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D8.1 –Gender Equality Plan Template

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The SAGE Consortium comprises:

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	Università degli Studi di Brescia	Italy
	Kadir Has University	Turkey
	Instituto Universitário De Lisboa	Portugal
	Sciences Po Bordeaux	France
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Deliverable 8.1

Description of Deliverable 8.1 as per SAGE Grant Agreement: Template for the creation of Gender Equality Plans

Partner institutions in the SAGE project will produce and implement Gender Equality Plans (GEPs), tailored to meet the specific conditions and cultures in participating institutions. GEPs will be employed to remove barriers to the recruitment, retention and career progression of female researchers; address gender imbalances in decision-making processes; and strengthen the gender dimension in research programmes.

Gender Equality Plan Template

The gender equality template provides participating institutions with a structured approach to the development of an institutional gender equality plan. The template guides partners through the main stages of a gender equality plan and provides a template for the creation of an action plan based on the SAGE wheel model.

The gender equality plan template is an organic document that will evolve to take account of the experience of and feedback from participating institutions.

Figure 1 SAGE Wheel Model for Gender Equality Plans



Institutional Gender Equality Plan

The development of an institutional Gender Equality Plan (GEP) requires a significant amount of reflective analysis. The GEP can be broken up into a number of stages

- Preparation
- Baseline Assessment and Analysis
- Action Planning and Target Setting
- Implementation
- Monitoring and Evaluation

Preparation

The preparation stage in the development of an institutional GEP involves securing the commitment and support of senior leadership, understanding the context in which the institution functions, and establishing an institutional self-assessment team.

Secure commitment and support of senior leadership

Explicit commitment and support from senior leadership and top management is essential for the success and sustainability of an institutional GEP as it will ensure the necessary resources are made available and will facilitate cooperation across the institution for the implementation of actions.

The letters of support from the President / Rector and senior management of the institutions participating in the SAGE project demonstrate commitment at the highest level to the development of a SAGE institutional GEP.

It is important that the support of senior leadership and top management is clearly communicated to staff and students across the institution and that every opportunity is taken to publicise the work being done on the development of the institutional SAGE GEP.

The strong commitment of senior leadership can be further demonstrated by the integration of gender equality into the institution's strategic objectives and by the inclusion of gender equality as a key performance indicator for senior managers, including academic members of staff in management positions.

Understand the context in which the institution functions

The unique context in which each participating institution functions will have an impact on the development of the institutional GEP. Therefore, time needs to be spent finding out as much as possible about the internal and external context to ensure the appropriateness of proposed actions.

The context will be influenced by a range of factors all of which may impact on the development of the GEP. Some of the factors to be considered are: domestic and European legislation; history and culture of the country and the institution; the range and influence of

stakeholders and funders; and the governance, structure, location and size of the institution. There will be additional factors pertaining to individual institutions which also need to be considered.

It is essential to have a clear and precise understanding of the governing and reporting structures within the institution. It would be informative to set this out in an organisational chart / diagram showing lines of responsibility and reporting.

Establish a SAGE institutional self-assessment team

Each SAGE partner has a core team within their institution which has responsibility for the SAGE project. However, for the development of an institutional SAGE GEP, the core team will need to be expanded to form a SAGE institutional self-assessment team (SISAT). The SISAT will be responsible for ensuring the collection and analysis of data, the identification of good practice and issues of concern; the identification of actions to address the issues; and the development of the SAGE gender equality action plan.

It is important to ensure that the SISAT comprises a broad range of staff including: representatives from each of the main areas of the institution; representation from senior levels of management; and a mixture of staff from different grades and roles, to provide perspectives from different career stages. The SISAT needs to include both men and women and members of staff with experience of balancing career and family. You should consider whether or not undergraduate and postgraduate students should be representation on the SISAT.

Members of staff with specific expertise, for example, equality and diversity, human resources and data analysis are essential elements of a SISAT.

The SISAT should collectively have the knowledge, skills, experience and expertise to: analyse the data; carry out gender impact assessments of policies, practices and procedures; and to devise appropriate actions to address identified issues.

The SISAT will need to agree: roles and responsibilities of individual team members; how the work and progress of the SISAT will be reported to senior leadership; and how it will be communicated across the institution.

Baseline Assessment and Analysis

The baseline assessment will give a thorough understanding of the current state of play in the institution with regards to gender equality and will identify any existing gender bias at institutional level.

The baseline assessment stage begins with the collection of quantitative staff and student data, an audit of policies, practices and procedures and the collection of qualitative data from staff and student consultation exercises.

The analysis of the information will: identify best practice at institutional level; identify critical gaps, challenges and opportunities; assess the level of resources allocated to gender activities; establish the baseline for possible improvements and innovations; and inform the development of the GEP.

Collection and analysis of gender-disaggregated data from secondary sources

A series of SAGE data templates have been developed for the collection and analysis of baseline gender disaggregated data from secondary sources within the participating institutions [See Deliverable 2.3]. The templates make provision for the collection of data in relation to:

- Governing Bodies and Senior Management Committees
- Student Body and National Benchmark Data
- Academic and Research Staff and National Benchmark Data
- Academic and Research Staff, Contract Type (Permanent / Open-ended, Fixed Term, Zero Hours / Hourly contracts)
- Academic and Research Staff, Contract Status (Full-time, Part-time)
- Recruitment
- Promotions
- Leavers
- Gender Pay Audit
- Uptake of Work-life Balance provision
- Maternity / Adoption Leave
- External Research Funding Application and Success Rates

The templates are designed for adaptation to best suit the needs of the individual partner institutions.

The data templates are accompanied by a series of prompts and questions for use by institutions in the analysis of the data. The prompts and questions are designed to enable the SISAT to clearly identify differences in gender representation, to explore contributory factors and to begin to develop actions to address the inequalities identified through the analysis.

Some of the data templates require the inclusion of benchmarking data. The benchmarking data allows the institution to compare its data to that of comparable institutions or to national data, as appropriate, and will provide a basis for establishing some measures of success.

While the focus of the analysis is at institutional level, it is important that analysis is also carried out below institutional level e.g. faculty, school, department, discipline, to identify any underlying inequalities or contributory factors. To take account of the different contexts, structures and challenges that exist, each participating institution will decide on the most appropriate breakdown of the data to support the development of its GEP.

Where gaps in the availability of quantitative data have been identified, actions need to be planned to address the gaps.

Audit and impact assessment of policies, practices and procedures

A SAGE best practice checklist has been developed to assist participating institutions in carrying out an audit of internal policies, practices and procedures [See Deliverable 2.2].

The best practice checklist is structured to address all four quadrants of the SAGE wheel through an audit of

- Policies relating to equality and diversity, combating bullying and harassment, maternity, adoption and work life balance
- Accessibility of policies
- Institutional commitment to gender equality
- The allocation of resources for the promotion of gender equality
- Maternity, adoption and work life balance provision
- Training for staff in relation to equality awareness, unconscious bias, combatting gender discrimination and sexism, and recruitment and selection
- Leadership training and mentoring opportunities to promote career progression
- Activities, initiatives and events designed to raise awareness and promote gender equality and career advancement
- Availability of courses on gender at undergraduate and postgraduate level
- Integration of a gender dimension in carrying out research

The audit will enable participating institutions to highlight best practice across the institution and to identify potential deficiencies in the provision of policies, training and activities to support gender equality, career development, career progression and work life balance provision.

The audit will also provide the institution with a clear indication of the availability of gender courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level and the extent to which gender considerations are integrated into research.

A gender impact assessment needs to be carried out on the policies, practices and procedures identified in the audit, which have not previously been gender proofed.

The gender impact assessment involves systematic consideration of the following:

- What is the aim of the policy?
- Who are the beneficiaries of the policy?
- What quantitative and / or qualitative data is available to assess the impact of the policy?
- Based on the analysis of the data, does the policy have a negative or disproportionate impact on women or men?
- What changes could be made to the policy to remove or lessen the impact on women or men?

- Is there an opportunity to promote gender equality through amendments to the policy?

Arrangements should be put in place to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into the development of new policies and procedures and the review of existing policies and procedures.

Each participating institution also needs to carry out a review of the content of the curricula across disciplines to assess the extent to which a gender dimension is integrated into courses. In addition to identifying areas of good practice, the review will highlight any areas where a gender dimension is limited or absent. The SISAT should consider what appropriate actions are required to address the issue e.g. the development of institutional guidelines for the integration of a gender dimension in course content.

Staff and student consultation and the analysis of the outcomes

It is important that participating institutions consult with staff and students to capture their views, perceptions and concerns on a wide range of issues pertaining to gender equality. The consultation can be conducted using a variety of methods including surveys, focus groups and interviews.

The SAGE primary collection data tool [See Deliverable 2.1] has been developed to assist participating institutions in designing and conducting staff and student consultation exercises. It comprises a set of guidelines on the conduct of surveys, focus groups and interviews and includes a sample interview protocol and gender survey.

The SISAT needs to consider the design of consultation exercises to ensure that the feedback captured on institutional processes and culture addresses the four quadrants of the SAGE wheel.

The responses from the consultation exercises will highlight good practice across the institution, identify key areas for improvement and inform the development of actions to address the areas of concern.

Action Planning and Target setting

The baseline assessment and analysis will have identified issues in relation to: the recruitment, retention and career progression of female researchers; gender imbalances in decision-making processes; and the incorporation of a gender dimension in research programmes.

It will also have highlighted examples of best practice and the SISAT should consider how best such practices can be shared and embedded across the institution.

In deciding upon the appropriate actions to be put in place to address each of the issues identified, the SISAT should consider the following:

- What evidence is available to support the proposed action(s)?
- What is the action designed to achieve?
- Who will benefit from the action?
- What barriers / challenges may be faced in implementing the action?
- Who will be responsible for the implementation of the action?
- When will the action start and when will it be completed?
- What will success look like?
- How will success be measured?
- What resources are needed?

Actions and success criteria should be aspirational but at the same time realistic. They need to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound (SMART).

The SISAT should give careful consideration as to how key indicators and measures of success are defined as they will establish the basis for the evaluation of actions at a later stage.

Key indicators could include:

- Gender ratios at undergraduate and postgraduate level
- Gender ratios at postdoctoral research level
- Gender ratios at academic grades
- Representation of men and women on key decision making committees
- Gendered experiences in the workplace (via employee surveys): harassment, discrimination, workplace culture and management styles
- Childcare provision and work life balance supports

Both quantitative and qualitative measures of success should be used as appropriate. Quantitative measures of success provide an indication of the size of any change e.g. increase in the number of women in senior management positions. Qualitative measures of success provide an indication of level of change in satisfaction, attitudes and perceptions e.g. an increase in the percentage of women expressing satisfaction with childcare arrangements.

It is not possible to address all areas of concern at the same time, therefore the SISAT will need to prioritise actions consistent with the institutional strategic objectives and available resources.

The proposed actions and success measures identified by the SISAT should be incorporated into a draft Gender Equality Action Plan (GEAP) addressing each of the four quadrants of the SAGE Wheel - Institutional Governance, Career Progression, Work Life Balance and Engendering Knowledge (See Figure 1). A SAGE GEAP template has been developed for use by participating institutions (See Figure 2).

The SISAT will need to consult with senior leadership and top management on the proposed actions and measures of success in the draft SAGE institutional GEAP to secure approval and support, and to ensure that adequate resources will be available to sustain the implementation of the GEAP.

Arrangements need to be put in place to ensure the collection of relevant data to enable the evaluation of progress at defined points during the SAGE project.

The GEAP will evolve on a continuous basis to reflect changes in the strategic objectives of the institution, changes in the structures, staff and priorities within the institution and to reflect progress, success and barriers in the implementation of the GEAP.

Figure 2 Template for SAGE Gender Equality Action Plan based on the SAGE Wheel

SAGE Objective 1 - To remove barriers to the recruitment, retention and career progression of female researchers

SAGE Quadrant	SAGE Theme ¹	Issue to be addressed / evidence ²	Planned Action ³	Timescale ⁴	Person responsible ⁵	Measures of success ⁶	Assessment of impact ⁷
Career Progression							

¹ Insert the appropriate SAGE theme from the SAGE wheel in Figure 1 e.g. Professional Development

² Include the issue identified and the evidence

³ More than one action may be required to address an identified issue

⁴ Include a start and end date

⁵ Responsibility should be clearly assigned to a named individual

⁶ Need to be clearly defined

⁷ Describes change due to actions taken

SAGE Objective 1 - To remove barriers to the recruitment, retention and career progression of female researchers

SAGE Quadrant	SAGE Theme	Issue to be addressed / evidence	Planned Action	Timescale	Person responsible	Measures of success	Assessment of impact
Work Life Balance							

SAGE Objective 2 - To address gender imbalances in decision-making processes

SAGE Quadrant	SAGE Theme	Issue to be addressed / evidence	Planned Action	Timescale	Person responsible	Measures of success	Assessment of Impact
Institutional Governance							

SAGE Objective 3 - To strengthen the gender dimension in research programmes

SAGE Quadrant	SAGE Theme	Issue to be addressed / evidence	Planned Action	Timescale	Person responsible	Measures of success	Assessment of Impact
EnGendering Knowledge							

Implementation

A formal event hosted by senior leadership to launch the institutional GEAP would provide an excellent opportunity to demonstrate commitment and ownership at the highest level. It would also offer an opportunity to raise awareness across the institution and to highlight the benefits to the institution such as, an improved working environment and increased success in the attraction and retention of academic and research staff.

At the implementation stage the SISAT should redefine the roles and responsibilities within the team, agree a schedule of regular meetings to monitor the implementation of the GEAP and to plan and prepare for the SAGE mid-term and end of project evaluations.

During the implementation stage, the SISAT should communicate regularly with senior leadership, staff and students across the institution and all stakeholders.

The institution's senior leadership and top management should receive regular updates from the SISAT on progress made and any barriers or obstacles encountered in the implementation of the institution's SAGE GEAP.

There should be a clear communications strategy to raise awareness of the institution's GEAP, maintain a high level of visibility, highlight activities which are taking place, and celebrate successes and achievements.

In addition to planned GEAP events, every opportunity should be taken at other internal and external events to showcase the institution's commitment to gender equality and to the SAGE GEAP.

Throughout the implementation stage participating institutions will have ongoing access to advice and support from the mentor institutions (TCD and QUB). Participating institutions will also benefit from sharing experiences and exchanging learning with the other SAGE partners and wider networks.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are continuous throughout the duration of the GEAP. While monitoring and evaluation are linked they are separate processes.

Monitoring is the process of checking that actions are being progressed and that the progress is on schedule. Monitoring will also identify obstacles and resistance to change and can result in modifications to the GEAP.

The SISAT is responsible for monitoring the progress of the SAGE GEAP. To maximise resources, the SISAT may find it helpful to establish four monitoring sub-groups, each with responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the actions in one of the four broad

areas of the SAGE GEAP - Institutional Governance, Career Progression, Work Life Balance and Engendering Knowledge.

The SISAT will meet on a regular basis to review update reports from members of staff with responsibility for the implementation of specific actions. This will allow for the early identification of unanticipated difficulties and provide the opportunity to take appropriate action and to make any necessary adjustments to the GEAP.

Evaluation is an assessment of the impact and effectiveness of the actions taken.

Evaluation of the SAGE GEAP will involve an assessment by the SISAT of key indicators, both quantitative and qualitative, identified at the action planning and target setting stage.

Evaluation by participating institutions will take place at the mid-point and at the end of the SAGE project. The SAGE data templates make provision for the collection of data on an annual basis and this will feed into the evaluation of the quantitative indicators.

Arrangements should be in place for the collection of information at defined intervals to support the evaluation of the qualitative indicators, for example, by surveys, focus groups and / or interviews.

Abbreviations

GEP	Gender Equality Plan
GEAP	Gender Equality Action Plan
SAGE	Systemic Action for Gender Equality
SISAT	SAGE Institutional Self-Assessment Team
SMART	Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-bound