

GENDER EQUALITY PLAN

K2 Solutions Foundation

Plan period	25 July 2025 – 24 July 2028
Date of adoption	25 July 2025
Approved by	Management Board of K2 Solutions Foundation

K2 Solutions Foundation is committed to equal opportunities, equal treatment and a working and research environment that is respectful, inclusive and free from discrimination. This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) is the Foundation's formal framework for embedding gender equality in governance, recruitment, employment, research and innovation, project delivery, communication and organisational culture.

1. Purpose and scope

This Plan applies to the Management Board, employees, researchers, project staff, trainees, volunteers, consultants, experts, contractors and other persons acting for or representing K2 Solutions Foundation, in a manner appropriate to their role and legal relationship with the Foundation. It also guides the Foundation's cooperation with project partners, participants, suppliers and stakeholders where relevant.

The Foundation does not tolerate discrimination, unequal treatment, sexual harassment, gender-based violence, bullying, victimisation or retaliation. Equal treatment is promoted regardless of sex, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, age, disability, ethnic or racial origin, nationality, religion or belief, family status, caregiving responsibilities, socioeconomic background or any other characteristic protected by applicable law.

The Management Board adopts the Plan and publishes it on the Foundation's public website.

2. Governance, responsibility and resources

Management Board

The Management Board is responsible for implementing this Plan. It shall approve this Plan and any subsequent revisions, ensure gender equality is considered in organisational and project decisions, review monitoring information, and approve corrective actions where necessary.

Resources

K2 Solutions Foundation commits appropriate human, organisational, and financial resources to implement this Plan. This includes providing access to relevant guidance and training, and considering gender-equality measures in the Foundation's annual planning and in project budgets where such costs are eligible and relevant.



3. Objectives and actions

3.1 Work-life balance and organisational culture

The Foundation will support a respectful organisational culture and, where compatible with operational, contractual, and project requirements, will consider flexible working arrangements, remote or hybrid work, reasonable accommodation, and meeting schedules that take account of caregiving responsibilities, accessibility, and time zones.

- Use respectful, inclusive and non-stereotypical language and images in internal and external communication.
- Review recruitment materials, calls for experts, event invitations and public information for discriminatory or stereotypical wording.
- Promote an environment in which concerns can be raised without fear of retaliation.
- Schedule meetings, training and events in a manner that supports inclusive participation where practicable.

3.2 Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

The Foundation will promote balanced participation in its Management Board, project leadership, selection processes, expert roles, public speaking and stakeholder activities. Appointments and selections will remain based on transparent criteria, relevant skills, experience, responsibilities and merit.

- When a choice exists, seek balanced representation of women and men in decision-making, advisory and representative roles.
- Where representation is substantially imbalanced, examine outreach methods and avoidable barriers affecting the candidate pool.
- Avoid allocating administrative, organisational, or representational tasks based on gender stereotypes.

3.3 Recruitment, employment and career development

Recruitment, selection, remuneration and access to professional development shall be fair, transparent and non-discriminatory. Vacancy notices and calls for experts will focus on objectively relevant competences and use inclusive language. The Foundation will not request information on pregnancy, family plans, marital status or caregiving arrangements unless legally required and directly relevant.

- Use transparent, role-related criteria in recruitment and selection.
- Where feasible, involve more than one person in selection decisions and seek balanced selection panels.
- Provide fair access to training, mentoring, project responsibilities, professional visibility and leadership opportunities.
- Consider career breaks, part-time work, parental leave and caregiving responsibilities fairly when assessing professional trajectories, where permitted by applicable procedures.
- Apply the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, in accordance with law and available resources.

3.4 Gender dimension in research and innovation

For every research and innovation proposal and project, K2 Solutions Foundation will consider whether sex, gender and diversity dimensions are relevant to research questions, user needs, methodology, data, pilots,

stakeholder engagement, dissemination and expected impacts. This is particularly relevant to work in transport, ports, maritime affairs, logistics, environmental protection, digital technologies, education and regional development, where different groups may face different needs, barriers, benefits or risks.

- Assess and document the relevance of sex and gender analysis during proposal development and project planning.
- Where relevant, incorporate gender-sensitive methods, data collection, analysis and stakeholder-engagement approaches.
- Seek inclusive participation in workshops, consultations, training and co-creation activities.
- Where gender is not relevant to a particular activity, record a brief justification in project documentation.

3.5 Prevention of harassment and gender-based violence

K2 Solutions Foundation has a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, gender-based violence, discriminatory harassment, intimidation, bullying and retaliation. This applies in the workplace, online, during travel, at events and in all Foundation-related activities.

- Any person may report a concern to the GEP Coordinator, a Management Board member or another designated contact point.
- Reports will be treated as promptly, fairly, confidentially and impartially as possible, subject to applicable law and the rights of all persons involved.
- No person shall be disadvantaged for raising a concern in good faith, requesting support or participating in a review.
- Where appropriate, the Foundation will use external legal, safeguarding, mediation, psychological support or other professional services.

4. Review and approval

This Plan is effective from 25 July 2025 and remains in force until 24 July 2028, unless the Management Board revises it earlier. The Management Board will review implementation at least every two years and will update the Plan where monitoring results, organisational changes, legal developments, project requirements or stakeholder feedback make this necessary.

Adopted by the Management Board of K2 Solutions on 25 July 2025, by Resolution No. 5/2025.


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