

## **ETH ZURICH'S GENDER STRATEGY AT THE PROFESSORIAL LEVEL**

ETH Zurich has a highly international community. People from different cultural, religious and other backgrounds come together and bring perceptions from vastly different areas. The diversity of opinions, research concepts and experiences are valued and enrich ETH's knowledge-based mission. In its Gender Action Plan, ETH Zurich defines its position on equal opportunities for all genders. The realisation of the Gender Action Plan in the departments is assessed every two years. Many departments have since implemented numerous conventional and innovative measures. These include childcare for evening events, family rooms, or the creation of gender equality positions at the level of department management. An important goal of ETH Zurich is to further implement adequate measures which allow reconciling an academic career and family-related tasks. This is equally crucial to the career development of all genders. Instruments for compensation for maternity leave, parental leave or family-related absences and a "stop the tenure evaluation scheme" for tenure track positions are in place. Day nurseries and childcare facilities on a regular basis and for specific occasions (such as emergency childcare, flexible childcare, holiday activities, or childcare solutions for conferences) are further developed, based on the employees' needs. If both partners are employed in the ETH Domain, the four months of maternity leave can be split between the parents, i. e. the father can take up to two months' parental leave.

Over the past years, ETH Zurich has established a stronger presence of women in most areas. Nevertheless, the total number of female professors is still below ETH's objectives.

In order to further accelerate and increase the portion of female professors, the President of ETH Zurich specifically defined the following measures **at the level of faculty recruitments**:

- The President has set and clearly communicated the goal of reaching at least 40 % women among the newly recruited professors.
- The President is highly supportive of efforts by the departments to increase their share of female faculty by direct appointment procedures.
- Advertisements of faculty positions are written in a gender-neutral way and explicitly encourage women to apply. Further, it is mentioned that ETH Zurich takes a stand for equal opportunities, the needs of dual-career couples and the compatibility of family and career.
- Before the advertisement is placed, the departments must demonstrate that an adequate number of qualified female scientists have been identified within the scope of an active search.
- Search committees must include at least three female professors as committee members. Wherever possible, this proportion should be increased to the point where 50 percent of the members are women.
- The search committees of ETH Zurich are chaired by professors from a different department. The chairs are requested by the President to ensure that the selection procedure complies with the DORA principles and that the committee proactively searches for potential female candidates.
- On the occasion of an instructional meeting between the committee chair, the head of department, and the departmental contact person for the selection procedure in question, the applicants' pool is discussed not only with regard to its excellence, but also with regard to its balance. Any further need for action, such as extended encouragement of qualified female scientists to apply, is decided upon if necessary.
- In every search committee, one voting member (usually a male professor from the department) takes on the role of a Gender and Diversity Advocate. Their task is to support the committee in ensuring that the selection procedure is fair, unprejudiced and transparent, and to inform the President in a written report about the male/female balance, the efforts to approach proactively potential female candidates, and the fairness and transparency of the evaluation procedure.
- As a rule, at least two female candidates should be invited to interviews. Any exceptions to this rule must be justified to the President.

- The committee's final recommendation – usually a shortlist of up to three candidates – should include at least one female candidate. Any exceptions to this rule must be justified to the President.
- Upper age limits may be elongated by the President when appointing assistant professors in the case of parental leaves, industry experience or relevant competences acquired outside of academia. The academic age of the different candidates is compared and all different criteria in the evaluation of each individual candidate are taken into account.
- ETH Zurich's dual career support plays a major role in the context of professorial recruitments, as faculty mobility is often constrained by family situations. The Dual Career Advice office offers support to all candidates who are invited for negotiations with ETH Zurich regarding the professional integration of their partners. This is done by connecting the partner to the relevant work community in Switzerland. In this context, since funding might not be available at the very beginning, the President may co-finance a position in the ETH Domain for the partner for an initial period. Presidential directives concerning the employment of spouses, partners and relatives at ETH Zurich contribute towards the transparency and sustainability of dual-career measures and guarantee the regular employment standards and quality checks. In addition, the Dual Career Advice office helps with the personal integration of newly arriving family members, namely with the search for an apartment, for schools or (privileged) access to childcare facilities, insurances of all kinds, social security, and pension funds, and provides contacts to networks or other (professorial) families.
- Further measures for mitigating unconscious bias in the selection procedures are continuously evaluated and implemented by the Office for Faculty Affairs.

**During the active phase**, the careers of female professors at ETH Zurich are supported by the following measures:

- They are provided a budget to hire a postdoc/scientist during maternity leave.
- For assistant professors on a tenure track, an additional year is granted for each child born during the tenure track period.
- In order to increase the influence of female professors within ETH Zurich, they are adequately represented in the strategically important commissions inside ETH Zurich (such as the Research Commission or the Strategy Committee) and they are encouraged to assume leading functions.
- When it comes to inquiries regarding suitable persons for awards and prizes as well as for representatives in scientific committees outside ETH Zurich, women must be listed adequately in the corresponding proposals, keeping in mind that they should not be absorbed by too much committee work, as it may slow down their research activities.
- The ETH Women Professors Forum, founded in 2011 at ETH Zurich, aims to connect women professors of ETH Zurich and EPFL Lausanne. It creates platforms for exchange and mentoring through its networking events, and it serves for the ETH Executive Boards as a sounding board in the area of promoting women in science.

Zurich, 25 September 2024