

Leibniz-Zentrum Allgemeine Sprachwissenschaft (ZAS)

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

2024-2030

2nd Progress Report 01.04.2026

Mission statement

The ZAS understands the realization of gender equality as a central guiding principle of its organizational and personnel development as well as a task of the institute's management. It supports the Leibniz Association's goals of equal opportunities and diversity and resolutely opposes discrimination and disadvantage, for example, on the basis of ethnicity, gender, religion and ideology, disability, age and sexual identity in accordance with the General Equal Treatment Act (AGG). For the ZAS as an institution of the Leibniz Association the equality standards of the Leibniz Association as well as the implementation agreement on equality (Ausführungsvereinbarung zum GWK- Abkommen über die Gleichstellung von Frauen und Männern bei der gemeinsamen Forschungsförderung, AVGlei) apply. The ZAS actively strives for the equality of women and men according to Art. 3 para. 2 of the German Basic Law (GG) and the Berlin State Equality Act (LGG). This includes the reduction of existing disadvantages and the continuous improvement of the compatibility of work, private life, and family for employees in the scientific as well as in the science-supporting area and at all career levels.

The gender equality policy of the ZAS is documented in the Equal Opportunities Concept and the Target Agreement with berufundfamilie GmbH.

I. Objectives and desired outcomes of the GEP

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) serves to identify existing needs for action in the area of gender equality and equal opportunities at the ZAS and to define measures to achieve and sustain these goals. It is based on the provisions set out in § 4 LGG Berlin and the Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans by the European Commission. The GEP was agreed between the Equal Opportunities Officers and the management of the ZAS for a period of six years. In accordance with §4 LGG Berlin and the Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans, the ZAS is committed to regularly assessing the goals and measures to achieve them in the form of annual progress reports. The target quotas outlined in the Gender Equality Plan are to be achieved by 2030, in accordance with the target agreement of the Leibniz Association for the first half of the Pact for Research and Innovation IV 2021-2030. Target quotas are based on the cascade model, in which the target proportion of women by career level, remuneration group, and decision-making position is based on that of the level below. Here, the expected fluctuation of employees is taken into account, while the particularly ambitious Leibniz orientation quotas are used as a benchmark.

Unless states otherwise, all statistical data on the structure of the workforce, which serve as the relevant baseline data for calculating the target quotas, refer to the reporting date of 31.12.2025.

II. Relevant baseline data

a. Staff numbers by gender at all levels

As of the reporting date, a total of 87 people¹ are employed at ZAS. Of these, 58 are female and 20 are male. While the proportion of women remained at 65% in 2023 and 2024, it increased to 74% in 2025.

Of the research staff, 21 are female and 12 are male. The proportion of women is thus 64%, which is an increase compared to 2023 (55%) and 2024 (53%). Further differentiation according to the qualification phase is provided in subsection ii.

A total of 15 people are employed in the science support area, 11 of whom are female and 4 male. This proportion of women in 2025 (73%) is higher than in 2024 (64%), and is comparable to the level in 2023 (75%).

Of the 30 research assistants employed at the ZAS, 26 are female and 4 are male. The proportion of women is 87%, representing a steady increase from 75% in 2023 to 81% in 2024. As per a joint decision of the Equal Opportunity Officers and the scientific management of the ZAS, research assistants are not considered in the cascade model due to their high fluctuation.

Overall, the proportion of women at all levels has increased compared to the previous two years, with the proportion of women in science-support-staff returning to the 2023 level after a temporary decline in 2024.

	total	number of women	number of men	percentage of women (%)
all employees	78	58	20	74
researchers	33	21	12	64
science-support-staff	15	11	4	73
research assistants	30	26	4	87

The structure of the workforce is presented below, broken down by remuneration group, qualification phase, and contractual relation to the organisation.

i. Remuneration group²

The remuneration group W3 corresponds to the director of the ZAS. Since October 2022, the ZAS has a female director. Therefore, the proportion of women in this remuneration group is 100%.

In the following remuneration group, E14, 2 of 4 positions are occupied by women (2023: 3 of 6; 2024: 2 of 3). The proportion of women at this level is therefore 50%, returning to the 2023 level after briefly reaching 67% in 2024, which can be explained by the fact that all four research area management positions are now grouped in E14. In this remuneration group,

¹ This includes all people that are employed at ZAS at the reporting date from the institutional budget or from third-party funds. This does not include (senior) fellows and honorary members.

² Dormant contracts are not included.

all 4 positions are permanent, of which 2 are occupied by women (unchanged since 2023).

In the remuneration group E13, the proportion of women is 85% for institutionally funded positions (2023: 63%; 2024: 67%) and 56% for third-party funded positions (2023: 56%, 2024: 46%). This amounts to a total proportion of women of 68%, which represents an increase compared to 2023 (58%) and 2024 (53%). Of the 5 permanent positions in this remuneration group, 80% are occupied by women—an increase compared to 71% in 2023 and 60% in 2024.

In the remuneration group E12, the total proportion of women is at 100%, with all institutionally funded positions occupied by women. This represents an increase compared to 67% (2 out of 3 positions) in 2023 and 2024, which can be explained by the retirement of a position held by a man. Both positions in this remuneration group are permanent, the second one having become permanent since the last report.

In the remuneration groups E11–E9a, the gender ratio remains largely unchanged since 2023. In remuneration group E10, 2 short-term third-party funded positions have been created, one occupied by a woman and one by a man. In remuneration group E9b, 1 short-term third-party funded position has been filled with a man. Two positions held by women were raised to higher pay grades, one from E8 to E9b and one from E9c to E10.

	total		number of women		number of men		percentage of women (%)		
	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	total
W3	1	0	1	0	0	0	100	-	100
E14	4	0	2	0	2	0	50	-	50
E13	13 ³	18	11	10	2	8	85	56	68
E12	2	0	2	0	0	0	100	-	100
E11	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	-	0
E10	1	2	1	1	0	1	100	50	67
E9c	1 ⁴	0	1	0	1	0	100	-	100
E9b	1	1	1	0	0	1	100	0	50
E9a	0	3	0	3	0	0	-	100	100

³This includes 2 female employees and 1 male employee whose positions are partly funded from the institutional budget (at least 50%) and partly from third-party funds.

⁴This includes 1 female employee whose position is partly funded from the institutional budget (at least 50%) and partly from third-party funds.

research assistants	11	18	8	17	3	1	73	94	86
thereof permanent positions	total		number of women		number of men		percentage of women (%)		
W3	1		1		0		100		
E14	4		2		2		50		
E13	5		4		1		80		
E12	2		2		0		100		
E11	2		0		2		0		
E10	1		1		0		100		
E9b	1		1		0		100		

ii. Qualification phase

At the ZAS, researchers are employed in all phases of academic education and qualification, from attaining the first university degree to the habilitation. The ZAS places particular emphasis on the career development of its early career researchers, a group comprising doctoral researchers and PostDocs. The ZAS defines PostDocs as researchers who completed their doctorate not longer than 6 years ago (excluding maternity, parental, and care leaves).

As of the reporting date, all 7 doctoral researcher positions are occupied by women (100%). The proportion of women at this level has already risen from 78% in 2023 to 100% in 2024 and has remained so in 2025.

The number of PostDocs at ZAS has fallen significantly from 13 positions in 2023-2024 to 6 positions in 2025. Four of 6 positions are held by women (67%). After the proportion of women among PostDocs declined from 54% in 2023 to 46% in 2024, it has since increased again. In particular, the proportion of women in third-party funded positions now stands at 60%, after falling from 50% in 2023 to 40% in 2024.

The number of habilitated researchers at ZAS has decreased from 6 in 2023-2024 to 5 in 2025. Three of those positions continue to be held by women (unchanged since 2023), which corresponds to a share of 60%.

	total		number of women		number of men		percentage of women (%)		
	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	total

doctoral researchers	3	4	3	4	0	0	100	100	100
PostDocs	1	5	1	3	0	2	100	60	67
habilitated researchers	5	0	3	0	2	0	60	-	60

iii. Research areas

At the ZAS, central aspects of natural language are investigated in four Research Areas (FB): Laboratory Phonology (FB1), Language Development and Multilingualism (FB2), Syntax and Lexicon (FB3), and Semantics and Pragmatics (FB4).

The table below shows the proportion of women in each FB. Due to the small size of the FBs as organizational units, considerable fluctuations compared to the previous year are to be expected in some cases and must be interpreted and weighted in a broader context.

Nevertheless, a comparison of the four research areas reveals a pattern whereby there are significantly more women than men in FB1 and FB2—a trend that has intensified over the last two years. In FB3, by comparison, men have outnumbered women since 2023, with the proportion of women decreasing from 40% in 2024 to 29% in 2025. In FB4, the proportion of women has remained stable at slightly below 60% since 2023.

	total		number of women		number of men		percentage of women (%)		
	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	total
FB1 all	3	3	3	3	0	0	100	100	100
FB1 PostDocs	0	2	0	2	0	0	-	100	100
FB1 doctoral researchers	0	1	0	1	0	0	-	100	100
FB2 all	4	6	4	4	0	2	100	67	80
FB2 PostDocs	0	1	0	1	0	0	-	100	100
FB2 doctoral researchers	2	2	2	2	0	0	100	100	100
FB3 all	4	3	2	0	2	3	50	0	29
FB3 PostDocs	0	0	0	0	0	0	-	-	-

FB3 doctoral researchers	1	0	1	0	0	0	100	-	100
FB4 all	4	13	2	8	2	5	50	62	59
FB4 PostDocs	1	2	1	0	0	2	100	0	33
FB4 doctoral researchers	0	1	0	1	0	0	-	100	100

iv. Decision-making positions

There are four management levels at the ZAS: directorship (level 1), vice directorship (level 2), research area management (level 3), and project management (level 4). Additionally, ZAS members serve in external committees (level 5) and on editorial boards (level 6).

The scientific management of the institute (level 1) is female, thus the proportion of women at this level is 100 % (unchanged since 2023).

Vice directorship (level 2) at ZAS is formed by 2 of the 4 research area heads. The appointment of the vice directors is subject to the approval of the Board of Trustees, with the positions rotating among research area heads, and a new vice director being appointed each year for a period of 2 years. All directors represent ZAS externally and take on administrative and representative tasks that affect the entire institute. At the reporting date, one vice-director is female and one is male, thus the proportion of women at this level amounts to 50%.

At the level of research area management (level 3), 2 out of 4 positions continue to be held by women (50%, unchanged since 2023).

At the level of third-party project management (level 4), 15 out of 30⁵ positions are held by women (50%). This is a slight increase compared to 2024 (48%), but is still lower than the proportion in 2023 (59%).

ZAS employees serve in 57 external committees (level 5), with several employees serving in more than one committee. The proportion of women performing committee work has risen steadily over the last two years, from 54% in 2023 to 61% in 2024 to 67% in 2025.

ZAS employees hold 59 editorial board memberships (level 6), with some holding multiple positions. At 61% in 2025, the proportion of women in editorial work is quite similar to the previous two years, when the proportion was 63% (2023) and 65% (2024). Some of these go beyond mere editorial board membership. Particularly noteworthy are functions as (co)-editors, guest editors, and associate editors; 12 of these functions are held by women, while 8 are held by men.

	total	number of women	number of men	percentage of women (%)
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⁵ This corresponds to a total of 26 third-party funded projects, of which 4 projects are led jointly by two co-PIs.

	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	total
Level 1: directorship	1	0	1	0	0	0	100	0	100
Level 2: vice directorship	2	0	1	0	1	0	50	0	50
Level 3: research area management	4	0	2	0	2	0	50	0	50
Level 4: project management	0	30	0	15	0	15	-	50	50
Level 5: committee work ⁶	57		38		19		67		
Level 6: editorial work	59		36		23		61		

v. Contractual relation to the organisation

Of the total of 48 ZAS employees (excluding research assistants), 20 are employed part-time, including 18 women and 2 men. Women therefore make up 90% of part-time employees, an increase from 76% in 2023 and 88% in 2024, highlighting a growing imbalance.

Broken down by type of personnel and type of funding, the distribution is as follows:

A total of 15 *research* positions are currently carried out part-time, of which 13 are filled by women and 2 by men. The proportion of women among part-time research staff is therefore 87%, which is a further increase compared to 2024, when it was 82%. The difference is even more pronounced when compared to 2023, when the share of women among part-time positions was 71%. This asymmetry can be partly explained by the fact that, at the reporting date, women make up 100% of doctoral researchers, who are inevitably employed part-time. Without doctoral researchers, a total of 8 researchers are employed part-time, 6 of which are women (75%).

At the level of *PostDocs*, one woman and two men are employed part-time. All are third-party funded. Thus, 33% of the part-time positions held by *PostDocs* are occupied by women, which is a decline compared to 50% in 2024.

⁶ The data concerning committee work and editorial work are self-reported by the employees of ZAS and may be subject to minor reporting gaps. Included in this data are the activities of the former director of the ZAS, who, at the reporting date, continues to work at ZAS as a senior fellow.

Of the remaining research staff (*senior researchers*), all part-time positions have been held by women since 2024. In comparison, the proportion was 75% in 2023.

Among the *science-support staff*, all 5 positions carried out part-time are occupied by women, maintaining a 100% proportion (unchanged since 2023).

	total		number of women		number of men		percentage of women (%)		
	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	inst. fund.	3 rd party	total
all employees ⁷	9	11	9	9	0	2	100	82	90
all researchers	7	8	7	6	0	2	100	75	87
-thereof doctoral researchers	3	4	3	4	0	0	100	100	100
-thereof PostDocs	0	3	0	1	0	2	-	33	33
-thereof senior researchers	4	1	4	1	0	0	100	100	100
science-support-staff	2	3	2	3	0	0	100	100	100

b. Career advancements

The ZAS started collecting data on employees' career advancements since January 2024. At present, there are still too few data points from which to draw conclusions about how long it takes men and women at ZAS to reach the next career level. However, preliminary results are reported in this subsection.

Since January 2024, three doctoral researchers (two women, one man) have successfully completed their doctorate and have secured employment as PostDocs. For the female doctoral researchers, the average time to complete the doctorate was 3 years and 6 months. For the male doctoral researcher, the time to complete the doctorate was 3 years and 1 month.

Three PostDocs (two women, one man) have been appointed to (assistant) professorships. For the female researchers, the average time to reach this career level from the date of completing the doctorate was 2 years and 6 months. For the male researcher, the average time to reach this career level from the date of completing the doctorate was 6 years.

One female PostDoc has taken up a position in the private sector after an 11-month PostDoc phase.

⁷ Excluding research assistants

In addition, five research assistants (four women, one man) have taken up positions as doctoral researchers after successfully completing their Master’s degree⁸.

c. Distinct job applications

The ZAS started collecting data on distinct job applications since January 2024. Distinct job positions are all institutionally funded positions. Initial results are reported in the following.

Following the retirement of a long-standing FB2 employee, a tenure track position in FB2 was advertised in the first quarter of 2024. The position was filled by a woman on September 1, 2024. A total of 29 applications were received from international candidates, 27 of whom were women (93%).

Additionally, institutional funding was used to create a position for data science and data management, which was filled by a woman on September 1, 2024. A total of 19 applications were received, 8 of whom were women (42%).

In 2025, no distinct jobs were advertised.

d. Employees who left the organization

The ZAS started collecting data on employees who left the organization in 2024. Since then, a total of 19 employees⁹ have left the organization, 9 of whom were female (47%). The time employees spent at ZAS ranges from 2 months to 28 years and 4 months, with a median tenure of 43 months (approx. 3 years, 7 months).

e. Parental leave

The ZAS started collecting data on parental/maternity leave in 2024. Since then, 3 female and 1 male employees have been on parental/maternity leave and one female employee is still on maternity leave as of the reporting date. On average, the female employees spent approximately 12 months on parental/maternity leave, while the male employee spent 1 month on parental leave. Return agreements have been made with all 5 employees.

Gender	Type of leave	Duration of leave	Returned after leave?
f	Parental	10 months	yes
f	Maternity+parental	13 months	yes
f	Maternity+parental	12 months	yes
m	Parental	1 month	yes
f	Maternity	14 weeks	Return agreement

f. Intersectionality

The ZAS recognizes that systems of discrimination and privilege intersect to create unique dynamics and effects. Yet, to protect employees’ privacy and to safeguard

⁸ Graduation (Bachelor’s or Master’s degree) of research assistants is not taken into account here, unless they subsequently took up a position as doctoral researcher.

⁹ Excluding research assistants

them from potential repercussions, the ZAS does not currently collect any data on their employees that goes beyond the gender dimension. The ZAS remains committed to being mindful of additional factors related to discrimination and privilege. Possible aspects include history of migration, gender identity, sexual orientation, (dis-)ability, and family educational background.

III. Targets

a. Pay equity and permanent positions

The highest remuneration group, W3, will continue to be occupied by a woman for the entire reporting period (2024-2030), as it corresponds to the position of the ZAS director.

Regarding the research positions, the defined aim is to maintain the existing gender parity in the remuneration groups E14 and E13. In remuneration group E14, gender parity has been reached by re-grouping one of the male research area managers from E13 to E14.

In remuneration group E13, women make up a slightly higher proportion than men. However, this corresponds to the overall gender ratio at ZAS and in research positions, so there is no need for remedial action.

For science-support positions (remuneration groups E9a-E13), the defined target is to actively recruit women for higher-paid science-support positions (E11-E13), wherever possible, if the proportion of women in these groups falls below 40%. Since the GEP came into effect, the only change in remuneration groups E11-E13 in the science support area has been the creation of a position for data science and data management, which is grouped at E13 and filled by a woman. Additionally, a re-grouping into higher pay grades was achieved for two female employees.

Regarding permanent positions, the aim of maintaining the existing gender parity has been met.

b. Career advancement and qualification phases

In the first qualification phase (doctoral researchers), the proportion of women is currently 100%. However, this does not translate into the next career stage (PostDocs), where the proportion of women is currently at 67%. This could indicate that fewer women than men currently reach the next career stage. To address this, the defined aim, in line with Leibniz Association's cascade model, is to narrow the gap between the proportion of women at the doctoral level and postdoctoral level, while ensuring that the existing gender parity is not altered to the detriment of women. Compared to the previous year, the proportion of women at the postdoctoral level has already increased significantly, so this development should be maintained, with particular emphasis on recruiting female PostDocs in FB3.

Since habilitation is no longer an international requirement for professorship appointments, the ZAS does not consider it necessary to set a target quota for habilitated researchers. However, the ZAS is committed to particularly supporting female senior researchers in advancing to the next career stage, such as professorships.

c. Leadership positions

Since October 2022, the ZAS has a female director, and the directorship will remain female for the entire duration of the reporting period (2024-2030).

For vice-directorship, the ZAS follows a rotation system in which vice-directorship rotates among the heads of the research areas, with a new vice director being appointed each year for a period of 2 years. To maintain gender parity among vice-directors, the goal is for at least 50% of the vice-director positions to be held by women over a four-year period.

At the level of research area management, gender parity is to be maintained. Under no circumstances should the situation arise where the proportion of women or the proportion of men in research area management positions falls below 25%. In this context, it should be noted that the ZAS is planning an institute expansion as a 'minor extraordinary item for expenditure of a scientific-strategic nature' ('kleiner Sondertatbestand inhaltlich-strategischer Natur', StB). If this is successful, another department will likely be added from 2029, increasing the number of research area managers from 4 to 5.

At the project management level, the defined target is to maintain the existing gender parity. While there is currently a balanced gender ratio, the proportion of women has declined noticeably since 2023. Since this seems to indicate that the proportion of third-party funded projects acquired by women is declining, women will be specifically supported in applying for third-party funding. In addition, women may be specifically recruited to submit project proposals.

The ZAS is committed to ensuring that women continue to be represented in research structural positions (e.g., committees, advisory boards, and editorial boards). The aim is to maintain the gender parity that currently exists at the ZAS in this respect and, if necessary, specifically support the participation of women in these areas.

d. Contractual relation to the organization

The full-time/part-time situation at ZAS is regulated based on the personal needs of the employees. The option of part-time work is anchored in the Equal Opportunities Concept and the Target Agreement with berufundfamilie GmbH. While it is noticeable that the proportion of women in part-time positions is significantly higher than that of men, which seems to reflect larger societal trends, the ZAS does not currently consider it helpful to set a target quota for part-time positions. Rather, the ZAS remains committed to offering part-time work by individual arrangement and in a needs-oriented manner.

IV. Measures

The following section describes measures in the areas of work-life-balance and organizational culture, leadership and decision-making, personnel development and recruitment, research content, and protection against gender-based violence, with which the ZAS aims to contribute to a generally balanced employment structure and to strengthen a gender- and diversity-sensitive work culture.

a. Work-life balance and organisational culture

The ZAS considers the compatibility of family and career as an important strategic element for attracting and retaining highly qualified employees. Measures to promote this compatibility are explicitly formulated in a gender-neutral manner.

In 2022, the ZAS was awarded the audit workandfamily (berufundfamilie) certificate for the first time for the strategic design of its family- and life-phase-conscious personnel policy. This certificate, which is considered a seal of quality for a company's compatibility policy, is awarded by the curatorium of the berufundfamilie Service GmbH. Certification requires successful completion of the accompanying auditing process, in which the status quo of the family- and life-phase-conscious measures already in place was determined and the institute's potential was systematically developed. As part of the auditing process, strategic goals and concrete measures were defined, which are recorded in a target agreement. These must be appropriately implemented within the three-year certificate period. Practical implementation is reviewed annually by the berufundfamilie Service GmbH.

i. Parental leave policies

The Equal Opportunities Officers and the administration provide information and advice on pregnancy, parental, and caregiver leave. With their permission, the ZAS maintains contact with employees on parental or caregiver leave and offers return arrangements. Continuing education opportunities are also available to employees during parental or caregiver leave as well as to employees working part-time.

Applicants of third-party funded projects are encouraged to apply for funding extensions to cover maternity or parental leave as part of their project applications. If the third-party funding body does not provide for this possibility or if no corresponding agreement can be reached with the third-party funding body, the ZAS endeavours to extend employment contracts by parental leave taken, although there is no legal entitlement to this (in the case of fixed-term contracts due to third party funding according to § 2 para. 1 WissZeitVG).

ii. Flexible working time arrangements

The ZAS designs the work and organizational structures to create a family-friendly working environment. Employees are offered flexible working hours and the possibility of mobile working. Family considerations are taken into account when scheduling meetings. It is agreed that ZAS-internal meetings should generally take place within the opening hours of schools and daycare centers. Exceptions must be justified and announced in advance. In case of important appointments outside the regular opening hours, subsidies for childcare costs can be applied for (see also next section).

iii. Support for caring responsibilities

Financial compensation for child or family care can be applied for in emergencies (e.g., unexpected unavailability of regular care) or when attending conferences or training measures. For business trips, travel allowances can also be applied for in justified cases for the travel of a caregiver, for the travel of children to a caregiver, or for bringing children along on a business trip. The annual budget for care subsidies is currently 3,000 €. For conferences, workshops, or similar events hosted at ZAS, central childcare can be organized via the Kids-Mobil of Humboldt-University.

A parent-child room has been set up in the new building in Wilmersdorf, which is shared with the staff of the Leibniz Centre for Literary and Cultural Research (ZfL) and the joint administration (GWZ). The room can be booked via the digital booking system, allowing parents to bring children to the workplace when needed. Spontaneous use without prior registration is also possible if required, provided the room is not already being used by another parent.

iv. Workload management

Reducing the risk of overload is one of the focal points of the target agreement for the audit berufundfamilie. One of the main focuses of the resulting measures is to improve the dialogue between employees and supervisors. In this context, the guidelines for the annual employee meeting have been adapted to take account of workload and work-life-balance. For early career researchers (doctoral researchers and PostDocs), an additional one-on-one meeting with a supervisor takes place at least once a year, in which questions of workload, feasibility of tasks, and objectives are discussed, taking into account the family situation.

Reference is made in the Employee Handbook to the possibility of requesting an employee meeting with supervisors or another manager, including the Institute's management, in the event of overload or impending burnout. In the event of *persistent* overload, employees can file an overload report, which is to be addressed in an appropriate employee meeting.

To further mitigate the risk of overload, measures aimed at optimizing the protection of leave, joint family time, and regeneration phases have been installed. Sensitive handling of weekends, school and university vacations, and public holidays is promoted by both the research area and the project management. Regular use of annual leave is discussed during the annual employee meeting.

The email codex was updated to emphasize that emails are not expected to be read and responded to after working hours or on weekends. In addition to the public holidays for Germany and the state of Berlin, ZAS employees have the option to display relevant non-Christian holidays (selection follows that of the Berlin Integration Commissioner) in their Outlook calendar. Employees are encouraged to also take non-Christian holidays into account when planning events, whenever possible.

v. Advice and support on work-life balance.

The Equal Opportunities Officers provide advice and support on work-life-balance. Compatibility and equality concerns are furthermore addressed in the Employee Handbook, during the annual employee meeting, and in the context of the ZAS Mentoring Program.

b. *Gender balance in leadership and decision-making*

To address common types of barriers that prevent women from being equally represented in decision-making and leadership positions, particularly those on a structural level, the ZAS is committed to providing early and sustained support of its female employees, especially during critical phases of their academic careers

(e.g., transitions between qualification phases). Female researchers are informed about the advisory, networking, and support formats offered by the Leibniz Association for individual support of career planning, such as the Leibniz Mentoring Programme, the Leibniz Female Professors Programme, and the Leibniz Junior Research Group funding. They are particularly encouraged to participate in external further education measures and to take on higher-ranking tasks and positions.

Management positions can be taken on part-time if there are no compelling official interests to necessitate the contrary.

The ZAS is committed to take care work into account when evaluating achievements, especially the publication performance of female researchers. Information events on unconscious bias and gender bias in science and in application and personnel selection processes are held to raise awareness of systemic structures and thought patterns that promote inequality and to provide appropriate counter-steering tools (see also the next section on gender equality in recruitment and career progression).

c. Gender balance in recruitment

As reported above, there is a discrepancy between the proportion of women at the doctoral level and at the PostDoc level, which could indicate that fewer women than men are advancing to the next career stage. Furthermore, the proportion of women in third-party funded PostDoc positions has declined in the past year. To counteract this, the ZAS leadership encourages principal investigators of externally funded projects to actively hire female researchers.

The ZAS has established gender equality expertise in recruitment and promotion committees and strives to maintain gender-balanced search and appointment panels, which are required to include at least 40% women. If a position is advertised in a project in which there are not enough female researchers available to meet this requirement, female researchers from outside the project are invited to join the committee and are granted the same voting rights as project-internal members.

The Equal Opportunity Officers are involved in all recruitment processes for ZAS positions and in all officially announced recruitment processes for externally funded projects. For third-party funded projects, the ZAS leadership encourages principal investigators to use open and publicly advertised recruitment and selection procedures over closed ones. The scientific management of the ZAS regularly updates the Equal Opportunity Officers about planned third-party projects with closed selection procedures.

All job advertisements point out ZAS's commitment to equal opportunities for women and men at all career levels and to family-friendly working conditions.

If a gender imbalance at a particular career or job level of ZAS arises so that women are underrepresented, proactive recruitment of women via advertising on field-specific internet sites, directly contacting women with the desired expertise, and increasing the number of potential female candidates by broadening the disciplinary range of recruitment will be intensified. ZAS selection committees are instructed to reject recruitment and promotion lists that include only male candidates and to initiate a new advertisement if there are no women in the applicant pool.

To raise awareness of structures and thought patterns that promote inequality and to provide appropriate counter-steering tools, the ZAS will organize workshops and trainings on unconscious biases. Unconscious bias training for all staff, including members of the scientific leadership, will take place in 2024, 2027, and 2030 (on a three-year rhythm).

d. Gender balance in career progression

To support the career progression of female researchers, the ZAS seeks to support female researchers in national and international networking, and in participating in the Leibniz-Mentoring Program, the ZAS mentoring program and other comparable programs. The ZAS endeavours to nominate at least one female researcher per year for the Leibniz Mentoring Program.

Furthermore, special attention is given to encouraging female researchers to develop their own research agenda that has the potential to receive grants from programs for early career researchers. Each research area aims to submit at least one application for third-party-funding per year by a female early career researcher.

Career progression of all staff at ZAS is monitored by the annual employee meetings. For early career researchers, an additional one-on-one meeting is conducted annually with a supervisor to discuss workload, career planning, and publication strategies. Early career researchers participating in the ZAS-internal mentoring program are accompanied and supported in their career by a mentor from ZAS. Mentors are PostDoc and senior researchers of ZAS working in a different research area than the mentee.

The above-mentioned tools are evaluated annually by the ZAS leadership, the Equal Opportunity Officers, the Works Council, and the organizers of the ZAS mentoring program.

Evaluation of career progression of women includes the following factors:

- Accounting for the time frame/period for the achievements and the intensity of work carried out
- Accounting for career breaks and discount leave periods when assessing research output, also placing a suitable value on non-traditional career paths (e.g., getting particular kinds of training, unusual undergraduate degrees, and diverse job experiences)
- Assessing research quality rather than quantity, and not relying solely on publication citation indices
- Assessing soft skills as well as research outcomes, such as successful project leadership
- Ensuring that administrative responsibilities, student supervision, and marking workloads are recognized and valued alongside research outputs

To enable equitable and transparent workload distribution among academic and science-support staff, ZAS implemented a ZAS-wide workload reporting tool in 2023. This tool will continue to be used to maintain consistent workloads between genders, staff types, and research areas.

e. Gender dimension in research content

Integration of the gender dimension into research content is promoted by including the gender impact assessment tool suggested and required by the DFG during the planning and application phases of prospective research projects.

f. Measures against gender-based violence including sexualized harassment

An event to raise awareness about the issue of sexualized harassment is held for all employees at ZAS, including the scientific management, on a two-year cycle. The first event was held in 2024.

The Equal Opportunities Officers, the Works Council and the management are available as reporting channels for employees who experience or witness sexualized harassment in the workplace. They can initiate further steps, including disciplinary measures and legal action.