



To whom it may concern

E cvb@ou.nl

November 29, 2021

Subject: Gender Equality Plan

our reference: U2021/0176CJN

The Executive Board of the *Open Universiteit* of the Netherlands promotes gender equality in academia. Diversity and inclusion, including gender equality, are at the heart of our institution's social mission. In line with the requirements of the European Commission's Horizon Europe programme, our institution has outlined the initiatives to stimulate gender equality in a gender equality plan, of which the main aspects are summarized below.

The *Open Universiteit* has dedicated resources to promote gender equality. Various officers pay structural attention to gender equality, in particular the members of the *Kerngroep vrOUw*. This group was established in 2010 to promote gender equality and informal networking among women and is financed by the Executive Board. In addition, a *Klankbordgroep diversiteit en inclusie* was established in 2021.

Gender equality is monitored among all staff categories. A target of 30% women by 2025 is set for all staff categories. As of 2022, the gender composition of the staff is part of the annual plans of each organisation unit and of their annual interviews conducted by the Executive Board. For many years now, the *Open Universiteit* is taking measures to stimulate gender equality among professors. These measures are successful and will be continued, as the *Open Universiteit* is having the highest percentage of female professors among all universities in the Netherlands (Women Professors Monitor 2020: 39,9% of female professors at the Open Universiteit compared to 24,2% on national level). Further commitment is required to stimulate gender equality among three staff categories: the top management positions, the associate professors, and IT positions. In the recruitment procedures of these positions, the considerations for decisions to appoint a male candidate must be indicated in case the target of 30% women has not been achieved yet.

To stimulate an inclusive work environment and make optimal use of the diversity of talents on the labour market, several initiatives are taken regarding training and capacity-building. These include attention for strategic staff planning in our leadership programmes, and the creation of an offer in trainings and instruments to prevent bias in work processes (e.g. in recruitment and selection, and in communication). Events of for instance the *Kerngroep vrOUw* and the initiative Recognition and Rewards (*Erkennen en Waarderen*) stimulate the awareness of diversity and inclusion in the work environment. Participation in



regional and (inter)national networks regarding diversity and inclusion create opportunities to increase expertise and to share experience in the field of diversity and inclusion. Besides, the *Open Universiteit* offers arrangements and facilities that promote gender equality in career opportunities, e.g. by optimizing the work-life balance and facilitating to report undesirable behaviour.

Since the *Open Universiteit* is currently working on an updated institution wide strategy for diversity and inclusion, the initiatives towards gender equality in academia in the abovementioned gender equality plan will be integrated in this strategy.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank van der Duijn Schouten'.

Frank van der Duijn Schouten
Interim President

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Theo J. Bastiaens'.

Prof. Dr. Theo J. Bastiaens
Rector