

ACTonGender Policy Brief

Gender Budgeting to challenge gender biases in decision-making of RPOs

Confronting gender bias in decision-making has been defined by the European Research Area as one of three priorities for the advancement of gender equality in higher education, research, and innovation. Gender budgeting is a structural transformation strategy that has the potential to eliminate gender biases in decision-making of research performing organisations (RPOs). The strategy is most commonly defined as an integration of a gender perspective in all aspects and all stages of the budgetary process to promote gender equality. Gender biases and inequalities are often (re)produced by supposedly gender-neutral policies, programmes, and resources allocation (O'Hagan 2018). GenBUDGET uses gender budgeting to challenge these inequalities and ensure the promotion of gender equality in RPOs.

Introduction

The GenBUDGET CoP is formed by 21 representatives from 14 research organisations, including University of Southern Denmark (SDU), Örebro University, Vilnius University (Kaunas Faculty), University of Birmingham, University of Iceland, Glasgow Caledonian University, University Carlos III of Madrid (UC3M), Ulster University, Open University, RWTH Aachen University, University of Modena & Reggio Emilia, Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini, Western Norway Research Institute, and RCSI – Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland. To initiate gender budgeting the CoP members have taken on TIPs, “targeted implementation projects”, at their own discretion, based on local conditions and circumstances. In the TIPs, the CoP members a) assess the gender impact of financial managerial mechanism(s), b) formulate measures to enhance gender equality, and c) take action and implement gender budgeting. In the following, we show how TIPs undertaken by the CoP members, discuss policy implications and how gender budgeting may be sustained in RPOs.

Activities, analyses, implementations

The CoP members have taken on diverse TIPs. The TIPs cover a wide range of issues such as the gender pay gap, remuneration, wage bonuses and charge supplements (Carlos III University and Vilnius University); workload allocation (University of Birmingham); internal distribution of basic grants for research (Örebro University); gendered patterns in financial distributive mechanisms (University of Southern Denmark) and gendered dimensions of submissions to Athena Swan and small-scale research grants (Glasgow Caledonian University). Some TIPs are connected to other ongoing projects, such as the EU project LeTSGEPs (University of Modena & Reggio Emilia and RWTH Aachen University that act as expert partners with 6 RPOs implementing GEPs and Gender budgeting). The overall findings of the TIPs are that the decision-making practices and processes are “gendering” processes (Bacchi and Eveline 2010);

that is, they produce and maintain gendered power relations and shape academic working experience within the RPOs. Even where equality duties, policies and procedures are in place, the findings indicate that significant inequalities still persist in RPOs. The TIPs have increased the visibility and (most often) lowered the legitimacy of the inequalities (e.g., higher funding distributed to male dominated fields on the grounds of “excellence”). These are necessary conditions to enable organisational transformation (Acker 2006). The TIPs are described more in detail in the appendix.

Policy implications and recommendations

To tackle gender bias in decision-making, staff in RPOs need to act to correct gender biased policies, programmes, and resource allocations so that they promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. Based on the TIPs, the GenBUDGET CoP makes several recommendations to eliminate gender biased decision making, in relation to internal financial mechanisms, workload, wages, and other resource allocation measures affecting the work environment and academic work. The CoP proposes measures such as developing a feminist approach to workload modelling; increasing ‘organizational value’ of teaching and committee work; mainstreaming salary negotiation procedures; re-examining ‘value per student’; increasing funding opportunities; motioning for internal strategic funding to be distributed as personal funds; and developing systematic follow-up of research funds. Moreover, the CoP stresses the need for RPOs to engage in proactive intersectional analysis across Schools, departments, and research centres, that includes an exploration of the relationship between spend, activity, and outcome by gender, race, sexuality, and disability.

Sustainability

In order to sustain gender budgeting, it is vital that decision-makers in RPOs take the lead and put effort in changing policies, programmes, and resource allocation so that they promote gender equality and the empowerment of women. Changing established processes and outcomes in organisations as RPOs is a significant challenge. The TIP approach makes this more manageable by dividing the overall undertaking into smaller efforts. Nonetheless, RPOs need to apply the strategy systematically, by implementing a gender budgeting action plan or specific measures in an equality plan, with clear objectives, actions, resources, responsible and accountable actors, and completion date for achievement. This increases the potentiality of gender budgeting to become sustainable in RPOs.

PROJECT INFORMATION

<i>PROJECT NAME</i>	Communities of Practice for Accelerating Gender Equality and Institutional Change in Research and Innovation across Europe
<i>ACRONYM</i>	ACT
<i>COORDINATOR</i>	Dr. Jörg Müller, Fundació Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (FUOC), jmuller@uoc.edu
<i>CONSORTIUM</i>	Open University of Catalonia (Spain), Portia (United Kingdom), NOTUS (Spain), Joanneum Research Forschungsgesellschaft mbH (Austria), Advance HE (formerly Equality Challenge Unit) (United Kingdom), Loughborough University (United Kingdom), Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (FLACSO) (Argentina), Technical University Berlin (Germany), Karolinska Institute (Sweden), Science Foundation Ireland (Ireland), Federal Environmental Agency (Germany), Deutsches Elektronen-Synchrotron (Germany), Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS) (France), Fundació Centre de Regulació Genòmica (CRG) (Spain), Jagiellonian University (Poland), ZRC SAZU (Slovenia) and University of Iceland (Iceland)
<i>DURATION</i>	May 2018 - October 2021 (42 months)
<i>WEBSITE</i>	https://act-on-gender.eu/

Appendix: GenBUDGET TIPs and activities

Carlos III University focuses on gender pay gap and has provided data on remuneration, distinguishing among gender, wage bonuses and charge supplements. In Spain, the salaries of teaching and research staff are set at three levels: State, Regional Government and University. In all three, the impact of gender budgeting is very limited. However, at the university level, some instruments have been incorporated from this perspective and which also acknowledge and seek to compensate the time dedicated to family care by women in a context of competitive excellence (increasingly publishing, better and in the shortest time), and prevent any (further) disadvantage from a salary perspective. These measures have been applied to permanent and non-permanent staff at the University which is particularly significant for the second group as they do not have a high salary level. Despite these measures, the gender wage gap is 14%. To overcome the gap, regulations have been approved (Royal Decree Law 6/2019, March 1 and Royal Decree 902/2020, October 13) to achieve remuneration transparency, reduce the gender pay gap and eliminate salary discrimination against women.

University of Birmingham has collected data on workload allocation as a key determinant of quantity and quality of work for academic staff, with particular implications for maintaining individual research productivity and profile that career success often depends on. Drawing on quantitative data from workload assignments of 214 academics and qualitative interviews and focus groups data, they find that complex technocratic workload allocation systems produce inequitable modelling in practice. Partly this is due to the variability of the weights accorded to different academic roles and activities. A feminist approach to workload modelling is suggested, that recognises the potential to reproduce bias and is founded on recognition of structural inequalities, plural experiences, and context. A first step is to acknowledge that lack of transparency and complexity contribute to the limitations of workload models.

Örebro University has done a survey on how the internal distribution of basic grants for research are carried out from a gender equality perspective. A total of 18 different distributions of research funds were covered, with special focus on research time and recruitment but also grants for scientific publication. The survey finds that governing documents, principles, and criteria exist for the distribution of funds at faculty level and that the outcome is also analysed from a gender equality perspective for most of the grants.

An analysis of the recruitment and appointments made for the strategic investments and carried out in 2019, showed that the university's internal processes resulted in a relatively equal distribution of the basic grant (60/40 percent women/men). Because of the TIP and in order to create more gender equality new routines for preparation and decisions on funding for guest professors at the university have been established. In summary, the survey shows that gender equality aspects are considered in the internal distribution of

funds, but that the processes and follow-up need to be developed.

University of Southern Denmark (SDU) examines whether there are gendered patterns in SDU's main financial distributive mechanisms, such as the allocation of funding for research and education, distribution of administration ("housework") or teaching duties, and decisions on salaries and categories of employment. The project involves desk research, interviews with people who influence these decisions, people with knowledge of financial distribution, and employees with first-hand experience from the general areas mentioned above. The preliminary findings include an indication of disproportional gendered distribution of "housework", an opacity in the distribution of funds and conceptions of certain academic positions, gendered salary differences and difficulties attracting qualified female applicants to STEM. Challenging career progression for young female researchers is another finding, particularly in relation to their disproportionately higher workload with less recognition or because women are perceived to be 'dangerous' to include in research groups or bids if there is a possibility of parental leave. Strategic departmental gender equality initiatives may also lose steam due to the de facto influence on hiring those who bring in research funding, or to prevalent notions of scientific freedom. This means academic staff referring to the freedom of academics to choose their topics of research (a highly valued notion in Danish academia) as perhaps the most important value in the workplace. Preliminary ideas for procedural changes include an increase of the 'organizational value' (Including a consequential credit for the employee. This might be a smaller organizational expectation re. the employee's publishing or research funding record, as committee work (could be e.g., diversity and inclusion measures) would be valued as important for the organization.) placed upon teaching and committee work to match the value placed on research; striking a better balance between genders when establishing committees e.g., for recruiting; mainstreaming salary negotiation procedures for all candidates; implementing already approved tenure-track recruitment to attract (potentially) more female applicants to STEM; re-examining the 'value per student' discrepancies between the faculties, considering more smaller funds as opposed to the small number of larger funds for research, continuing SDU reimbursement; parental leave and strengthening the financial support for spouses of researchers going abroad. Proposals for internal strategic funding to be distributed as personal funds to all parties involved in research activities and not merely PIs could minimize potential power-driven dependency. Furthermore, systematic meetings/exchanges between SDU's Gender Equality Team and union representatives could heighten the systematic awareness from individual cases and facilitate exchanges on good practice initiatives and support of researchers. Additionally, the political administration in Denmark is currently focusing on gender mainstreaming the legislation for parental leave, and SDU will attempt to qualify this legislative process.

Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU) has examined the results from research support grants in 2019, and the gender dimensions of occupations, promotions, and research profiles as a core element of the institution's submissions to Athena Swan. GCU was granted a Silver Award and a Bronze for the Glasgow School for Business and Society. The imbalances in representation in research and promoted roles, and the emerging impacts of Covid are the focus of departmental

and institutional actions including a research Re-Boot Scheme to fund small research actions to support 'catch-up' activities. Aligned with the dominant disciplines at GCU and the inherent gender divisions within health and life sciences and social sciences, 67% of research positions at GCU are held by women, above the 56% figure for all academic positions which contrasts with only 29% of professors are women. Women outnumber men in the applications for the research support grants and again in the Re-Boot Scheme in 2021. Across total staff numbers, women of colour are significantly under-represented (3.6%). The need for university research strategies, promotions and career progression, research support schemes and other related policies to engage in proactive intersectional analysis data across departments, research centres, and Schools, and for that analysis to include an exploration of the relationship between spend, activity, and outcome by gender, race, and disability.

University of Iceland (UI) focuses on the outcomes of the PhD programmes by looking at the career progression of PhD holders. UI policy for the years 2016-2021 emphasises graduation of 70 PhDs each year, but in 2019 91 PhDs graduated from UI. The Icelandic labour market, whether within or outside RPOs, has not progressed in line with this changed reality and PhD holders tend to be in a precarious position. The TIP draws on a survey, conducted 1,5 years after graduation, among UI PhD graduates in the years 2010-2018 (n=510). The response rate was 56%, with responses from 286 PhD holders. We find four gender dimensions to PhD career progression. 1) Employment status is gendered. Even though most PhD holders are employed (94%), men get a job sooner than women (0.2 vs. 1.8 months) and are more likely than women to have accepted their job for 'positive' reasons. Moreover, 10% of PhD graduates from 'feminised' fields of SSH are employed in the only job they were offered. 2) Employment sectors are gendered. Most PhD holders are employed in education (47%) and health care (18%). PhD holders from the 'masculine' field of STEM work in a diverse range of fields, indicating that they have more job opportunities than other PhDs. 3) Gendered work conditions. Men are more likely to be in a position of power and have employees working under their supervision, especially those that are in STEM subjects. Moreover, while all men work in jobs that require graduate degree, 15% of women are overqualified for their jobs. 4) Gendered geographical mobility: Men are more likely than women to be working abroad and commuting between different parts of the country for work. The findings are a starting point for a policy development of the PhD programme. The researcher and UI equality officer are in the progress of presenting the findings and involving key managers in the development of potential policy changes that have the objective of facilitating gender equal outcomes of the UI PhD programme.

In **Vilnius University** descriptive analysis of academic staff earnings by gender was examined as a part of H2020 project SPEAR at the beginning of 2021. Initial descriptive analysis shows that, in general, female academic employees earn less than their male colleagues. The two exceptions – higher average earnings of women in positions of associate professor and higher women's earnings from projects – confirm the unequal status of women and men in the university: i.e. associate professors are overloaded with extra paperwork (e.g., self-assessments, etc.), extra teaching and other "housekeeping" tasks, which

although they are remunerated financially, do not lead to higher positions or continuous higher salaries. Work in projects provides extra pay, but is based on continuous risk (temporary contracts, extra-unpaid work on project applications, unplannable workloads and salary, etc.). In-depth analysis of salaries of both academic and non-academic staff is planned as one of measures in the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) (to be finalized by end of 2020 in framework of H2020 project SPEAR).

University of Modena & Reggio Emilia and **RWTH Aachen University** have been associated with the EU project LeTSGEPs - Leading Towards Sustainable Gender Equality Plans in Research Performing Organisations, which has been linking gender budgeting in institutional GEPs. Already 6 RPOs within LeTSGEPs have been trained in designing GEPs, by using this integrative approach, paving the way for gender mainstreaming applied to all the budgetary process, using gender budgeting to widen the spectrum of analysis that GEPs usually adopt. With this specific focus and its related transformative potential, LeTSGEPs aims to make the knowledge gained accessible to stakeholders from politics, practice, and science.

Fondazione Giacomo Brodolini was involved in the Genis Lab - gender in science and technology lab – which focused on defining methodologies and tools for gender audit and Gender Equality Plans. Gender Budgeting was a fundamental part of the Genis Lab approach. Three main aspects were analysed: funding allocation procedures in order to enhance transparency and gender mainstreaming; sources of external funds paying attention to any gender issues; the allocation of time and space, resources that are fundamental to carry out research activities. The last point is probably the most innovative aspect: the analysis of time management not only focuses on the distribution between genders of housework, family care and paid work but also, regarding the time dedicated to work. It looks in detail at time management procedures for the various activities required in doing research. An analysis of gender differences in the use of time devoted to research and other activities required, such as teaching is therefore made. The experience of the Genis Lab project shown that Gender budgeting is a crucial tool to promote structural changes in research institutions. Gender budgeting, in fact, specifically contrasts opaqueness in decision making process usually considered to be the principal problem faced by research institutions towards structural changes for gender equality.