



Aalto University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Plan 2022–2024

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1

**Introduction to equality,
diversity and inclusion
at Aalto University**

Equality, diversity and inclusiveness are in our core values, supporting our community's wellbeing, creativity and ability to foster world-class research, teaching and impact. As part of our strategy, Aalto University Ways of Working define our mindset to collaboration: 'Diversity is part of who we are, and we foster an empowered community that shines by working together' ([read more here](#)).

The Aalto University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Plan defines the ways in which we promote the equality, diversity and inclusion of our community: our current state, recent development and development plans for the three-year period 2022-2024. The EDI Plan feeds into annual action plans that outline concrete action steps for each year at the university level and in each of Aalto's six Schools. The development actions are reviewed as a part of the university review process.

We have built our EDI Plan in a community-driven way with faculty, staff and students participating in workshops and meetings in which priorities and development plans were gradually defined. In addition to workshops and meetings, an open online platform for all employees and students was used to gather ideas and feedback ([read more here](#)). We also conducted interviews with key stakeholders. The plan has been discussed and aligned in Aalto Management Team, Academic Affairs Committee, HR Management Team, Learning Services Management Team, Schools Equality Task Forces, and occupational safety and employee representatives before its final approval by the President of Aalto.





1.1 Objectives for equality, diversity and inclusion work

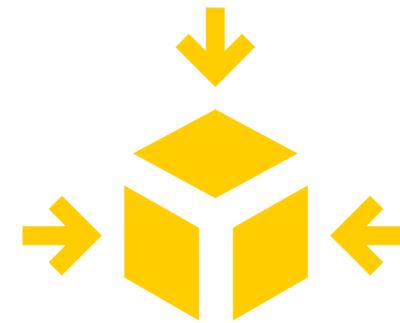
We aim to be a diverse and inclusive community where all students, faculty, staff and stakeholders feel a sense of belonging and can fulfil their professional, educational and social aspirations fully. In addition to equality, diversity and inclusion being embedded in our values, they enable creativity, wellbeing, innovation and attractivity to and retention of diverse talent. This leads to better research, education and impact – better us.

We actively work toward providing an inclusive and accessible environment in which employees and students with diverse backgrounds, and their intersections, are treated equally and are free to work and study without fear of discrimination. We recognize the overlapping nature of social categorizations such as age, origin, nationality, language, religion, belief, opinion, political activity, trade union activity, family relationships, state of health, disability, sexual orientation or other personal characteristics.

As an equal, diverse and inclusive Aalto University:

- We appear as an attractive community for diverse students and employees.
- We treat every applicant equally in recruitment and student admissions, and we evaluate work fairly with transparent criteria and evaluation methods that minimize bias.
- We support wellbeing and professional growth of all our students and employees, and we offer employees' opportunities for personal development and career advancements based on their academic and/or professional qualifications.
- We all contribute to our daily encounters with colleagues, students, faculty, staff, partners and collaborators to an inclusive culture and community where all members with diverse backgrounds feel welcome and safe, and get their voices heard.
- We are committed to identifying and removing any discrimination in our structures and practices and continuously develop an inclusive culture.

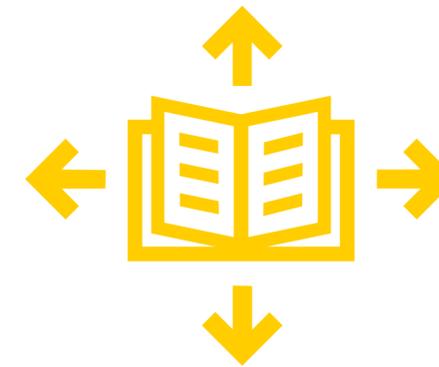
On our way toward these objectives, we focus on the following five areas during the 2022-2024 period:



1 Building EDI capabilities



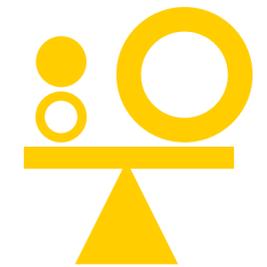
4 Strengthening a data-driven operating model



2 Fostering inclusive learning experiences



5 Promoting accessibility and barrier-free environments



3 Promoting equal people processes and practices

1.2 Operational model for equality, diversity and inclusion work

Our operating model stresses community engagement, accountability, and proactive and systematic development.

All community members have a responsibility to build equality, diversity and inclusion locally in their own environment. Our Code of Conduct ([read more here](#)) sets out the ethical principles and legal compliance policies that govern what we do and what we expect from each other in all aspects of university life.

The Provost, supported by the EDI Officer and EDI Committee, is responsible for equality, diversity and inclusion development work at the university level; and the Deans, supported by the Schools' Development Managers (or equivalent) at the school level. School-level EDI Task Forces (or equivalent bodies) make annual action plans for their school and follow-up on actions. The University-level Diversity Task Force, Learning Services (LES), and Human Resource Services (HRS) support the implementation of agreed activities. The Accessibility Coordination Group coordinates accessibility of teaching and other academic activities, campus, and services produced both physically and digitally. Equality, diversity and inclusion matters are discussed regularly with occupational safety and employee representatives and the student union, AYY.





1.3 Equality, diversity and inclusion in communication

The presentation, content, language usage and visual materials of internal and external communications of the university is accessible and promotes of equality, diversity and inclusion. Communication on equality, diversity and inclusion matters is based on transparency and proactivity. The three-year EDI Plan, yearly action plans and other EDI materials are publicly available on the Aalto University website ([read more here](#)). All employees and students have access to procedures that can be followed if one witnesses or experiences discrimination, harassment, or inappropriate treatment ([read more here](#)).

The working languages of the university are Finnish, Swedish and English. The Aalto University Language Guidelines are designed to support us in becoming a multicultural and multilingual environment where everyone is a full member of the community. The guidelines also focus on the continual development of our two national languages and emphasise the value of language quality as an increasingly important indicator of high quality in all activities and operations.

2

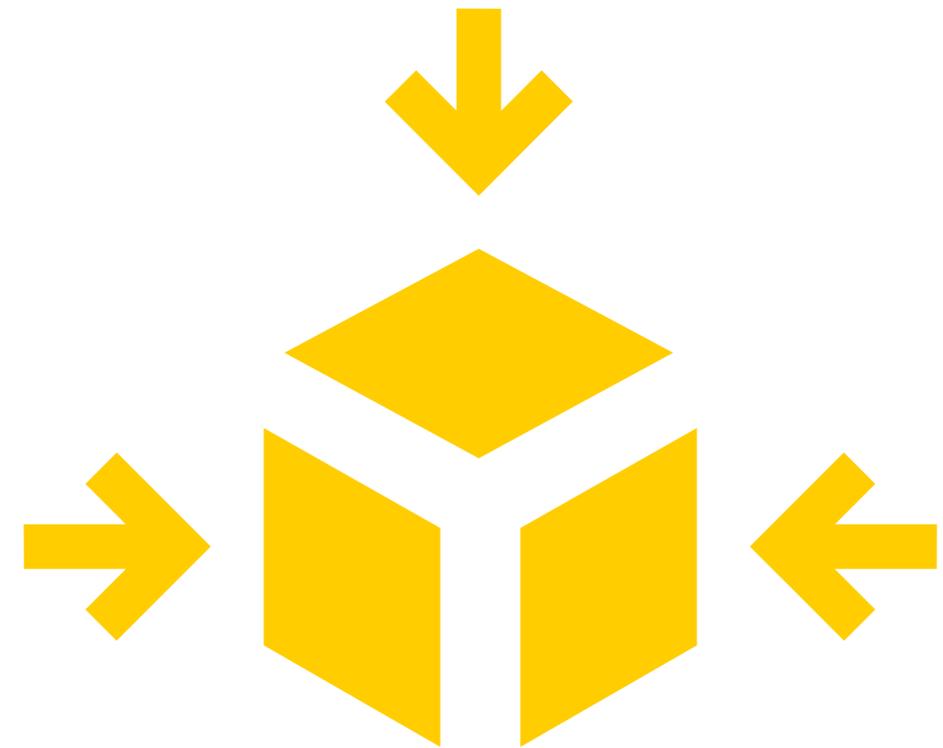
Fostering equal, diverse and inclusive community: development plan for 2022-2024

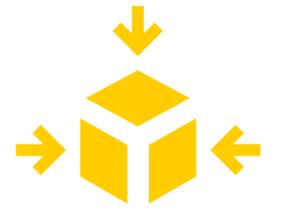
**This section presents our current state,
recent development and 2022-2024
development plans in the five focus areas
listed in Section 1.1.**

2.1 Building equality, diversity and inclusion capabilities

Current state

Based on the 2021 Employee Wellbeing Survey, the overall experience of equality, diversity and inclusion at Aalto is at a good level (average 4.17 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 the best score), but there is variation across personnel groups, gender, age and nationality. There is also some variation across Schools. Personnel with another nationality than Finnish assess their experience positively but indicate that better support is needed for spouses and families, and for understanding Finnish culture, language and working life opportunities. Personnel who do not identify as men or women have a lower experience of EDI than binary gender groups.



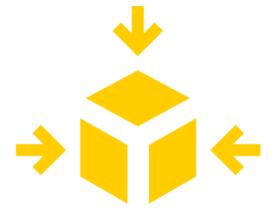


Recent development

During 2019-2021, we have taken the following actions for building EDI capabilities in the Aalto community:

- **Policy development:** Updated Aalto values and ways of working and Code of Conduct policy through a participative process.
- **Availability of information:** Established a focused EDI site and learning hub on aalto.fi
- **Communications:** Showcased EDI through an “Aalto - home of” campaign, UN International Day of the Girl activities, and other communications.
- **Awareness building and training:** Developed Code of Conduct e-learning and organized Code of Conduct workshops across the organization; organized unconscious bias training and workshops; organized the symposium “Creating Belongingness in Higher Education Communities” to raise awareness and share best practices of inclusion and wellbeing nationally.





Development plan for 2022-2024

The Aalto community continues to grow more diverse. During 2022-2024, we will take further actions to facilitate making all students and personnel feel included in the Aalto community by building EDI awareness, communications and competencies further, and by focusing on psychological safety, inclusive communications and inclusion of diverse minorities.

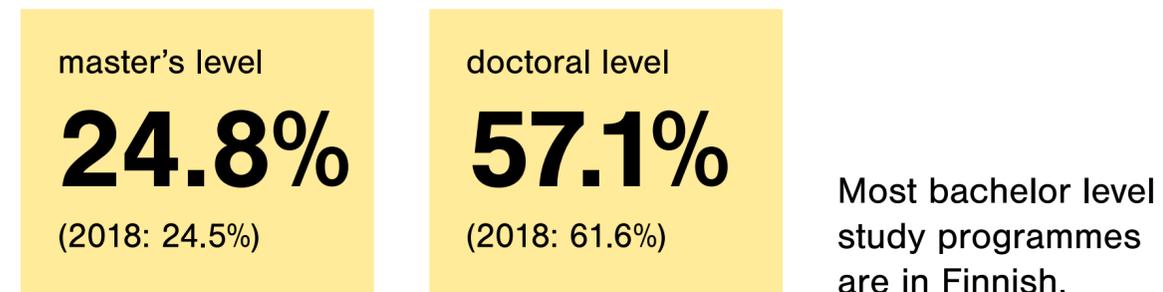
CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
<p>EDI competency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop EDI e-learning and video materials for communications and training workshops • Incorporate EDI components into faculty and service personnel training and development programmes 	EDI Officer with HR and Communications
<p>EDI awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement a strategic communication plan to increase awareness • Encourage grassroot development at departments. • Develop and pilot an annual “EDI Days” concept 	EDI Officer with Communications
SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS	
<p>Psychological safety and inclusive communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and implement principles of and tools for safe interactions and inclusive practices for events, meetings, lectures and teamwork • Provide training for safe interactions and inclusive practices for faculty and staff 	EDI officer with Learning Services, HR and AYY
<p>Inclusion of international employees and students into Aalto and Finland</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen measures that help the inclusion of international employees and students into the Aalto community and Finnish society • Address special support for learning national languages, networking, spouse and family integration through Talent Boost and HEI LIFE projects 	HR & Learning Services process owners with School teams and AYY
<p>Inclusion for diverse minorities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support peer networks of minority identity students, faculty and staff • Push for an option for gender-free identity in digital services 	EDI task force with AYY

2.2 Fostering inclusive learning experiences

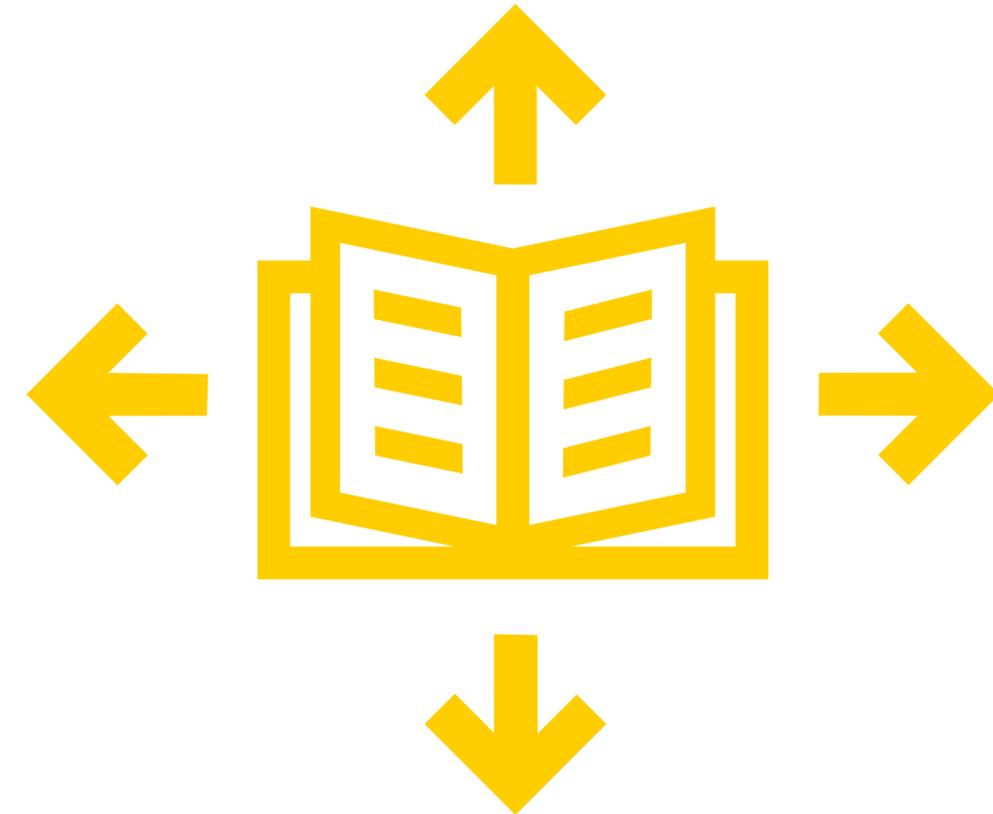
Current state

We currently follow two diversity metrics, internationality and gender (data available for men/women only), for which the 2020 status is as follows:

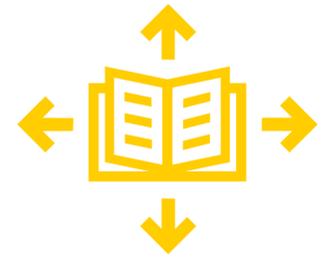
In 2020, the share of international students among new students was



In 2020, the share of women among new students was



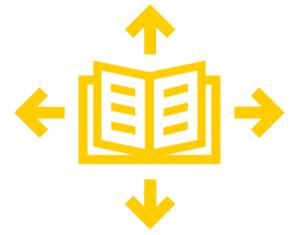
The results of the 2021 AllWell? student survey indicate that the overall wellbeing of Aalto's students has decreased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The wellbeing of international students is at an even lower level – the largest single factor contributing to this is a lack of peer support, and it remains a key development area.



Recent development

During 2019-2021, we have taken the following actions for fostering EDI aspects in teaching and learning:

- **Attracting diverse students:** Embedded EDI aspects in student marketing materials and campaigns to encourage women and men to apply to fields that have been traditionally labelled as gendered for men or women. Initiated the “Shaking Up Tech” event in 2018 for upper secondary school aged girls to attract more girls into technical fields. “Shaking Up Tech” has become a large-scale national event ([read more here](#)).
- **Student admissions and onboarding:** Monitored and developed further equality and non-discrimination measures in entrance exams and student evaluations, including anonymous grading in preliminary assignments and intake assignments in the fields of architecture and landscape architecture. Embedded EDI aspects into new tutor training and new student’s onboarding journey. Adjusted tuition fee regulations for fair and equal treatment of non-EU/EEA degree students during the COVID-19 pandemic. Further supported Aalto tuition fee liable students through, e.g., AYY student representatives in administration (Halled) positions.
- **Pedagogy:** Implemented a pedagogy course “Supporting Teachers’ Multicultural Competence”. Added a new question to student course feedback survey at Aalto BIZ: “To what extent did the teacher include all students in the class and make the atmosphere inclusive?”
- **Student wellbeing:** Dedicated “Starting Point for Wellbeing”, offering students advice and guidance on services related to wellbeing, increased student psychology services, online support and workshops. Implemented a yearly student wellbeing survey “AllWell” for all second- and fourth-year students. AllWell results are systemically analysed and discussed in all study programmes and with AYY, and corrective measures taken.
- **Preventing inappropriate behaviour:** Aalto’s and AYY’s harassment contact persons provide further support in situations of inappropriate conduct. Established dedicated ombudspersons for doctoral candidates.



Development plan for 2022-2024

During 2022-2024, we will continue to take actions toward attracting diverse students into Aalto’s educational programmes, and continue joint EDI development work with AYY and student guilds. Specific development areas focus on inclusive teaching and learning practices, and equality and consistency of supervision.

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT AREAS	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
<p>Attracting diverse students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement best practices for attracting diverse students across all study programmes, paying attention to gender, socio-economic status and nationality. 	Admission Services and School Learning Services, with Communications
<p>EDI collaboration with AYY and student guilds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop further mechanisms of dialogue and collaboration on EDI activities between Aalto, AYY, and student guilds and associations 	EDI officer, with School Development Managers
SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS	
<p>Inclusive teaching, supervising and learning practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop user-centric and equal processes and procedures through the Leap for Learning project • Integrate EDI in teachers’ onboarding and pedagogical training, teachers’ toolbox, and programme director’s handbook; Support teachers in building inclusive course content and materials • Develop and share inclusive practices in academic advising, study groups, assignments, evaluation and student feedback 	EDI Officer with Schools and process & project owners
<p>Equality and consistency of PhD supervision</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish joint standards for quantity and quality of PhD supervision, including supervision plans in doctoral students’ personal study plans; Clarify the process and the information on whom to contact and how to proceed if issues arise • Develop “Being a Thesis Advisor or Supervising Professor” web pages and organize training for supervisors 	Doctoral Education Services

2.3 Developing equal people processes and practices

Current state

We currently follow two diversity metrics, internationality and gender (data available for men/women only), for which the 2020 status is as follows:

International personnel in 2020

academic personnel

44%

2018: 37%

2010: 16%

professors

26%

2018: 24%

2010: 4%

new tenure track
recruitments

34%

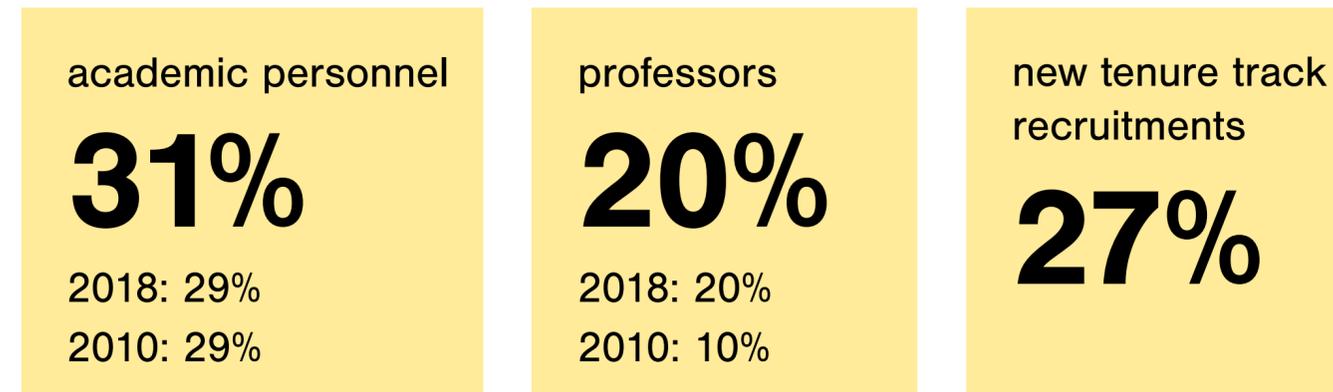
Aalto University has 106 nationalities represented in our personnel. 7.2% of service personnel were international, representing a clear development area. An increasing share of doctoral students are international (60% versus 49% in 2018). This makes us the 35th most international university in the world (THE Most international universities 2021).





Share of women in academic positions is improving but continues to be a development area. In service units, 62% of personnel were women. Share of women in academic manager positions (23%) was in line with the share of women in professorships. The share of women among heads of departments was 15%, which represents a clear development area.

Share of women in academic positions





Recent development

During 2019-2021, we have taken the following actions for promoting equal people processes and practices in the Aalto community:

- **Policy development:** Revised Tenure Track, Lecturer Track and Other Academic Careers policies to include a dedicated section on diversity and inclusion. Briefed each School's Tenure Track committees about equal evaluation practices and effects of bias.
- **Recruitment practices:** Developed an in-house headhunting service "Talent Search" for identifying and attracting underrepresented groups to apply to Aalto. Talent Search has been utilized particularly in professor recruitments in fields in which it is difficult to attract women applicants. Revised job advertisement templates and photo material banks to communicate the importance of diversity and ensure the use of inclusive language and picture material. Provided a "Gender decoder" tool to support recruiters in verifying gendered language in job advertisements.
- **Training and development:** Published a handbook and e-learning tool on EDI aspects in recruitments. The handbook is distributed to all recruiting faculty and staff, and the e-learning is provided to all new supervisors as a part of their onboarding journey. Integrated EDI aspects into Aalto's training programme for new supervisors. Initiated and implemented a national development project "Equal Career Paths for Women – NOW!" in collaboration with two other universities and five universities of applied sciences, funded by the European Social Fund. Started a mentoring programme for new assistant professors and piloted targeted mentoring for women assistant professors.



Development plan for 2022-2024

During 2022-24, we will take actions to embed equality, diversity and inclusion further in recruitment and onboarding processes, widen mentoring and support in career paths, continue to utilize job pay analyses to achieve equal pay. Specific development areas are holistic well-being and improving the share of international recruits to service positions.

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT AREAS	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
<p>EDI practices in recruitment and onboarding processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote and widen the use of Talent Search and other inclusive recruitment and onboarding practices and tools across the organization Review all HR processes from EDI perspective and undertake potential corrective measures 	HR process owners with EDI Officer
<p>Mentoring and support in career paths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement the EDI aspects of the new Tenure Track, Lecturer Track, and Other Academic careers policies in departmental committee guidelines, materials and orientation of committees Widen and systematize the recently started and piloted mentoring programmes Explore minority mentoring possibilities 	HR process owners with EDI Officer
<p>Equal pay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to utilize job pay analyses to achieve equal pay between genders, and between Finnish versus international employees 	HR process owners with employee representatives
SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS	
<p>Holistic wellbeing in diverse life situations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Broaden the Starting Point of (Student) Wellbeing – concept also toward employees Encourage equal parental leaves regardless of gender 	HR process owners with Holistic Wellbeing / OASIS project
<p>Diversity of university management & service personnel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and implement systematic measures to improve share of international recruits for service positions 	HR process owners with EDI Officer

2.4 Strengthening a data-driven operating model

Current state

The management and development of EDI work is part of Aalto University's overall quality system of continuous development (Plan, Do, Check, Act/Adjust cycle, see Figure 1), and is aligned with the university's annual planning cycle.

The EDI Committee monitors EDI statistics annually. The following statistics and surveys are utilized for monitoring (see Appendix 1):

- Equality and diversity statistics of students and personnel
- Salary survey, conducted at one-year intervals
- Personnel survey with EDI related questions, conducted at two-year intervals
- Workplace surveys, conducted at five-year intervals
- AllWell? Survey for second-year and fourth-year students
- The International Student Barometer (ISB), at approximately two-year intervals
- The Finnish Bachelor's Graduate Survey, sent to all bachelor graduates



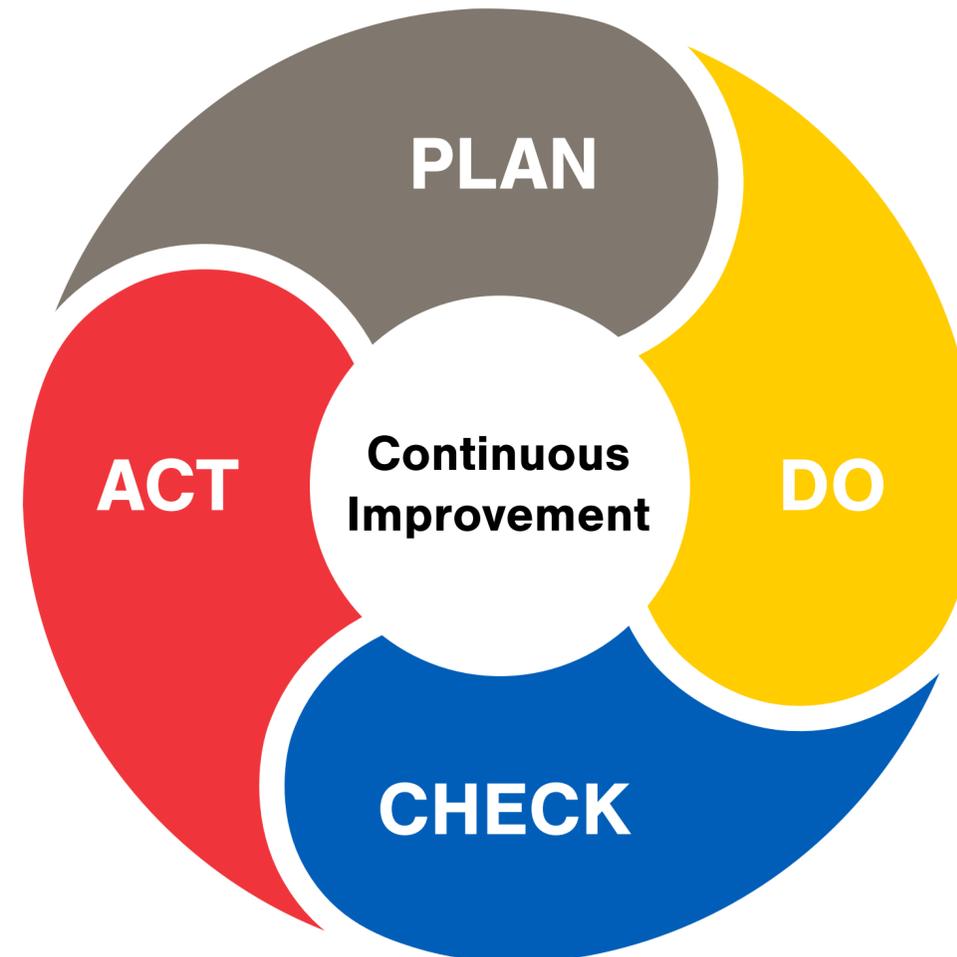


PLAN

- Planning is based on the university strategy, values, ways of working and Code of Conduct. Following related legislation and other requirements.
- EDI Plan is prepared for three-year period and aligned with strategic goals.
- The action plans of the six (6) schools and university updated annually

ACT

- Action to improve development: Adjusting goals, updating action plan and/or further specification on implementation.



DO

- Implementation of action plans: work towards improved equality, diversity and inclusion at the university level, schools and departments.
- Sharing best practices across schools & departments

CHECK

- Annual reviews of the schools, and the university review at three-year intervals
- Statistics and systematic feedback for example through people processes
- Monitoring the progress of measures, annual reporting to the university-level EDI Committee

Figure 1



Recent development

During 2019-2021, we have made several improvements in the operating model of EDI:

- **Governance:** Strengthened EDI governance by focusing leadership under the Provost, establishing a dedicated EDI Officer role, and initiating an operative EDI Task Force. The Provost was named as chair of the EDI committee to link EDI work tightly to the university leadership, and the EDI committee composition was strengthened with additional members representing international faculty.
- **Processes:** Improved processes for and information about reporting inappropriate behaviour and harassment. Harassment contact persons, who can be contacted anonymously, were named for the university with the aim of lowering the threshold of reporting on incidents.
- **Data and metrics:** Added new EDI questions into the employee wellbeing survey (conducted every two years) to get an overview on EDI issues across the organization. Employee survey results are followed up in all Schools, departments and units, and corrective action taken. Added the following measures into yearly EDI monitoring: gender balance and share of international employees in supervisory positions in different levels of the organization, gender balance of applicants in recruitment processes, and share of international applicants in recruitment processes.





Development plan for 2022-2024

By linking EDI to the university’s annual clock, we will systematically monitor Aalto’s progress toward the 2022-2024 EDI goals outlined in this document. We are aiming for tighter alignment with EDI and our annual management processes.

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT AREAS	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
<p>Monitoring progress at all levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up progress of 2022-2024 EDI goals through a systematic process aligned with the university’s annual clock • Develop and implement yearly university- and School-level action plans in line with the 2022-2024 goals and jointly agreed yearly priorities 	EDI task force, with School Development Managers
<p>Processes for reporting inappropriate conduct</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further improve processes, guidelines, communication and monitoring of reporting inappropriate behaviour; Align anonymous reporting process with implementation of EU whistleblowing directive 	HR, LEGAL and Learning Services, with EDI Officer
SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS	
<p>FINEEC audit of EDI activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FINEEC (KARVI) audit 2023 with EDI as a learning university focus area and bench-learning theme 	Audit Task Force & EDI Officer
<p>Utilizing research and benchmarking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow EDI research done at Aalto and other universities to ensure most recent knowledge is incorporated into practices • Conduct international benchmarking of EDI best practices through Boston Consulting Group diversity roundtable and Unite Horizon 2020 project 	EDI Officer, with other EDI actors
<p>Strengthening EDI data and analytics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of D&I dashboard for providing transparent, real-time access to data and analytics • Development of inclusion data with a support model for units with lower levels of perceived inclusion 	EDI Officer, with MIS, HR & Learning Services

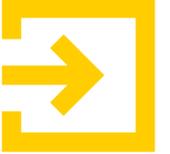
2.5 Promoting accessibility and barrier-free environments

Current state

Based on the 2021 Employee Wellbeing Survey, the overall experience of accessibility of university facilities is at a good level (average 4.04 on a scale of 1-5). Experiences, however, vary based on personnel groups, gender, age and nationality. There is also some variation across Schools. Younger, academics and personnel with another nationality than Finnish assess their experience more positively. Personnel who do not identify as men or women have a lower experience of EDI than traditional gender groups.

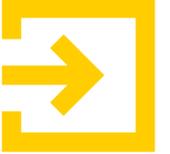
In 2021, aalto.fi was included in the Regional State Administrative Agency accessibility auditing program, which provided feedback guiding our future development work.





Recent development

- **Governance:** Formed the Accessibility Coordination Group to improve coordination across domains, with representatives from campus, IT, and learning services.
- **Accessible studies:** Launched harmonized and systematic practices for individual study arrangements, a statement template and practices for extending exam time (+1 h). Learning Services maintain a toolbox for individual study arrangements in diverse situations toolbox and organize pedagogical training “Monenlaisia oppijoita tukeva opetus”.
- **Physical accessibility:** Made an accessibility inspection in all our buildings, following the requirements of the Building Code of Finland. Included barrier-free direction for people with sensory or mobility impairments in all construction and renovation projects, including Dipoli main building and Harald Herlin Learning Centre renovations, and Väre (School of Arts, Design and Architecture), Ekonominaukio (School of Business) and A Bloc (shopping centre and metro station) buildings. Installed hearing loops widely on campus to make it easier for persons using hearing aids to find a place in the room where they hear best. Established gender-neutral bathrooms in several campus buildings. Opened recovery facilities to cater for needs of breastfeeding parent on campus.
- **Digital accessibility:** Implementation of Finnish Act on the Provision of Digital Services 306/2019 accessibility requirements started, existing services evaluated and instructions for new services included in digitalization guidelines. Accessible online communications and accessible document production is supported with a communications platform, with guides and instructions, templates, training and support for content producers. Updated Aalto University Open Science and Research Policy that promotes open access to scientific publications, research data, methods, software codes and infrastructure.



Development plan 2022-2024

Next, we need to focus on building awareness and ensuring competence of our employees. Also, we need to further develop ways to measure accessibility and planning to better utilize available information, for example, accessibility inspections for each of Aalto University's buildings, for prioritizing the development work.

CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT AREAS	PARTIES RESPONSIBLE
<p>Barrier-free campus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorporate accessibility planning and inspections to all new construction and renovation projects • Evaluate the success of barrier-free and accessible campus annually via user feedback surveys, usage of statistics and accessibility inspections, and make corrective actions if required 	ACRE & ITS
<p>Digital accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate and ensure accessibility of IT systems through development and procurement of digital services, information systems and online communications • Provide training and support for content creators • Set WAI ARIA-standard as the quality requirement for digital communications • Offer accessible materials for students through the Learning Centre 	IT Services, Communications, Learning & Research Services
<p>Accessible studies for all</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build student awareness of accessible studies, individual arrangements and wellbeing through orientation and onboarding processes • Further improve teacher communication and training 	Learning Services with HR and AYY
SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT AREAS	
<p>Digital Accessibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the accessibility of the national SISU information system of teaching and studies • Provide support for researchers and teachers for creating open-access teaching and research materials • Ensure events are made accessible regardless of whether they are physical, hybrid or virtual 	IT Services, Learning Services, Research Services and event organisers

Appendices

APPENDIX 1.

[Aalto University equality statistics 2020](#)

APPENDIX 2.

[University Language Guidelines and their implementation plan for 2019-2023](#)

APPENDIX 3.

[Accessibility Implementation Plan 2022-2024](#)

APPENDIX 4. Aalto EDI resources

- [Aalto University strategy](#)
- [Equality, diversity and inclusion at Aalto University](#)
- [Aalto University Code of Conduct](#)
- [Aalto University principles for sustainability](#)
- [Aalto University Language Guidelines](#)
- [Aalto University accessibility policy: 'Accessible Aalto'](#)
- [Accessibility and a barrier-free campus for students](#)
- [Guidelines on dealing with harassment and inappropriate conduct](#)
- [Instructions for investigating suspected cases of misconduct and disruptions of student learning](#)
- [Wellbeing services for students](#)
- [Wellbeing services of faculty and staff](#)