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Austrian  
Presidency  
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 Federal Ministry  
Republic of Austria  
Education, Science  
and Research

FOCALPOINTS  DIVERSITY

# Diversity Oriented Developments in Higher Education and Research Institutions

## Practical Applications



diversitas 2016

FOCALPOINTS ●●●● DIVERSITY

# Diversity Oriented Developments in Higher Education and Research Institutions

## Practical Applications

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## PREFACE



Higher education and research institutions have always been places for the open exchange of views and respectful interaction. To encourage equal opportunities and create organisational cultures where a sense of community and diversity are actively practiced, constant communication between all the parties involved and consistent improvements to the legal framework are required.

My department has, therefore, anchored our approach to diversity in central strategy and management tools – the nationwide University Development Plan, the strategy for social dimensions, and performance agreements – as important areas for action, and has taken appropriate measures. So, for example, in December 2016, eight higher education institutions were awarded the diversity-management prize “Diversitas” and through this a spotlight was focused on outstanding examples of good practice. In the early summer of 2017, the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research and the Diversitas-workshop initiated

a dialogue on good practice, which focused on the involvement of experts in the practical implementation of diversity management. In addition, in working groups, an intensive exchange of ideas was encouraged on questions of equal opportunities, and with the universities’ disabilities representatives. This was aimed at pooling ideas about diversity in order to accelerate anti-discrimination, and the promotion of diversity and inclusion.

These were, and are, important steps on our joint venture to create a proactive approach to diversity and, consequently, encourage innovative and sustainable organisational cultures in our higher education and research institutions.

This current publication *Focus on Diversity* aims to provide an extensive overview of all activities and projects in this field. The goal is to encourage other organisations to start their own projects and promote further positive developments. In this spirit, I wish all those interested an exciting and informative read.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Heinz Faßmann". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Univ.-Prof. Dr. Heinz Faßmann  
Federal Minister of Education, Science and Research

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The diversity management prize, **DIVERSITAS**, which was first awarded by the Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research in 2016, gave Austrian higher education institutions and research facilities the opportunity to present projects on their approach to diversity to a broader audience. The 27 submissions documented in this publication have all shown a broad array of approaches to executing ministerial guidelines for the equality of the sexes and the development of diversity management, which are set out in the 2016–2018 performance agreement. The projects submitted to **DIVERSITAS** range from initial awareness raising measures, to measures for individual diversity dimensions, all the way to the establishment of an integrated and systematic diversity management.

Practical examples show how differently higher education institutions and research facilities approach diversity-based challenges. These submissions give specific insights into the development of strategies and measures, and thereby provide other higher education and research institutions with a wide range of ideas for the (further) development of their own diversity management in the areas of teaching, research and administration.

The overview shows interested decision-makers and staff members in higher education and research institutions how organisations in their field establish and organise diversity management strategies according to their own specific circumstances and objectives. There are

various influences which affect the specific design of measures, such as how the topic of equality and anti-discrimination has been dealt with up to this point, which disciplines the higher education or research institution focuses on, the “in-house” diversity-related expertise available and regulatory requirements (such as laws, national objectives, international agreements, etc.).

This publication offers practitioners an insight into the main factors which lead to successful diversity management at higher education and research institutions. These include: the degree of relevance accorded to the topic (this is expressed, for example, in how the topic is structurally anchored in the institution); the combination of “top down” and participative approaches in the development and implementation of measures; the provision of sufficient resources for the specific area; a well-founded development of knowledge and competencies, using both internal and external expertise. The linking of diversity management to existing structures and processes, i.e. a career advancement plan for women, gender mainstreaming, human resources development or entrance requirements for students, must be seen as a central factor for success.

Finally, aspects of organisational culture, such as the opinion of employees on different aspects of diversity and the resulting level of acceptance, play another important role in determining the success of these measures.

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# INTRODUCTION

Compared to developments in the Anglo-American sphere of higher education, and private organisations, diversity management in the German speaking university and research area is a relatively new strategic concept with which to meet social and higher education policy requirements (c.f. Vedder 2006; Klammer/Matuko, 2010; Klein/Heitzmann 2012; Blome et al. 2013, 217ff; Bender et al. 2013). To facilitate similar developments in Austria, certain important stimuli are necessary. On a legal level, this is, in particular: the expansion of the Equal Opportunities Act to include further diversity dimensions alongside gender<sup>1</sup>; the implementation of the UN convention for people with disabilities<sup>2</sup>; the national action plan, Disability 2012–2020<sup>3</sup>; the guidelines established in the Universities Act 2002 with regard to equal opportunities, equality and the advancement of women<sup>4</sup>; and the Universities Act amendment 2015 (BGBl. I Nr. 21/2015). With these measures, it is intended to implement an equality plan which regulates the areas of compatibility and anti-discrimination. In addition, there is a socio-political demand for social transparency in the higher education area<sup>5</sup>, for the internationalisation of higher education institutions, as well as for quality assurance and the capacity for development in teaching, research and administration.

The Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (BMBWF) has created an internal structure for this thematic field consisting of the department Gender and Diversity Management<sup>6</sup>, and the working group on gender and diversity management. These work on strategies for the higher education and research area both cross-departmentally<sup>7</sup> and on an international level. For the performance agreement period 2016–2018, the BMBWF has, in the formulation of its understanding of equality, stipulated that there will be the development of an active diversity management in the medium term.<sup>8</sup> This takes into account the socio-political and economic importance of diversity in the tertiary education sector.

Within this framework, awarding the **DIVERSITAS** prize 2016<sup>9</sup> had the objective of drawing attention to current practices for dealing with diversity in Austrian higher education institutions and research facilities, and making the knowledge generated thereby accessible to the entire higher education and research area. 27 of the 58 higher education and research organisations entitled to make a submission, accepted the invitation to submit their work. The submissions were evaluated by an international jury of experts<sup>10</sup> and five ring-fenced cash prizes of 25.000 Euro each, and three non-cash prizes of 8.333 Euro each were awarded.<sup>11</sup>

This publication is aimed at staff members, and also at international higher education institutions and research facilities, as well as interested members of the general public. It seeks to encourage and support networking and knowledge-sharing between higher education institutions and research facilities. The publication is organised according to four key action fields, which were derived from the

focal points of the submissions: Integrated, Systematic Diversity Management, Diversity-Related Organisational Development Projects, Projects on Specific Diversity Dimensions and Intersectionality.<sup>12</sup>

The **FOCALPOINTS**  at the end of each chapter provide a short summary of key aspects of implementation.

1 See Equal Opportunities Act, Version 07.06.2017, <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=10008858>, and the federal law concerning Equality (Equal Opportunities Act B-GBG), Version 09.06.2017, <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20003395>.  
2 See UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, <https://www.behindertenrechtskonvention.info/inhalte/>.  
3 See National Action Plan on Disability 2012–2020, [https://www.sozialministerium.at/site/Service\\_Medien/Infomaterial/Downloads/Nationaler\\_Aktionsplan\\_Behinderung\\_2012\\_2020](https://www.sozialministerium.at/site/Service_Medien/Infomaterial/Downloads/Nationaler_Aktionsplan_Behinderung_2012_2020).

4 See Universities Act 2002, Version 07.06.2017, <https://www.ris.bka.gv.at/GeltendeFassung.wxe?Abfrage=Bundesnormen&Gesetzesnummer=20002128>.  
5 See National Strategy on Social Dimensions in Higher Education, <https://bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/strategie-entwicklung-zur-sozialen-dimension-in-der-hochschulbildung-workshop-diversitaetsmanagement/>.  
6 See Department for Gender and Diversity Management, <https://bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/stabsstelle-gender-und-diversitaetsmanagement/>.  
7 For example, Interministerial Working Group for Gender Mainstreaming/Budgeting, <http://www.imag-gendermainstreaming.at/>.  
8 See Austrian-wide University Development Plan, System-goal 8, [https://bmbwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user\\_upload/wissenschaft/publikationen/2015\\_goe\\_UEP-Lang.pdf](https://bmbwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/wissenschaft/publikationen/2015_goe_UEP-Lang.pdf), and Austrian ERA-Roadmap, [https://era.gv.at/object/document/2581/attach/oesterreichische\\_ERA\\_Roadmap.pdf](https://era.gv.at/object/document/2581/attach/oesterreichische_ERA_Roadmap.pdf).  
9 See <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/diversitas-ausschreibung-bis-31-mai-2016/>.  
10 Jury-Members: Surur Abdul-Hussain (ÖVS), Martin Bernhofer (Ö1 Science), Andrea Bührmann (Institute for Diversity-research, Georg-August-University Göttingen), Roland Engel (Austrian Society for Diversity), Bettina Schmidt (International Society for Diversity Management, Germany), Roberta Schaller-Steidl (BMBWF, Department for Gender- und Diversity Management).  
11 For the list of winners and jury deliberations see <https://bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/diversitas-preistraegerinnen-und-preistraeger-2016/>.  
12 Because of thematic overlap, some submissions could be assigned to multiple focal points.

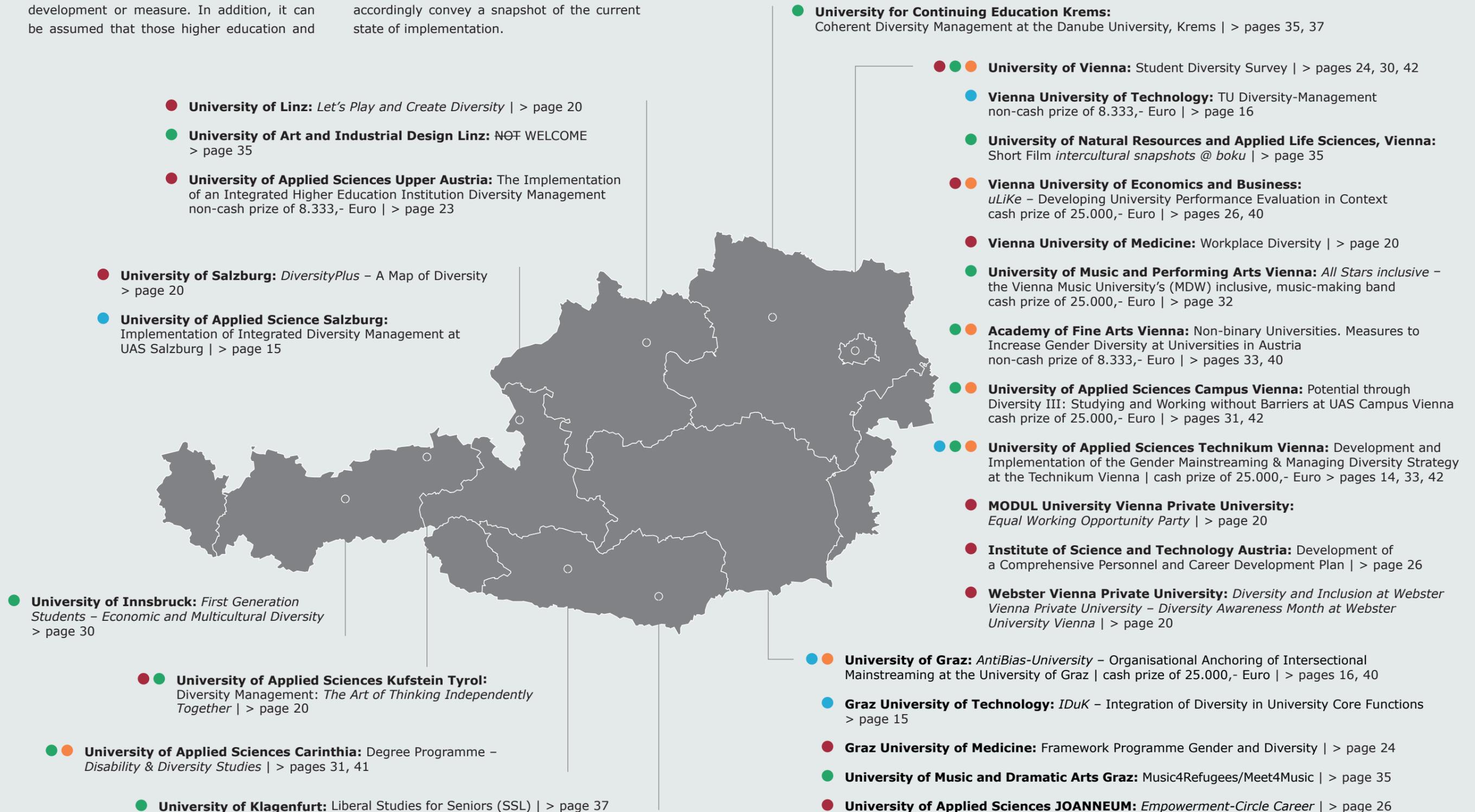
# OVERVIEW OF THE SUBMISSIONS AND THEIR MAIN FOCAL POINTS

It is to be noted that some of the higher education and research institutions have only presented a part of their project, or one specific development or measure. In addition, it can be assumed that those higher education and

research institutions which have not taken part in *Diversitas* 2016, have already initiated projects in the field of equality. The submissions accordingly convey a snapshot of the current state of implementation.

## KEY

- Integrated, Systematic Diversity Management | 5\*
- Projects on Diversity-Related Organisational Development | 12\*
- Projects on Specific Diversity Dimensions | 13\*
- Intersectionality | 7\*



# INTEGRATED, SYSTEMATIC DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT



Integrated, systematic diversity management, understood as a context-sensitive and strategic change and transformation process which takes place throughout an entire organisation, includes all status groups (administrative staff, teachers, researchers and students), and every department of the organisation. It is characterised, especially through its conception as a long-term, participation-oriented development process, by its strategic and sustainable anchoring in an organisation and a corresponding allocation of resources. However, in German speaking higher education and research areas, there are very few examples of this (Jansen-Schulz et al. 2011, Auferkorte-Michaelis/Linde 2015).

Several of the submissions to **DIVERSITAS** present developments in the area of integrated, systematic strategies. Within these, the characteristics of the specific diversity management concept differ according to the historic development of the topic in the respective higher education and research institution. The strategic focus oscillates between anti-discrimination and equal opportunity rights, and the objectives of quality and organisational development. Structural anchoring is achieved by including the issue in strategic documents and by institutionalising accountability. The submissions also highlight a number of challenges. For example, for some higher education and research institutions, the question of the relationship between diversity management and structures and strategies that already existed arose; for instance, the advancement of women and gender mainstreaming. Also a subject of discussion were links to existing structures and processes, and how to deal with resistance – issues which are central to every transformation process.

## Systematic Implementation of Diversity Management Examples

## Systematic Implementation of Diversity Management Examples

The fact that the implementation of diversity management is a long and multi-faceted process is shown in the example from the **University of Applied Sciences Technikum Vienna (UASTV)**. The development, implementation and initial evaluation of the university's strategy on *Gender Mainstreaming and Gender Diversity* took over five years. In the process, the systematic implementation of diversity management and the existing instrument of gender mainstreaming were strategically linked.

The UASTV understands diversity management as multidimensional and intersectional. The starting point for developing a strategy was a Diversity-situation<sup>13</sup> analysis, which visualised the diversity and intersectionality (for example gender and educational background) present at the university. In addition, existing measures were checked for synergies and areas where action was required, identified. The results of the analysis served as a basis for the conceptualisation and development of an evidence-based diversity strategy, supported by the university management, and with objectives in five key action fields:

1. Implementation of structures necessary for the sustainable implementation of the diversity strategy
2. Raising awareness of and support for, competencies related to dealing with diversity for all UASTV employees and students
3. Implementation of gender mainstreaming and the advancement of women
4. Promotion of diversity and capability
5. Equality of treatment and equal opportunities

The strategy's firm structural anchoring is visible in many areas. As a first step, the strategy was defined with specific regard to the organisation and anchored in strategic documents (overall

strategic focus, mission statement, principles of conduct, statute, research strategy, internationalisation strategy, personnel development concept, training contracts, quality criteria for University of Applied Sciences professorships) and in budgeting. This structural inclusion meant the strategy became a component of all development processes at the UASTV. In addition, accountability was institutionalised through the appointment of a gender-mainstreaming representative (20h/week) and a managing diversity representative (30h/week) as staff positions in senior management and the Rectorate; a think-tank on gender management and a diversity task force with representatives from every operational area were created; and internal and external focused communications and networking measures were established.

Subsequently, the UASTV introduced measures in various operational areas. In the personnel department, for example, measures were taken in recruiting, staff surveys and work-life-balance (models of maternity leave, "daddy-month", coaching possibilities). In the area of internationalisation, measures were set up, among others, to promote mobility, a buddy system for incoming students was established and training on intercultural competences and diversity was offered. In the areas of teaching and research, best practices were used to develop guidelines for project applications, a diversity-focused method portal set up and awareness raising training was offered to teachers and researchers.

The current focus of individual support measures is on women and people with migration backgrounds. On a structural level, the focus is on the integration of gender and diversity into teaching and research.

The development and implementation of the strategy for *Gender Mainstreaming and Managing Diversity* was made with the involvement of all status groups (staff, teachers and students) and in cooperation with all service providers at the UASTV. The fact that the strategy can be adapted to meet new challenges can be seen in the further development of *Managing Diversity to Diversity & Inclusion*, which evolved from the increased focus on the diversity dimension, disability.

The gender and diversity representatives secure the ongoing inclusion of the topic area in the operation of the UASTV through their participation in different working groups, and thereby ensure continuous awareness raising among staff members. In addition, aspects of gender and diversity are included in staff surveys.

In the process of implementation, challenges and resistance occurred – as in any transformative process within an organisation. So, for instance, the development of an organisation-specific understanding of the issues was marked by differing expectations, perspectives and levels of awareness among the parties involved. Another challenge has been raising the awareness of staff about relationships between power and discrimination. Last, but not least, to achieve constructive conflict management, it is necessary to handle the resistance of individual persons in an inclusive manner.

The evaluation, which has been running since February 2016, shows that 80% of the planned measures have already been implemented.

The **University of Applied Sciences Salzburg's (UASS)** approach to implementing integrated diversity management was a year-long certification process, which was carried out alongside an external and standardised consultation process. In the course of this, all diversity dimensions relevant to the UASS were addressed and the interests of the academic and administrative departments considered.

A feasibility agreement was negotiated with the university management to ensure their commitment, and to define minimum criteria to ensure that all relevant dimensions were taken into account. In this external certification process, both staff and students were included. The process was started with a general awareness raising process for executive staff. Measures for staff and students were drawn up in a development workshop and collected in an action catalogue. A quality circle determines the implementation status annually. To ensure the strategy is sustainably anchored, the diversity related policies and goals were operationalised through concrete measures, and linked to existing procedures and structures. Importance was attached to inclusive procedures and easily accessible information about the process. The acquisition of a basic certificate is handled by the TÜV Austria, according to ÖNORM S2501<sup>14</sup>. Every three years, a recertification is carried out as an external quality assurance. At UASS, this certification process was carried out at a higher education institution in Austria for the first time. In Germany, a certification initiative which offers a diversity-audit already exists.<sup>15</sup>

For the UASS, the certification combines the expectations of an external quality assurance and the correlating public image effect, which, internally, increases the incentive to participate in the transformation process and, externally, increases the appeal of the UASS.

In its diversity management strategy, the **Graz University of Technology** strives to integrate diversity into the university's core functions of teaching and research, and builds on existing approaches and proven methods. In this case too, gender equality, which in technical fields still poses a challenge, interacts with issues of diversity. The package of measures for the integration of diversity in research and teaching was built up over the years under the principle "top down" and "bottom up", and was structurally anchored step by step. It is located in the domain of the Rectorate and is

13 See: [http://ffhoarep.fh-ooe.at/bitstream/123456789/635/1/114\\_297\\_Allmayer\\_FullPaper\\_dt\\_Final.pdf](http://ffhoarep.fh-ooe.at/bitstream/123456789/635/1/114_297_Allmayer_FullPaper_dt_Final.pdf) (Accessed: 10.05.2017).

14 See Austrian Standards: <https://shop.austrian-standards.at/Preview.action;jsessionid=82099B081720BF54956F2C1DD083F2EC?preview=&dokkey=286206> (Accessed: 06.05.2017).

15 See Donors' Association: <https://www.stifterverband.org/diversity-audit> (Accessed: 05.05.2017).

implemented under the primary responsibility of the office for equality and the advancement of women. The working group *Gender and Diversity* supports the continual development of the measures, acts as an interface for projects and assignments, and formulates recommendations for the Rectorate. The working group consists of representatives from interest groups, management, strategic TU institutions as well as academics from the non-professorial teaching staff. The development of measures is participative. The creation of career opportunities for women, a guest professorship for gender and technology, diversity and gender-sensitive advice on applications, and the collection of examples of good-practice in research and training options for researchers, are some of the significant measures for further developing the core functions of teaching and research with regard to gender and diversity. In the course of further training events and workshops, networks and peer groups will be encouraged. These should promote the further spread of knowledge on gender and diversity. In the long term, a change in the research and teaching culture is expected. The measures are continuously being evaluated (reflection and feedback at events; continuous and indicator-based self-assessment). The differing levels of knowledge of participants is recognised as a challenge which emphasises the importance of developing a collective understanding of definitions and fundamental assumptions. The content and structural relevance of aspects of diversity are also experienced differently in the various specialist disciplines. Continuous feedback from the results of evaluations makes it possible to communicate the value and potential of taking gender and diversity into account in core functions.

At the **Vienna University of Technology**, a systematic diversity management is to a large extent still in planning. However, it can build on the strong, existing structural anchoring of the issue in the Vice Rectorate, gender and diversity, as well as on internal networks and expertise. It is intended to further develop pre-existing measures intersectionally – that is, comprising of all interest groups – and to establish a “diversity steering committee”. This should integrate relevant internal and external experts and make use of, for example, the experience which is invaluable in intersectional considerations that has been gained by other organisations and the department for gender expertise. In addition, an integrative needs analysis within the framework of special seminars in the internal further development programme is planned. The results of this needs analysis will be presented in a reflection workshop held by the steering committee, and appropriate measures will be developed. For 2017, focal points on the dimensions of culture, language, dialect, religion and sexual orientation are planned. A website will provide information on projects, seminars, literature and contact points. The participation of students and management is recognised as a particular challenge.

The **University of Graz** also takes the approach of dealing with diversity in an intersectional manner in establishing their diversity management (see page 40). It uses target group oriented findings from situation and needs analyses, as well as template activities, to identify, and find solutions for, exclusionary mechanisms in the areas of teaching, research and administration.

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The submissions show that every approach is different due to variations in context, as well as the individual organisation’s specific experiences in the development of equality issues and objectives related to diversity management. As a result, strategic engagement with diversity management is linked to longstanding debates on questions of gender equality, the advancement of women and gender mainstreaming, and diversity management concepts are developed based on needs analyses. In addition, projects already implemented in the field of gender equality are being newly classified according to diversity management.

The clear structural anchoring of these measures in the examples given, increases awareness of the relevance of diversity management and is a prerequisite for the sustainable institutionalisation of diversity management which has a fixed place, independent of the persons involved. In the ideal case, therefore, diversity management will be in the domain of the university management, and, as part of the development of the organisation, will include all university departments and status groups.

From the submissions it is clear that there is an understanding that the results of situation and needs analyses serve as fundamental decision-making tools for the development of a systematic diversity management. Each specific higher education institution context, like, for example, the prior development of equality and support measures, as well as the existing need for measures, is thereby optimally addressed, and synergies with already established structures and processes are made possible.

The anchoring of diversity in teaching – didactically and content-related – galvanises educational processes and encourages the development of competencies in teachers as well as students. Other notable success factors are the training of professional competencies at an administrative level, and the internal and external networking of experts and officials.

With regards to certification activities it seems essential that – to avoid the problems of acceptance and implementation seen in other certification processes (for example, quality control) – advisors and certification bodies have to show a high level of expertise in the fields of diversity management and auditing, as well as competencies regarding organisational development processes.

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# PROJECTS ON DIVERSITY-RELATED ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In some of the submissions to **DIVERSITAS**, projects focussing on issues essential for the establishment of a systematic diversity management were presented. These include awareness-raising measures aimed at changing the organisational culture, instruments for strategy development as well as personnel development measures (cf. Warmuth 2012).

- Awareness Raising Measures:  
Changes in Organisational and Discipline Cultures
- Instruments for Strategic Development
- Human Resource and Career Development

## Awareness Raising Measures: Changes in Organisational and Discipline Cultures

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Measures to raise awareness are a significant aspect of introducing diversity management. They serve to generate knowledge, and create acceptance, of various phenomena related to diversity. This then forms the basis for changes in the organisational culture. The submissions in this section present a series of practicable projects.

At the **University of Linz**, a simulation game aims to raise awareness of diversity, and corresponding phenomena, at the university. To this end, the game *Let's Play and Create Diversity*<sup>16</sup> was analysed and adapted by operational development groups. The goal was to create basic guidelines for action for the further development of diversity management. The structural anchoring of diversity management was ensured through the creation of a diversity board.

The event, *The Art of Thinking Independently Together*, at the **University of Applied Sciences Kufstein Tyrol** was an awareness raising measure and training session. The focus was on inter- and transcultural relationships as well as gender.

The **MODUL University Vienna Private University** on the other hand, planned to raise awareness and share information through an intranet website. This was managed by the Equal Opportunity Working Party, founded in 2015. The goal of this working group is to provide support in consolidating and disseminating the commitment to diversity that already exists. It has an advisory function, is the contact partner for all university status groups, and cooperates with the senate and employee's council.

The **Webster Vienna Private University** had a diversity awareness month planned for April 2017. All university initiatives concerned with diversity took part in this event. These included the Global Citizenship Programme, student clubs and the LEADS leadership certificate program. The university also profits considerably from diversity related activities at Webster University in Saint Louis.

The **University of Salzburg** formed a steering group consisting of members of different hierarchical levels, operational areas and status groups. This group is working on an information and awareness raising offensive and is developing, amongst other things, a website. Accompanying measures, like start-up events or workshops on different diversity dimensions, will reach different target groups in teaching, research and administration.

The **Vienna University of Medicine** has been working on a comprehensive, integrative and target group-oriented diversity management since 2010. In their submission, they presented the seminar Workplace Diversity, which is focused on raising awareness among staff members. Every year, three to six of these seminars, in which the basics of diversity management are explained, are offered. Individual diversity dimensions are specifically addressed in focus and target group workshops. Additionally, for management there are seminars which address handling diversity in a team from a management perspective.

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An important requirement for the development of integrated and systematic diversity management lies in recognizing diversity phenomena and their relevance for the development of the organisation. Therefore, raising awareness is an essential prerequisite and key field of action. There are already a range of methods and instruments in this area, and these can be adapted and further developed by higher education and research institutions for their own specific context and circumstances.

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16 See: <http://www.charta-der-vielfalt.de/service/publikationen.html> (Accessed: 23.05.2017).

## Instruments for Strategic Development

Alongside awareness raising, instruments for analysis are an indispensable tool for the development of a strategy that is customised for a particular organisation in order for it to react to situation and needs analyses. For

initial orientation in this field, a common tool is the diversity-wheel<sup>17</sup>, which starts on the individual level, and contains a range of diversity dimensions which can be seen as more, or less, changeable.

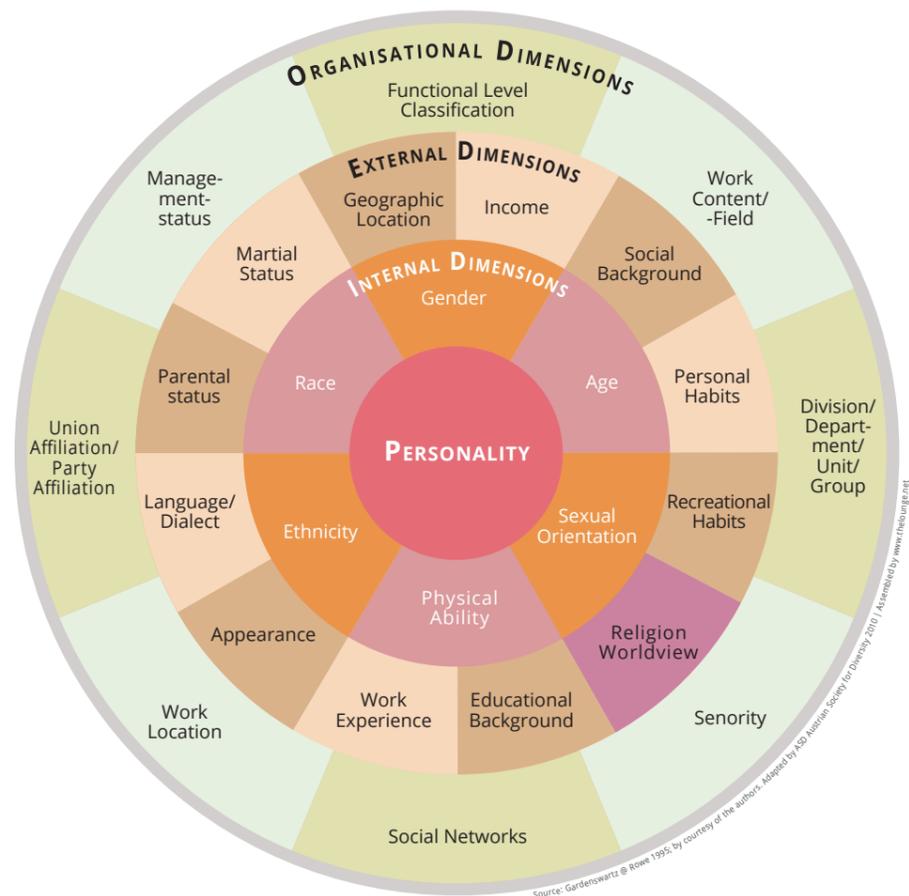


Figure 1: Diversity-wheel (adaptation by ASD) | Four Layers of Diversity according to: Gardenswartz, Lee / Rowe, Anita (2002): Diverse Teams at Work. Society for Human Resource Management. The ASD – Austrian Society for Diversity – revised this model and expanded the dimensions social class, language/dialect, networks, party affiliation.<sup>17</sup>

17 See: <https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/stabsstelle-gender-und-diversitaetsmanagement/gender-und-diversitaetsmanagement/>. In the critical diversity management research field, it is recommended to use the Diversity-wheel for initial orientation, but equally to question categorising and individualizing approaches, and instead to focus on an intersectional perspective. This enables social categories to be understood as multidimensional and heterogenic and connected to power relationships. (cf. i.a. <https://erwachsenenbildung.at/themen/diversitymanagement/grundlagen/dimensionen.php> und Bereswill 2015).

The **University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria** created the so-called HEAD<sup>18</sup> wheel for their situation analysis. This instrument is meant to support an integrated view of the organisation from a diversity perspective. It encompasses five sectors relevant to the management of higher education institutions: demographic diversity, cognitive diversity,

functional diversity, professional diversity and institutional diversity. In addition, it should also support the coordination and the consolidation of all diversity measures and identify any "blind spots" (cf. Gaisch/Aichinger 2016).

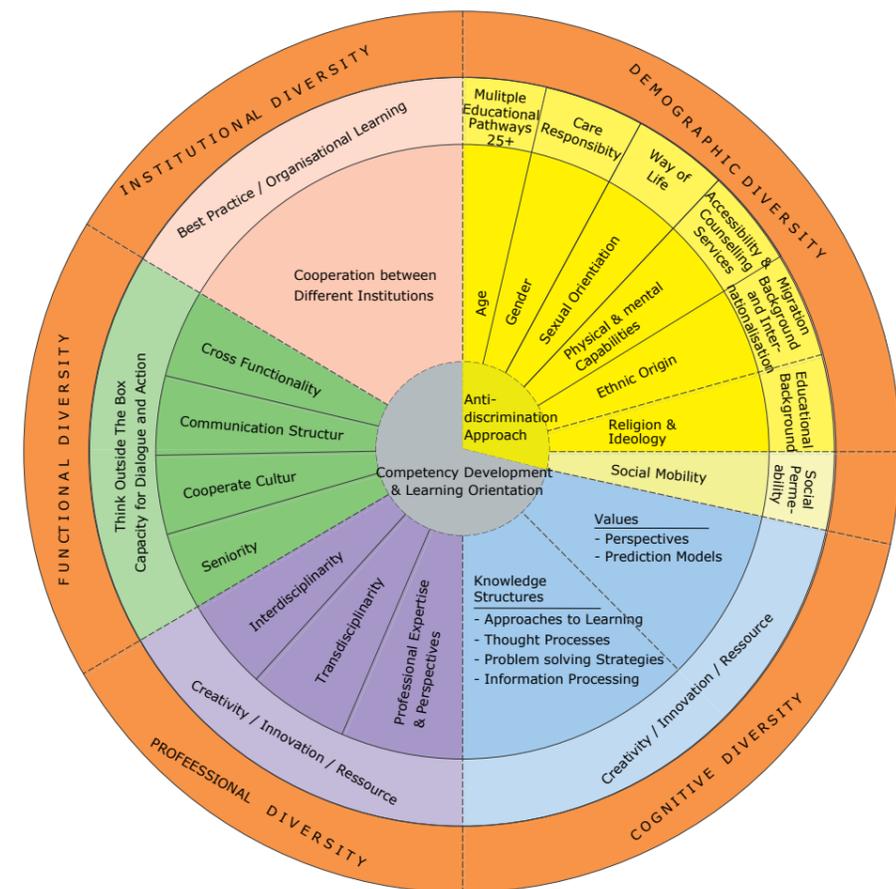


Figure 2: HEAD Wheel

18 HEAD = "Higher Education Awareness for Diversity".

In their submission, the **University of Vienna** presents their instrument for a diversity student survey, which was conducted in 2014. The goal of the survey was to obtain a differentiated view of the students and their needs. In accordance with performance agreements, the focus was on students with a migration background and "First Generation Students". The QUEST-questionnaire, which is already used in some German-speaking higher education institutions for situation and needs analyses, served as a basis for the survey. Taking into account different participants, the survey was adapted to the needs and circumstances of the University of Vienna. From a diversity theory perspective, it was necessary to make several changes to achieve this; these changes included, among others, the use of terminology ("How should migration background be recorded?", "How should regions of origin be clustered?"). Additionally, open questions on discrimination issues experienced and observed, and areas for action were developed with regard to different diversity dimensions. The goal is to deploy continuous data monitoring, based on the student surveys, for which new data fields need to be determined, such as "educational background of parents".

The **Graz University of Medicine** presented in their submission a framework programme as a strategic instrument, tool for analysis, target agreement and evaluation instrument. The programme encompasses all sectors of the university and is structurally anchored in the policy document. It addresses all diversity dimensions relevant for the university, links measures already available, and integrates planned and recommended measures. Specifically, the framework programme is organised by diversity dimensions, their related measures and projects and is designed in the form of a table, which also provides information about who is responsible for each area and the status of implementation. Through the use of a structured presentation, organised according to individual diversity categories, not only is the existing range of measures clearly depicted and communicable, but it is also clear where further measures are still needed. The framework programme is evaluated annually in a workshop attended by students, the employee's council, the working group on equal opportunities and the representative for people with disabilities. The workshop also offers the opportunity to develop new ideas and integrate them into the development process.

## FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

Diversity management requires reflection on structures and processes which already exist. Different heuristics and instruments through which further strategies and measures can be developed support this. As shown in the examples, such instruments can be used to connect and restructure projects in order to identify blind spots or to obtain evidence through surveys and analyses. The respective heuristics and instruments should be aligned with the situation, goals and needs of the organisation. As the example from the University of Vienna shows, the critical and theory-based use of diversity dimensions, and the accompanying categorisation, supports the prevention of stereotyping and reductionist views of individuals' and groups' attributes. It also helps to identify interactions between diversity dimensions.

## Human Resource and Career Development

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Personnel development is a key field of action in diversity management. It can provide an impetus for a wide variety of structural, procedural and organisational changes. In this respect, most of the submissions focus strongly on the diversity dimension, gender.

The *Empowerment Circle: Career* network at the **University of Applied Sciences JOANNEUM** offers women the opportunity to create a broad network with professional guidance. Conceptually, the network took the term empowerment (cf. Holcombe 1995) as its basis. The career network (initially created for three years) was developed in the working group on equal opportunities. In the network, women can broaden their personal competencies and discuss career matters. The external guidance offers women support in strengthening their own position, clarifying and defining goals and tackling them strategically. The women's network works across department, academic title and position boundaries.

The **Institute of Science and Technology Austria** is planning the introduction of a *Personnel Development and Career Advancement Plan* for all staff members. The plan is part of the HR-strategy and is laid down in the performance agreement. It encompasses a set of measures focused on four topics:

- Promoting inclusion, diversity and anti-discrimination
- Promoting the compatibility of career and family
- Career development (academic staff)
- Specialist careers (administration and scientific service units)

The Human Resources and Academic Affairs departments are tasked with the management of the measures. The respective target groups should be included in the planning of the personnel development and career advancement plan by means of surveys, interviews and focus groups. The development and advancement plan specifically targets career advancement

through the provision of, for example, soft skills and making people aware of different career options. It also supports employees in combining family and work. The plan aims to promote anti-discrimination, intercultural and interdisciplinary cooperation by raising awareness of inclusion, diversity and anti-discrimination. In this way, employee retention and motivation should be increased, and the appeal of the Institute of Science and Technology Austria as an employer broadened. As the institute is active internationally, special focus is given to the intersection of age, gender and cultural origins/background.

In their submission, the **Vienna University of Economics and Business** presents an ongoing process to establish a new form of performance evaluation. *uLike – Developing University Performance Evaluation in Context* focuses on a multi-dimensional evaluation framework which assesses performance in the areas of teaching, research and Third Mission, and takes contextual and biographical factors into account. Part of the measure, which is controlled by the Rectorate, is a university-wide reflection process on how the examination of standardised conceptions of career paths, and a performance evaluation focused on research output, can lead to the comprehensive recognition of achievement in different areas. This should increase the chances of success of researchers who do not have a typical curriculum vitae, but rather a broader performance portfolio, and who deliver top performances in areas other than those which fall under research output (publications). To facilitate this, an anti-categorical approach was selected for *uLike*. This means that aspects like care responsibilities, maternity leave, part time work or other breaks in an academic career are taken into account, but do not have to be linked to a social category. Although social categorisations like disability, age or gender are considered necessary in the examination of relational concepts of performance, they are not viewed ex ante as relevant or important. Therefore, it is not indi-

vidual social categories or diversity dimensions that are foregrounded, but individual lives and needs. Through this anti-categorical approach, it should be possible to make inequality and power relationships visible, and ensure that identity attributes are not fixed, but recognised in the development of measures that allow for changeable, context-dependent categorisation and allocation. The senate, the senate commission, personnel development as well as various

other groups are involved in the development of *uLike* by means of, among other things, focus group discussions and an electronic consultation process. With regard to the university's development plan, *uLike* is in the performance agreement 2016–2018 and in the Rectorate's programme of work, which should ensure that the sustainability of the performance evaluation plan is guaranteed.

### FOCALPOINTS

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The examples in these submissions show that higher education and research institutions are, to some extent, adapting and implementing classical personnel development and career advancement measures. The example from the Vienna University of Economics and Business illustrates a fundamental requirement for cultural change, in which an important key element of expert organisations, namely the concept of performance, and the related traditional hierarchical categorisation of performance areas is questioned and renegotiated to ensure equal opportunities. To achieve this, they chose an anti-categorical approach, which not only takes social categorisation into account, but also individual lives and needs. Up until now, the latter have generally been ignored in performance evaluations, which meant that disadvantages were perpetuated, and certain performance areas undervalued, or not even included, in performance evaluations. Therefore, an anti-categorical approach can serve as an impetus for questioning excluding structures, processes and cultures, and for developing inclusive perspectives.

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# PROJECTS ON SPECIFIC DIVERSITY DIMENSIONS

Alongside questions of gender equality, which have as a result of historical and legislative developments long been the subject of discussion in institutes of higher education (cf. Schacherl et al. 2015), many submissions (also) focused on further diversity dimensions according to target group orientation. A strong focus was put on social background, disability and inclusion, as well as on interculturality. Gender-diversity and lifelong learning are examples of further topics.

The submissions show various ways of dealing with individual diversity dimensions. This can, among other things, be ascribed to different contextual circumstances and the opportunities to connect that arise within different disciplines. Current socio-political topics are also reflected.

- **Social Background – “First Generation Students”**
- **Disability and Inclusion**
- **Gender Diversity**
- **Interculturality**
- **Lifelong Learning**

## Social Background – “First Generation Students”

Current studies show that social background still shapes careers in education (cf. OECD 2013). As a result, higher education institutions have been working on improving the social permeability of their institutions for years. The former Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research has already developed a strategic focal point for this (BMWFV 2017)<sup>19</sup>.

The **University of Vienna** has set a goal of increasing the percentage of “First Generation Students”. In the Diversity student survey (see page 24), which was submitted to **DIVERSITAS**, the diversity dimension, the educational background of parents, was used to identify the diversity dimension, social background. The results were evaluated in conjunction with other diversity dimensions like ethnic origin. From the quantitative and qualitative survey data on, for example, experiences of discrimination due to social background, or the importance of scientific terminologies, barriers and needs can be identified.

The **University of Innsbruck** is also intensifying its planning of activities in the field of “First Generation Students”, initiating a preliminary study and analysing the data which already exists in order to identify courses of

action from the results obtained. The dimension of social background will be considered together with the dimensions migration background and gender. The goal is to break down educational barriers and to achieve a more balanced social diversity at the University by promoting students with “non-traditional relations to university”. Different stakeholders at the University, such as the Austrian Union of Students, but also external organisations, will be included in the plan of action in order to utilize their know-how and expertise (i.e. [www.arbeiterkind.de](http://www.arbeiterkind.de)<sup>20</sup> and the Vienna Chamber of Labour’s educational policy division). In addition, cooperations with the Pedagogical University Tyrol, the School of Education at the University of Innsbruck and university personnel development training as part of the teaching competencies certificate are planned. Existing activities at different organisational units will also be coordinated with each other. In this way, it is planned that advisory services, both in schools and at study and job fairs, will be able to inform school leavers about different degree programmes and motivate them to study. Further, Peer Monitoring for students will be established, such as is already being offered at the University of Graz<sup>21</sup>.

### FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

Inspiration for this field of action can also be drawn from international projects. Many universities and organisations have already launched initiatives relating to these fields, and created online communities to provide support and allow for the exchange of ideas. See for example:

- Humboldt University Berlin: <https://frauenbeauftragte.hu-berlin.de/de/foerderung/studentinnen/firstgen>
- Ostfalia University of Applied Sciences: <https://www2.ostfalia.de/cms/de/studienberatung/first-generation-students/>
- German Association of University Professors and Lecturers: [https://www.hochschulverband.de/tandem.html#\\_](https://www.hochschulverband.de/tandem.html#_)
- Online-Community „I’m first“: <http://www.imfirst.org/stories/>

19 See also: <https://bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/strategie-entwicklung-zur-sozialen-dimension-in-der-hochschulbildung-workshop-diversitaetsmanagement/> (Accessed: 10.06.2017).

20 See Miethe et al. (2014).

21 See: <https://www.uni-graz.at/de/studieren/studierende/peer-mentoring/> (Accessed: 09.05.2017).

## Disability and Inclusion

According to the Student Social Survey 2015, 12% of all students in Austria (approximately 36.760 individuals) have one or more health impairment(s), which have limiting effect(s) on their studies<sup>22</sup>. Students with disabilities, health impairments or chronic diseases find themselves confronted with structural, temporal and organisational barriers in everyday university life. In recent years, the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which has been ratified by Austria, and the National Action Plan on Disability 2012–2020, have rendered the topic inclusion of people with disabilities a core mission for higher education and research institutions. Accordingly, these institutions must design their admissions and courses in such a way that the participation of people with disabilities is ensured without discrimination. This does not only involve the need for structural modifications to buildings, but also the analysis of their (own) way of thinking and policies for dealing with disabilities.

Several **DIVERSITAS** submissions focused on this topic:

The **University of Applied Sciences Campus Vienna (UASCV)**, for example, deals with the subject *Studying and Working without Barriers*. Here, UASCV orientates itself to current requirements and embeds the project in its organisational development. Assuming that women with disabilities have fewer chances in the labour market, as well as are at a higher risk for poverty when compared to women without disabilities, the UASCV has initiated projects during the admission procedure for applicants as well as for new and existing employees. Particular emphasis is placed on the sustainable and structural anchoring of the projects. For this reason, a legal advice centre was established to support applicants, students and employees in discrimination cases. A diversity advisory board was also founded. Since the

winter semester 2016/17, the Department for Gender & Diversity Management (G&DM) has served as a central point of contact for applicants and students with disabilities, chronic diseases and specific limitations who may be entitled to technical resources or special help to compensate for their disadvantages. This support for students is in cooperation with the various degree programmes. Based on these structures, the UASCV is working on processes that can be used when admitting students and employees with disabilities (e.g. regarding “compensation for disadvantages”, employing people with disabilities). These processes will be developed by the management of the G&DM Department, human resources management and the Diversity advisory board, which consists of senior managers, teaching staff as well as employees, and includes a board of student experts. This process is supported by projects that encourage awareness raising and the development of knowledge and know-how. As a result, a seminar on *Better Inclusion of Employees with Disabilities and Chronic Diseases* was initiated for those involved in the development process, as well as seminars for teaching staff, employees and students on *Experiencing Deafness or Studying and Working with a Disability*. In addition, there was a lecture on *Barrier-free Access to Education: What do Tertiary Institutions Need to Do?* Since the summer semester 2016, the UASCV has been a member of uniability – a committee for the equality of people with disabilities and chronic diseases at universities and higher education institutions in Austria. Inclusion in this network enables the exchange of information on related topics among universities.

The **University of Applied Sciences Carinthia** has embedded the topic of disability in its curriculum within the degree programme, *Disability & Diversity Studies*. Here, rather than a medical-therapeutic model, a social model of

22 See: Studierenden-Sozialerhebung 2015: <http://www.sozialerhebung.at/index.php/de/zusatzberichte-und-sonderauswertungen-2015> (Abruf: 16.05.2017).

disability, which interlinks with other diversity dimensions, is emphasised. As a result, rehabilitative models of disability are transformed into a cultural studies-inclusive concept of disability, which results in an emancipatory focus in the degree program. Accordingly, perspectives on the inclusion of people with disabilities into civil society find their way into the degree programme. Through this inter- and trans-disciplinary orientation, the degree programme responds to the dynamic and complex changes in population structure, which lead to an increasing demand for experts in case management.

The **University for Music and Performing Arts Vienna** also made the topic of inclusion in teaching a focal point in its submission. The band *All Stars inclusive* is a music group that gives people with and without disabilities – among them students of various music pedagogy study programmes – the opportunity to gain musical and social experiences with inclusion in a music-educational context. In a lecture, students from instrument pedagogy, music education, rhythm, music therapy and elementary music pedagogy degrees make

music with people who have sensory impairments or learning difficulties. This is done along with the latter's carers or family members, with professional musicians and with students from other universities. Not only does this enable them to learn didactic and pedagogical skills, but it also promotes an inclusive attitude. Through the lecture, students should develop the skills to be able to deal competently with heterogeneous classes and groups in their future careers.

To encourage empowerment and emancipation, the band members are closely involved in the planning process. Several of the musicians with disabilities are also involved in the research project *Listen, What Are They Telling Us: Participatory Research on the Inclusive Making of Music* at the Institute for Music Pedagogy. Participation in the band is free of charge and there are no entrance requirements. In addition to weekly rehearsals, a concert is put on each semester. So far around 150 students and 50 people with disabilities have been able to gather valuable social and musical experience in the band. With the establishment of the band, new ground was broken in Austria.

## FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

The examples related to the topic of *Disability and Inclusion* (cf. Klein 2015) illustrate, firstly, the interaction of sustainable, structural anchors, process development, and knowledge building and development through networking and organisational learning. Secondly, they present innovative approaches in teaching, which can also serve as examples of good practice for other higher education and research institutions.

## Gender Diversity

Engagement with questions relating to gender equality has a long history in Austria's higher education institutions, which can be seen in legislative measures (e.g. The University Act, The Equality Act). This topic is also accorded significance in performance agreements, as current figures<sup>23</sup> still show a number of imbalances and discriminations<sup>24</sup>. On an organisational level, this manifests itself in particular through the institutionalisation of working groups for equal opportunities, competence centres, staff and coordination units, as well as the collection of gender-segregated data. Measures for career advancement, work-life balance and childcare are frequently implemented at higher education institutions.

Until now, most gender-related projects were based on a dichotomous gender concept. With the differentiation in gender research and the civil society movement, higher education institutes are increasingly confronted with new questions and challenges in the field of gender. On the one hand, this concerns the intersectional view of gender, and thereby the interaction with other diversity dimensions, such as practices related to university access at the **University of Applied Sciences Campus Vienna** and the **University of Applied Sciences Technikum Vienna** show. On the other hand, on an organisational level, questions on gender-diversity in terms of non-binary gender identities, such as transgender, trans- and intersexuality, are becoming increasingly urgent.

The **Academy of Fine Arts Vienna** has addressed gender-diversity in their submission *Non-Binary Universities – measures aimed at strengthening gender-diversity at universities in Austria*. The goal of the related projects is to make all areas of the university where transgender, intersexual, and transsexual people (students, employees, visitors, applicants) have been structurally discriminated against, visible. For example, it is already possible for students not to indicate their gender at entrance examinations. However, in order to enrol they are obliged to specify their gender due to legal requirements. A catalogue is currently being compiled that lists all university areas in which gender-binarism is structurally included, as well as measures to establish non-binary structures that could be adopted within the framework of university autonomy (e.g. adapting "Campus Online" and toilet facilities for gender neutral use). In addition, the necessary legal requirements for change will be identified and a roadmap for changes to the statutory framework will be developed. The fact that this thematic area is given great relevance is shown, among other things, by the large number of Academy members involved and by the incorporation of the projects into the Academy's development plan. It specifically analyses the complex dovetailing of measures for the advancement of women, which have been practiced at the Academy for many years, and of measures for the advancement and non-discrimination of those who do not identify as either women or men. Measures to integrate the needs and requirements of transgenders, intersex and transsexual people will be developed in close connection with, and under consideration of, instruments for the advancement of women.

23 See: <https://bmbwf.gv.at/wissenschaft-hochschulen/gender-und-diversitaet/programme-und-initiativen/strategische-gleichstellungsziele-in-den-leistungsvereinbarungen/> (Accessed: 12.05.2017).

24 See: uni:data, Gender Monitoring: [https://oravm13.noc-science.at/apex/f?p=103:6:::NO::P6\\_OPEN:N](https://oravm13.noc-science.at/apex/f?p=103:6:::NO::P6_OPEN:N) (Accessed: 26.05.2017).

## FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

The submission of the Academy refers to a social development which makes the increasingly non-binary gender realities of life visible, and highlights the need for adaptations and the development of new instruments and measures. Internationally, some universities, such as the University of Oxford, the ETH Zurich and Harvard, have already implemented measures for the recognition of transgender, intersex and transsexual people. In the European Union, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe has already adopted a resolution on the safety of transgender people in Europe<sup>25</sup>. This example is intended to provide ideas for other higher education and research institutions on how to provide students and employees with an environment in which they can live in accordance with their gender identity. The development of a non-discriminatory learning environment questions heteronormative structures and promotes the development of the potential of all employees, students and teachers.

## Interculturality

The submissions to **DIVERSITAS 2016** show how higher education institutions react to current social and demographic developments, such as migration, internationalisation and the current flow of refugees (see also Crea 2016).

Some submissions focused on awareness raising projects, such as the training seminar, *The Art of Thinking Independently Together*, at the **University of Applied Sciences Kufstein Tyrol**, with, among other things, a focus on inter- and transcultural relationships, or the film project, *Intercultural Snapshots @ boku*<sup>26</sup>, for the promotion of intercultural competencies in members of the **University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna**.

The **University for Continuing Education Krems** has institutionalised questions in this area; in particular in the Department of Migration and Globalisation, where, in teaching, there is reflection on diversity and social (power) structures on a global level, and intercultural communication can be practiced within a framework of encounters and cooperation with members of different cultures.

Two universities submitted projects that concerned refugees. In summer 2015, the Institute for Music Education at the **University of Music and Dramatic Arts Graz** initiated the project *Music4Refugees* and organised a benefit concert for refugees. Since summer semester 2016, *Meet4Music* has been offering weekly workshops for playing music together. This is a community service that students can attend, and help shape, as a free elective in order to reinforce their intercultural competencies. Participation for those interested is free and requires no registration or prior knowledge. *Meet4Music* is therefore easily accessible for all ethnic groups, and through the musical togetherness offers an opportunity for sharing and raising awareness of differences

and commonalities on equal terms. For the sustainability of the projects, integration into the teaching programme is just as crucial as sustainable, cooperative relations between the university and external organisations, such as those concerned with refugee accommodation and civil society.

The **University of Art and Industrial Design Linz** addressed the poor housing conditions of refugees in their project *NOT WELCOME*. The goal of the project was to enable the integration of refugees, raise students' awareness of refugee issues and generally reinforce openness at the University of Arts. Over the course of two semesters, 56 students from the Space & Design Strategies course worked with refugees to renovate a refugee home in Linz. The cafeteria of the University of Arts was used to cook with the refugees. During the building and cooking activities, strategies for space and design were negotiated. Students worked and experimented together in a lengthy process, where, in dealing with cultural differences, it was less the student's artistic skills that were required, but rather their social skills. As a result, they had to find means of communication – without a common language – negotiate expectations and standards of living, and question things they took for granted: How do you explain recyclable products? How do you deal with questions of design or sustainability? What is nice, good, usable, desirable? The internationality of the university's team, which originated from several European and Asian countries, as well as Iran, USA and Australia, supported the process. Thus, students and teaching staff were able to introduce different perspectives into the collaborative work with the refugees. The results of the project were shown at the Offenes Kulturhaus Linz.<sup>27</sup> This project was also implemented in cooperation with external organisations, such as SOS-Menschenrechte (human rights) and the social market, SOMA.

25 See Resolution 2048 (2015): <http://bit.ly/283pI9I> (Accessed: 23.05.2017).

26 See: [https://youtu.be/NN-IE5J-j\\_g](https://youtu.be/NN-IE5J-j_g) (Accessed: 10.05.2017).

## FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

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Intercultural competencies are essential not only in international exchanges and cooperation between researchers, teachers and students, they are also important for many occupational fields for which the students are being prepared. For this reason, the diversity topic *Interculturality* is also addressed internationally in the teaching and further education provision of numerous higher education institutes.

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## Lifelong Learning

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Lifelong learning has been anchored in higher education since 2011, through the strategy lifelong learning in Austria (LLL 2020-Strategy)<sup>28</sup>. Some higher education institutions have developed specific programmes for this, such as can be seen in the submission by the **University of Klagenfurt**. Already in the winter semester, 2007/08, a university course for older people interested in science, the Liberal Studies for Seniors course (SSL), where no formal requirements were necessary, was developed. The course is open to people of all ages. The goal of the course is to support the mental activity, health and social integration, especially of elderly people. Furthermore, the course offers those who, for a variety of reasons, never had the chance of an academic education, the opportunity to further educate themselves. Within the course, in addition to lectures on cultural studies, social and economic sciences, technical sciences and linguistics, exchange forums and clubs, and a fixed regular meeting are offered; all of which supports the exchange of experiences and knowledge among students across the genera-

tions. Additionally, students can choose from a wide range of courses offered by several Carinthian educational institutions. Due to the variety of the continuously-changing content on offer, the course undergoes continuous further development. Moreover, regular public events, such as workshops and conferences, are organised. The course's tuition fees per semester amount to 100 euros.

The topic of lifelong learning is also central to the **University for Music and Dramatic Arts Graz's** project: *Meet4Music*. Working with refugees enabled all those involved to react to societal changes that resulted from refugee movements, and to develop new perspectives and skills.

In their submission, the **University for Continuing Education Krams** addresses the federal government's LLL 2020-strategy through, among other things, the goals of increasing the participation of working people in education and of diversifying the age range of students through their course programme.

## FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

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The examples from the various submissions show that the age- and education-related openness of higher education institutions can also be promoted through projects for lifelong learning. Examples from the international environment can provide further valuable ideas (cf. for example Bischoff/Prang 2015).

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27 See: <http://www.strategies.ufg.at/?p=1384> (Accessed: 23.05.2017).

28 See: [https://erwachsenenbildung.at/themen/lebenslanges\\_lernen/oesterreichische\\_strategie/details.php#dokumente](https://erwachsenenbildung.at/themen/lebenslanges_lernen/oesterreichische_strategie/details.php#dokumente) (Accessed: 12.05.2017).

# INTERSECTIONALITY



The reciprocal influence of different diversity dimensions, and the associated mechanisms of power and exclusion, have been discussed intensively in gender and feminist organisational research for quite some time (cf. Crenshaw 1989; McCall 2005; Acker 2006; Klinger/Knapp/Sauer 2007; Squires 2008; Rommelspacher 2009; Winker/Degele 2010; Smykalla/Vinz 2011). The topic of intersectionality is accordingly varied and provides different possibilities for approaches to multidimensionality. Approaches to intersectionality emphasise that the allocation of people to specific diversity categories, according to social categorisation, falls short for several reasons: differences in everyday practice are not only realised and perceived with regard to one dimension, but always through the interplay of multiple dimensions (intercategorical perspective, cf. McCall 2005).

Approaches to intersectionality also emphasise the dangers of stereotyping that categorisation can bring, as they tend to have an homogenising effect (women, men, people with disabilities etc.). Therefore, social categories should not only be considered as social constructs that are changeable over time, but also as heterogeneous in themselves (intercategorical perspective, cf. McCall 2005). So, for example, women's and men's opportunities for participation vary not only due to their gender, but also due to their economic situation, their social background or their ethnic identity.

Lastly, a closer look at intersectional relations demonstrates that differentiations always reproduce and reflect societal power structures, which shape people's societal and social situation, recognition and opportunities for participation. This manifests itself through mechanisms such as the different evaluation of gainful employment and reproductive work, the heteronormative influence in the attribution of competencies or the division of labour. By focusing on such mechanisms, which also result in inclusions and exclusions in higher education and research institutions, homogenising views of individual groups along diversity dimensions can be avoided. Therefore, the focus is not on social categories, but on beneficial and disadvantageous structures, processes and cultures (anticategorical perspective, cf. McCall 2005).

The submissions to **DIVERSITAS 2016** provide an insight into how intersectionality is currently being addressed in higher education and research institutions in Austria.

—— **Organisational Anchoring of an Intersectionality**

—— **Intersectionality as a Part of the Curriculum**

—— **Intersectional View of Students' Situation**

## Organisational Anchoring of an Intersectionality Perspective

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In most submissions intersectionality is discussed through the interplay of different diversity dimensions (e.g. gender and ethnic affiliation, social background, etc.). The anticategorical approach, which deals with mechanisms of limitation and exclusion, is, in comparison, used less frequently.

The approach to gender diversity of the **Academy of Fine Arts Vienna** and the **University of Graz** provide an example of this (see page 33). With the submission of *Anti-Bias-University*, the University of Graz provides insights into the development of *intersectional mainstreaming*. The goal is to reduce the dynamics and mechanisms of exclusion and discrimination in teaching, research and administration. To facilitate this, the university is further developing its current orientation for target groups to cover intersectional considerations, and is addressing multidimensionalities and mechanisms that support or hinder participation and development. On a structural level, the *AntiBias Group*, which is part of the Vice Rectorate for Personnel and Equality, was created. The group consists of the Vice Rector for Personnel, representatives of administrative bodies, initiatives for protection against discrimination, students as well as diversity researchers. This cross-hierarchical committee ensures that diversity know-how and awareness are reflected in all participating

university sectors. The group's job is, among other things, to further develop the existing target group orientation towards multidimensional, intersectional practices in the areas of organisation, research, and teaching. Additionally, for this purpose, a comprehensive survey of the actual state of courses on offer and need analyses in the fields of teaching, research and administration were conducted. Existing projects for individual diversity dimensions were analysed. The target-group related findings and the exclusion mechanisms identified were analysed for their relevance to other groups, and from the results, areas requiring action, and solutions for non-functional differentiation practices were derived. Through this cross-target approach, the stigmatisation of individual groups could be combatted. During this process, in-house academic expertise and practical knowledge about the current programme could be used.

The **Vienna University of Economics and Business** also chose an anticategorical approach in the development of their performance evaluation model (see page 26). This not only promotes a differentiated analysis of mechanisms that oppose equality and anti-discrimination efforts, but it can also contribute to preventing re-stereotyping and rejects the practice of target-group specific measures being dramatised or overcharged with emotion.

## Intersectionality as a Part of the Curriculum

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The degree programme *Disability & Diversity Studies* at the **University of Applied Sciences Carinthia** explicitly deals with intersectional relationships. The intersectional approach was chosen to examine the complex interdependencies between various differentiation categories related to disability. The resultant change of perspective foregrounds the social inclusion of people with disabilities and their life situation. This implies the need for a re-orientation from a medical-thera-

peutic paradigm to a new form of professional guidance and civil society communitarianisation to enable people to live a largely independent life. Furthermore, in the light of different social developments, such as the change towards a multicultural and aging society or the increased occurrence of mental illnesses, the course's linking of diversity and disability makes it possible to establish a new occupational field that takes these social needs into consideration.

## Intersectional View of Students' Situation

In its submission, the **University of Vienna** shows how correlations between different diversity categories can already be identified in needs analyses. As part of the diversity survey, selected diversity categories, such as the educational background of the parents (social background) and the student's ethnic origin (region of origin, citizenship), were analysed. The evaluations can be used for targeted measures.

Some higher education institutions are already considering the various interactions between differences that can lead to discrimination. For example, in its submission, the **University of Applied Sciences Technikum Vienna (UASTV)** refers to measures that address the correlation between the students' gender

and their educational background, as well as between occupation and migration background. For this purpose, the UASTV makes use of bridging and preparation courses and, as part of a study, evaluated the situation of working students with a migration background at the university, in order to be able to accurately develop appropriate measures.

The **University of Applied Sciences Campus Vienna** has implemented projects, such as those for admission procedures, where, for example, the overlap of disability, economic situation, educational background and mother tongue, is taken into account, and support services, in cooperation with the Austrian Union of Students, are provided.

### FOCALPOINTS ●●●●●

These examples that have been submitted to **DIVERSITAS** show how the concept of intersectionality (cf. Kaufmann 2015) can be used for the identification of correlations between social categorisations, in order to break down the alleged homogeneity of individual groups (intracategorical approach) or show the correlations between social categorisations (intercategorical approach). Moreover, the example of the **Vienna University of Economics and Business** shows that intersectionality can also be considered from an anticategorical point of view.

## OUTLOOK

The Austrian higher education and research institutions are a key factor in Austria's socio-political and economic development as a member of the European Union and the international community. Equality, anti-discrimination and accessibility are basic requirements for securing participation opportunities in higher education, research and innovation. This is emphasised by international and national agreements, such as the United Nation's Agenda 2030 for sustainable development and the continuous development of equality and anti-discrimination legislation, as well as the Universities Act amendment 2015 (BGBl. I Nr. 21/2015) or the National Strategy on Social Dimensions. Additionally, questions of social cohesion and the welfare state, as well as the economic viability of our social systems, are becoming increasingly urgent. Therefore, sustainable and viable compatibility strategies, that ensure the social contribution of higher education and research institutions, need to be developed for these sectors. Frameworks such as the EU-Policy Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) in Horizon 2020<sup>29</sup> and the inclusion of gender- and diversity issues as quality criteria in the funding programmes of the FFG<sup>30</sup> or the city of Vienna's Universities of Applied Sciences,<sup>31</sup> support the discussion of the impending challenges, and the development of the required skills on a subject-specific and organisational level.

Social responsibility and the requisite international competitiveness of higher education and research institutions have made the further development of integrated and systematic diversity management systems a core mission of organisational development in teaching,

research and administration. In this respect, the challenge for higher education and research institutions is to incorporate existing projects, both strategically and institutionally. Likewise, it is necessary to develop gender equality, which has already been institutionalised through plans for the advancement of both women and equality, so that it becomes a diversity-oriented equality policy. Such a diversity-oriented differentiation of equality agendas would reflect higher education and research institutions' increased and systematic assumption of social responsibility for the performance agreement period 2019–2021. This would be a third field of action alongside teaching and research.<sup>32</sup> Many higher education and research institutions can draw on a wide range of internal expertise and their experiential knowledge for the development of strategies and measures that is necessary. Networking with other institutions and external experts can also be of support. A fundamental approach based on current findings in the increasingly differentiated diversity and intersectionality research should help identify the necessary areas for change and development within the organisation. This will allow them to transform alienating structures, processes and cultures into a diversity-oriented equality.

**DIVERSITAS 2018** will again give higher education and research institutions the opportunity to draw the attention of the general public to their achievements and development trajectory, and thereby contribute to further promoting developments in the Austrian higher education and research sector.

29 See: <https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/horizon2020/en/h2020-section/responsible-research-innovation> (Accessed: 10.06.2017).

30 See: <https://www.ffg.at/news/gender-kriterien-der-forschungsforderung-basisprogramm-macht-den-anfang> (Accessed: 03.07.2017).

31 See: <https://www.wien.gv.at/forschung/institutionen/fh.html> (Accessed: 03.07.2017).

32 The nationwide Austrian University Development Plan, the National Strategy on Social Dimensions in Higher Education, and the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations serve as a guideline in the field of social responsibility.

# OVERVIEW OF THE SUBMISSIONS AND CONTACT PERSONS

## SUBMISSIONS FROM HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS

### SUBMITTED ACTIVITY

#### POINT OF CONTACT

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## FURTHER LINKS

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# GLOSSARY

## ANTI-CATEGORICAL HANDLING OF DIVERSITY

The anti-categorical approach addresses the danger of reproducing stereotypes and of unequal power positions through categorisation processes – meaning assigning individuals to homogenous groups such as “women”, “people with a migration background” or “people with disabilities”. Therefore, instead of categories (diversity dimensions), it focuses on the identification and processing of inclusive or exclusive aspects of social, as well as organisational, circumstances. Diversity phenomena, therefore, undergo a stronger, fundamental structural processing, which goes beyond a view of individuals and groups based on categories, and questions these.

## DIVERSITY

Diversity means variety, differences. In relation to people, the term refers to results of processes of differentiation and categorisation on a social and functional level.

## DIVERSITY DIMENSIONEN

Diversity dimensions such as gender and age are the result of social categorisations. In the Austrian Equal Opportunities and Anti-discrimination Acts, six of these dimensions are identified as grounds for protection: gender, age, religion and worldview, ethnicity, sexual orientation and disability. The current legislation, however, identifies different levels of protection for these categories. For example, discrimination based on age, religion and worldview or sexual orientation is only forbidden in the work space, not, however, in the provision of goods and services.

## DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Diversity management is a multi-dimensional management approach, serving the prevailing organisational aims. This management approach realises, and makes use of, the diversity of staff and organisationally relevant stakeholders. Diversity management can therefore take on different forms and describe different ways of handling diversity in organisations.

## DIVERSITY ORIENTATED EQUALITY

This term describes the inclusion of other diversity dimensions such as age, sexual orientation, religion etc. in the politics and strategies related to equality. The extension of the understanding of equality beyond the diversity dimension, gender, comes from differentiation in the Equal Treatment Act. *See also: Diversity dimensions.*

## INTEGRATED, SYSTEMATIC DIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

Holistic, systematic diversity management refers to variants of this management concept, which not only include specific measures or address individual sectoral areas. Diversity management can be understood as holistic and systematic, if it is viewed as a strategic, context-sensitive transformation process that encompasses all functional and service areas, as well as status groups, of an organisation. Also essential are: the commitment of the management and executives; a form of institutional anchoring; a resource allocation that meets the objectives; the development of knowledge and competencies; opportunities for participation, and transparent communication about the change process.

## GENDER DIVERSITY

Gender diversity describes the biological and identifying variations of gender. They include Cis-persons (people whose gender identity correlates with their birth gender) as well as transgender and intersexual people.

## HETERONORMATIVITY

Heteronormativity describes power relationships, which are socially anchored through the normative relation of bisexuality (female/male) and heterosexuality, and other forms of gender identity, sexual identity and sexual desires that are socially, and often also legislatively, sanctioned or disadvantaged.

## INCLUSION

Inclusion means to include or involve, and describes all interactions and processes which are targeted at allowing people with all their differences to participate in society. Inclusion does not exclusively address matters of disability.

## INTERSECTIONALITY

Intersectionality means that social and functional differences, such as gender, social heritage or disability, do not act independently of each other, but are interlinked. Therefore, they must also be analysed in their interactions. Henceforth, the discrimination mechanisms which are connected to diversity, such as sexism, racism or heterosexism, need to be analysed. Intersectionality perspectives also address the inner heterogeneity of diversity dimensions and the problems with categorisation processes. *See also: Anti-categorical handling of diversity.*



