

Diversity Action Plan for Staff

University of Antwerp

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MISSION¹

Diversity is a structural feature of our modern society and of the metropolitan environment specifically. The University of Antwerp wants to fulfil its corporate **social responsibility** commitment by creating an inclusive environment for all students and staff members. The University of Antwerp considers diversity an **added value**, offering various insights and views that stimulate creativity within our institution. It strives to make optimal use of the **available competences** of students and staff members and to allow them to further develop and strengthen their competences. As an actively pluralistic institution, UAntwerp expects all of its students and staff members to adopt an **attitude** which recognizes, appreciates and propagates differences and similarities between individuals.

DIVERSITY ACTION PLAN FOR STAFF

The Diversity Action Plan for Staff (DAP Staff) comprises various actions towards four strategic objectives **to promote a more inclusive work environment** for all of its current and future employees. This action plan is merely the start of a dynamic process of improvement, to which new actions can continuously be added.

To this effect a **list of priority actions** is developed addressing six diversity topics: disability, sexual orientation, philosophy of life or religion, ethnic-cultural diversity, gender identity (M/F/X), internationalization (international employees). The DAP Staff pays attention to the interconnectedness of these different topics and tries to steer clear of a normative and stereotypical approach as much as possible.

Together with the Strategic Action Plan Sustainable Gender Policy for Academic Personnel² and the Action Plan Internationalization³, the DAP Staff will provide the basis for the diversity policy for staff members of the University of Antwerp. These three plans are strongly interconnected and cannot be considered separately from one another.

The plan intervenes at **different levels** and at **different stages** of the career. The combination of different actions will impact the culture of our institution, the recruitment, selection, development and promotion of staff members and the monitoring of data on staff. If UAntwerp chooses to pursue an inclusive climate, it should also take a closer look at its formal and informal procedures and mechanisms.

¹ Based on the full vision- & mission statement of UAntwerp only available in dutch: [Microsoft Word - 150213-29 pt 7.2 doc Diversiteitsbeleid DEF.docx \(uantwerpen.be\)](#)

² Only available in dutch: [Strategisch actieplan 'Duurzaam genderbeleid voor academisch personeel\[1\] \(uantwerpen.be\)](#)

³ Only available in dutch: [Internationalisering | Universiteit Antwerpen \(uantwerpen.be\)](#)

1. The University of Antwerp develops a diversity culture and creates a positive working atmosphere and organisational structure where diversity contributes to quality and innovation within our institution.

The University of Antwerp wants to present itself as an inclusive organisation that welcomes all talents and offers equal opportunities to all of its employees.

The diversity and inclusion related actions, organized by the university, will be highlighted both in our internal as external communication. Diversity is integrated into the university's global, permanent communication strategy.

All **diversity-related questions** are mapped out and provided with a clear and unified answer. We will substantiate these answers and evaluate them against the existing legal and organizational limits in collaboration with Unia (the Interfederal Centre for Equal Opportunities).

Despite all efforts, it remains difficult to completely rule out discrimination or unacceptable behaviour. We are, however, working on a better coordination between the **existing reporting channels** and making them known throughout the entire organisation, so that all staff members who are faced with various forms of discrimination, exclusion or unacceptable behaviour, can be approached appropriately.

2. The University of Antwerp further develops its inclusive recruitment policy in which everyone's talents are appreciated.

Attracting and maintaining a diverse work force requires specific efforts. The University of Antwerp wants to recruit the **best talents**, considering diversity features and competences as an explicit added value to the organization. Our job openings appeal to as many diverse potential candidates as possible and encourage specific under-represented groups to apply.

We minimize the room for **unconscious bias** in our selection procedures. The HR Department and Team Diversity are developing **trainings for executives and committee members** that shed light on the effects of bias in selection and recruitment procedures. The existing selection and recruitment strategies are being supplemented with points of attention that will increase objectivity and transparency.

3. The University of Antwerp applies an inclusive career development policy aiming at greater diversity.

Career perspectives should offer staff members proper challenges, with horizontal and vertical development opportunities being equally important. An inclusive and transparent **career advancement policy** encouraging more diversity in all job groups and management positions, will both help to keep motivated talented personnel with us and ensure greater diversity on every level within our university.

We focus on **full accessibility** so as to create equal opportunities for everyone to work in the best circumstances, while encouraging self-development. Specific needs and requirements will be addressed so that all employees will be able to perform their job as well as possible.

Inclusion and diversity competences are an added value in (academic) careers and therefore make up an important part of our career policy. By integrating the core competence 'inclusion & diversity' and offering a targeted training and development programme, the University of Antwerp enables its employees to further develop these competences, which will help to fully professionalize the entire organisation.

4. The University of Antwerp invests in qualitative and quantitative monitoring in order to stimulate a diverse organisation.

Gaining **insight into the careers of staff members** (applying at, advancing through and leaving our institution) makes up an essential component in the development of our diversity policy, especially for under-represented groups. These qualitative and quantitative data help map out the current and missing diversity and can provide insight into still existing thresholds. The analysis also provides a basis for setting policy priorities and is an important tool for the evaluation and adjustment of the chosen policy.

STAKEHOLDERS DAP STAFF

DAP Staff Steering Committee

The DAP Staff Steering Committee will continuously follow up, evaluate and adjust the DAP Staff. The Steering Committee consists of representatives of faculties and central departments and of employees with lived experience on diversity topics. The DAP Staff Steering Committee reports on the realized actions and establishes a priority list for 2021-2022. An owner is designated for each action.

Team Diversity

Team Diversity of the University & Society Department supports the DAP Staff Steering Committee and evaluates the implementation of the DAP Staff in close collaboration with those responsible for the services and departments involved. The HR Department is the most important strategic partner of Team Diversity in this respect, both in evaluating and adjusting and in implementing the various actions.