

Equality Plan – BD-SS Way Forward for Cyprus Innovation (CyprusInno & The Base by CyprusInno) 2021-24

BD-SS Way Forward for Cyprus Innovation (CyprusInno & The Base by CyprusInno) is an award-winning inter-communal social venture working towards building an island-wide entrepreneurial ecosystem in Cyprus via a hybrid platform of digital tools, live events, and physical spaces while utilizing a novel method of entrepreneurship as a mechanism for peacebuilding. We focus on entrepreneurship as a mechanism that unifies, inspires, and leads to social and economic development and youth engagement. We target all innovators island-wide, with programs specifically focused on adolescents 14-17, youth 18-35, and female entrepreneurs. CyprusInno also operates The Base by CyprusInno, the world's first Social Impact Generator, a unique physical space combining the elements of a coworking space, accelerator/incubator, innovation center, office, and multimedia studio. It is the first space of its kind in the world that is located in a demilitarized zone (Cyprus' Buffer Zone).

The Base by CyprusInno runs a pre-accelerator program for startups focused on tackling one or more of the 17 SDGs. BD-SS Way Forward for Cyprus Innovation focuses on empowering youth in Cyprus to launch startups that address the SDGs. As an organisation, BD-SS Way Forward for Cyprus Innovation tackles SDGs 5, 8, 9, 11, 16, and 17. Specifically related to SDG #5, gender+ Equality, our organisation embeds gender sensitive practices in our operations and our programs, and also undertakes efforts to encourage more participation from women. Our research has shown low representation amongst females in entrepreneurship across the island. In response, we've made efforts to increase female representation in our programs from as low as 20% up to 40-60%.

The Equality Plan of BD-SS Way Forward for Cyprus Innovation is designed to revolve around the key priority areas of the organisation, aiming to tackle inequalities related to gender+ and intersectionality*.

This four-year Equality Plan is tackling the following key priority areas: (1) gender+ equality in CyprusInno mission, leadership and decision-making, (2) gender+ equality in recruitment and career progression including availability of family-friendly policies, pay gap (3) inclusion and diversity in all of the activities of the organisation (4) gender-sensitive data collection, access and processing, and (5) measures to prevent and address sexual harassment and harassment.

Important definitions:

***Intersectionality:** Intersectionality refers the interconnected nature of social categorizations such as race, class, and gender+ as they apply to a given individual or group, regarded as creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage.

Gender+: This notion coined by the EU-funded QUINGproject, acknowledges that gender+ always intersects with other axes of inequality, such as ethnicity, age, disability, class or other personal and status or characteristics. It also reflects the dynamical dimension of those intersections, which may happen in different scenarios.

gender+ in recruitment, career progression & work-life balance

Objective	Action	Timeline
Develop and adopt gender-sensitive recruitment practices	Review the workforce planning process to ensure gender+ equality objectives are included	January 2021 – December 2024
	Develop a proactive recruitment policy to ensure gender+ equality objectives are included and recruitment processes monitored using data on applications received, shortlisting of candidates, and offers accepted by gender+ and classification levels	January 2021 – December 2024
	Ensure gender+ diversity on selection panels and include an external gender-expert	January 2021 – December 2024
Develop and adopt gender-sensitive promotion practices	Make promotion criteria gender+ sensitive	January 2021 – December 2024
	Improve transparency of promotion procedures	January 2021 – December 2024
Implement gender-sensitive work-life-balance practices	Explore and implement initiatives which could support staff of any gender+ to effectively incorporate child caring, child raising, and other family responsibilities into their career plans	January 2021 – December 2024
	Promote flexible work schemes and work-from-home policies	January 2021 – December 2024
	Establish promotion and recognition measures that do not penalize care time	January 2021 – December 2024

Inclusion and Diversity in our activities

Objective	Action	Timeline
Make all phases of projects selection gender+ sensitive.	Collect and monitor the gender+ of applicants for teams in a digitalized, anonymous manner.	January 2021 – December 2024
Improve the gender+ balance of shortlisted candidates	Extend the call for applications in the case of underrepresentation of any specified group.	January 2021 – December 2024
	Include a gender+–sensitive statement in all calls for	January 2021 – December 2024

	startups/teams, to encourage more women to apply i.e. "CyprusInno encourages women to submit applications as".	
	Encourage gender-balance formation of the teams applying to the Programs.	January 2021 – December 2024
	Offer child-care support during activities/workshops to all the participants.	January 2021 – December 2024
Inclusive communication strategy and practices	Use inclusive promotional material/photos in programs announcements (social media, website etc.).	January 2021 – December 2024
	Use of gender-sensitive language in all official documents and in all channels of external communication (Website etc.)	January 2021 – December 2024
	Identify good practices in organising inclusive and parity public events.	January 2021 – December 2024
	Avoid all-male panels by ensuring the participation of female experts whenever possible.	January 2021 – December 2024

gender+ in Leadership and Decision Making

Objective	Action	Timeline
Mainstream gender+ in decision-making processes	Ensure diversity in all leadership committees and boards	January 2021 – December 2024
	Develop a training program for the people who exercise leadership in the institution: training session for the board of directors	January 2021 – December 2024
	Analyse the leadership model and make proposals for its improvement	January 2021 – December 2024

Pay Gap

Objective	Action	Timeline
Ensure equal payment to all employees	Conduct annual gender+ pay equity audits to identify where pay gaps exist and the reasons for the gaps	End of each year

	Review remuneration policies	End of each year
	Develop action plans and set targets to address any gaps	Start of each years
	Include a Pay Equity section in the Annual Progress Report of the organisation	End of each year

Data Collection & Monitoring

Objective	Action	Timeline
Improve gender+ sensitive data collection & monitoring	Improve the quality of the current collected gender+ disaggregated data	January 2021 – December 2024
Develop a comprehensive annual reporting system that will allow continuous monitoring of the operational objectives set to achieve gender+ equality	Include gender-sensitive data in the Annual Progress Report	End of each year
	Publish the Annual Progress Report the website	End of each year

Sexual Harassment and Harassment

Objective	Action	Timeline
Prevent and detect situations of harassment and discrimination that may occur promoting tools that channel and solve	Develop & establish a Sexual Harassment Policy	End of 2023
	Disseminate the Policy to all staff members	January 2024
	Design of a clear complaint procedure communicated with all staff members	January 2024
	Offer training on sexual harassment and harassment for staff members	January 2024