



GENDER EQUALITY PLAN 2024-2026

AccelBio – Collaborative Laboratory



Associação AccelBio
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Institutional Commitment

The Associação AccelBio, Collaborative Laboratory (hereinafter AccelBio), firmly expresses its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

The aim of the AccelBio Gender Equality Plan (GEP) 2024-2026 is to promote equal participation of women, men, transgender and non-binary employees, identifying and eliminating any stereotype or barrier that impedes anyone from developing their best selves in the professional life at AccelBio.

Equality is one of AccelBio's founding principles. For this reason, we will continue the course followed up to now, working towards non-discrimination, and to drive and develop the measures necessary to achieve equal opportunities among any AccelBio employees and collaborators. Both AccelBio Direction and Management Team have full responsibility for the implementation of the commitments set out in the AccelBio GEP and is counting on the active involvement of each and every AccelBio employees and collaborators in making sustaining steps towards equality at all levels.

Because of this, we would like to thank you in advance for your involvement and willingness.

AccelBio Direction

AccelBio Management Team



Bárbara Gomes

CEO



Hugo Almeida

COO

Principles of AccelBio's Gender Equality Plan

There is no way in which we can fulfil our mission and ambitious goals without having access to the greatest possible diversity of talent. This form of diversity and inclusion is the ground for our ability to innovate and grow. The unification of a wide range of perspectives and views within our collaborators leverages our capacity for innovation in research, thus creating new insights in drug discovery that will enable us to fulfill our mission - transform breakthrough science into validated and investment-worthy assets with the ultimate goal of contributing to a more equitable society.

We regard gender equality as a setting stone of the equality of treatment, embedded in a culture that is routed on the pillars of diversity and inclusion. We believe that all members of our CoLAB, including associates and collaborators, should be treated in a manner that is both neutral and nonetheless personal at all times, comprehending non discriminating behaviors and attitudes based on sex, place of birth or belief, for example. This applies to our Research & Development, dissemination and training activities, and day to day activities.

Our plan is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development goals. In particular, goals 5 (Gender Equality) and 10 (Reduced Inequalities) and will follow the principles for Equality, Equity and Diversity. Equality, equity, and diversity are interrelated concepts that promote fairness, inclusion, and respect for differences among individuals. This document is a declaration fully aligned with our principles and views. Aiming at supporting and guiding us towards achieving more Equality, Equity and Diversity.

1 Equality

- All individuals should be treated with respect and dignity on an equal basis, regardless of their background, identity, or any characteristics;
- Discrimination, prejudice, and bias should not be tolerated in any form;
- Access to opportunities, resources, and services should be made available to everyone on an equal basis;
- Policies and practices should be designed to promote equal treatment and avoid discrimination.

2 Equity

- Differences among individuals should be recognized and accommodated to ensure fairness and justice;
- Disadvantaged groups should be provided with additional support and resources to ensure equal access to opportunities;
- Barriers and systemic inequalities that prevent individuals from realizing their potential should be identified and addressed with reachable means;
- Policies and practices should be designed to promote equal outcomes, not just equal treatment.

3 Diversity

- Differences among individuals should be recognized, valued and respected;
- The unique perspectives and experiences of individuals from diverse backgrounds should be valued and taken into account in decision-making processes;
- Discrimination, harassment, and prejudice based on identity or any other characteristics should not be tolerated;
- Policies and practices should be designed to promote diversity, equity, and inclusion.

Areas of action

This Plan focus on five development areas, meant to cover strategic action axes, namely:

- 1- gender equality in recruitment, retention and career progression;
- 2- prevention of gender-based and sexual and moral harassment;
- 3- integration of the gender dimension into research content;
- 4- work-life balance; and
- 5- organizational communication and culture.

In general lines, the actions to implement within this plan will range from selection, hiring and promotion processes rooted in the principles of equal treatment and opportunities, to managing human resources in a way that integrates work, personal and family life balance, and encompassing the importance of training and professional development.

1 Gender equality in recruitment, retention and career progression

Goals

- Ensure equal opportunities through equal treatment of all employees with regard to work and career, while promoting the respective under-represented gender;
- Ensure that the percentage of women working at AccelBio is never below 40% of total work force.

Actions

- The job advertisements will be gender-neutral and contain an indication that the work environment is international and gender-sensitive, that the professional career is taken into account on the principles of non-discrimination and equality, and that supportive measures for work-life balance exist;
- All efforts will be made to ensure the gender-balanced recruitment jury, aiming at 40% (minimum) target of the under-represented sex;
- Maternity or paternity leave will be taken in consideration at the time of the staff evaluation;
- AccelBio will facilitate mentoring schemes for young female researchers aligned with their career objectives;

- The AccelBio management team will make effort to nominate AccelBio's women scientists for prizes and recognitions on outstanding women scientists.

Indicators

- Overall gender profile of AccelBio community, including number of job applicants and shortlisted candidates;
- Assessment of the gender pay gap and career progression gap;
- Gender balance of the recruitment jury;
- Perception of the community about the transparency and gender equality in the recruitment and career progression assessed using an annual survey.

Metrics

	2024	2026
Gender profile of AccelBio community	64% female (7 out of 11)	Percentage of female workers never below 40%
Gender profile of the recruitment jury	The representation of women ranges from 33% to 67%, depending on the position in evaluation	Achieve a balanced gender profile within the recruitment jury, aiming for a 50% representation of both men and women.

2 Prevention of gender-based and sexual and moral harassment

Goals

- Shield the workers and organization from any type of harassment, focusing on prevention and deterrence of sexual, gender-based or any other form of harassment;
- Promote and implement policies for the inclusion and protection of minorities, preventing any form of discrimination, and combating harassment and violence at all levels (moral, sexual, sexist).

Actions

- Creation of a Code of Conduct. This document aims to inform and advise the employees on the procedures in place to support them on matters regarding

equality, non-discrimination and prohibition of harassment. As such, this wide dissemination must be ensured, i.e. at the enrolment of new employees;

- Increase awareness among AccelBio community members about harassment in the workplace, providing training on a specific periodicity or whenever it needs to be reinforced;

Indicators

- Code of Conduct;
- Number of reported incidents;
- Number of implemented resolutions following incidents;
- Perception of the AccelBio community about the transparency of the implemented policies and trust in the procedures, as assessed in the anonymous annual survey.

Metrics

	2024	2026
Number of reported incidents	0*	0
Number of implemented resolutions following incidents	0*	Equal to the number of reported incidents

* may be due to the fact that the code of conduct is still not in place

3 Integration of the gender dimension into research content

Goals

- Raise awareness on the importance of the sex and gender dimension in research, and train researchers on how to include it, as to improve the scientific quality and societal relevance of the produced knowledge.

Actions

- Work together with our associates to implement teaching modules on gendered aspects of research, while easing the access to AccelBio researchers;
- Identify in-house experts among all AccelBio associates and collaborators who will have an advisory role for researchers on how to consider gender and sex in research content (e.g. experts in animal models and clinical studies design);

- Seek for opportunities to influence the national funding agencies on the importance of including the sex/gender analysis in the research project evaluation.

Indicators

- Number of researchers attending training on gender dimension into research content.

Metrics

	2024	2026
Number of researchers attending training on gender dimension into research content	0	12

4 Work-life balance - articulation of professional life with personal and family life

Goals

- Create the correct work-life balance, design individual solutions bringing accountability to each member of AccelBio and stimulate its implementation;

Actions

- Permit flexible working time arrangements and remote working, whenever the functions allow, guaranteeing an adequate staff evaluation taking this in consideration;
- AccelBio will make efforts to ensure that the laboratories/entities where collaborators from female gender work have dedicated lactation room that fulfils the privacy, comfort and hygiene standards;
- Creation of an onboarding plan after parental leave to promote and assure a smooth return back to work. This plan will include the scheduling of orientation meetings to update on science, internal policies and procedures and training, that may occurred during the absence period;

- After parental leave, AccelBio will promote discussions with the collaborator to identify new career goals and objectives in face of a new personal reality. When possible, offer career development opportunities to help employees to advance and adapt their careers with the new additional family responsibilities;
- In principle, no meetings/events should be organized outside of 10:00-17:00 (Portuguese time);
- AccelBio will make efforts to offer dual career options, when needed, and will rely on local networks and its associates to identify suitable jobs for the partners of the new hires.
- When possible, and depending on financial status, offer paid sick leave for employees to take care of their sick children (under the 30 days defined by law).
- Establish communication channels to ensure that the staff is aware of the available work-life balance measures. An information sheet/brochure about childcare facilities, social benefits and dual career opportunities should be made available upon enrolment at AccelBio.

Indicators

- Number of people opting for flexible working regime or remote works and their gender structure;
- Perception of the AccelBio community about the AccelBio efforts in creating a better work-life balance assessed using the annual survey.

Metrics

	2024	2026
Number of people opting for flexible working regime	11 (64% female)	12

5 Organizational communication and culture

Goals

- Maintain sustained progress in keeping gender equality as a prime focus in the organizational culture institutional culture regarding gender equality (along focus on integrity and ethical behavior, which are the grounds to achieve the GEP);

- Build and maintain awareness on CoLab professionals and employees to the importance of the different gender perspectives, at the individual and organizational level.

Actions

- Promote the use of gender-neutral and inclusive language in the institutional communication material;
- Design engaging awareness campaigns about the role of women in science using AccelBio social media, on occasions such as the International Day of Women and Girls in Science (February 11) and the International Women's Day (March 8), among others;
- Active dissemination of external events/initiatives on gender equality via internal communication material (Teams group);
- Establish a feedback culture as to reflect on the internal processes and the work experience, and provide the basis for a continuous improvement. AccelBio will offer an exit interview form to employees leaving the CoLAB;
- Create a tab on our website dedicated to equality, equity and diversity;
- Integrate equality, equity and diversity in training plans;
- Establish an external committee on culture and gender equality, with the purpose of consulting on the status of implementing this plan;

Indicators

- Dedicated tab in AccelBio's webpage;
- Number of visits
- Number of specific training actions and number of trainees;
- Former AccelBio employees' gender analysis and assessment of exit interviews.

Metrics

	2024	2026
Number of visits to the dedicated tab in AccelBio's webpage	0	500
Number of specific training actions and number of trainees	0	1 training action/year 25 participants/training action