious* efforts with an ambitious, *persistent and long-term* perspective.

- *Informed* equality work rests on extensive, relevant GE data and knowledge from SDU as well as collaboration with national and international experts and continual qualification through updated GE research
- *Consistent* equality work is achieved through continuous supporting of SDU's primary tasks and functions and through the ongoing and systematic follow-up on GE-initiatives across organizational levels provided by the quality assurance framework of SDU's Gender Equality Plan (GEP)
- *Conscious* equality work is achieved through targeted dissemination, explicit leadership for GE and systematic application and development of methods that promote equality, ensure access to the entire talent pool as well as ensure visible and continuous development of processes, procedures and practices
- *An ambitious, persistent, long-term* focus on GE is achieved through dedicated internal expert resources that support the organization's GE efforts; through structural embedding of GE in work cycles and procedures; through systematic follow-up on data and efforts; and through targeted communication practices that further GE and inclusion and contributes to visibility and transparency.

### SDU's strategic GE-focus: Approach and principles

SDU's strategic GE-focus covers the entire organization and aims for long-term, sustainable development of SDU as a university and as a study- and workplace – based on an explicit focus on equality. The GE-perspective serves as the starting point for attention to other diversity parameters such as age, gender identity, ability, socio-economic and educational background, nationality, ethnicity, religion and sexual orientation.

SDU's strategic GE-initiative is a long-term cultural and organizational development change effort which takes as its point of departure:

- local context and specific problems and tasks as crucial reference points
- embedding of initiatives, measures and solutions in processes, procedures and practices
- prioritizing dialogue and involvement of stakeholders

The following general **principles** apply to SDU's strategic GE initiative:

- **Several parallel and mutually complementary** initiatives are simultaneously advanced and coordinated across the organization
- **Analyses and scoping** based on high quality data combined with local experiences and expertise form the basis for **focused and tailored action, initiatives and interventions**
- GE-perspectives integrated in **organizational structures, systems and procedures** ensure long-term, sustainable implementation
- **Systematic follow-up** through SDU's Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and **ongoing dissemination** of initiatives, solutions and impact take place at all organizational levels
- **Responsibility and progress** are ensured through engaging management in formulating and implementing measures in and across academic and administrative units – leaders are responsible and accountable for their GE-efforts
- **Focus on possible actions and what works** combined with **local anchoring of initiatives** and local commitment to improving issues form the basis of mutual learning and capacity building across the organization
- SDU's Gender Equality Team (GET) serves as **strategic and operative expert-resource** to the rest of the organization, providing faculties, departments, units and cross-sectional functions with support based on locally defined needs and requirements

Conceded

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Interim Rector Ole Skøtt

## SDU's strategic GE-focus – the wider national and international context

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Gender equality (GE) is integral to a wider societal agenda that strives for sustainability as well as ethical and social responsibility.

In Denmark, the [legal framework](#) specifies that GE be mainstreamed into all activities and actions within public institutions.

Furthermore, GE is one of the major cross-cutting themes of [UN's Sustainable Development Plan](#) – not only in terms of SDG5, 'Gender Equality', but indeed as [central to the achievement of all 17 SDGs](#).

With its [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#), The European Commission also recognizes gender equality as a major issue. A set of specific objectives are defined in the European Research Area (ERA), where a broader inclusion and access to excellence is a priority – objectives that pertain specifically to the research sector: [1\) Fostering equality in scientific careers; 2\) Ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies; 3\) Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content](#).

In recognition of the persistent gender inequality and the need for structural and systemic countering measures, [EU has in its Horizon Europe \(HEU\) Framework Programme defined the documentation of structured GE measures to meet the ERA objectives as an eligibility criterion](#).

GE also features in EU's paradigm of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), with the other aspects, *ethics, open access/science, science education and public engagement*. Careful [analyses](#) of the implementation of each of these RRI-areas show that a high level of GE-competence and integration *entails* high competence in the other RRI-areas. But not vice versa. This suggests that a specific GE-focus will have a spill-over effect onto other sustainability and responsibility criteria.

Similar spill-over effects are corroborated by findings which document that an explicit GE-focus improves the working environment, [brings down harassment cases](#), furthers psychological safety and organizational learning, which in turn ensure [higher productivity](#), higher quality in outputs, as well as improved bottom lines.