

# Gender Equality Plan



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This Gender Equality Plan for the period from 2022 onwards was acknowledged by the Managing Director of the Rocklink GmbH.

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A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop followed by a horizontal line and a small flourish.

## **1 Prologue**

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of Rocklink GmbH aims to point out objectives, concrete measurements, and challenges to face in order to enhance equality of both men and women within the firm. This includes the reduction of underrepresentation of women, the avoidance of gender-specific disadvantages, the filling of job openings on equal terms oriented on the quality of the applicants at all qualification and employment levels, and the optimization of the reconciliation of work and family for the employees of the Rocklink GmbH.

The hereby presented Gender Equality Plan should be formulated for a period of six years.

The plan is available in English on the intranet of Rocklink GmbH. Beyond that, this GEP will be uploaded on the Company's website and can be accessed by all interested stakeholders.

## **2 Assessment of the current situation**

The situation of female employees is represented as follows: as of November 30, 2021 a total of 4 people were employed at the Rocklink GmbH; of these 1 was a woman. This corresponds to a percentage of 25 % in total.

The female employee is a working student, part-time employed and belongs to a group of two working students overall at the Rocklink GmbH. Beside that the permanent staff consists of an expert for sales and logistics as well as the executive of the company.

It is so far to be stated, that in general and according to higher salary groups as well as full-time jobs women are therefore underrepresented.

## **3 Common Objectives and Concrete Measurements**

According to this the organizational and working culture at Rocklink GmbH shall be designed to be more balanced, provide equal opportunities for both genders and to be family-friendly. With the Gender Equality Plan, Rocklink GmbH seeks to implement these following objectives:

- Ensure equal opportunities through equal treatment of women and men with regard to work and career

- Promote the respective underrepresented gender
- Increase the percentage of women in leadership positions and decision-making bodies
- Facilitate the compatibility of work and family for women and men

The following fields of actions have been identified and various measures have been defined and organized thematically down below:

1. Organizational frame
2. Recruitment
3. Further training and career development
4. Reconciliation of work and family life

### **3.1. Organizational frame**

Rocklink GmbH is committed to a culture of collaboration and appreciation embedded in a dynamic framework of transparent structures, well-defined procedures and open communication culture. It strongly believes that a working culture of respect, equal opportunities and diversity can help a company to grow and stay successful. It strives for an environment that promotes career advancement and career development for each and everyone in the company.

#### **3.1.1. Raising awareness of executives and employees**

On a continual basis, the executives shall place high priority on the topics of equality of opportunity and the promotion of, in particular, early-career female employees. These topics are to be part of the leadership culture at Rocklink GmbH.

Measures:

1. To promote an overarching culture of gender equality at Rocklink GmbH and to incorporate it into the activities of daily working, the concept of leadership shall be defined and management guidelines shall be developed. As part of these guidelines, principles for dealing with each other in daily life at Rocklink GmbH shall be formulated.
2. Executives shall be encouraged in their mentoring and advisory role, for example through the instrument of the annual performance review.

### **3.1.2. Increasing the visibility of women workers**

Greater visibility of women employees shall encourage women to further pursue and develop a career and shall help to counter underrepresentation.

Measures:

1. Identifying and recommending women for top leadership roles
2. Looking for rotational assignments that will help broaden female employees' experience, visibility, and influence.
3. Ensuring female employees are focusing on high-value, visible work
4. Encouraging participation in technical conferences and membership in professional organizations
5. Rewarding outstanding women working achievements

### **3.1.3. Equal Pay**

The gender pay gap and pay discrimination represent virulent issues in many companies. In order to discover, remedy and prevent unfair gender differences in pay and other terms of employment, every three years Rocklink GmbH wants to survey and analyze

1. provisions and practices regarding pay and other terms of employment that are used at the employer's establishment, and
2. pay differences between women and men performing work that is to be regarded as equal or of equal value.

Rocklink GmbH plans to constantly draw up an action plan for equal pay in which they report the results of the survey and analysis that is undertaken.

### **3.1.4. Use of gender-neutral language**

The equal treatment of women and men is to be taken into account linguistically in the formulations used. Often the generic masculine is still used carelessly in daily communication. The objective of Rocklink GmbH hence is to address women and men equally and to make women visible linguistically as a matter of principle. Also the upcoming addressing of non binary persons in spoken and written language should be included.

Measure:

1. To raise awareness for the use of gender-neutral language, all employees will be provided with a language usage guide with recommendations and examples which can be obtained from the Gender Equality Officer.

### **3.1.5. Data management and reporting**

All cross-sectional measures, including gender-aggregated data collection on the proportion of women and analyses, shall be presented annually to the managing director.

The Gender Equality Plan shall be updated every two years by the responsible Gender Equality Officer. The results of the measures taken shall be analyzed and, if necessary, adjustments /optimizations shall be made.

Measures:

1. Rocklink GmbH collects gender-aggregated data on recruitment and the employment structure
2. Rocklink GmbH documents the percentage of women in every phase of the recruiting process and for every job opening that is announced.

### **3.1.6 Promotion of a feedback culture**

The establishment of a feedback culture serves to reflect the guidelines and processes as well as the work experience at Rocklink GmbH as the basis for a continuous improvement.

Measure:

1. As a standard procedure, Rocklink GmbH shall offer a feedback form to employees and to those who leave the company.

### **3.1.7. Counteracting sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination in the workplace**

Rocklink GmbH condemns any type of sexual harassment, bullying and discrimination. It is part of the duty of care of Rocklink GmbH to protect its employees from this at the workplace, and this applies to both women and men to the same extent. The principle of equal treatment as noted in the German Anti-Discrimination Act (AGG) §3 shall apply in Rocklink GmbH.

The Management commits to immediately investigate any cases of sexual harassment, bullying or discrimination, which become known to it. If employees are affected or feel affected by sexual harassment, bullying or discrimination for a reason specified in §1 AGG, they have the right to obtain advice and support from the Gender Equality Officer or the management.

The Gender Equality Officer shall be informed about the specific steps that are to be undertaken.

Measures:

1. Attention shall be drawn to the commitment Rocklink GmbH has made, and awareness of the issue shall be raised. To communicate adequate handling of this issue, it is recommended to include this topic in the leadership guidelines of Rocklink GmbH.
2. A special guide „Recognizing and Managing Conflicts“ is to be elaborated and made known to the executives and rest of the workforce

### **3.1.8. Active participation of the Gender Equality Officer**

The Management supports the exercise of the rights and obligations of the Gender Equality Officer. The early involvement of the Gender Equality Officer in all personnel, social and organizational planning, decisions, and measures relevant to gender equality form the prerequisite for the successful promotion of equal opportunities. The responsibility for informing the Gender Equality Officer in a timely manner lies with the Managing Director and the heads of other organizational units.

The Gender Equality Officer shall be integrated to a greater extent and with strengthened rights in the coordination and decision-making processes.

The Gender Equality Officer shall not be bound by instructions in the exercise of her duties. Rocklink GmbH supports the Gender Equality Officer in her tasks by releasing her from other duties and giving her the necessary personnel, space and material equipment to carry out her activities. Rocklink GmbH shall also bear the cost of attending training and education events, provided that they provide knowledge necessary for the Gender Equality Officer to carry out her work. The Gender Equality Officer shall not be hindered in the performance of her tasks nor placed at a disadvantage in her career development due to her activities.

## **3.2 Recruitment**

### **3.2.1. Job announcements**

The organizational and working culture of Rocklink GmbH shall be reflected in the design of the job announcements.

Measures:

1. The job advertisements of Rocklink GmbH shall generally contain an indication that the work environment is international and gender-sensitive, that the professional career of the applicants is taken into account irrespective of gender, nationality or religion, and supportive offers to better reconcile work and family life exist.
2. Rocklink GmbH shall prepare templates for gender-neutral job advertisements.
3. As a matter of principle, all job announcements shall contain a link to the Internet pages of Rocklink GmbH on the reconciliation of work and family life.
4. For jobs announcements for positions in teams, in which currently only one gender is represented, prospective applicants belonging to the not-represented gender shall be specifically encouraged to apply.

### **3.2.2. Active recruitment and selection of personnel**

Active recruitment to increase the pool of highly qualified female candidates is of special importance to meet the objectives.

1. The Management of Rocklink GmbH shall recommend female candidates to fill positions. For the representatives of Rocklink GmbH shall be requested to actively contact suitable women scientists and to encourage them to submit an application.
2. Research databases for female high potentials shall be identified. Using such search databases and personal networks, female experts shall be proactively identified, preferentially contacted and encouraged to submit an application.
3. A standard ratio of male and female candidates invited to the final interview for a vacancy shall be applied depending on the ratio of applications, or at least two women candidates shall be called for interviews. This also serves as a measure to provide female candidates with experience in the process of interviewing.

### **3.2.3. Interview process**

Interviews must be objective, unbiased and transparent and shall take place according to previously established assessment criteria.

Measures:

1. The interview questions shall be established in advance.
2. The interview reports should inform about the appointment recommendations.
3. For increased transparency, Rocklink GmbH will inform all applicants about the progress of the procedure at regular intervals.
4. When sending interview invitations and offers, information shall be included about the framework conditions at Rocklink GmbH, such as the reconciliation of work and family life or social services.

### **3.3. Human resources development and career promotion**

To prepare female and male employees for their careers or alternative career paths, they shall be encouraged to take advantage of career development measures and to assume leadership tasks.

#### **3.3.1. Annual performance review**

Annual one-on-one meetings between the supervisor and employee shall be used by the employees to reach agreement on the employee's individual development goals and options and to find suitable instruments to implement these.

Measure:

1. Workshops shall be offered once a year to the employees as well as coaching for executives, in order to prepare them for the above-mentioned one-on-one meetings.

#### **3.3.2. Qualifying women to be future leaders**

The preparation for future leadership positions as well as support in newly assumed executive positions includes the targeted development of special competences and management skills. Through

individualized development strategies, women scientists shall be prepared to take on roles with more responsibility.

Measures:

1. Workshops on leadership, communication and self-assessment
2. Through coaching for female high potentials, the start in a new position as an executive shall be supported with regard to the diversity of tasks and roles and the balance between career and family. Those women find a coaching scenario suited to them from more experienced coaches.

### **3.4. Reconciliation of work and family life**

A family-friendly work environment at Rocklink GmbH is designed to help women and men reconcile work and family life and, in this aspect, to see no reasons to leave the company. Executives at Rocklink GmbH shall play an active role in leadership responsibilities and help employees to reconcile work and family life:

Measures:

1. Better communication of the different offers and framework conditions
  - a. Overview promoting the benefits of good work and family life compatibility
  - b. A clear commitment supporting work-family life balance shall be published on Rocklink GmbH website
2. Establishment of further childcare and home services

#### **3.4.1. Workplace organization**

As far as possible, Rocklink GmbH strives to design its workplaces in all areas and functions so that requests for a reduction of working hours and job-sharing can be granted. As far as conditions allow, the request of part-time employees to increase their weekly working hours shall be considered, just as the individual request for a reduction of working hours. Part-time employees shall be granted the same career development and advanced training opportunities as full-time employees.

### **3.4.2. Flexible working time solutions**

Beyond the flextime regulations, at Rocklink GmbH there are individual possibilities for variable working hours, i.e. the change from full to part-time and vice versa and – in case of need and in consultation with the managing director – possibilities of home office solutions and leaves of absence.

Employees are given the possibility to make their work activities adaptable to their family life. The focus is on advisement about the legal regulations or collective agreement provisions related to the reduction of working time, leave and re-entry.

In scheduling vacation leave, the requests of employees with school-age children for vacation during the school holidays shall have priority.

## **4. Continual Adjustment of the Gender Equality Plan**

At the end of each financial year a comprehensive report on the developments regarding gender equality during the last reporting period shall be given by the management under the agenda item Gender Equality.

Furthermore, the Gender Equality Plan shall be always adjusted to current developments. The Gender Equality Officer shall actively participate in this adjustment. In this context, factors which hinder the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan shall be identified, and alternatives shall be developed.

The next adjustment shall take place on 31/12/2022. In case of any questions please contact the appointed Gender Equality Officer Mr. Benedikt Ansorge.

## **References**

European Institute for Gender Equality (<<https://eige.europa.eu/>>)