



Opsis Research

## **Opsis-Research SRL - Gender Equality Plan**

## Table of Contents

1.	Executive Summary .....	3
2.	Introduction & Organisational Commitment .....	3
1.1	Purpose of the Gender Equality Plan.....	3
1.2	Alignment with Horizon Europe Requirements .....	4
1.3	Commitment from Senior Management .....	4
1.4	Strategic Relevance for OPSIS Research .....	5
1.5	Scope of the Plan .....	5
1.6	A Living and Adaptive Framework .....	5
3.	Regulatory Framework & Methodological Approach.....	6
3.1	Compliance with ERA Guidelines.....	6
3.2	Adoption of the GEAR Tool (EIGE) Framework .....	7
3.3	Integration of SAGE (Systemic Action for Gender Equality) Methodology.....	7
3.4	Internal Adaptation to Organisational Context .....	8
3.5	Integration with Organisational Processes and R&D Activities .....	9
3.6	Continuous Improvement and Organisational Learning.....	9
3.7	Summary of Methodological Approach.....	9
4.	Organisational Context & Workforce Overview .....	10
4.1	Organisational Structure and R&D Environment.....	10
4.2	Nature of Research Activities and Project-Based Work.....	11
4.3	Approach to Human Capital Development.....	12
5.	Gender Equality Areas of Intervention.....	13
5.1	Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture .....	13
5.2	Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making .....	14
5.3	Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression .....	15
5.4	Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Innovation Content.....	15
5.5	Measures Against Gender-Based Violence and Harassment.....	16
6.	Implementation Framework.....	17
6.1	Governance Structure and Responsibilities.....	17
6.2	Integration into Organisational Processes .....	18
6.3	Resource Allocation and Sustainability.....	18
7.	Monitoring, Evaluation & Continuous Improvement .....	19
7.1	Data Collection and Internal Monitoring Mechanisms.....	19

7.2	Periodic Review and Adaptation of Measures.....	20
7.3	Continuous Improvement Approach .....	21
8.	Capacity Building & Awareness .....	21
8.1	Training and Skills Development.....	21
8.2	Awareness and Internal Communication .....	22
9.	External Communication & Transparency .....	23
9.1	Public Availability of the GEP.....	23
9.2	Dissemination and Stakeholder Engagement.....	24
10.	Conclusion & Future Outlook.....	24
11.	Alignment with International and National Gender Equality Frameworks.....	25
11.1	Alignment with the UN Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) .....	25
11.2	Alignment with National Gender Equality Strategies .....	26
11.3	A Multi-Level and Integrated Approach.....	26
12.	References.....	28

## 1. Executive Summary

OP SIS Research has developed this Gender Equality Plan (GEP) as a structured and proportionate framework to promote gender equality across its organisational, research, and innovation activities.

As a research-driven SME active in European and international projects, OPSIS Research recognises gender equality as a key enabler of research excellence, innovation quality, and responsible organisational development. The GEP is designed not only to ensure compliance with Horizon Europe requirements but also to support the integration of inclusive practices into everyday operations and project-based work.

The plan is aligned with the policy framework of the European Research Area (ERA) and follows a methodological approach based on the **GEAR (Gender Equality in Academia and Research) tool** and the **SAGE (Systemic Action for Gender Equality) framework**. These methodologies have been adapted to the scale and operational model of the organisation, ensuring a balance between structure and flexibility.

OP SIS Research adopts a **process-oriented approach**, focusing on:

- The integration of gender equality into organisational processes and research activities
- The systematic monitoring of practices through internal mechanisms
- Continuous improvement through feedback, review, and adaptation

Rather than relying on rigid numerical targets, the organisation applies structured methods for data collection, internal assessment, and decision-making, ensuring that gender equality is addressed in a practical and sustainable manner.

The GEP is embedded within existing workflows, including project management, human resource practices, and collaboration processes, and is actively considered in the preparation and implementation of EU-funded projects.

Through this approach, OPSIS Research ensures that gender equality is integrated as a core organisational principle, contributing to inclusive, high-quality, and socially responsible research and innovation outcomes.

## 2. Introduction & Organisational Commitment

### 1.1 Purpose of the Gender Equality Plan

The Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of OPSIS Research establishes a structured and systematic framework to promote gender equality across all organisational activities, with particular emphasis on research, innovation, and project implementation. As a research-driven SME operating in the fields of Artificial Intelligence, Data Analytics, Energy, Health, and Smart Cities, OPSIS Research recognises that gender equality is not only a matter of compliance but also a key driver of innovation, research quality, and organisational performance.

The purpose of this GEP is to:

- Ensure equal opportunities in recruitment, career progression, and access to resources
- Promote an inclusive and respectful working environment
- Integrate the gender dimension into research and innovation content
- Align internal practices with European standards and expectations
- Support participation in European research programmes, including Horizon Europe

The plan is designed as a **living framework**, continuously evolving through monitoring, feedback, and organisational learning.

## 1.2 Alignment with Horizon Europe Requirements

OPSIS Research has developed this Gender Equality Plan in full alignment with the **Horizon Europe eligibility requirements** and the broader policy framework of the **European Research Area (ERA)**.

The GEP addresses all mandatory process-related requirements:

- **Public document**  
The GEP is formally adopted and made publicly available through the organisation's communication channels.
- **Dedicated resources**  
OPSIS Research commits to allocating appropriate human and organisational resources to support the implementation and continuous improvement of the plan.
- **Data collection and monitoring**  
The organisation applies structured internal processes to collect, review, and assess gender-related data across key areas (e.g. recruitment, participation in projects, career development), ensuring evidence-based decision-making.
- **Training and capacity building**  
Regular awareness and training activities are implemented to foster an inclusive culture and to address unconscious bias, gender-sensitive research design, and ethical considerations.

In addition, the GEP incorporates the **five recommended thematic areas** defined by Horizon Europe:

- Work-life balance and organisational culture
- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation
- Measures against gender-based violence and harassment

This ensures that OPSIS Research is not only compliant but also aligned with best practices in European research and innovation ecosystems.

## 1.3 Commitment from Senior Management

The successful implementation of this Gender Equality Plan is strongly supported by the senior management of OPSIS Research.

The company's leadership recognises that:

- Gender equality contributes directly to **research excellence and innovation outcomes**
- Diverse teams enhance **problem-solving, creativity, and decision-making quality**
- Inclusive organisational cultures improve **employee engagement, retention, and performance**

Senior management is therefore committed to:

- Embedding gender equality principles into **strategic and operational decision-making**

- Ensuring fair and transparent processes across all organisational functions
- Supporting equal participation in **research projects, proposal development, and dissemination activities**
- Promoting a culture of respect, inclusivity, and zero tolerance for discrimination or harassment

This commitment is reflected in:

- The integration of GEP principles into **internal policies and procedures**
- The assignment of responsibilities for GEP implementation and oversight
- The encouragement of open dialogue and continuous feedback within the organisation

#### 1.4 Strategic Relevance for OPSIS Research

For OPSIS Research, gender equality is closely linked to its core identity as a **research and innovation organisation with international collaborations**.

Given the company's active involvement in EU-funded projects and multidisciplinary research environments, the GEP supports:

- Effective participation in **international consortia and research networks**
- Alignment with **ethical, societal, and regulatory expectations** in EU projects
- The development of **responsible and inclusive technological solutions**

In particular, OPSIS Research acknowledges the importance of:

- Addressing potential biases in **AI and data-driven systems**
- Ensuring inclusivity in **health, energy, and smart city applications**
- Promoting equal visibility and contribution in **research outputs and dissemination activities**

#### 1.5 Scope of the Plan

This Gender Equality Plan applies to:

- All employees and collaborators of OPSIS Research
- All organisational activities, including:
  - Research and development
  - EU-funded and national projects
  - Internal operations and management processes
  - External collaborations and partnerships

The plan is implemented across all company locations and operational contexts, ensuring consistency and coherence in approach.

#### 1.6 A Living and Adaptive Framework

OPIS Research approaches gender equality as an **ongoing, iterative process** rather than a static compliance requirement.

The GEP is therefore designed to:

- Adapt to organisational growth and evolving needs
- Incorporate feedback from employees and stakeholders
- Reflect emerging best practices from the European research community
- Continuously improve through structured monitoring and internal evaluation

Key principles guiding this approach include:

- **Pragmatism** – focusing on applicable and effective measures
- **Flexibility** – adapting actions to the scale and nature of the organisation
- **Sustainability** – ensuring long-term integration into organisational practices
- **Accountability** – maintaining clear ownership and oversight

This Gender Equality Plan has been formally approved by the management of OPSIS Research and is publicly available on the organisation's official communication channels (e.g. website).

The GEP is aligned with the principles of Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI), ensuring that gender equality is integrated into ethical and socially responsible research practices.

### 3. Regulatory Framework & Methodological Approach

#### 3.1 Compliance with ERA Guidelines

OPSIS Research has developed its Gender Equality Plan in alignment with the strategic objectives and policy framework of the **European Research Area (ERA)**, which promotes gender equality as a fundamental pillar of excellence in research and innovation.

The organisation recognises that gender equality is not limited to workforce composition but extends to:

- The **quality and relevance of research outcomes**
- The **design and implementation of innovation activities**
- The **ethical dimension of data-driven and AI-based systems**

In this context, the GEP reflects ERA priorities by:

- Promoting inclusive and diverse research environments
- Supporting equal participation in research and innovation processes
- Embedding gender considerations into organisational governance and project execution
- Ensuring alignment with Horizon Europe expectations regarding responsible research and innovation (RRI)

OPSIS Research adopts a **systemic and structured approach**, ensuring that gender equality is integrated across all organisational layers rather than addressed through isolated actions.

This Gender Equality Plan has been formally approved by the management of OPSIS Research and is publicly available on the organisation's official communication channels (e.g. website).

The GEP is actively considered during the preparation and implementation of EU-funded projects, including proposal design, consortium participation, and dissemination activities.

### 3.2 Adoption of the GEAR Tool (EIGE) Framework

For the design and structuring of this Gender Equality Plan, OPSIS Research has adopted the principles and methodology of the **GEAR (Gender Equality in Academia and Research) Tool**, developed by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE).

The GEAR framework provides a comprehensive and iterative process for implementing Gender Equality Plans, structured around key phases:

- **Assessment** – Understanding the current organisational context
- **Design** – Defining objectives and areas of intervention
- **Implementation** – Applying targeted measures
- **Monitoring** – Tracking progress through internal mechanisms
- **Evaluation & Adjustment** – Refining actions based on outcomes

The GEAR cycle is applied in a proportionate and iterative manner, adapted to the scale and operational model of the organisation.

OPSIS Research has adapted this methodology to its organisational scale and structure, ensuring:

- A **proportionate and efficient approach** suitable for an SME environment
- Integration with existing organisational processes (e.g. project management, HR practices, R&D workflows)
- Avoidance of unnecessary administrative complexity while maintaining compliance

Key elements of the GEAR-based approach within OPSIS Research include:

- Systematic consideration of gender equality across all core functions
- Structured yet flexible implementation aligned with organisational growth
- Continuous feedback loops enabling iterative improvement

Responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of the GEP is assigned to a designated internal role, supported by senior management.

### 3.3 Integration of SAGE (Systemic Action for Gender Equality) Methodology

In addition to the GEAR framework, OPSIS Research has incorporated principles from the **SAGE (Systemic Action for Gender Equality)** methodology to strengthen the institutional and long-term impact of its GEP.

The SAGE approach emphasises:

- **Institutional transformation** rather than isolated interventions
- Integration of gender equality into **organisational culture and governance**
- Continuous learning and adaptation
- Engagement of all organisational levels

OPSIS Research reflects SAGE principles through:

- Embedding gender equality considerations into **decision-making processes**
- Promoting shared responsibility across management and staff

- Encouraging a culture of openness, inclusivity, and awareness
- Ensuring that gender equality is linked to **research quality and innovation outcomes**, not treated as a standalone compliance exercise

This systemic perspective allows the organisation to:

- Strengthen internal coherence across policies and practices
- Ensure sustainability of actions beyond individual projects
- Align gender equality with long-term strategic objectives

These processes are embedded into existing organisational workflows, including project management, HR-related practices, and internal reporting mechanisms.

### 3.4 Internal Adaptation to Organisational Context

While grounded in established European methodologies, the OPSIS Research GEP has been **carefully adapted to the specific characteristics of the organisation**, including:

- Its size and structure as a **research-oriented SME**
- Its strong involvement in **EU-funded collaborative projects**
- Its focus on **advanced digital technologies (AI, data analytics, IoT, health, energy)**
- Its **international and multidisciplinary working environment**

This adaptation ensures that the GEP is:

- **Operationally applicable** within day-to-day activities
- Integrated into **project-based workflows**, including proposal preparation and implementation
- Relevant to both **technical and non-technical roles**

The organisation applies a **method-driven approach** rather than rigid numerical targets, focusing on:

- Establishing structured processes for:
  - Data collection
  - Internal review
  - Decision-making support
- Monitoring trends and patterns over time
- Identifying areas for improvement and applying corrective actions

This approach allows OPSIS Research to:

- Maintain flexibility in a dynamic R&D environment
- Ensure proportionality in implementation
- Support continuous improvement without imposing unnecessary constraints

The GEP is actively considered during the preparation and implementation of EU-funded projects, including proposal design, consortium participation, and dissemination activities.

### 3.5 Integration with Organisational Processes and R&D Activities

OP SIS Research systematically considers the integration of the gender dimension in research and innovation content, where relevant, particularly in AI-driven systems, health applications, and data-intensive solutions.

This includes:

- Embedding gender considerations into:
  - **Project design and proposal development**
  - **Consortium participation and role allocation**
  - **Dissemination and communication activities**
- Aligning with internal practices such as:
  - Project management workflows
  - Collaboration with academic and industry partners
  - Training and knowledge-sharing activities

Special attention is given to the **gender dimension in research content**, particularly in:

- AI and data-driven systems (bias awareness and mitigation)
- Health-related applications (user diversity and inclusivity)
- Smart city and energy solutions (societal impact considerations)

### 3.6 Continuous Improvement and Organisational Learning

OP SIS Research adopts a **continuous improvement model**, inspired by both GEAR and SAGE methodologies.

This model is based on:

- Periodic internal review of practices and outcomes
- Collection of qualitative and quantitative insights (without reliance on rigid targets)
- Feedback from employees and project stakeholders
- Adaptation of measures to evolving organisational and project needs

Core principles include:

- **Iterative development** of policies and practices
- **Learning-by-doing** within project environments
- **Scalability** as the organisation grows
- **Responsiveness** to new challenges in research and innovation

### 3.7 Summary of Methodological Approach

In summary, the OP SIS Research Gender Equality Plan is:

- **Fully aligned** with ERA and Horizon Europe requirements
- **Structured** using the GEAR framework

- **Systemically oriented** through SAGE principles
- **Adapted** to the realities of an R&D SME
- **Integrated** into organisational and project workflows
- **Designed for continuous improvement**, rather than static compliance

This ensures that gender equality is embedded as a **core organisational capability**, supporting both operational effectiveness and research excellence.

## 4. Organisational Context & Workforce Overview

OP SIS Research operates within a dynamic research and innovation environment, where organisational flexibility, interdisciplinary collaboration, and continuous knowledge development constitute key elements of its operational model. As a research-driven SME, the organisation combines technological expertise with active participation in European and international research projects. This context shapes both its internal structure and its approach to workforce development, requiring adaptable processes, inclusive practices, and a strong emphasis on collaboration. The present section outlines the organisational characteristics, working environment, and human capital approach of OP SIS Research, providing the necessary context for the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan.

### 4.1 Organisational Structure and R&D Environment

OP SIS Research is structured as a flexible and project-oriented organisation, designed to support innovation, rapid adaptation, and effective collaboration across different domains. It operates in an international and multicultural environment through its participation in European research consortia and collaborative projects.

The organisational model is characterised by:

- A **lean structure**, enabling efficient communication and decision-making
- A **project-based operational model**, where teams are formed dynamically based on expertise and project requirements
- A **cross-functional approach**, integrating technical, research, and management roles
- A **collaborative culture**, encouraging active participation across all levels of the organisation

Activities are primarily organised around research and innovation projects, often involving collaboration with:

- Universities and research centres
- Industry partners and SMEs
- Public sector organisations and international stakeholders

This environment creates a **multidisciplinary and multicultural setting**, where diversity of perspectives is essential for achieving high-quality research outcomes.

Decision-making processes within OP SIS Research are:

- **Transparent**, ensuring clarity in responsibilities and roles
- **Participatory**, allowing input from different team members
- **Adaptive**, responding to evolving project and organisational needs

Within this context, gender equality is not addressed as a standalone function but is embedded into:

- Team formation processes

- Role allocation and responsibilities
- Internal communication and collaboration practices

The organisational structure supports the integration of gender equality by ensuring:

- Equal access to participation in projects and internal processes
- Visibility of contributions across different roles
- Fair distribution of opportunities in both technical and coordination activities

These processes are implemented through regular team interactions, project meetings, and collaborative planning activities, ensuring active participation across roles.

#### 4.2 Nature of Research Activities and Project-Based Work

The core activities of OPSIS Research are centred on research, development, and innovation, with a strong emphasis on participation in European-funded programmes, including Horizon Europe and other collaborative frameworks.

The organisation operates within a **project-based ecosystem**, which involves:

- Formation of interdisciplinary teams
- Collaboration across multiple organisations and countries
- Continuous interaction with stakeholders from diverse backgrounds
- Adaptation to complex and evolving research challenges

This mode of operation requires structured yet flexible processes that ensure both efficiency and inclusivity.

Key characteristics of the project-based environment include:

- **Dynamic team composition**, based on expertise and project needs
- **Distributed responsibilities**, across technical, scientific, and management tasks
- **High levels of collaboration**, within and across organisational boundaries
- **Exposure to diverse working cultures and practices**, due to international partnerships

Within this context, OPSIS Research recognises that gender equality is critical to ensuring:

- Balanced participation in research and innovation activities
- Equal access to roles in proposal preparation and project implementation
- Fair representation in meetings, workshops, and dissemination activities
- Inclusive engagement across all stages of the project lifecycle

Gender equality considerations are integrated throughout the project lifecycle, including:

- **Proposal phase**
  - Inclusive team composition
  - Equal contribution to proposal development
  - Consideration of gender aspects in project design (where relevant)
- **Implementation phase**
  - Fair allocation of tasks and responsibilities
  - Equal participation in technical and management activities
  - Balanced representation in consortium interactions
- **Dissemination and exploitation phase**
  - Equal visibility in publications and presentations
  - Inclusive participation in stakeholder engagement activities

Furthermore, OPSIS Research actively considers the integration of the gender dimension into research content, particularly in domains such as:

- Artificial intelligence and machine learning
  - Awareness of algorithmic bias
  - Consideration of diverse datasets and user groups
- Health technologies
  - Inclusion of different user profiles
  - Sensitivity to gender-related differences in data and outcomes
- Energy and smart city solutions
  - Consideration of societal impact
  - Inclusivity in design and implementation

By embedding these principles into project workflows, the organisation aligns with **Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI)** and Horizon Europe expectations.

These practices are integrated into existing project management workflows, ensuring consistency across different projects and collaboration environments.

### 4.3 Approach to Human Capital Development

OPSIS Research considers its human capital as a central component of its success and long-term sustainability. The organisation adopts a structured approach to human capital development, combining flexibility with clearly defined processes that support professional growth, inclusivity, and equal opportunities.

The overall approach focuses on:

- Continuous learning and upskilling
- Equal access to development opportunities
- Supportive and inclusive working conditions
- Recognition of individual and team contributions
- Equal access to opportunities across both technical and coordination roles

Training and development activities are integrated into the organisational culture and may include:

- Participation in project-related knowledge exchange
- Internal and external training sessions
- Exposure to new technologies and research methodologies
- Collaboration with academic and research partners

Within this framework, gender equality is addressed through a process-oriented approach that ensures:

- Equal access to training and skill development opportunities
- Transparent and fair career progression pathways
- Inclusion in leadership and coordination roles
- Support for work-life balance and well-being

To support these objectives, OPSIS Research applies internal practices that focus on:

- **Regular review of organisational practices**, to identify potential barriers or biases
- **Monitoring of participation across roles and activities**, without relying on rigid numerical targets
- **Encouragement of feedback**, allowing employees to contribute to organisational improvement

Key principles guiding human capital development include:

- Inclusivity – ensuring all employees can participate fully in organisational activities
- Fairness – promoting equal treatment in opportunities and decision-making
- Flexibility – adapting practices to individual needs and project requirements
- Sustainability – supporting long-term engagement and professional growth

Special emphasis is placed on creating a working environment that:

- Encourages open communication and collaboration
- Values diversity of perspectives
- Supports innovation through inclusive participation
- Promotes respect, trust, and professional integrity

Through this approach, OPSIS Research ensures that its workforce can effectively contribute to research excellence while operating within an equitable and supportive organisational framework.

Overall, this organisational context enables the effective integration of gender equality considerations into both operational practices and research activities.

## 5. Gender Equality Areas of Intervention

OPSIS Research addresses gender equality through a structured set of thematic areas, aligned with the priorities defined by Horizon Europe and the European Research Area (ERA). These areas reflect a holistic and process-oriented approach, ensuring that gender equality is embedded across organisational practices, research activities, and workplace culture. Rather than focusing on isolated actions, the organisation adopts a systemic perspective, integrating gender equality into everyday operations and long-term strategic planning. The areas of intervention presented below are interrelated and mutually reinforcing, contributing to a coherent and sustainable Gender Equality Plan.

### 5.1 Work-Life Balance and Organisational Culture

OPSIS Research promotes a working environment that supports work-life balance, recognising that flexible and inclusive working conditions are essential for equal participation and long-term engagement. Given the project-based nature of the organisation, flexibility is approached in a structured yet adaptable manner, ensuring alignment with both organisational needs and individual circumstances.

The organisation promotes flexible working arrangements, implemented through team-level coordination and project-based planning processes, where operationally feasible.

- Flexible working arrangements, where operationally feasible
- Respect for personal needs and individual circumstances
- A supportive and collaborative work environment
- Sustainable working practices that prevent burnout

Work-life balance is further supported through:

- Consideration of workload distribution across project phases
- Awareness of peak periods in project delivery
- Informal flexibility mechanisms within teams

At the same time, OPSIS Research actively fosters an organisational culture based on:

- Mutual respect and professional integrity

- Openness and transparent communication
- Inclusion and equal participation
- Recognition of diverse perspectives

This culture is reinforced through:

- Daily collaboration practices
- Team-based working models
- Continuous interaction across roles and functions

By embedding these principles into organisational practices, OPSIS Research ensures that work-life balance is not treated as a standalone policy, but as an integral part of organisational culture.

OPSIS Research implements these principles through:

- Flexible working arrangements where operationally feasible
- Team-based workload coordination and planning
- Informal support mechanisms within project teams

## 5.2 Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

OPSIS Research promotes inclusive governance and decision-making processes, ensuring that leadership opportunities are accessible and transparent. The organisation adopts a merit-based and participatory approach, while actively encouraging diversity in leadership roles and decision-making processes.

Key principles include:

- Equal access to leadership and coordination roles
- Transparency in role allocation and responsibilities
- Recognition of contributions across all organisational levels
- Inclusion of diverse perspectives in decision-making

Leadership within OPSIS Research is exercised both formally and informally, particularly in project-based environments where coordination roles are distributed across teams.

Employees are encouraged to actively participate in:

- Project coordination and management tasks
- Technical leadership roles
- Internal discussions and strategic planning
- Representation in external meetings and consortia

The organisation ensures that:

- Opportunities for leadership are communicated clearly
- Responsibilities are assigned based on expertise and engagement
- Participation is not restricted by hierarchical barriers

This approach enables a balanced and inclusive leadership environment, strengthening both organisational effectiveness and innovation capacity.

Opportunities for leadership and coordination are typically identified within project contexts, based on expertise, experience, and active involvement in project activities.

OPSIS Research implements these principles through:

- Transparent allocation of leadership and coordination roles

- Inclusive participation in project decision-making
- Encouragement of diverse representation in internal and external activities

### 5.3 Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Progression

OPSIS Research applies fair, transparent, and inclusive practices throughout recruitment and career development processes. Recruitment is conducted in a manner that promotes equal access and minimises bias, ensuring that all candidates are evaluated based on objective and relevant criteria.

The organisation applies the following principles in recruitment:

- Open and inclusive communication of opportunities
- Objective evaluation based on skills, experience, and qualifications
- Avoidance of biased language or criteria in job descriptions and selection processes

Career progression is supported through a structured yet flexible approach, enabling employees to develop within the organisation according to their interests, performance, and expertise.

Key elements include:

- Access to diverse and challenging project roles
- Opportunities for skill development and training
- Participation in research, proposal writing, and dissemination activities
- Recognition of individual contributions and achievements

OPSIS Research adopts a process-based monitoring approach, focusing on:

- Reviewing recruitment and career progression practices
- Identifying potential barriers or imbalances
- Adjusting practices where necessary to ensure fairness

This ensures that career development is based on equal opportunities and that all employees can progress within an inclusive environment.

These practices are applied in alignment with the organisation's project-based structure, where roles and responsibilities evolve dynamically across different research activities.

OPSIS Research implements these principles through:

- Inclusive and gender-neutral job descriptions
- Objective and structured evaluation processes
- Equal access to opportunities across roles and career paths

### 5.4 Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Innovation Content

OPSIS Research recognises that gender equality is a critical component of high-quality research and innovation, particularly in data-driven and technology-oriented domains. The organisation systematically considers the integration of the gender dimension in research content, where relevant, ensuring alignment with Horizon Europe expectations.

This is particularly important in areas such as:

- Artificial intelligence and machine learning
- Health technologies and personalised applications
- Energy systems and smart city solutions

The organisation promotes:

- Awareness of potential biases in data collection and algorithm design
- Consideration of diverse user groups and needs
- Inclusion of gender-sensitive perspectives in solution development

Gender dimension considerations may be integrated into:

- Project design and proposal preparation
- Methodological approaches and data analysis
- Development and validation of technological solutions
- Evaluation of societal impact

This approach is aligned with Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles, ensuring that research outcomes are:

- Ethically grounded
- Socially relevant
- Inclusive and accessible

By embedding the gender dimension into research practices, OPSIS Research enhances both the scientific quality and societal impact of its work. These considerations are applied where relevant and proportionate to the scope and objectives of each research and innovation activity.

OPIS Research implements these principles through:

- Consideration of diverse user groups in solution design
- Awareness of bias in data and algorithm development
- Integration of gender aspects in project design where relevant

### **5.5 Measures Against Gender-Based Violence and Harassment**

OPIS Research maintains a zero-tolerance approach towards any form of gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination. The organisation is committed to providing a safe, respectful, and inclusive working environment for all employees and collaborators.

This commitment is reflected in:

- Clear organisational principles that prohibit inappropriate behaviour
- Promotion of respectful communication and professional conduct
- Encouragement of a culture of trust and openness

The organisation supports:

- Availability of internal channels for reporting concerns
- Confidential handling of sensitive situations
- Support for individuals who may experience inappropriate behaviour

Awareness and prevention are further strengthened through:

- Internal communication on acceptable workplace behaviour
- Informal and formal awareness-raising practices
- Encouragement of active responsibility among all employees

OPIS Research ensures that:

- Concerns can be raised without fear of negative consequences
- Issues are addressed promptly and appropriately
- Respect and dignity are upheld in all interactions

This approach contributes to maintaining a workplace environment based on safety, trust, and mutual respect. These mechanisms are aligned with the organisation's broader ethical and professional standards, ensuring consistency across all organisational practices.

Any form of gender-based violence, harassment, or discrimination is strictly prohibited and may lead to appropriate corrective or disciplinary actions, in line with organisational policies and applicable regulations.

OP SIS Research implements these principles through:

- Availability of reporting channels
- Confidential handling of concerns
- Promotion of a safe and respectful working environment

## 6. Implementation Framework

The effective implementation of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) within OPSIS Research is based on a structured yet flexible framework, ensuring that gender equality considerations are embedded into organisational processes, research activities, and decision-making practices. Rather than introducing parallel structures, the organisation integrates GEP implementation into existing workflows, ensuring consistency, efficiency, and long-term sustainability.

### 6.1 Governance Structure and Responsibilities

OP SIS Research adopts a clear and proportionate governance approach to support the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan. Responsibility for the coordination and monitoring of the GEP is assigned to a designated internal role, operating in close collaboration with senior management. The GEP responsible role operates with direct access to senior management and contributes to organisational coordination processes.

This governance structure ensures that:

- Gender equality considerations are integrated into organisational decision-making
- Responsibilities are clearly defined and communicated
- Implementation is supported at both operational and strategic levels

The governance model includes:

- **Designated GEP responsible role**, responsible for:
  - Coordinating GEP-related actions
  - Supporting internal communication and awareness
  - Monitoring implementation progress
  - Acting as a reference point for gender equality matters
- **Senior management involvement**, ensuring:
  - Strategic alignment with organisational priorities
  - Support for implementation and resource allocation
  - Integration of GEP principles into decision-making
- **Project-level contribution**, where:
  - Project coordinators and team members consider gender equality aspects in project activities
  - Responsibilities are distributed across teams in alignment with project roles

This approach ensures that gender equality is addressed as a shared responsibility across the organisation, rather than being limited to a single function. This structure ensures alignment with both European and national gender equality policy frameworks.

## 6.2 Integration into Organisational Processes

OP SIS Research integrates the Gender Equality Plan into its existing organisational and operational processes, ensuring that gender equality is embedded in everyday practices. Gender equality considerations are embedded into existing workflows rather than implemented as standalone procedures.

The GEP is not implemented as a standalone mechanism, but is aligned with:

- Project management workflows
- Human resources practices
- Research and innovation processes
- Internal communication and collaboration structures

In practice, this integration includes:

- **Project lifecycle integration**, where gender equality considerations are reflected in:
  - Proposal preparation and consortium participation
  - Task allocation and team composition
  - Participation in meetings and dissemination activities
- **Human resource processes**, including:
  - Recruitment and onboarding practices
  - Career development and role allocation
  - Training and professional development opportunities
- **Organisational practices**, such as:
  - Internal communication and team collaboration
  - Decision-making processes
  - Knowledge-sharing activities

These practices are applied in a proportionate and context-specific manner, depending on:

- The size and scope of the organisation
- The nature of each project or activity
- The roles and responsibilities involved

This ensures that implementation remains both effective and adaptable within a dynamic R&D environment.

## 6.3 Resource Allocation and Sustainability

OP SIS Research is committed to ensuring that the Gender Equality Plan is supported by appropriate organisational resources, in line with Horizon Europe requirements. Given the scale and structure of the organisation, resource allocation is approached in a proportionate and integrated manner, avoiding unnecessary administrative burden while ensuring effective implementation.

Resources supporting the GEP include:

- **Human resources**, through:
  - The designated GEP responsible role
  - Involvement of team members in implementation activities

- Contribution of project coordinators and staff
- **Organisational capacity**, including:
  - Integration of GEP into existing workflows
  - Use of internal communication channels
  - Alignment with ongoing project activities
- **Time and effort allocation**, embedded within:
  - Project planning and execution
  - Internal meetings and coordination activities
  - Training and awareness actions

OPSIS Research ensures sustainability of the GEP by:

- Embedding gender equality into long-term organisational practices
- Aligning implementation with ongoing research and innovation activities
- Supporting continuous improvement through feedback and adaptation

This approach enables the organisation to maintain a balance between:

- Compliance with European requirements
- Practical applicability within an SME environment
- Long-term integration into organisational culture

Through this implementation framework, OPSIS Research ensures that the Gender Equality Plan is not only formally established, but actively applied, monitored, and continuously improved.

## 7. Monitoring, Evaluation & Continuous Improvement

OPSIS Research adopts a structured and process-oriented approach to monitoring, evaluating, and continuously improving the implementation of its Gender Equality Plan (GEP). The organisation recognises that gender equality is an evolving area, requiring ongoing assessment, feedback, and adaptation. Therefore, the GEP is implemented as a dynamic framework, supported by internal monitoring processes and continuous organisational learning. This approach ensures that gender equality remains relevant, effective, and aligned with both organisational needs and European research and innovation requirements.

### 7.1 Data Collection and Internal Monitoring Mechanisms

OPSIS Research applies structured internal processes to monitor the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan, ensuring that gender equality considerations are consistently reviewed across organisational activities. The organisation follows a **process-based monitoring approach**, focusing on the systematic observation of practices rather than the application of rigid numerical targets.

Monitoring activities may include:

- Review of participation across:
  - Project roles and responsibilities
  - Proposal preparation and coordination activities
  - Internal decision-making processes
- Observation of organisational practices related to:
  - Recruitment and onboarding
  - Career development and role allocation
  - Access to training and professional development
- Consideration of gender-related aspects in:

- Research and innovation activities
- Project implementation and dissemination
- Team collaboration and communication

Data collection is conducted in a proportionate and context-appropriate manner, taking into account:

- The size and structure of the organisation
- The nature of project-based work
- The need to avoid unnecessary administrative burden

Monitoring is supported through:

- Internal discussions and team interactions
- Project-level observations and coordination activities
- Informal and structured feedback from employees

This approach enables the organisation to identify trends, potential imbalances, and areas for improvement without relying on fixed indicators. These processes support alignment with evolving European and national policy frameworks on gender equality.

Monitoring outcomes are discussed within internal coordination mechanisms and inform organisational decision-making and adjustments.

## **7.2 Periodic Review and Adaptation of Measures**

OP SIS Research conducts periodic internal reviews of its Gender Equality Plan and related organisational practices, ensuring that implementation remains effective and relevant.

These reviews are integrated into existing organisational processes and may take place through:

- Internal meetings and coordination discussions
- Project-related reviews and reflections
- Feedback from employees and collaborators

The purpose of these reviews is to:

- Assess the effectiveness of existing practices
- Identify potential gaps or challenges
- Adjust approaches where necessary

The organisation adopts a flexible approach, allowing measures to be adapted based on:

- Organisational growth and changes in structure
- New project requirements and collaboration contexts
- Emerging best practices from the European research community

Adaptation may include:

- Refinement of internal processes
- Adjustment of practices related to participation and inclusion
- Enhancement of awareness and training activities

This ensures that the GEP remains responsive to both internal and external developments.

### 7.3 Continuous Improvement Approach

OP SIS Research applies a continuous improvement model, inspired by the GEAR and SAGE methodologies, ensuring that gender equality is embedded as an ongoing organisational process.

This approach follows an iterative cycle aligned with the GEAR methodology:

- **Planning**
  - Identification of areas of intervention
  - Alignment with organisational priorities and project activities
- **Implementation**
  - Integration of gender equality considerations into workflows
  - Application of practices across organisational functions
- **Monitoring**
  - Observation of practices and participation
  - Collection of feedback and insights
- **Review and Adjustment**
  - Evaluation of effectiveness
  - Adaptation of measures where needed

This cycle is applied in a proportionate and context-specific manner, ensuring:

- Flexibility within a dynamic R&D environment
- Scalability as the organisation evolves
- Practical applicability in day-to-day operations

Continuous improvement is supported by:

- A culture of openness and feedback
- Active involvement of employees and project teams
- Alignment with Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles

Through this approach, OP SIS Research ensures that:

- Gender equality is continuously monitored and refined
- Practices remain aligned with organisational needs
- The GEP evolves as a living and adaptive framework

## 8. Capacity Building & Awareness

OP SIS Research recognises that the effective implementation of the Gender Equality Plan depends not only on organisational structures and processes, but also on the awareness, engagement, and capabilities of its people. For this reason, the organisation promotes a continuous approach to capacity building and awareness, ensuring that gender equality principles are understood, applied, and integrated into everyday practices. These activities are designed to be proportionate to the size and structure of the organisation, while remaining aligned with the expectations of the European Research Area (ERA) and Horizon Europe.

### 8.1 Training and Skills Development

OP SIS Research supports the development of relevant knowledge and skills related to gender equality through a combination of formal and informal learning practices. Training activities are integrated into the broader organisational and project environment, ensuring practical relevance and applicability.

These may include:

- Awareness of gender equality principles in research and innovation
- Understanding of unconscious bias and inclusive practices
- Consideration of the gender dimension in research content, where relevant
- Ethical aspects related to data, AI, and technology development

Training is typically delivered through:

- Internal knowledge-sharing sessions
- Participation in project-related workshops and discussions
- Exchange of practices within research consortia
- Informal learning through collaboration and daily interaction

Special attention is given to ensuring that:

- Training opportunities are accessible to all employees
- Participation is encouraged across different roles and levels
- Learning is aligned with organisational activities and project needs

Rather than relying on standalone training programmes, OPSIS Research adopts an integrated approach, where learning is embedded into:

- Project implementation processes
- Team collaboration and coordination
- Continuous professional development

This ensures that knowledge related to gender equality is not isolated, but actively applied within the organisational context. These activities contribute to the practical application of gender equality principles within ongoing research and organisational processes.

Training activities are practical, project-oriented, and linked to ongoing research and innovation activities.

## **8.2 Awareness and Internal Communication**

OPSIS Research promotes awareness of gender equality through continuous internal communication and engagement. The organisation recognises that awareness is a key factor in fostering an inclusive and respectful workplace culture.

Awareness activities are embedded into everyday organisational practices and may include:

- Communication of gender equality principles within teams
- Integration of GEP-related topics in internal discussions and meetings
- Informal exchange of perspectives and experiences
- Reinforcement of inclusive behaviours and professional conduct

Internal communication supports:

- Understanding of organisational expectations regarding gender equality
- Alignment of practices across teams and projects
- Encouragement of open dialogue and feedback

The organisation fosters a culture where:

- Gender equality is recognised as a shared responsibility
- Employees feel comfortable raising questions or concerns
- Inclusive behaviours are encouraged and supported

In addition, awareness is strengthened through:

- Participation in project environments where gender equality is addressed
- Exposure to European best practices and collaborative initiatives
- Continuous interaction with diverse teams and stakeholders

This approach ensures that awareness is not limited to formal communication, but is embedded into the organisational culture and daily operations.

Awareness activities are integrated into project environments and collaboration practices, reinforcing inclusive and responsible research behaviour.

## 9. External Communication & Transparency

OP SIS Research recognises that transparency and external communication are essential components of an effective Gender Equality Plan, particularly within the context of European research and innovation activities. The organisation is committed to ensuring that its Gender Equality Plan is accessible, visible, and aligned with broader European practices and expectations.

External communication supports:

- Accountability towards stakeholders
- Alignment with Horizon Europe requirements
- Engagement with the wider research and innovation community

### 9.1 Public Availability of the GEP

The Gender Equality Plan of OPSIS Research is formally adopted and made publicly available, in line with Horizon Europe eligibility requirements.

The organisation ensures that the GEP:

- Is accessible through official communication channels (e.g. company website)
- Is available to partners, stakeholders, and collaborators upon request
- Reflects the organisation's commitment to transparency and responsible practices

Public availability ensures that:

- The organisation demonstrates compliance with European requirements
- Stakeholders can understand the organisation's approach to gender equality
- The GEP can be referenced in project proposals and collaborations

The document is maintained as an up-to-date resource, reflecting:

- Organisational developments
- Updates in practices and approaches
- Continuous improvement of the GEP

The GEP is also used as a reference document in the context of participation in European project proposals. The GEP may also be referenced in EU project proposals, consortium agreements, and collaboration frameworks.

## 9.2 Dissemination and Stakeholder Engagement

OP SIS Research promotes the dissemination of its gender equality approach within its network of collaborators and stakeholders, particularly in the context of research and innovation projects.

Dissemination is carried out in a proportionate and context-specific manner, depending on:

- The nature of each project
- The requirements of funding programmes
- The scope of stakeholder engagement

Dissemination activities may include:

- Sharing GEP-related practices within project consortia
- Participation in discussions on gender equality within research projects
- Integration of gender equality considerations in dissemination and communication activities

Stakeholder engagement is supported through:

- Collaboration with academic and research institutions
- Interaction with industry partners and SMEs
- Participation in European research and innovation ecosystems

Through these interactions, OPSIS Research:

- Aligns its practices with European standards and expectations
- Contributes to the exchange of knowledge and good practices
- Enhances the visibility of its commitment to gender equality

This approach ensures that gender equality is not only implemented internally, but also communicated and reflected in the organisation's external activities and collaborations, including relevant national and European policy initiatives.

## 10. Conclusion & Future Outlook

The Gender Equality Plan of OPSIS Research establishes a structured, proportionate, and forward-looking framework for integrating gender equality into the organisation's activities, culture, and research practices.

Through this plan, OPSIS Research reaffirms its commitment to:

- Promoting equal opportunities across all organisational functions
- Ensuring inclusive participation in research and innovation activities
- Embedding the gender dimension in relevant research content
- Fostering a respectful and collaborative working environment

The GEP is designed as a **living and adaptive framework**, aligned with the principles of the European Research Area (ERA) and the requirements of Horizon Europe. It reflects a process-oriented approach, where gender equality is continuously integrated, monitored, and refined within existing organisational practices.

Looking forward, OPSIS Research aims to:

- Further strengthen the integration of gender equality into project design and implementation
- Enhance awareness and capacity building across all organisational levels
- Continue aligning internal practices with evolving European standards and best practices
- Expand its contribution to inclusive and responsible research and innovation ecosystems

The organisation remains committed to:

- Maintaining transparency and accountability in the implementation of the GEP
- Supporting continuous organisational learning and improvement
- Ensuring that gender equality remains an integral component of its strategic and operational development

As OPSIS Research continues to grow and expand its participation in European research and innovation initiatives, the Gender Equality Plan will evolve accordingly, ensuring its relevance, effectiveness, and long-term sustainability. This reinforces the organisation's position as a responsible and forward-looking participant in the European research and innovation landscape.

OPIS Research remains committed to maintaining compliance with Horizon Europe requirements and continuously improving its approach to gender equality.

## **11. Alignment with International and National Gender Equality Frameworks**

OPIS Research recognises that gender equality is a global priority, addressed through a combination of European, international, and national policy frameworks. In addition to its alignment with Horizon Europe and the European Research Area (ERA), the organisation has considered and incorporated principles from internationally recognised initiatives and national strategic frameworks, ensuring a comprehensive and forward-looking approach.

### **11.1 Alignment with the UN Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)**

OPIS Research acknowledges the importance of the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs), established by UN Women and the United Nations Global Compact, as a globally recognised framework for advancing gender equality in the workplace, marketplace, and community.

The organisation's Gender Equality Plan reflects the core principles of the WEPs, including:

- Promoting high-level corporate leadership for gender equality
- Treating all employees fairly at work and respecting human rights and non-discrimination
- Ensuring the health, safety, and well-being of all employees
- Promoting education, training, and professional development opportunities
- Implementing inclusive organisational practices and supply chain awareness
- Encouraging equality through community engagement and partnerships
- Supporting transparency and accountability

These principles are integrated into OPSIS Research's organisational practices through:

- Inclusive governance and decision-making processes
- Equal access to career development and participation in research activities
- A zero-tolerance approach to discrimination and harassment
- Continuous awareness, training, and organisational learning

The adoption of WEP-aligned practices strengthens the organisation's commitment to responsible and ethical business conduct within the global research and innovation ecosystem.

## 11.2 Alignment with National Gender Equality Strategies

OP SIS Research also takes into consideration relevant national frameworks for gender equality, including the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (Greece), which defines strategic priorities for promoting equality, inclusion, and social cohesion.

The organisation's GEP is aligned with key national priorities, such as:

- Promoting equal opportunities in employment and professional development
- Preventing and addressing gender-based discrimination and violence
- Strengthening gender mainstreaming across policies and organisational practices
- Supporting work-life balance and participation in the labour market

In particular, OPSIS Research contributes to these priorities through:

- The implementation of inclusive organisational practices
- The integration of gender considerations into research and innovation activities
- The promotion of equal participation in project-based environments
- The development of a respectful and inclusive workplace culture

By aligning with both European and national strategies, OPSIS Research ensures that its Gender Equality Plan:

- Reflects a multi-level governance approach
- Supports broader policy objectives beyond organisational boundaries
- Contributes to the advancement of gender equality within the research and innovation ecosystem

In particular, the organisation acknowledges the strategic axes of the National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2021–2025), including the promotion of gender mainstreaming, the prevention of gender-based violence, and the strengthening of equality in the labour market and decision-making.

OP SIS Research ensures that these priorities are reflected in its organisational practices in a proportionate and context-specific manner, aligned with its role as a research-oriented SME.

The organisation adopts a gender mainstreaming approach, ensuring that gender equality considerations are systematically integrated into organisational processes, research activities, and decision-making.

## 11.3 A Multi-Level and Integrated Approach

Through the combined alignment with:

- Horizon Europe and ERA priorities
- The GEAR and SAGE methodologies
- The UN Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)
- National gender equality strategies

OP SIS Research adopts a multi-level and integrated approach to gender equality.

This approach ensures that:

- Gender equality is embedded across organisational, project, and societal levels

- Practices remain consistent with international standards and expectations
- The organisation contributes actively to inclusive and responsible research and innovation

This alignment reinforces the organisation's role as a responsible and forward-looking participant in the European and global research community. It ensures coherence between European and national policy priorities and supports the consistent integration of gender equality across organisational, project, and policy levels.

## 12. References

### European Frameworks and Guidelines

- European Commission – *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*  
<https://european-research-area.ec.europa.eu/horizon-europe-support-gender-equality>
- European Research Area (ERA) – Gender Equality Policy Framework  
<https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu>
- European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) – *GEAR Tool (Gender Equality in Academia and Research)*  
<https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/toolkits/gear>

### Methodological Frameworks

- SAGE Project – *Systemic Action for Gender Equality*  
<https://www.sage-growingequality.eu>

### International Frameworks

- UN Women & UN Global Compact – *Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs)*  
<https://www.weps.org/about>

### National Frameworks (Greece)

- National Action Plan for Gender Equality (2021–2025)  
<https://opengov.gr/minlab/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2021/07/%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94%CE%99%CE%A6-2021-2025.pdf>
- General Secretariat for Demography and Family Policy and Gender Equality  
<https://isotita.gr/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/%CE%95%CE%A3%CE%94%CE%99%CE%A6-2021-2025.pdf>

### Additional Supporting Resources

- Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) Framework  
<https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu>