

Gender Equality @ SAL

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Foreword from CEO

It is the vision of Silicon Austria Labs (SAL) to become a top European research centre for electronics-based systems. In the network of science, research, and industry, we conduct world-class research and lay the foundation for ground-breaking products and processes.

Not only what we do, but how we do it is relevant!

For all employees, it is not only important that we achieve the goals we set, but also HOW we achieve them. Building a first-class research institutions requires entrepreneurial behaviour, leadership and risk-taking. Ethical and legal behaviour is equally important for everyone. It is a necessary condition for customers, employees and all stakeholders to trust us.

Integrity is more important than short-term success

In other words: Integrity is the basis of our actions. Integrity is more important than short-term success. When in doubt, we would rather forego an activity than do something that conflicts with a law or our principles.

Our values

Our core values are about mutual respect of individuals, recognition of their contributions, and about open communication. They provide the framework for how we work together as one SAL team and implement our strategy. They guide us in our day-to-day business.

It is up to us to live this system.

Everyone knows that there cannot be a pre-established rule for every decision-making situation. But how do we behave in cases that are not regulated in advance? The answer is "ethically and with integrity" in all professional situations, which needs to be combined with entrepreneurial behaviour to build a first-class research centre. The SAL Compliance Management System provides a framework for self-responsible action.

The lived compliance culture is decisive.

The determining factors are the role model effect of the management at all levels and the self-responsible actions of all employees. Clear, lived values as well as recognition and concrete measures to promote correct behaviour are the cornerstones.



Gerald Murauer
CEO

1.2 Status Quo

SAL and its employees, through their awareness and representativity, are always mindful about equality of chances and fairness between genders at all levels. As the natural sciences and electronic fields of research are generally areas with a small percentage of female scientists with an average proportion of women in natural sciences in Austria being 31.4%⁵, it is not always possible to achieve gender balance.

SAL currently employs 17,5% female and 82,5% male scientific staff. The percentage for enterprise functions is about 56% female and 44% male, with employees from 40 different countries. These statistics are updated monthly due to the fast growth of SAL.

SAL offers the following 3 career paths to address the different levels of career.

- Scientific career path
- Engineer career path
- Management career path

Being aware of the big discrepancies in the percentage between male, female and other scientific staff, SAL is constantly improving its HR strategies to reduce the existing gap. This includes, while not been limited to, hiring new colleagues, PhD students or interns, and extends to researcher participation in projects.

In line with the EU aims, our internal Code of Conduct as well as with the Austrian Federal Constitutional Law, the core project team will consist of experienced researchers, chosen based on their project relevant scientific qualifications and without any gender consideration. The resources in the project are distributed based on the single work packages and their content. There is no gender-specific distribution.

In the area of **work-life balance**, we are constantly working on ways to improve through the **"Family and Career"** certification. The current certificate is valid until 2023.

2. SAL GENDER EQUALITY STRATEGY

2.1 Central Goals of SAL Gender Strategy

With the SAL Gender Strategy, SAL aims up to set up an example in raising awareness and understanding within and without our institution, as well as our research activities and collaborations. Our goal is to further improve and increase the proportion of women in science and research, both within our organization, as well as within our projects. This aligns with the current EU requirements, which state that for proposals with deadlines in 2022 onwards, all research organisations are required to have a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place. For this

purpose, the following document Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR)¹ from the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) has been used as a guideline.

The main key goals of SAL Gender Strategy are:

- Contributing added values to SAL core's business:
 - Having competent personnel and ensuring the knowledge transfer to the next generation
 - Supporting innovation and creativity through diversity
 - Offering an open culture based on respect and trust
- Sustainable fulfilment of the specific performance targets
- Becoming an example in raising awareness and understanding towards gender equality in research

The SAL Gender Strategy is published on the intranet and can be viewed by all employees at any time. In addition, it is made available online on our Homepage: [Silicon Austria Labs \(SAL\) \(silicon-austria-labs.com\)](https://silicon-austria-labs.com).

2.2 SAL Gender Equality Plan

The main EU objectives for gender equality in research, are at the core of SAL's strategy for gender equality in research and innovation:

- Fostering equality in scientific careers
- Ensuring gender balance in decision-making processes and bodies
- Integrating the gender dimension in research and innovation content
- Flexible and family-friendly working conditions and arrangements for both women and men
- reviewing the assessment of researchers' performance, to eliminate gender bias
- gender awareness-raising to achieve institutional change
- monitoring, with appropriate indicators, the implementation of gender policies and actions
- guiding targets in decision-making bodies, such as leading scientific and administrative boards, recruitment and promotion committees and evaluation panels, to achieve gender balance in leadership and decision-making positions.

One of the measures of the GEP is to create a structure to support gender equality work within our institution. The structure will consist of different persons coming from several levels of the institution, with different roles and responsibilities within the company, well-networked, and publicly supported by the top-level management executives. Such a structure would consist of senior managers from the leadership executive level, managers, research staff, students, human resources staff, as well as administrative staff.

¹ Gender Equality in Academia and Research (GEAR Tool), European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE)

2.3 SAL Gender Equality Process

A step-by-step process will be established to implement the SAL gender strategy and gender equality measures.

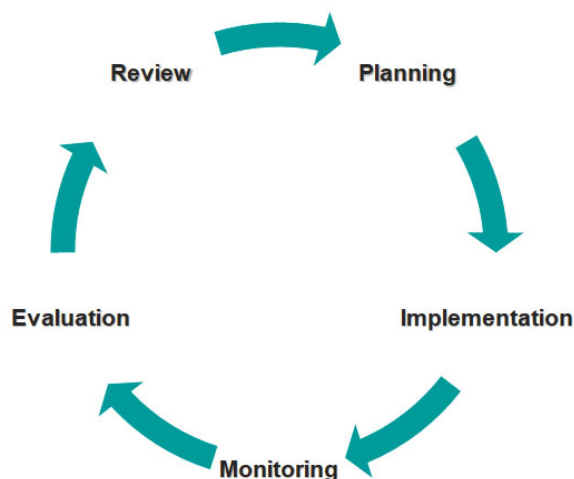


Figure 1: SAL Gender Equality Process Cycle

This process ensures that:

- the SAL GEP is based on quantitative and qualitative analyses,
- equality-oriented goals will be formulated,
- measures and instruments derived from these goals will be defined,
- the efficiency level will be constantly evaluated,
- the results of this evaluation will be communicated within the organisation and its employees.

2.4 Participation Board

For an effective and continuous implementation of gender equality measures, a **GEP Participation Board** will be implemented that involves different hierarchical levels and employee groups in the development of gender activities.

- The senior management and leadership team
- SAL Gender & Diversity representative
- SAL Gender Officer
- Gender & Diversity - Work Council's representative
- Research and Administrative staff
- Human resources (HR) and legal department representatives
- Working groups that support different aspects of gender equality

- **Women & Leadership @ SAL group** - As part of this initiative, all women at SAL are invited to discuss which aspects can hinder or support women in terms of reaching or aspiring to senior or leadership positions. The Gender Officer initiates these discussions and summarises discussion results in a structured and anonymised form. These results provide an important basis for deriving concrete measures and evaluating ongoing activities.
 - **Gender & Management @ SAL group** - SAL executives discuss different aspects that can potentially hinder or support women in terms of reaching or aspiring to senior or leadership positions. The results of the discussion will also contribute to the development of measures.
- SAL Gender Inbox
- All employees have the chance to anonymously speak out on gender issues. A Gender “Mailbox” for suggestions/complaints via in-house will be available, and the Gender Officer will resume the supervision of this measure.

2.5 Monitoring of strategic measures

For evaluation purposes and effectiveness of the measures, continuous monitoring will take place, by means of various instruments and defined indicators. Several gender related indicators have been annually reported since the CTR AG times, as well as after the Merger with SAL GmbH, and published in the annual report (in printed and in electronic form on our homepage). This information is always available to our employees, as well as to our stakeholders and partners.

For further reporting purposes there are several indicators or key figures monitored at SAL:

- Proportion of female personnel among the research and administrative staff (senior scientists, scientists, PhD students, Master students, interns)
- Career development steps
- Work-life balance
- Training courses

2.6 Work Environment Survey

The Work Environment Survey consists of a legally required action, analysing the employees' mental and physical health and implementing possible improvements. An internal evaluation of our employees' well-being will be conducted as needed, yearly or every two years (last time in 2021). Mandatory measures will be derived and implemented at the level of the organisational units and reported to the management and Head of Recruiting & HR Development. The results of the employee surveys will be made available to all employees on the intranet.

2.7 Gender Pay Gap

The General Income Report is collected every 2 years, as required by law, and shows the income differences between women and men. In this way, the median values of the total remuneration are calculated, and a comparison made between each remuneration group. Continuous monitoring allows current developments to be considered and integrated into the measures of the SAL Gender Equality Plan.

3.1 Resources and Budget

SAL will provide the gender representatives and the Gender Officer with an annual budget based on the action plan as well as the necessary resources (personnel resources, space, and material expenses). In addition, the staff members nominated for the various working groups are enabled to participate in the associated meetings and activities (e.g. training courses, information events).

3. CONTINUOUS ACTIVITIES AND MONITORING AT SAL

3.1 Organisational Culture

Our Mission Statement on the SAL Website is: "We inspire with value". We regard diversity as an enrichment and mutual tolerance as the basis for good cooperation. Humanism in the context of the enlightenment is the basis of our actions, means appreciation and respect for each individual employee.

The key factors for a gender-equal company are a corresponding organisational culture and work-life balance, which in turn is the prerequisite for innovation, attractiveness as an employer and thus economic success. The following measures therefore support gender-responsive communication and, above all, the creation and maintenance of gender-responsive framework conditions in the company:

- **The use of gender-equitable language** in internal and external communication is anchored in a binding corporate guideline. Gender-sensitive language and image selection is quality assured by Communications & PR department.
- **Clear rules** for dealing with gender-based violence, including sexual harassment; bullying, bossing and mobbing staff in the workplace and in business relationships are included in the SAL QM System, as well as in the SAL Code of Conduct, which is communicated to all employees and is the bases for our cooperation
- **Diversity & Inclusion:** For us at SAL, it is a matter of fact that we treat everyone (internally and externally), regardless of ethical origin, gender, age, religious confession, sexual orientation, denomination, language, appearance, physical ability, or other characteristics, in the same respectful way with due regard for apparent differences. We appreciate the diversity of people as an enrichment, both in the professional and private environment. Diversity is considered in the design of the entire organization as well as all HR processes and policies.
- **Work Environment Survey:** The Work Environment survey consists of a legally required portion, analysing the employees' mental and physical health and about

possible improvements. The survey was conducted for the first time in September 2021 and mandatory measures are to be derived and implemented at the level of the organisational units and reported to the management and Head of Recruiting & HR Development. The results of the employee surveys will be available to all employees on the intranet.

3.2 Work-Life Balance

The expectations for a work-life balance depend on what stage of life and career someone is in. The models established at SAL make it possible to organise working life according to individual needs and thus achieve an optimal work-life balance:

- "Daddy Month": the possibility of 1 month leave for fathers is given by the collective agreement,
- Support for paternity leave and part-time are anchored in the collective agreement,
- Childcare offered at all locations. **SAL Villach location:** supported by the city of Villach and in cooperation with neighbouring companies and institutions, a childcare institution is planned in Technology Park (THC) for 2023.
- Flexible (part-time) working models: possibility of flexible working time adapted to individual needs in terms of extent and SAL location, as well as flexibility of the working place (as Home Office).

3.3 Gender Balance in Leadership and Management

The corporate strategy of the SAL GmbH defines corresponding measures for equal rights and the promotion of women. Accordingly, job advertisements for management positions are published at SAL (internally and externally). In the spirit of gender equality, women are expressly invited to apply. Further measurements will be continuously considered to improve the professional development of women personnel at SAL.

3.4 Gender Training

To promote a gender-sensitive work culture, the Gender Officer at SAL is continuously trained in the topics of equality, gender & diversity. It is planned that all managers and staff will be internally trained on these topics. The focus would be on the legal framework and practice, the implementation of gender and diversity perspectives in management practice, self-reflection with regards to one's own role and dealing with "unconscious (gender) bias". The trainings will be carried out by specialists.

3.5 Integration of Gender Dimension in Research

The integration of gender dimensions is now an obligatory part of European and national research funding schemes. The inclusion of gender dimensions in research and innovation content promotes the development of new ideas, continuously eliminates gender bias and increasingly integrates societal needs.

The gender dimension needs to be analyzed from two angles; the first one addresses the gender balance within the research teams working on the project, while the second one takes a look into the subject matter itself and evaluates the possible differences between the genders in the topic

of the project. That includes, but is not limited to, any sex differences that should be examined and described as well as the different effects of research findings, presumptions that could possibly affect research priorities, questions, and methods. Promotion of gender balance is desired at all levels of the relevant teams, both research and management.

- A Gender Guide for project leaders will be created to support the gender-appropriate conception, description, and implementation of research projects. Gender aspects are considered within the project team and in setting of the project objectives.
- Consideration of gender and diversity aspects in SAL research topics, for example: Innovation Systems & Digitalisation, Data Science, Integrated Energy Systems, Integrated Mobility Systems.