

Equal Opportunities at IOCB Prague in Numbers – Annual report (November 2023)

Equal Opportunities Statement

The mission of the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the CAS (IOCB Prague) is the pursuit of scientific knowledge through innovative research and the education of new generations of scientists. We understand that the success and productivity of our researchers requires a stable and supportive social environment. We take into account the personal circumstances that might affect our employees and their partners and/or families and make every effort to support them in achieving a healthy work-life balance. As an institute, we are committed to providing a positive working environment for all employees regardless of their nationality, gender, ethnicity, or disability status.

1. Distribution of staff

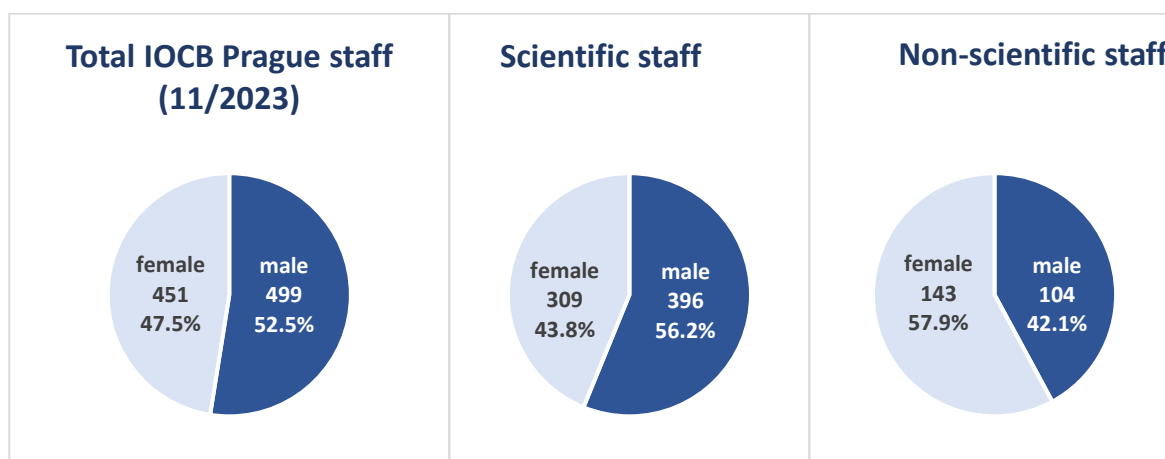
1.1 Number of employees as of 8 November 2023

As of 8 November 2023, the institute employs a total of 950 employees (a tiny decrease of 6 people compared to the July 2022 total of 956), of which 451 are women and 499 are men, and include academic staff, PhD students, and technical and administrative staff. Of this number, 232 staff members (24.4%) are foreign nationals (remaining similar over the last two years: in 2021 there were 23.8% foreigners, in 2022 there were 25.6% foreigners). Among scientific staff, 30.9% are not Czech, among technical-administrative staff, only 5.7% are foreigners). This figure mirrors similar numbers from the previous year, and is unsurprising as it is primarily researchers moving abroad to gain experience whilst among admin staff, knowledge of Czech language and the local environment is an advantage (for instance knowledge of the Czech legal landscape).

1.2 Composition of the workforce at IOCB Prague

Gender / Area	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
Scientific	309 (-26)	396 (+4)	705 (-22)	43.8% (-2.3%)
Technical and Administrative	143 (+5)	104 (+11)	247 (+16)	57.9% (-1.8%)
Total	451 (-21)	499 (+15)	950* (-6)	47.5% (-1.9%)
%	47.5% (-1.9%)	52.5% (+1.9%)		

Table 1: Composition of IOCB Prague workforce disaggregated by gender and type of work as of 8 Nov 2023 (increases/decreases since July 2022 indicated).



* Since the director and vice director for research are also group leaders, they are included in both scientific and administrative categories.

Since July 2022, the number of employees at IOCB Prague has remained almost the same. The number of scientific staff reduced marginally (by 22), whilst there was a small addition (of 16) in the number of non-scientific staff. The scientific staff includes 15 undergraduate students, possibly reflecting the fact that the data were collected in November, after the end of the academic year 2022/2023, when many undergraduate students will have completed their degrees.

Overall the proportion of women has gone down slightly (by about 2%), although the overall distribution still remains relatively balanced (47.5% of staff are female). Of the scientific staff, the lower proportion of women remains more pronounced (43.8% of scientific staff are women) compared to the technical and administrative workforce where, despite a 1.9% reduction, there remain more women than men (57.9%).

1.3 Composition of scientific staff

Qualification Level / Gender	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
Group leaders	5 (0)	37 (+1)	42 (+1)	11.9% (-0.3%)
Junior group leaders	3 (0)	6 (+1)	9 (+1)	33.3% (-4.2%)
Senior researchers	2 (0)	9 (0)	11 (0)	18.2% (0)
Junior researchers	26 (-1)	61 (+9)	87 (+8)	29.9% (-4.3%)
Postdoctoral researchers	82 (-1)	99 (-6)	181 (-7)	45.3% (+1.1%)
PhD students	105 (-6)	115 (+1)	220 (-5)	47.7% (-1.6%)
Undergraduate students (BSc, MSc, or equiv.)	34 (-13)	40 (-2)	74 (-15)	46.0% (-6.8%)
Scientific technicians/lab managers	51 (-5)	18 (-1)	69 (-6)	73.9% (-0.8%)
Emeritus researchers and Adjunct professors	1 (0)	11 (+1)	12 (+1)	8.3% (-0.8%)
Total	309 (-26)	396 (+4)	705 (-22)	43.8% (-2.3%)

Table 2: Composition of scientific employees disaggregated by gender and level of seniority as of 8 November 2023 (increases/decreases since July 2022 indicated).

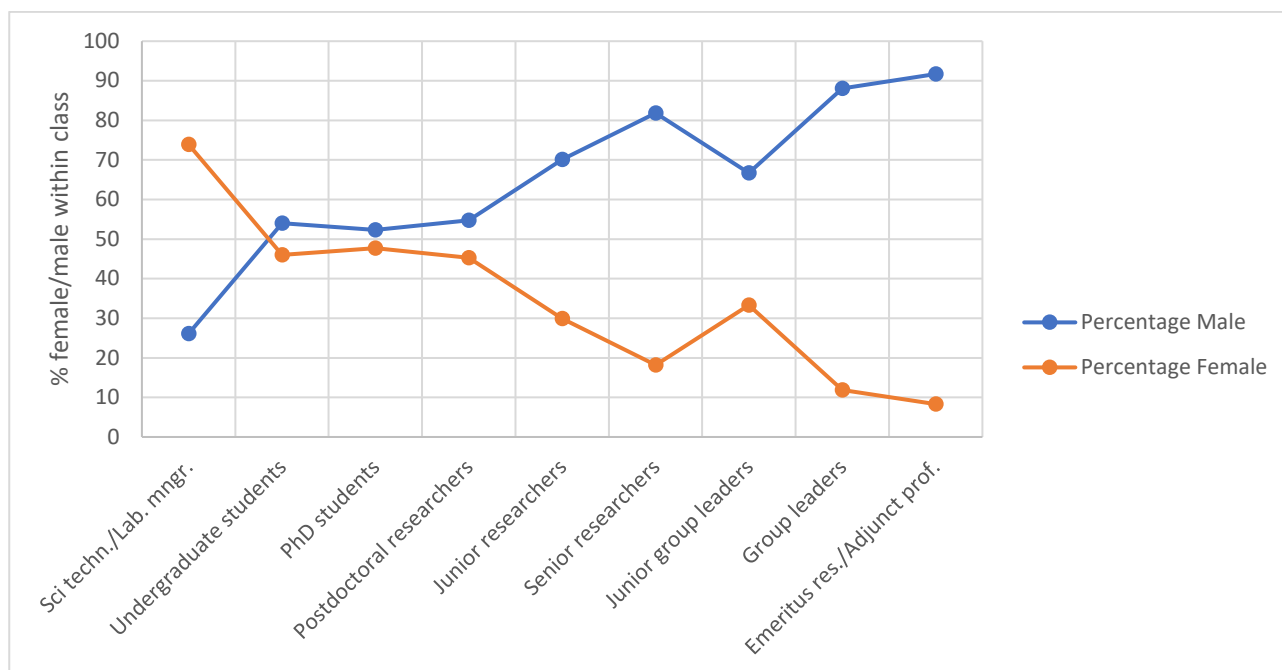


Figure 1: Graphical representation of the data indicated in Table 2, composition of scientific employees disaggregated by gender and level of seniority as of 8 November 2023.

Among scientific staff, the percentage of women decreases as the level of seniority increases, this year there is a larger proportion of men in all but the scientific technician/lab manager positions, where a large

percentage of women (73.9%) hold scientific technician or lab manager roles. Unusually, the percentage of women undergraduate students has gone down to below 50% (46.0%, down by 6.2% from last year), meaning a much larger reduction in female undergraduate students (13) than their male counterparts (only 2). This might reflect the fact that the reference point is in November, after the end of the 2022/23 academic year, such that a larger number of female undergraduate students might have completed their degrees and associated stays in the laboratory. New bachelor and master students might not have joined the laboratories this early in the 2023/24 academic year. The proportion of female PhD students (47.7%) has gone down slightly since last year, whilst the proportion of postdocs that are female (45.3%) remains slightly below half.

Among junior and senior researchers, many of whom act as deputies for group leaders and thus have a relatively high degree of autonomy within the groups, the percentage of women is 29.9% (down by 4.3%) and 18.2%, respectively. The reduction in the proportion of female junior researchers reflects the fact that overall 9 male junior researchers have joined the staff, whilst one female researcher has left this category.

Amongst group leaders (reduction in proportion of females of 0.3%) and junior group leaders (reduction in proportion of females of 4.3%), the percentage changes reflect the fact that a new group leader joined each of these categories and was male in both cases. The percentage change is much larger amongst the junior group leaders (where there are 9 in total) than amongst the senior group leaders (where there are 42 in total). Despite efforts being made to advertise the position widely amongst researchers from a wide range of backgrounds, the open call for the junior group leader position did not attract any suitably qualified female applicants. The proportion of female junior group leaders at 33.3% compares favourably to the overall proportion of female researchers in Czechia overall (27.6% in 2020) and to the proportion of female researchers in the life sciences in Czechia (24.8% in 2020). The data are taken from the [STRATIN+ project monitoring report \(2020\) on women in Czech science](#).

Like in the previous year, women make up a relatively small part (8.3%) of the emeritus and adjunct professors at the institute, with only one woman amongst the emeriti/adjunct professors. As in the past, this must be considered in the context that most emeritus professors have only a small FTE allocation reflecting their desire to stay in touch with research beyond their active career.

1.4 Composition of non-scientific staff

Qualification Level / Gender	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
Section heads	9 (-1)	9 (+3)	18 (+2)	50.0% (-12.5%)
Administrative and technical support staff (without university degree)	88 (+1)	60 (+5)	148 (+6)	59.5% (-1.8%)
Administrative and technical specialist (with university degree)	46 (+5)	35 (+3)	81 (+8)	56.8% (+0.6%)
Total	143 (+5)	104 (+11)	247 (+16)	57.9% (-1.9%)

Table 3: Composition of non-scientific staff at IOCB Prague disaggregated by gender and level of seniority as of 8 November 2023 (increases/decreases since July 2022 indicated).

Among non-scientific staff, changes to the distribution have been minor, and there remain more women than men across all categories. While this remains slightly more pronounced for administrative and technical support staff without university degrees (e.g. clerical, premises management, etc.; 59.5% female), it is also the case for university-educated specialist staff (e.g. project managers, accountants, ITS specialists, lawyers, etc.; 56.8% female). Among the heads of administrative and technical sections, we saw the biggest drop (a 12.5% decrease) in proportion of represented females, with the category now being equally split between men and women. This apparently large change is reflected by the fact that a new vice director plus a strategic advisor were hired to the new director's office and both are male. Compared to last year's

data sets, a female member of staff from the “section heads” was recategorized as “administrative and technical specialist” and a male member of staff with “vedoucí” (head) in his job title was recategorized in the opposite direction. In a category with small overall numbers (a total of 18), such small absolute changes make a large difference in the percentage change.

1.5 Other data on parent support measures

IOCB Prague provides mothers with children up to the age of 4 years with a supplement to cover child care costs. Upon its review by the IOCB management, from April 2023 this supplement has increased in value from 13,600 CZK a month to 17,000 CZK (gross) a month and has now become available also to male employees who have spent at least 6 months on parental leave with their child prior to requesting this support. The directive has clarified that the supplement is available to parents immediately after returning from maternity/parental leave as its aim is to make it easier for parents to return to work after taking time out to look after their child. Between July 2022 and November 2023, the number of parents using this support has risen from 44 to 50 and currently no fathers are making use of the supplement. This is probably due to the fact that culturally it is not very common for fathers to take parental leave in Czechia. With the positive move towards including fathers in the parental childcare supplement, IOCB is showing that it is OK for father to take parental leave and subsequently return to work.

Fathers and mothers alike can take advantage of places in a local day care center (Zkumavka) allocated to employees of IOCB Prague (children aged two years and older). Currently, as of November 2023, 6 children of IOCB parents are enrolled in the Zkumavka day care.

Fathers and mothers of children up to the age of 15 can apply for financial support to help cover the cost of a children’s camp (one in summer and one in winter per child). Subsidies were awarded for a total of camp stays as follows:

Year	Number of supported camp stays
2019	119
2020	111
2021	105
2022	150 (130 summer, 20 winter)
2023	142 (134 summer, 8 winter)

Following on from new national legislation, in autumn 2023 IOCB has issued a directive to make it possible for those caring for children up to the age of 9 or other dependent persons, and for pregnant employees to work from home where this is enabled by the nature of their work.

1.6 Promoting successes of underrepresented groups (women, early career, international researchers)

In 2023, the Women in Science group at IOCB established the [Dana Hocková lecture series](#) to commemorate Dr. Dana Hocková (1970–2021), who was an accomplished scientist and role model to others at IOCB Prague and beyond. Dana was not just a brilliant scientist but also a great role model to junior researchers, showing her colleagues that it is possible to do great science and be a good parent at the same time. The inaugural lecture in February 2023 and was delivered by Petra Břehová (talking about Dana Hocková’s scientific work) and Hana Dvořáková (talking about her as a person and scientist). In May 2023, another lecture was delivered by RNA scientist [Štěpánka Vaňáčková](#) from the Central European Institute of Technology (CEITEC, Brno), followed by an informal career path seminar to provide a personal insight and inspiration for early career researchers, both male and female, here at IOCB.

As part of the Gilead Sciences visit at IOCB, a seminar on careers in the pharmaceutical industry was held to enable early career researchers to gain an insight into this possible research career, and crucially to show the pathways of (amongst others) female researchers in industry.

A new junior research group headed by [Paulo Paioti](#) was established at IOCB, which was widely publicized amongst institute staff.

The National Contact Centre for Gender and Science organizes networking brunches for early career female scientists (PhD students and postdocs) with high-profile female researchers-cum-public figures (rector of Charles University Milena Králíčková in August 2022 and neurosurgeon Eva Brichtová in August 2023), as well as networking brunches for expat researchers in Czech science with successful foreign researchers (with chemist Mariya Shamzy in June 2023 and with philosopher Anna Tropia in November 2023). These were publicized amongst PhD students and postdoctoral researchers at IOCB.

Paulo Paioti, the newest junior group leader, was awarded the prestigious Czech Science Foundation (GAČR) JUNIOR STAR grant. Tomáš Slanina, also a junior group leader, was awarded the Neuron Prize for promising researchers. Lenka Maletínská, a female senior group leader, was awarded the title of Doctor of Sciences. All of their successes were publicized on the internal screens (electronic noticeboard) system and via IOCB's social media outlets, allowing others to take inspiration from their successes.

Several early career researchers (postdocs and PhD students) have been awarded prestigious fellowships (MSCA Postdoctoral and ERA fellowships to Qin Yang and Téo Hebra, respectively, MSCA4Ukraine fellowship to Semen Yesylevskyy, Experientia fellowship to Karolína Vaňková, the French embassy prizes for Jakub Štoček and Adam Jaroš, a Barrande short stay fellowship for Vilém Charvát, and the Josef Hlávka Award for Eva Bednářová) and their successes were publicized on the internal screens.

Prizes and awards from conferences, successful PhD defenses and newly published papers by IOCB researchers were also publicized via the internal screen system.

Regular biological, chemical, and physical section seminars are now advertised on the internal screens, meaning that they are open and accessible to all who might be interested in attending.

The IOCB press officer, Veronika Sedláčková, has established a new podcast, called CHEmic, in which she talks about their research with various IOCB scientists. Special emphasis is being put on the choice of interviewees to represent not just established researchers, but also their more junior colleagues.

In early December 2023, IOCB hosted the [Dream Chemistry Award](#) competition, co-organized by the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences, which allows early career researchers from across the world to present their completely bold and novel ideas to the jury. Local PhD students and postdocs were invited to attend and be inspired by such young talents.

1.7 Support of postdoctoral researchers

In order to encourage mobility and attract highly qualified researchers with PhDs from leading institutions to IOCB Prague, a postdoctoral fellowship exists that provides the holder with one to two years of salary funding. In April 2023, to reflect the general salary increase in salaries across the institute, the value of the fellowship increased from 55,000 CZK (gross) per month to 60,000 CZK per month, and now includes a 50,000 CZK annual travel allowance to enable attendance at workshops and conferences. Candidates are selected twice per year by a selection committee. From 2016 to 2021, a total of eleven women and twenty-seven men have received this funding, reflecting the number of applications submitted. In **2022, five fellowships were awarded to men and five to women** (out of five applied for by men and five applied for by women). In **2023, four fellowships were awarded to men and four to women** (out of five applied for by men and four applied for by women).

Postdoctoral researchers are also eligible to apply for the PPLZ support scheme provided by the Czech Academy of Sciences (one or two fellowships available to IOCB Prague per round, typically no more than three per year). From 2016 to 2021, six women and six men have received this funding. In **2022, one**

woman applied for and received this fellowship. In **2023, one man applied for and received** this fellowship.

In autumn 2023, the IOCB's postdoc initiative, after being dormant for a couple of years, restarted with a series of meetups to open up a discussion space for postdoctoral researchers, research associates and technical staff, as well as building an in-house peer support network for sharing technical and transferable skills. This initiative is organized in a bottom-up manner by the postdocs themselves, with financial support provided by IOCB management.

In November 2023, a new format of event, Scientific shorts, was coined by communications department expert Oldřich Hudeček to enable postdoctoral researchers (and others) to enlighten their colleagues and the general public about their research in 5 minutes. This event was part of the annual week of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

The IOCB also make an internal funding scheme, BridgeY, available to early career researchers, who have submitted a proposal for an independent project to a national or international grant agency and have been unable to obtain the funding as a result of competition against more senior researchers. This support is aimed to help them make their next proposal more competitive by completing preliminary results, finishing off publications, and similar activities.

1.8 Support of student (PhD and master/bachelor) researchers

In autumn 2022 and 2023, introductory "bootcamps" for first year PhD students starting at the IOCB were organized, introducing them to processes and policies at IOCB as well as, crucially, the people that are their points of call within the IOCB. In 2022 this was attended by 14 new students, of which there were 7 foreigners from 6 countries. In 2023, 36 new students attended, of which there were 8 foreigners from 4 countries.

In summer 2023, under the [Summer Student Program](#), a total of 23 master's students from 16 different EU universities, were hosted across 16 different IOCB groups.

In November 2022, the IOCB PhD representatives organized a career workshop on alternative careers for postdocs and PhD students.

The [Prague-Weizmann Summer School](#) on drug discovery was held in Rehovot, Israel in August 2023 and the IOCB provided stipends for IOCB students to attend this meeting.

A monthly PhD science club seminar is organized, enabling PhD researchers to practice presenting their research in-house in preparation for speaking at conferences nationally and internationally.

As part of the [IOCB's invited lecture series](#), attended by high profile scientist from across the world, PhD students (and postdocs, if space is available) are given the opportunity to meet the speaker informally over lunch, followed by a discussion of their own research.

Personal development courses organized within the campus or by the Czech Academy of Sciences (e.g. on language skills, scientific writing, presentations, grant writing, etc.) are advertised to the PhD students, who are encouraged to attend these.

Research visits abroad by PhD students are encouraged by supervisors and supported by the Project Office who help students find and apply for appropriate studentships/fellowships.

1.9 Support of early career group leaders

As part of IOCB's 70-year anniversary celebration in May 2023, aside from historical perspectives, prominent speaker space was given to the institute's junior group leaders (1 female and 2 male) representing the future directions of IOCB research.

A biweekly group leaders scientific discussion lunchtime meeting is held to enable research group leaders to discuss their science in an informal and friendly atmosphere. This initiative was introduced by the IOCB's junior group leaders, based on their experience of similar initiative from their previous positions abroad.

1.10 Support of IOCB employees generally

All newly produced material (directives, director's decrees, forms, emails from administrative departments, etc.) continues to be produced in both Czech and English language to make all communications accessible.

A [code of ethics](#) for researchers of the IOCB has been written and is available since January 2023, and in parallel an ethics committee has been established to deal with any transgressions of the code.

The IOCB employees are able to consult the IOCB's wellbeing consultant (Hoffit Abramson) at no cost to themselves, in addition to being able to use the IOCB subsidized services of the psychologist (Magdalena Frouzová).

A signpost was created on the institutional intraweb to concentrate links to all of the above and below mentioned initiatives in one place and make them easier to find.

The sick days have been recategorized as personal leave days. Employees are now entitled to 4 annually (instead of 3), and the restriction that these cannot be taken in the second half of December and immediately before and after annual leave has been lifted.

In March 2023 a lecture on how to make a good presentation by Jean Luc Doumont was organized by the IOCB management and open to all employees, with an afternoon workshop for group leaders also held on the same occasion.

The Project office have prepared material to help researchers understand and tackle the sex and gender dimension of research and this material is available on the intraweb.

In autumn 2023, the IOCB participated in the Institute of Sociology of the CAS administered "[Prevalence study](#) of gender/based violence in public higher education institutions and institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences".

An employee satisfaction/needs survey was carried out within the HR Excellence in Research (HR Award) agenda. Mapping of the needs of staff disadvantaged for health reason (physical or mental disabilities) is envisioned in the next reporting period.

Range of special diets (vegan, vegetarian, gluten-free, lactose-free, etc.) is well catered for in the in-house canteen.

On the occasion of the IOCB 70-year anniversary, a number of technical and administrative staff were awarded long service awards for their services to the IOCB. This was in addition to the bonus given to employees on reaching anniversaries of their employment at IOCB in a given year (10 years, 15 years, etc.).

2. Planned actions, challenges, and measures

The actions to be implemented as part of the [Equal Opportunities Plan](#), are broken down into short-, medium- and long-term goals. The progress on the short-term goals is listed below.

2.1 Short-term goals (by 31 December 2022)

Challenges	Measures	Responsibility	Progress
Equal Opportunities Plan (EOP) available publicly and to employees	- Create webpage on IOCB Prague website to introduce the Equal Opportunities Plan	- Communications office	Completed

	- Inform about equal opportunities at IOCB Prague		
Create a role of equal opportunities officer	- Clearly define responsibilities and appointment procedure - Appoint an equal opportunities officer	- IOCB Prague Board - Executive management	Completed
Gender-neutral language in job advertisements	- Ensure that advertisements are phrased to encourage applicants from all backgrounds - Update job advertisement template to include gender neutrality	- Communications office - Equal opportunities officer - Group leaders - HR department	Being monitored
Publication of the equal-opportunity agenda on the intranet and website	- Provision of information on the equal-opportunity agenda and contact persons	- Communications office - Equal opportunities officer	Completed
Visibility of female researchers	- Increase awareness of gender equality at the institute through formal (invited lectures) and informal (personal career path workshops) events	- Women in Science group - Executive management	Ongoing
Mapping the needs and requirements of employees at IOCB Prague	- Conduct a staff survey to identify needs and requirements relating to the equal-opportunity agenda - Analyze results and revise medium and long-term goals if necessary - Consult with the trade union	- Equal opportunities officer	Partly completed
Need to collect sex/gender disaggregated data on staff and students	- Update process to collect monthly report on employee numbers to include sex/gender with names - Annually collect data as categorized in tables 1–3 of this document	- HR department	Ongoing (see this report)
More women to apply for awards and IOCB Prague fellowships	- Encourage group leaders to nominate women (especially early career) for awards - Increase promotion of IOCB Prague fellowships among group leaders	- Project office - IOCB Prague Board - Group leaders	Ongoing

2.2 Medium-term goals (by 31 December 2024)

Challenges	Measures	Responsibility	Progress
Awareness of possible bias in hiring decisions	- Arrange an (online) course on unconscious bias in hiring decisions and encourage those in positions to hire staff to attend	- Equal opportunities officer - HR award coordinator	To follow
Training/mentoring available for underrepresented groups	- Leadership skills courses for female researchers - Help underrepresented groups find informal mentoring opportunities - Investigate possibilities of offering formal mentoring to (not only) female group leaders	- HR award coordinator - IOCB Prague Board	To follow
Ensuring that English and gender-neutral language is used in internal communication	- Upon revision of documents, ensure that they are available in English and that they are written in inclusive/gender-neutral language	- Executive management - Communications office	Ongoing
Transparency in internal issues relevant to equal opportunities	- Invite the equal opportunities officer to relevant meetings where appropriate - Support the open exchange of information	- Equal opportunities officer - IOCB Prague administration (IOCB Prague Board, executive management)	Ongoing
Ensuring that anti-sexual harassment and bullying policy exists	- Make this an integral part of the ethical code of IOCB Prague	- IOCB management - HR award coordinator	Partially
Raising awareness of the gender dimension in research and science	- Give examples of where these issues might be relevant (e.g. effect of medical interventions on men/women, sex cohorts of laboratory animals) in project proposals/implementation - Invite an external speaker to give a brief course on this	- Project office	Ongoing

Report compiled on 8 December 2023 (final version 2 January 2024)

Blanka Collis (Equal Opportunities Officer)

Provided for information to the IOCB Board and IOCB Director