



Universität
Münster

Living.Knowledge. Diversity

Diversity Strategy University of Münster 2024-2027

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1. Preamble

The University of Münster is fully committed to equity, diversity and inclusion. It pursues a **proactive diversity policy that** embraces diversity in all its dimensions as an enrichment and opportunity. At the University of Münster we actively promote an organisational culture in which diversity is recognised and valued as a foundational element for excellence in research, teaching, studies and administration. The diversity of perspectives that arise from different backgrounds, experiences and identities not only enrich academic discourse, but also promote creativity and innovation. Within its organisation, the University of Münster has taken a firm stance which unequivocally condemns acts of harassment, interpersonal and structural discrimination and exclusion caused by racism, ableism, sexism, classism, ageism, homo- and transphobia as well as religious intolerance. In our commitment to provide an accessible and inclusive university experience to students, faculty and staff, we are dedicated to identify mechanisms of structural exclusion and break down institutional barriers. Developing an inclusive culture is a collective organisational task. Consequently, every member of our community shares the **responsibility** for fostering an institutional climate where all members of our University feel welcome and respected.

As one of the largest research and educational institutions in Germany, the University of Münster plays an integral role in the public life both on a local and national scale. Acknowledging the pivotal role of academic institutions, the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion are fundamental to our research, teaching, community engagement and administrative services. As such we actively oppose all forms of intolerance, inhumane agitation, and hatred within the University. As public institutions, universities serve the interests of the societies and communities of which they are an integral part. Universities are role models. It is, therefore, our responsibility as a public institution to cultivate social change and engineer a pluralistic, inclusive society and to generate research contributions and ideas which are beneficial to the public.

In our daily practice this means that the University holds itself accountable to supporting the individual identities, perspectives and experiences among its faculty, staff and students and ensures that all members can fully participate and contribute to campus life. This also includes ensuring that all members of the University have access to staff development and training related to equity, diversity and family care.

In accordance with its core values and principles, the University of Münster decided to change its name and dispose of its militaristic, colonial and anti-Semitic namesake Wilhelm II. This put an end to the historical-critical debate that had been raging about the University's problematic namesake and its own identity since 1996/97.

The following Diversity Strategy was developed by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career Development and Diversity and the Diversity Steering Group on the basis of work completed by the Rectorate Committee for Diversity, and with the participation of the Steering Committee for the "Shaping Diversity" auditing process (Stifterverband). The strategy was discussed in the relevant University committees (Senate Committee for Diversity, Rectorate, Senate, Deans' Roundtable), taking into account the greatest possible diversity of perspectives.

The University of Münster has a long tradition of advancing equity-related strategic plans and

measures. While past strategic plans and measures, such as the Equal Opportunity Framework Plan, the faculty-level equal opportunity plans, the Internationalisation Strategy, the Agreement on Respectful and Cooperative Behaviour, as well as target agreements outlined in the “family-friendly university audit” and “Total E-Quality”, have addressed distinct diversity categories in isolation, the present Diversity Strategy takes into consideration that diversity categories are overlapping and mutually constitutive rather than isolated and distinct. As such, the Diversity Strategy differs from previous equity-related strategies in its adoption of an intersectionality lens and provides a framework for the shared vision of a diverse and equitable university:

Based on our accomplishments so far, the University of Münster’s strategic goals for the next five years were drafted in the form of recommended fields of action. From the very beginning, the measures put in place by the central administration to support all members of the University of Münster were developed in a transparent manner in order to encourage and support future exchange and the joint development of an equitable and inclusive campus culture.

The Diversity Strategy will be regularly updated and adapted to the changing needs of our University members and in response to external changes, e.g. to the regulatory framework (see chapter 7).

The Rectorate of the University of Münster adopted the diversity strategy at its meeting on 11.01.2024. The Senate acknowledged the decision and approved the Diversity Strategy on 31 January 2024. The Board of Governors expressed its approval on 2 February 2024.

2. Mission statement diversity

Mutual respect, a cosmopolitan mindset, internationality and diverse perspectives – situated at the centre of society, the University of Münster embraces **diversity in all its dimensions**. The diversity of our University staff and students with their unique characteristics, skills and perspectives is what drives and challenges us. Diversity is alive in the workplace when we learn from one another, freely exchange points of view, engage in self-reflection and jointly surmount shared challenges. The University of Münster regards diversity as **enrichment and opportunity**. When put into practice, diversity helps build the foundation for **innovation and excellence in research, teaching, study and administration**. It strengthens the University’s profile and position at the national, European and global level of higher education.

Diversity is a **cross-sectional task** of key significance across all areas of University operation and administration. All members of the University are called upon to actively shape a non-discriminatory and equitable organisational culture where stereotypical thinking is questioned, and discriminatory behaviour is rejected. As a public institution, Living.Knowledge.Diversity also entails that the University of Münster assume **social responsibility**. Consequently, it actively communicates its commitment to diversity to the public sphere.

The University of Münster has instituted a **proactive diversity policy** which ensures equitable participation of all University members regardless of their ethnicity, religious or sexual orientation, age, gender, disability or social background. The goal is to sustainably promote a

respectful and appreciative campus and organisational culture where the **principles of non-discrimination, equal opportunity and equitable participation** are consistently implemented. To continue expanding the **necessary framework conditions**, the University of Münster is actively working to **dismantle institutional barriers and structural and individual discrimination**. In view of the rich diversity of its employees and students, the University is especially focused on promoting the interdependence of the individual dimensions of diversity. In this way, the University is fostering an environment where individual possibilities and competence are promoted in a needs-based manner, further potentials of diversity are explored, and the equitable access to study, academic and non-academic careers is ensured.

The University of Münster aims to:

- sustainably anchor and cultivate awareness of diversity, non-discrimination and educational equity in the University's core activities through a broad selection of services and continue to advance the targeted development of suitable strategies and measures at all levels.
- establish transparent procedures and processes within the existing central and decentralised University structures which offer ways to recognise, dismantle and prevent discrimination and structural barriers at an early stage.
- promote diversity as a value through a targeted communication strategy and optimise public relations activities beyond the confines of the University of Münster.

The mission statement on diversity was adopted by resolution of the Senate on 15 July 2020 (Res. 2020/0524) and subsequently passed by the Rectorate on 23 July 2020 (Res. 2020/0565).

3. Milestones in the diversity process

Diversity has been institutionally anchored in the office of the Vice-Rector for Strategic Human Resources Development since 2016 (renamed the **Vice-Rector for Academic Career Development and Diversity** in October 2022) and strategically referenced in the University of Münster's **University Development Plan** since 2017. While gender equality, age, disability, and internationality have been fields of action for a long time and have been the focus of the University's diversity initiatives, anchoring the responsibility for EDI within the mandate of the Vice-Rectorate signified a major change. This sparked a university-wide discussion on the importance of and approach to diversity both at the University and in society as a whole. During these conversations, it became clear that a reorientation and substantial organisational transformation in the area of diversity were required.

To actively support and augment the realignment and sustainable development of EDI, the position of a "diversity project manager" was created at the operational level in early 2019 which provided the basis for a **centrally coordinated diversity management** at the University of Münster. The position of the Diversity Project Manager is part of the Human Resources Development department which plays a critical role in shaping a non-discriminatory and equitable working environment and organisational climate. They are responsible for the development and implementation of hiring practices which are transparent and free from discrimination, supporting employee retention by means of diversity-sensitive employee-

supervisor performance reviews and targeted awareness trainings in the area of gender equity, diversity, empowerment and anti-discrimination.

2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Thematic complex of diversity institutionally anchored in the office of Vice-Rector for Strategy Human Resources Development
2017	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Diversity strategically anchored as a university-wide, cross-sectional issue in the University Development Plan (HEP) ▪ Total E-Quality certification, with addition of „diversity“ for the first time
2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of an operational diversity management system at the central administrative level ▪ First report on the „diversity“ at the University of Münster
2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of diversity as a strategic topic in structural and development planning with the faculties ▪ Mission statement on diversity ▪ Total E-Quality top certification with addition of „diversity“
2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Rectorate Committee for Diversity (RKD) assumes its oversight functions ▪ Rectorate decides to participate in the Stifterverband's „Shaping Diversity“ audit
2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ RKD report to the Rectorate defines the University's perspective on development in the area of diversity ▪ „Shaping Diversity“ auditing process commences ▪ Diversity Charter is signed ▪ Renamed Vice-Rector for Academic Career Development and Diversity commences
2023	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creation of the Rectorate Award for Diversity (endowed with 20,000 euros) ▪ Establishment of the Senate Committee for Diversity ▪ First University-wide „Diversity Week“ is organised ▪ Pilot project to assess the diversity climate throughout the entire University ▪ Adoption and publication of the Diversity Strategy ▪ Final report on the „Shaping Diversity“ audit

In 2020 the Senate and Rectorate adopted the **mission statement Diversity** “Living.Knowledge.Diversity” which affirms the University’s commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion in research, teaching and transfer. To ensure the active participation and involvement of all status groups at the University, especially equity seeking groups, in the process that would drive organisational change and transformation, the Rectorate Committee for Diversity (RKD) was established in 2020 with a one-year mandate. The committee’s task was to analyse the University, its structures and processes with regard to unequal treatment, discrimination und mechanisms of exclusion and to make recommendations on future action and initiatives. Because EDI benefits everyone, our goal is to promote a common understanding of diversity as an intrinsic value across all areas of the University.

The RKD offered valuable advice to the University’s leadership team from multiple perspectives and actively promoted a culture of inclusion and diversity. In March 2022 the RKD submitted its final report to the Rectorate which outlines recommendations for prioritised fields of action (strategy and structure, service and advising, teaching and learning, and communication). These are to be addressed as priorities in the University’s future Diversity Strategy, as well as for measures within the recommended fields of action. The presentation of the final report marked the end of the RKD’s work, which was continued by the newly established Senate Committee for Diversity in 2023. Building on the work of the Rectorate Committee for Diversity, the University’s overall diversity process continued seamlessly as it participated in the “Shaping Diversity” audit by the German Stifterverband. Participation in the long-term diversity audit provided an

opportunity to continue and advance the organisational development process in a structured manner and with the support of external experts. Furthermore, it enabled administrators to incorporate the individual sub-processes into a comprehensive strategic plan that could be effectively communicated to the University community. The audit's peer exchange forums and public events proved to be an effective vehicle for driving the intended long-term structural and cultural transformation.

The University's participation in the diversity audit was accompanied by signing the Diversity Charter in 2022. In signing the charter, the University of Münster demonstrated its commitment to recognising and strengthening diversity both within and beyond the institution, acknowledging its potential as an opportunity and enrichment, and developing a sustainable inclusive campus culture based on the principles of mutual respect, integrity and compassion.

To reinforce the initiated transformative process, additional steps were taken in 2023 to establish diversity as a living practice in everyday academic life and throughout the entire University community. The Rectorate voted to establish a **Rectorate Prize for Diversity**, endowed with 20,000 euros. In the future, the prize will be awarded every two years, alternating with the Rectorate Prize for Gender Equality, in order to recognise and reward outstanding diversity initiatives and projects and showcase them as examples of best practice.

To ensure the continuous advancement of an inclusive and equitable University culture, the **Senate Committee for Diversity** was constituted as a permanent body of central University governance that strategically supports the alignment between central and faculty/departmental-level EDI strategies and initiatives. The committee plays an important role in raising the profile of diversity both internally and publicly and in promoting innovative ideas which strengthen the University's EDI efforts. The committee also advises the University on updating and further developing its proactive diversity policies with the aim of cementing EDI as guiding principles in the University's campus and organisational culture.

In line with its commitment to EDI, the University of Münster has been actively taking part in the annual nationwide Diversity Day since 2023. The University marked its inaugural Diversity Day 2023 with an entire **Diversity Week** with multiple centrally and faculty-coordinated events. These were open to all members of the University as well as the public and included discussion forums and training opportunities on the topic of racism/critical whiteness.

In line with the auditing and strategic process and with the aim of adopting a sustainable, evidence-based quantitative and qualitative data-driven approach to EDI, the University of Münster has launched a pilot project **to survey the University's overall diversity climate** with the aim of converting it into a permanent data monitoring process. For the first time, the University will regularly assess the organisational development status in the area of diversity in general and in the area of discrimination prevention in particular within a science-based, empirically-founded and indicator-supported inventory. All members of the University will be given the opportunity to participate in this process.

4. Guiding principles for future action

The following principles serve to guide the implementation the Diversity Strategy, its objectives and associated measures:

- **Participation and mainstreaming approach:** The University of Münster promotes diversity as shared responsibility, accountability and commitment across the institution. Activities promoting equity, diversity and inclusion are recognised as positive collaborations, based on a shared purpose by all stakeholders at all levels and in all areas of the University. Individual specialists with expertise in diversity entrusted with specific responsibilities work to support EDI initiatives and collaborations. The University empowers all its members, regardless of their status group and career level to actively participate in the development of EDI strategic plans and respective EDI measures as well as in committee processes. Staff in leadership positions play a particularly important role in their areas. As role models they can make a powerful impact on shaping a work environment where every person is accepted as equal, inspired to participate and empowered to succeed. They develop needs-based measures in close coordination with their teams and align them with central initiatives.
- **Research orientation and excellence:** The University of Münster's expectation and quality standard is to attain the excellence in research, teaching, transfer and administration through critical, innovative and multi-perspective thinking, as well as cutting-edge research and methodology. Diversity is vital to academic excellence. Acknowledging the diversity of our researchers and faculty, including their different perspectives, experiences, and insights, as well as empowering underrepresented voices of equity-seeking groups so that they are heard and valued, are critical success factors for a differentiated and comprehensive approach to scientific and social challenges.

At the same time, adopting an approach to the concept of diversity that is based on scientific evidence is an equally important factor for anchoring diversity as a cross-cutting topic in research, teaching and transfer. The University of Münster's Diversity Strategy, its attendant measures and collected data are based on current research findings and are continuously subjected to critical, research-guided reflection and evaluation. Harnessing a wide range of expertise to develop evidence-informed interventions Academics representing various academic disciplines and research contexts and experiences are actively involved in developing an evidence-informed, transformational diversity process. Potential for discovery and research excellence is heightened when scholars enjoy freedom of inquiry in inclusive research environments marked by pluralism in terms of experience, perspectives and identity.

- **Intersectionality, self-reflection and anti-discrimination:** Intersectionality and concluding multiple discrimination are unique challenges that organisations must address if they mean to take consistent action against discrimination, unequal treatment and exclusion. The measures and programmes within the prioritised areas of action address the multidimensional differences in social group memberships and making its pernicious

effects, which result in unequal treatment and structural discrimination, understood. Intersectionality must be considered and mapped out in a consistent and solution-oriented manner.

5. Prioritised fields of action and strategic goals

The University of Münster sees diversity as an enrichment and opportunity for all aspects of interpersonal, organisational and societal action. We apply a social justice lens to diversity aiming at fostering a society based on the principle of solidarity. It is the overarching goal of our transformative diversity process to further consolidate a positive understanding of the concept of diversity across our organisational culture and structures and to ensure that a positive understanding is woven into all our organisational processes.

For the next three years, the University of Münster will focus on the following four fields of action: Strategy and Structure, Teaching and Learning, Advice and Support, and Communication and Participation.

In each field of action, the focus is on sustainable **structural changes**. Our goal is to create an inclusive and accessible university experience for all through the active participation of all members of the University. To work towards this goal, we will leverage the experience of equity-seeking groups to learn about exclusionary mechanisms and adjust the existing structures by recognising, reducing and removing barriers to participation for present and future members of the University. In all fields of action, we consider inclusion and accessibility. Any existing structural and institutional barriers that could lead to unequal treatment should be identified and dismantled in order to ensure that all members of the University are treated equally. It is our shared goal and responsibility to ensure equal participation and enable our students, faculty and staff to participate in the university on an equal footing, taking into account their diverse lived realities and positions.

5.1 Field of Action: Strategy and Structure

The governance of the University of Münster is based on the principle of subsidiarity. This encourages the collaborative development of objectives and structures in the area of EDI in participatory structures as a decentralised practice. In practice, this means that faculties, departments and other decentralised units are provided with the authority and autonomy necessary to drive diversity initiatives and create an inclusive environment targeted towards the specific needs of the respective departments.

The University of Münster's understanding of subsidiarity consequently allows to interlink centrally and decentrally initiated and governed diversity processes and follow a “top-down” and “bottom-up” approach to EDI-related organisational change. In order to succeed, we need an organizational culture build on the principles mutual respect of and appreciation for all members of the University in which equity, diversity and anti-discrimination is practiced in everyday life. This requires an organisational framework that provides both processes and instruments which make visible the effects of individual differences, identities and social group memberships and support the establishment of a sustainable EDI culture that recognises and values diversity. The

aim is to reveal the impact that differences, identities and affiliations can make and to establish a sustainable culture of diversity with recognition of heterogeneity and diversity at the University.

In order to create this organizational framework, the University of Münster has set itself the following goals:

- In terms of diversity mainstreaming, the University integrates diversity as a strategic cross-cutting issue in all strategic core processes, i.e. in the strategic planning principles, University development planning, structural and development planning at the faculty level, system accreditation and quality management.
- The diversity management structures are being expanded in a needs-based manner both at the level of the central institutions and in the 15 faculties.
- Networking and exchange forums will be established to connect all stakeholders involved in EDI initiatives and programmes at the University. The aim of the programme is to enable the University to work on various diversity-related projects, network more closely with each other and exchange information on current topics and developments in the field of diversity.
- A robust data basis will be developed with regard to diversity at the University.

5.2 Field of action: Teaching and Learning

The University of Münster is committed to proactively embed EDI and intersectionality in teaching and learning activities while considering the complex implications this might have for the research-based learning approach. There are two ways in which the concept of intersectionality is employed in the context of teaching and learning. On one hand, it is used in epistemological and methodological terms to describe a specific approach to the respective subject area. On the other, it serves to describe the phenomenon of the complex, cumulative way in which the effects of multiple forms of discrimination (such as racism, sexism and classism) combine, overlap, or intersect. To support this transformational process, we need to critically reflect on our University's traditional structures and deeply held assumptions to gain a better understanding of the factors that cause and sustain inequalities within our educational system. It is our shared goal to reduce barriers to equal participation and provide an inclusive and accessible educational environment, enabling student success, supporting their well-being and allowing all current and future students to develop their full potential. The integration of EDI principles in the respective subject areas and fields will also spark an interdisciplinary discourse on how to further adopt and broaden underrepresented perspectives. At the same time, didactic methods aim to initiate analytical and self-reflective processes on personal experiences related to equity, diversity and inclusion. This will result in a so-called "dual-target perspective" in terms of higher education didactic methods.

As one of the largest teacher training universities in Germany, the University of Münster serves an important role in contributing to social and educational justice: The teacher education program at the University of Münster is designed as an interdisciplinary academic journey which equips future teachers with a wide range of subject specific skills as well as social entrepreneurship competencies which allow them to critically examine contemporary issues of local, global and intercultural significance. Trained in such skills, our students will positively

impact and enrich the learning experience of generations of future elementary and secondary school students. Teachers are key social multipliers and important mentors for the transfer of knowledge for the University of Münster and society as a whole. Consequently, the area of teaching and learning is central to the diversity process.

The University of Münster has already gained extensive experience in the area of EDI in teacher training. The QLB project “Dealing with Diversity: Competent handling of heterogeneity through reflective practical experience” (1/2016- 12/2023) is particularly noteworthy in this context. The project’s main goal is to develop and disseminate teaching modules which provide students with the necessary theoretical knowledge and complementary practical skills which allow them to adequately respond to the increasing heterogeneity in the classroom. The individual teaching modules will be integrated into the general curriculum in a sustainable manner.

The University’s experience with EDI in teacher education is an important stepping stone for the development of a new degree programme in “Inclusive Education” that began in the winter semester 2023/24 and the ongoing development of didactic teaching methods in higher education. In addition, it is also fundamental to further advance the development and implementation of innovative structures, procedures and measures within the area of teaching and learning. In view of the interdisciplinary collaboration in study and teaching, we are identifying opportunities for applying findings and experiences from these teaching and research contexts to cross-disciplinary discourse.

The University of Münster has set the following goals with respect to teaching and learning:

- Further integration of Diversity into the processes of the quality management system and the Mission Statement on Teaching
- Promote and open up a dialogue on “diversity” as a topic in teaching, taking into account subject-specific characteristics and interdisciplinary approaches.
- Promotion of diversity-sensitive framework conditions in teaching and learning

5.3 Field of action: Advising and Support Services

The University of Münster offers a variety of well-established support and advising services which promote the holistic well-being and respond to the needs of our faculty, staff and students. In order to establish equity-centred support and advising services with a focus on diversity and preventing (intersectional) discrimination, it is paramount to acknowledge that traditional advising models often perpetuate inequities for equity seeking groups. The current advising and support structures are often targeted towards specific status groups (e.g. the Student Advice and Counselling Centre (ZSB), the Careers Service, AStA (General Students’ Committee) programmes, or Counselling Service for Staff and Management in Conflict-, Addiction- and Health-related Matters). Others are focused on individuals belonging to a specific underrepresented social group such as counselling services for women on gender equality issues or advice for people with disabilities regarding the provision of accommodations. In addition, professional concerns may often be intertwined with a challenging interpersonal situation at work or a dispute and might entail matters covered by employment law. Due to the complexity of the situation, it might be difficult for people who are seeking support to navigate the complex system of advising structures or find the support or advising service that fits their needs. The situation is further complicated due to the fact that not all of the University of Münster's support and advising

services are equally visible to all target groups.

Since 2022, the established support and advising services structures have been under review with regard to how well they address the concerns and needs of those who self-identify as members of equity seeking groups at the University of Münster and the provision of programmes and services with an intersectional approach. Some areas with room for improvement were identified and could be addressed immediately. Issues of structural and systemic discrimination still exist at our University. It became apparent that the advising and support structures, as well as complaint processes required adjustment to better respond to the needs of victims of discrimination, and especially racial discrimination. In order to close these gaps, the University has dedicated additional resources to the University's conflict counselling centre for employees and created the new position of a counsellor who is tasked with focusing on discrimination and paying close attention to intersectionality. To increase its visibility, the University's GETA Complaints Office was relocated to the University's Compliance Office. To ensure that Faculty, staff and students can easily access information about support, advising and complaint offices for victims of harassment and discrimination, a new website "Diversity Support Services" was launched in 2023. The University has developed training opportunities from an antiracist standpoint and encapsulated concepts of diversity, power and privilege and intersectionality for all staff working in advising and counselling positions. The measures described above are only a first step towards augmenting the existing advising and complaints offices at the University of Münster. The employees staffing these offices have received specialist training in the area of discrimination/diversity-sensitive counselling. The measures described above support and expand on the existing advice and complaints offices at the University of Münster.

5.4 Field of action: Communication and Participation

As a University we strive to anchor diversity, social justice and anti-discrimination as key issues across our activities and functions and at all levels of the organisation. At its core, this process is about communication. Embedding EDI in our University culture means improving our understanding of the concept of diversity by creating opportunities and a safe space for constructive feedback and dialogue about our shared values and attitudes. This also entails shifting our focus to our institution and assessing its established communication channels. It means ensuring that information is displayed in an accessible and inclusive manner in order to prevent exclusion and discrimination. Universities engage with society and the public on a daily basis through websites, community engagement initiatives and public events. We are committed to exerting a positive impact on society and its development. By sharing new insights which are both research-based and pragmatic, the University supports the future development of a diverse, global community. It is, therefore, our responsibility to design our public relations work in an accessible, inclusive and non-discriminatory manner. This encourages mutual exchange and transfer of information between the University and society as a whole, allowing innovative approaches and solutions to be developed in a joint effort.

To ensure that all members of the university have easy access to information and support structures in the area of diversity, counselling and anti-discrimination, a new web portal devoted to diversity was launched at the start of 2023.

The central objectives in this field of action are:

- Analysis of established communication channels, processes and content at the University of Münster; identification of barriers that can lead to exclusion and discrimination; ensuring equitable access to information
- Promoting the University of Münster's core value of recognizing diversity as intrinsically valuable beyond the boundaries of our university through a targeted communication strategy and optimisation of public relations work
- Consistent and systematic use of inclusive, gender- and diversity-sensitive language and images in all texts and documents published by the central administration; raising awareness among faculties and departments of the value and use of inclusive, gender- and diversity-sensitive language
- Development of outreach campaigns that profile EDI initiatives at the University of Münster.

6. Responsibility and implementation

Each and every member of the University is responsible and accountable for the ongoing implementation of EDI. Opportunities for members from all status groups to actively participate in EDI efforts are institutionally anchored at the University of Münster and are supported by both structured processes and permanent committees. Examples in the core area of diversity management include the joint Rectorate and faculty-level Structural and Development Plans (SEP), the establishment of the Rectorate Committee and subsequent Senate Committee for Diversity and the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career Development and Diversity. These structured processes complement central offices such as the Diversity Office, the Disability and Access Resource Centre, the Equal Opportunity Office, the Representative for People with severe permanent Disabilities and the Family Service Office. The participatory processes and continuous reciprocal communication between the University's senior leadership, its faculties, central and decentralised offices and the various providers of measures and programmes and their target groups allow us to build broad support and a shared vision of diversity for the entire institution.

Opportunities for active participation, designing services in a transparent way and soliciting feedback on individual experiences and needs strengthen the trust that students, faculty and staff place in the organisation and additionally emphasises the responsibility of all staff to actively participate in the diversity process.

The following topic-specific groups, representative bodies and committees are responsible for implementing and further developing the Diversity Strategy:

Rectorate: The Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career Development and Diversity works closely with other relevant University committees to develop, communicate, implement, evaluate and further improve the Diversity Strategy. Within the Rectorate, the Vice-Rectorate is responsible for embedding EDI into the University's strategic planning instruments.

Diversity Office: With the establishment of a Diversity Office, the fixed-term position of Diversity Project Manager has now been converted to a permanent position. The new Diversity Office

constitutes a key element of the diversity management structures at the University of Münster. It gathers expertise from both Dept. 1 (Academic and Student Affairs) and Dept. 3 (Human Resources), making it ideally equipped to serve and respond to the needs of staff, students and faculty alike.

The Diversity Office is firmly anchored in the University's organisational structure. It maintains regular contact with the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career Development and Diversity and acts as a coordination office for all matters relating to EDI and equal opportunity.

In cooperation with the Vice-Rectorate and the relevant committees, long-term goals and strategies are developed and measures implemented to create an inclusive, equitable and non-discriminatory environment for all members of the University.

Senate Committee for Diversity: Established in April 2023, the Senate Committee for Diversity complements the top-level committee structures at the University of Münster. The Senate Committee for Diversity has equal representation and is one of the highest-level ranking committees within the University. Due to its high visibility and credibility, the committee plays an important role in anchoring EDI as a guiding principle within the University's structures and campus and organisational culture, as well as in highlighting the importance of diversity and inclusion at all levels and areas of the University. The committee is involved in promoting diversity and equal opportunities throughout the University and presents its recommendations to the Senate and Rectorate.

Diversity Roundtable: The Diversity Roundtable is an informal discussion forum which brings together key stakeholders from the field of EDI. Coordinated by the Diversity Office, advisors, interest groups and EDI experts come together at least once a semester for networking purposes and to discuss the latest developments, needs and ideas related to their respective target groups.

Faculties: Aligned with the principle of subsidiarity at the University of Münster, the Dean's Offices of the faculties are responsible for developing and implementing needs-based EDI strategies, services, measures and initiatives in their respective areas and report regularly to the Rectorate. The Diversity Strategy serves as a framework of orientation in this regard. The purpose of the Diversity Strategy is to provide guidance and strategic direction to individual faculties on how to ingrain equity, diversity and inclusion within their respective units. The faculties are encouraged to form decentralised diversity committees and/or name a representative who is responsible for driving the EDI agenda in their unit. Diversity is established as a intersectional issue in the structural and development planning of the faculties and is increasingly taken into account in evaluations.

Interest groups: The independent interest groups and the representatives for employees and students work in close collaboration and are invited to the Diversity Roundtable. Their knowledge and expertise are of central importance as they ensure that the needs and voices of their target groups are heard and the diversity process within the entire organisation is advanced.

7. Evaluation and future development

Evaluations are an important part of quality control and assurance at the University of Münster. The centrally implemented services, measures and initiatives in the area of diversity are regularly

and systematically evaluated in order to assess their development, implementation and effectiveness. This internal evaluation serves the needs-oriented, sustainable advancement of the standards, structures and measures of diversity management at the University of Münster.

The Diversity Strategy itself will be evaluated, updated and adapted based on needs analyses and overall strategic objectives in close cooperation with the Diversity Office, the Senate Committee for Diversity and other central committees, and with the active involvement of the greatest possible diversity of perspectives from all status groups. The first comprehensive evaluation will take place five years after the initial publication of the Diversity Strategy. The Diversity Strategy is designed to provide the faculties and central institutions with direction and guidance on developing faculty-specific EDI plans which take into consideration the individual faculty needs that arise from their respective departmental cultures and priorities. Deans are accountable to ensure ongoing exchange with their diversity committees and/or representatives as well as the central and decentralised interest groups.

The University of Münster solicits external audits (including “Shaping Diversity”, “family-friendly university audit”, “Total E-Quality” and the “DHV-Gütesiegel” for fair and transparent appointment negotiations) to regularly re-evaluate and critically reflect on its diversity process and its corresponding action plans and packages and to share them with the public. The information and feedback obtained during the auditing processes enable the University to continuously improve existing measures and identify and close gaps in the range of measures and services provided.

The evaluation processes are monitored centrally by the Diversity Office. The results are regularly reported to the Rectorate and the Senate Committee for Diversity and presented to the University community.

