

# Mainstreaming Gender and Diversity at BEST

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## Introduction

The center started to raise awareness for gender and diversity related issues more than 15 years ago. Constant effort has been undertaken since then to improve framework conditions for employees. 6 specific projects were acquired and brought to completion. Based on the outcome of those projects a relevant number of measures was realized.

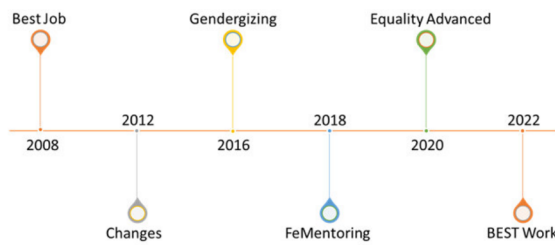


Figure 1: History of projects of the center related to gender and diversity between 2008 - 2024

## The Process

In order to realize a constant and long-term development of gender equality an iterative process has been established. BEST frequently carries out analysis. Resulting data are the base for the Gender Equality Strategy and planning of measures. These are then implemented and their impact is again analyzed (see figure below).



Figure 2: BEST's process to reach more gender equality

This process ensures that

- Gender Equality measures are taken following a quantitative and qualitative analysis
- The process follows participatory principles and that some measures derive from e.g. surveys
- The process is evaluated on a frequent basis
- Deviations and causes are analyzed
- The process is transparent and easy to communicate

The core team to guide this process consists of the Top Management, Human Resources, Working Council and the Equality Representative.

## Main Achievements

In the scope of the human resources development e.g. a number of company agreements was elaborated together with the works council with a benefit for the entire center:

- Flextime
- Career models
- Travel (time) compensation
- Telework
- On-call standby
- Parental leave
- Family Time

Furthermore, a uniform salary scheme could be agreed upon and a range of training and qualification offers has been elaborated. Women who are pregnant are invited to so called return-to-work discussions ("Rückkehrgespräche"). BEST offers the possibility of minimal employment ("Geringfügige Beschäftigung") during (parental) leave to stay linked to the centre and ensure information flow and knowledge transfer.

The first Shared Leadership couple in the Area Management started in 2021 and the model has been further developed and rolled out since then.

For recruiting the center has started to apply new approaches like using the concept of "Personas", which helps to better understand the needs and interests of various target groups and reach out to them on best suited channels at the right time.

The attempt to bring young female researchers into the center is also reflected in the number internships. During the last 15 years there have been about 70 young women who completed one at BEST.

In order to make women's success stories more visible the center has participated in competitions and Dina Bacovsky was the winner of the ÖGUT Women in Environmental Engineering award in 2021. Also, the number of e.g. respective LinkedIn posts was raised.



Figure 3: News item and LinkedIn post „BESTe Frauenpower“ on International Women's day 2024

More updates and details can be found on our website and in our Gender Equality Plan (GEP, last update in 2024).



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