

# **Equal Opportunity and Diversity at the University of Bonn—Promoting Diversity on Campus**

Third self-evaluation report from the University of  
Bonn / Re-audit “Vielfalt gestalten” (October 2024)

**Inclusion**  
**Internationality**  
**Anti-Discrimination**  
**Gender Equality**  
**Family Friendliness**  
**Educational Equity**  
**Accessibility**

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## 1 The University of Bonn at a glance

Founded in 1818 and hosting approximately 700 professors, 31,500 students, 6,500 doctoral candidates and nearly 7,000 academic, administrative and technical staff, the University of Bonn is one of the largest universities in Germany and an internationally leading center of academic excellence. It is firmly established among the top 10 universities in Germany and ranks among the top 100 universities worldwide. The work of many of its researchers, such as those active in the disciplines of mathematics, economics and the agricultural sciences, leads the field on the international stage. The University of Bonn was the most successful of the eleven chosen applicants to the University of Excellence initiative in 2019. The six Clusters of Excellence that it maintains in the areas of mathematics, quantum computing, immunology, economics, dependency studies and robotics in the agricultural sciences, is the largest single collection of such formations at a German university.

The University of Bonn stands for top-level research within an extensive global network, for sound communication of science into teaching and for knowledge transfer into society. It owes its excellence to its members: its students, researchers, teachers and all its administrative and technical staff. It is their diversity—reflected in a broad spectrum of potential, experiences and lifestyles—that both enriches and challenges the University as a learning organization. The University of Bonn understands the implementation, promotion and support of equal opportunity and diversity as fundamental to a university culture built on appreciation and thus as a management and cross-sectional duty, which also corresponds with a goal of the second self-evaluation report from 2019.

By signing the Diversity Charter in 2017, the University of Bonn committed itself to strengthening equal opportunity. The declared aim of the Charter is to make diversity more visible and to value and promote the potentials of every individual. In order to achieve this, the University is working to develop an organizational culture that affirms and values the individual circumstances and different social and cultural backgrounds of all members, whilst adopting a systematic approach to uncovering and dismantling the structures driving inequality, and working to tackle mechanisms of exclusion.

Our dedication to this end was established within the scope of the first audit; the University of Bonn renewed this commitment by completing the Stifterverband “Shaping Diversity” (“Vielfalt gestalten”) audit 2019/20 under the leadership of the Vice Rector for University Development and Equal Opportunity. Involving a range of network of partners and representatives from the three status groups teaching staff/researchers, students and technical and administrative staff, our participation in this re-audit procedure serves to reaffirm our commitment to the cause of diversity and inclusion. We also seek to increasingly consider the concept of intersectionality in the context of the re-audit.

2020 also saw the establishment of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit, with the higher-level Vice Rectorate set up in the following year, focusing its work exclusively on these two areas. These moves ensure that the diversity work at the University of Bonn is integrated into the structures of the Rectorate. The Vice Rectorate, headed by the Vice Rector, employs an advisor. Since 2022, the core team of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has consisted of the head of unit, a project manager with a focus on educational equity and a team assistant. In 2023, an additional two staff positions, contracted until the end of 2025, were created. While one of the new members of staff works full-time in the area of inclusion and participation, the other two were given part-time positions in the area of anti-discrimination.

## 2 Development of the diversity strategy since certification

Seeking to promote innovation and sustainability, the University of Bonn has taken the decision to develop its diversity strategy in such a way that works toward establishing the best possible study, working and research conditions for all of its members. To this end, the University of Bonn works to integrate each and every member of our university into its community regardless of their ethnic and social background, gender, disability, religion or belief, age, sexual identity or family situation. These measures are developed further in a target group-specific and sustainable way, often through the participation of the relevant status groups.

The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit provides the Rectorate with advice and support in its efforts to establish and develop concepts and strategies designed to promote equal opportunity and diversity. By identifying best practices, the Unit works to ensure their implementation and fosters the establishment of a University-wide organizational culture characterized by mutual appreciation and respect—also an objective from the first certification process. In order to further develop and implement the diversity strategy, building strong networks is essential. Our mission statement **“Networks for participation, individual diversity, recognition and appreciation” (BRIDGES<sup>1</sup>)**, through which a range of knowledge, skills and the central and decentral measures derived from them are brought into a mutually reinforcing relationship, had already proven itself in the course of the first audit.

In 2020, the Unit focused on the development and management of a COVID-19 assistance program, the implementation of the [Strengthening the Equal Opportunity Process \(STEP\)](#) funding funding program and the development of the [Equal Opportunity Portal](#). In May 2021, the University of Bonn moved to establish the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and conferred it with sole responsibility for these issues. Assisted by the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit, the Vice Rectorate is responsible for implementing the University’s diversity strategy. The current head of unit assumed her post in July 2021<sup>2</sup>.

Working in accordance with the BRIDGES principle, the Vice Rectorate and Unit act as bridge builders, driving forces and advisors and liaise closely with the Rectorate, the faculties and divisions, the University Gender Equality Commissioner, the faculty gender equality officers and the University-wide diversity network that emerged from the steering committee involved in the 2018/19 audit. The current network features some 40 counseling and contact points (including Human Resource Development, the Central Study Advisory and Counseling Service, the Bonn Graduate Center, the Office of Family Services, the Representative for Students with Disabilities or Chronic Illnesses, the Office of Disability Resources, the Anti-Discrimination Office and the [Diversity Working Group of the Faculty of Arts](#)) as well as members and initiatives from the group of mid-level academic staff.

The transfer of responsibility for the topic of diversity and equal opportunity within the Rectorate, which was made possible by the establishment of a dedicated Vice Rectorate for this area, means that those working on these issues are supplementing the existing focus on teaching and strategies to increase women’s representation in the professoriate with a third priority in the reduction of structural barriers and protection from discrimination. In the context of the increasing societal and

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<sup>1</sup> BUILDING NETWORKS FOR PARTICIPATION, INDIVIDUAL DIVERSITY, RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION. The plural indicates the plurality of the networks.

<sup>2</sup> The legally-mandated lockdowns implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic established restrictions that brought social and professional life to an effective standstill. A change in the management of the Unit led to a year-long vacancy and slowed progress in its strategic work.

political focus on the topics of diversity and inclusion, the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the affiliated Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit remain committed to implementing and achieving the plans and objectives formulated together with the Vice Rector for Teaching, Learning and University Development for the area of teaching in the second self-evaluation report (see section 3).

The Vice Rectorate and the Unit work to provide strategic guidance to promote excellence through diversity and inclusion. To this end, the University of Bonn published the mission statement [“Excellence through Equal Opportunity and Diversity”](#) in October 2023 to establish the realization of this goal as a long-term priority. The statement represents the starting point from which a more detailed project and action plan will be developed to focus on five key areas: 1) facilitating access to education for first-generation academics or individuals with a migration background, 2) improving the compatibility of university studies, academic research and a career with family life, 3) gender equality, especially in management positions, 4) inclusion and 5) anti-discrimination.

Since certification, the University of Bonn has developed and implemented a range of projects and instruments and has organized events—referred to below as “measures” (M)<sup>3</sup> (see Appendix 1 “List of measures by fields of operation”)—which will be outlined in the following by referring to the five focal areas from the mission statement.

## 2.1 Our commitment to educational equity

The University of Bonn strives to provide equal opportunities in education for all. This includes promoting people’s access to education on the one hand, whilst ensuring that they encounter as few obstacles as possible along the way on the other. One focus of our efforts to this end rests on supporting those potentially disadvantaged by their background, such as first-generation academics, individuals from materially disadvantaged backgrounds and underrepresented groups, including people with a refugee or migration background. Autumn 2022 saw the creation of a permanent full-time position in the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit with responsibilities including the establishment of the new Pathways to Research program (see below) and coordinating the strategic expansion of the Rectorate’s work in the area of educational equity.

Various University stakeholders carry responsibility for a range of initiatives and programs that focus on aspects of educational equity. The [Central Study Advisory and Counseling Service \(ZSB\)](#) provides essential guidance in this area. The wide range of counseling services that it provides refer both prospective and current students to sources of funding such as scholarships, BAföG and other sources of financial assistance, for example the General Students’ Committee (AStA) start assistance. ZSB staff have liaised closely with schools in Bonn for a number of years, including those in socially disadvantaged areas, in order to support underprivileged schoolchildren who are interested in university education.

The University’s participation in the NRW-wide program [Kein Abschluss ohne Anschluss \(KAoA\)](#) ensures the availability of a comprehensive range of information on higher education to secondary schools in the NRW region. KAoA is a career guidance program established to enable schoolchildren to make a successful transition from school to vocational training or higher education. To this end, the ZSB runs a number of events and provides information services such as the [University of Bonn](#)

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<sup>3</sup> The descriptions of the measures provided in this report make no claim to completeness. The faculties, research areas and other University institutions implement a large number of projects and initiatives related to equal opportunity and diversity.

[Days](#) (M 1) and the state-wide [Student Orientation Weeks](#). Three full-time members of the ZSB staff have worked on the NRW-wide [Talent Scouting Program](#) since May 2024. Aimed at schoolchildren with a non-academic family background, this initiative works to reduce barriers in accessing higher education and has been rolled out across 23 universities throughout the state since 2016.

The Bonn talent scouting team is currently engaged in the following programs:

- Monthly outreach counseling sessions for young people in their last years of secondary school in the Bonn region and the Rhine-Sieg and Rhine-Erft districts. Our talent scouts can also be contacted outside of these monthly sessions and provide counseling at the ZSB offices or online.
- Comprehensive support services that cover the schooling phase, the transition from school to university, and university life itself. The scouts provide information on career and study orientation, organize workshops on topics such as funding, application procedures and study periods abroad, and organize meetings with role models.
- Previous participants in the program can be trained at the NRW-Zentrum für Talentförderung to act as talent mentors for schoolchildren and first-semester students at the University of Bonn.

In addition to the initiatives from the ZSB in this area, the [Youth University](#) (M 2) also provides prospective students with guidance and support pertaining to their decision to apply to university. Aimed at different age groups—from primary schoolchildren to those interested in vocational training or studying—its programs give an introduction to life at university and the teaching content of the degree programs taught there in order to help potential applicants find a discipline and even a career that matches their interests and aptitude. The programs include the [Children's University](#), [Jugend forscht](#) ("Young Researchers"), [science rallies](#), the [FFF \("Fördern, Fordern, Forschen"\) early studies program](#) (M 3), a range of 101 courses and orientation services and close cooperation with a range of schools in the Bonn and Rhine-Sieg areas as well as a number of German schools abroad.

Alongside its orientation services, the ZSB plays a central role in advising and supporting students throughout their studies. Working in cooperation with [Healthy Campus Bonn](#), it runs workshops for students under the aegis of its [RessourcenStark durchs Studium \("Push through Your Studies"\)](#) program (M 4), helping them to develop skills in areas such as resilience, building self-esteem, learning strategies and time management. The ZSB has also organized the annual [Bergfest](#) (MN 5) since 2023. An event for students and doctoral candidates who have reached the half-way point of their studies, it constitutes a forum in which their achievements are celebrated and in which they are empowered for the next phase of their studies.

Students can turn to the [Career Service](#) to obtain help and support regarding career selection, career planning and job application strategies. A number of workshops, 1:1 counseling and the Career Day provide students and graduates with advice and support to facilitate their journey from university to a career. The Career Consultations run by the Career Service is an especially popular forum for questions about career entry posed by first-generation academics. The web page of the Career Service provides information about external contact partners working in this area, such as the career entry program run by ArbeiterKind.de (see below).

A key development during the reporting period was the launch of the Bonn study support program (Be Strong!) (see section 3.3), which will commence in the summer semester of 2025.



Figure 1: The Pathways to Research logo

Committed to the cause of educational equity, the University of Bonn has redoubled its efforts to provide support to groups that are currently underrepresented at the University or who face particular challenges in navigating the German systems of secondary and higher education. As part of the Excellence Initiative, the University of Bonn developed in the winter semester 2022/2023 the [Pathways to Research program](#) (MN 6), which was rolled out in the summer semester 2023. Aimed at students and doctoral candidates with a refugee or migration background, the grant program disburses monthly scholarships, runs a range of workshops and events and offers individual coaching. In addition to skills-building, the program seeks to help participants to make social contacts and promotes networking with role models. The program works closely with the University of Bonn [Argelander Competence Center](#) in providing advice and support to doctoral scholarship recipients. To date, it has provided funding to 30 university students and five doctoral candidates.

The [Argelander program](#) for early-career researchers provides comprehensive advice and support to researchers at all stages of their academic development. Its work rests on the three pillars of orientation, qualification and support and aims to

- promote early academic independence;
- create space for the development of innovative ideas and approaches, and
- create transparent career paths.

Individuals with a refugee background can also access advice, support services, and funding through various other programs, such as those provided by the state of NRW and coordinated by the International Office (IO). [NRWege scholarships](#) are open to students with a refugee background, who can apply for a one-year full or partial scholarship. The [NRWege Preparation for University](#) program provides prospective students with orientation services, an intensive preparation course for the German Language Proficiency Test for Admission to Higher Education (DSH) and a range of counseling services. The program also runs learning cafés and workshops that prepare their participants to study at a German university. It builds on the work of the predecessor *Academic Integration Program for Refugees (FdIS)*. In addition to preparing individuals with migration and refugee backgrounds for university studies, the state of NRW also supports international students in their efforts to prepare their career entry in Germany through the [iStart career program](#) funded by the *Zukunftsvertrag Studium und Lehre stärken* (ZSL). Students with a refugee background are prioritized for places on modules with capacity restrictions. The IO is also currently supporting 13 Ukrainian recipients of the DAAD-funded *Future Ukraine scholarship* and provides support regarding the *DAAD Bridge Scholarships for Palestinians in Germany* program.

In 2021, the Rectorate took the decision to grant funding to the [MitSprache program](#) (M 7) set up by the Faculty of Arts in cooperation with Caritas Bonn and other partners. The Equal Opportunity and



Diversity Unit managed this funding. Seeking to promote the social participation and integration of immigrants in German society through efforts toward language acquisition and intercultural exchange, the program works to equip students at the University of Bonn to act as volunteer language tutors. It also acts as a point of contact for recently-arrived immigrants considering studying or training in Germany. In 2023, the program was extended by another three years.

The [Perspective Integration—Language in Professional Environments \(PIB\) program](#) (M 8), coordinated by the Department of Intercultural Communication and Multilingualism Research (IKM) at the Faculty of Arts, has been teaching intercultural skills since 2016. Its provision is unique in Germany that also explicitly addresses non-academic fields of work. Job supervisors, teachers and specialist workers are sensitized in intercultural affairs and are made aware of the language training needs of immigrants and the importance of language in the workplace. Funding for the program was extended for a further two years in 2023.

Intercultural exchange and acquisition of the skills requisite to its promotion also constitute the focus of the [intercultural training courses](#) (M 9) organized by the IO. Run several times per semester and taught in German or English, some of these courses incorporate a focus on diversity issues. A certain contingent of places on the courses is reserved for international students. These intercultural training courses make a contribution to educational equity by enabling participants who would otherwise not be able to travel or study abroad to gain intercultural experience. The [Certificate of Intercultural Competence](#) (M 10), also offered by the IO, closes an important gap in this regard, enabling students to develop the intercultural knowledge and experience that they often need for career entry, but which they might otherwise be unable to acquire.

Seeking to deepen its commitment to first-generation academics, the University of Bonn has entered into a dialogue with [ArbeiterKind.de](#). This organization is dedicated to the provision of advice and support to prospective and current first-generation students. Its long-term aim is to increase the proportion of such students at institutions of higher education in Germany. In addition to sharing knowledge, the two stakeholders are currently exploring various opportunities for cooperation. The University of Bonn is currently intensifying its work on the topic of classism. This move also reflects the commitment of the student body in this area.

In the winter semester 2022/2023, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit organized a *Career Coaching—First-Generation* to prepare first-generation academics at the University of Bonn for career entry. In the workshop, participants were encouraged to reflect on their personal motivation, goals and interests. The workshop was organized as part of the *Diversity and Awareness Workshop Series* (M 11, see Appendix 3), which covers the five focal areas of educational equity, family friendliness, gender equality, inclusion and participation, and anti-discrimination.

In summer semester 2024, the office of the Central Gender Equality Commissioner (ZGB) organized a [workshop for women early-career researchers with the title “Wissenschaftlerin der ersten Generation – was heißt das für mich? Empowerment und Netzwerken für Erstakademikerinnen” \(“First generation woman students—what does that mean for me? Empowerment and networking for first generation woman academics”\)](#) (M 12). In addition to encouraging participants to reflect on their personal resources, the workshop also provided a forum for discussion and exchange.

The IO provides access to a range DAAD-funded [scholarships for international students](#). These include:



- Contact scholarships for students from partner universities who are studying at the University of Bonn under the aegis of the Global Exchange Program
- Scholarships for international students who are about to graduate
- *Scholarships for more equity* open to international students with a refugee background, a chronic illness or disability, care responsibilities or responsibility for minors in their household
- Scholarships for students displaying especially high levels of social engagement
- Scholarships for students from member institutions of the NeurotechEU European university alliance completing an intensive German as a foreign language course
- Erasmus+ scholarships for students at the University of Bonn with a disability or chronic illness, first-generation students, students with a child or students who work, to study or complete an internship abroad

Since 2021, the Erasmus+ Programme has provided financial assistance to students from groups underrepresented in international programs (see above) to enable them to engage in international mobility. To this end, they are awarded an additional €250 per month. In close partnership with the Office of Family Services and the Representative for Students with Disabilities and Chronic Illnesses, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has made considerable efforts to publicize the availability of this funding as soon as it was launched. Reflecting the importance that it places on equal opportunity and international mobility, the IO has also moved to increase the Erasmus funding provided to this target group through provision of Santander scholarships.

International doctoral candidates can participate in a range of support programs run in cooperation between the IO and the [Bonn Graduate Center](#). This includes [writing support groups](#), [welcome and orientation events](#) and [information events on career paths](#) (M 13).

The University of Bonn is open for suggestions from the student body with regard to the issue of educational equity. One of the outcomes of their dialogue includes the University-wide provision of free menstrual hygiene products for students (see section 2.3). The newly designed [General Student Survey](#) (M 14) was conducted for the first time in 2022. Seeking to make a contribution to the goal of improving overall academic success at the University of Bonn, it focused on identifying the challenges experienced by various groups during the course of their studies and the resulting need for support.

The University of Bonn is committed to developing its existing activities in the area of teaching and learning and is taking on greater responsibility for quality and quality management in this area, in a way that is also externally visible. To this end, the University moved to launch a two-stage system accreditation project in 2022, led by the Vice Rectorate for Studies, Teaching and University Development and involving all faculties, the Bonn Center for Teacher Education (BZL) and other University stakeholders as well as an external accreditation consultancy. The objectives of system accreditation include the development and long-term establishment of a continual and participatory culture of quality in the area of teaching and learning. Seeking to coordinate and support the project and the University of Bonn's path to formal system accreditation, the Vice Rectorate established the Quality Management and Digitalization Unit for Teaching and Learning (SQDSL) in Division 9—Studying, Teaching, Academic Planning. A team was appointed to run the new unit in mid-2022. Following the certification of the University of Bonn as a system-accredited university, the SQDSL acts as both the central point of contact for all questions relating to quality assurance and the quality development of the degree programs taught at the University of Bonn, and the internal control loop system. The Gender Equality Office and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit were closely

involved in this project, for example in working to refine the equal opportunity profile in the checklist for the new University mission statement for teaching. This led to the generation of the operational sub-goals of strengthening educational equity, curricular flexibilization as part of a gender-, family-friendly and inclusive university, and educational equity as an object of university studies. The Gender Equality Office, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit and the SQDSL are working together closely to coordinate regular updates of the internal accreditation templates used in every internal accreditation procedure. These generally refer directly to the web and project pages of the Gender Equality Office and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit. The faculties are requested to collaborate with the faculty gender equality officers to supplement the templates or to position themselves accordingly.

## 2.2 Family friendliness is no child's play

The diversification of family models is reflected in the lives of employees and students of the University of Bonn. As such, it is essential that new social realities are reflected in the services provided in this area. The University of Bonn defines the term "family" as any long-term alliance constituted by close personal ties, in which people take responsibility for each other. This definition provides the basis on which the eligibility for support services is decided and childcare places are allocated.

The University of Bonn was certified by the [Family-Friendly University Audit](#) in December 2011; this temporary status was made permanent at the end of 2021. The [Office of Family Services](#), a unit within the Human Resources (HR) division, provides advice and support for staff and students with family responsibilities. The Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit support the work of the Office of Family Services by holding regular meetings to ensure close coordination and to plan joint initiatives. This alliance proved to be beneficial during the course of this year's re-audit, which is discussed below. In order to assess needs on a regular basis, the Office of Family Services and the Vice Rector for Equal Opportunity and Diversity launched the Family in Academia round table (M 15) in March 2022. This provides a forum for researchers with care responsibilities to meet regularly to share experiences and ideas and discuss their response to the challenges that they face in their everyday working lives. The round table presented the Office of Family Services with recommendations for improving the situation of researchers with care responsibilities in summer 2023. These will be incorporated in a range of initiatives including the University of Bonn Diversity Strategy. The University of Bonn receives further stimuli in this area through its participation in transregional networks involving other universities. To this end, it is an active member of the [HochschulNetzwerk Familie \(HNF\) NRW](#) and *Familie in der Hochschule e. V.*

The University of Bonn provides its members a wide range of support services to assist them in their efforts to combine the competing demands of university studies or a career with family life. It currently provides funding for 140 childcare places available to University employees in a range of daycare centers, with a further 115 places reserved for the children of students studying at the University of Bonn. To improve transparency in the childcare placement process, the allocation criteria have been revised and updated (M 16). A points-based system has been introduced to prioritize specific groups such as single parents, people in vocational training or the academic qualification phase, woman managers and fathers on parental leave. The system is designed to ensure that siblings are cared for in the same facility. Special arrangements have also been put in place to make it easier for newly appointed professors to access childcare during the year. In

response to high levels of demand for this service, the University is currently drawing up plans to increase the number of childcare places funded or provided by the University over the coming years. This includes plans for the construction of a new University childcare facility (M 17) in a central location on the Poppelsdorf Campus with capacity for 50 children. A bilingual set-up (German/English) and extended opening hours are planned.

The support provided by the University of Bonn in this area is rounded off by the provision of off-peak and emergency childcare available to parents employed by the University of Bonn. The University also organizes childcare services during the school holidays and at University events. It can also arrange babysitters for students and University staff if required. In cooperation with the City of Bonn, the University provides the [Kinder St.E.R.N.](#) childcare service, organized by La familiär e. V., which offers flexible childcare during off-peak hours and afternoons for students. With the long-term funding for this project secured this year (M 18), students can continue to rely on an important program that enables them to balance the competing demands of university study and family life. The expansion of this infrastructure is subject to regular review in order to ensure that the University of Bonn can offer its members even greater support regarding childcare. The Office of Family Services counseling service also offers University staff and students with care responsibilities individual and tailored advice and awards grants to cover part of the costs of childcare.

Working within the scope of a joint project run by the Gender Equality Office and the Office of Family Services, the University of Bonn provides travel grants to enable University staff to take children on official travel. Several funds are also maintained to provide financial support to students with children, especially single parents experiencing challenging situations. [Short-term financial support is also available to students with children, who are in the final phase](#) of their bachelor's, master's or doctoral program (M 19). This seeks to enable the students to organize their domestic and childcare routine in such a way that permits them to devote more time to completing their final thesis.

Although caring for family members is gaining social recognition, it remains a sensitive and often stigmatized issue. The Office of Family Services is currently involved in the implementation of a range of measures designed to raise awareness of the issue and the associated needs of those affected by it, whilst raising the profile of the wide range of advice and referral services open to them. For example, the Office of Family Services moved in 2016 to appoint a qualified care advisor to its staff, who provides University employees and students with [qualified advice on issues relating to the provision of care for family members](#) (M 20). This service has been well received and its take up has increased steadily. A decentrally run training program equips selected on-campus members of staff to act as first points of contact on the issue of caring for dependents; they learn how to provide their colleagues with preliminary information and work to put them in touch with sources of specialist information and advice. A support group accompanied by an external specialist was set up for those with care responsibilities three years ago. Regular invitations are issued to University staff and students alike and they can attend in-person or via video call. The program is currently under further development and will be relaunched as a low-threshold lunch and talk offer.

The University is currently engaged in establishing an emergency support service for University members both themselves in need of care or responsible for caring for dependents. This will enable them to access services that go beyond the advice and support provided by the Office of Family Services, but which are not covered by a public provider (e.g. relief payments from care insurance providers). These support services are subject to fees and include assistance with financial planning, correspondence with the care or pension funds and care cost accounting by a case manager. The

subsidy is granted to finance further support services geared to affecting a reduction in the demands placed on a person's time, thereby enabling to devote more energy to their work or studies. The Office of Family Services is currently planning a care campaign for 2025. Involving new podcast episodes and a traveling exhibition, the Office will also redouble its networking efforts to ensure greater transparency around its response to this issue and will work to raise awareness about and reduce the taboos that exist in this area.

The Office of Family Services recorded an increase last year in the uptake of its counseling services relating to compensation for disadvantages on the part of pregnant and breastfeeding students and students with children. In addition to the advice that it provides in this area, the Office of Family Services also performs a support role, for example, by accompanying students to coordination meetings with examiners or the examination office. Its staff remains in close dialogue with the Gender Equality Office, which also provides advice in individual cases and accompanies discussions. It is not always easy to find solutions that permit compensation for disadvantages without, for example, extending the duration of studies for the students affected. Action is required in this area to ensure that adjustments can be made which better fulfill both the legal requirements and the voluntary commitments made by the University of Bonn within the scope of the Family-Friendly University Audit to grant compensation for disadvantages and to ensure greater transparency. In July 2024, the Rectorate commissioned the Office of Family Services, the Vice Rectorate for Studies, Teaching and University Development and the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity to initiate discussions with faculty representatives and form working groups to address key issues, including laboratory working practices, alternative examination formats, digital teaching, improving the provision of information, and transparency (M 21). All partners are committed both to achieving greater standardization and transparency for students and teaching staff alike, and to the establishment of best practice examples. In a process of coordination between the Office of Family Services and the Gender Equality Office, the proposals developed will be combined and given expression in binding regulations.

The responsibility and role model function of managers in promoting a working culture that raises awareness of family and other special life phases and circumstances is an increasingly important aspect in ensuring the compatibility of family and career. University of Bonn managers already have a range of tools at their disposal—including coaching and mentoring programs and training courses—that they can deploy to this end. They receive support in their response to achieve a balance between these two elements, both for themselves and their team, from the Office of Family Services, HR and a range of other bodies such as the Onboarding team. Demand in this area is growing, and the existing personnel development programs provided in the areas of counseling, mentoring, coaching, etc. for managers are currently being expanded. One instrument currently in planning is the development of modules designed to support managers in dealing with the issues of the compatibility of family and career and the integration of awareness for this issue into existing HR development programs. Consideration is being given to mandatory training programs that can be rolled out as part of the onboarding process.

Working together with HR, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit is planning to update the management principles based on a new concept of leadership, to formulate clear expectations held of managers with regard to the issue of combining work with care and family responsibilities (raising awareness), and to develop a part-time/tandem management concept. This will be linked to a stronger focus on managers with family or care responsibilities. In this way, the University of Bonn is working to integrate an awareness of these issues into its management structures, whilst combining

them with an intersectional perspective in a move to drive on the process of uncovering and dismantling discriminatory structures and promoting gender equality and inclusion.

The [podcast series “Pssst! Papa lernt und Mama forscht – Familiengerecht studieren und arbeiten an der Uni Bonn”](#) (“Shhh! Dad is studying and Mom is conducting research—families at the University of Bonn”) (M 22) also seeks to raise awareness of the issue of family friendliness. Episodes featuring University members have already been released in which they explore the issues of studying as a parent, counseling, caring for dependents and childcare. Two further episodes are set for release later this year, focusing on motherhood and academia, and resilience in caring for dependents.

## 2.3 Gender equality for all

The University of Bonn strives to facilitate equitable participation of all genders and gender identities in university life. In particular, this includes women’s equality—with the aim being parity, especially in leadership positions—as well as giving greater consideration to underrepresented gender identities in research and administration. Work is therefore being done to raise awareness of gender diversity and thus improve the acceptance of gender identities that lie outside the binary gender system.

An important outcome of recent efforts to this end is the significant increase in the proportion of women professors employed at the University of Bonn, which rose from 19.1% in 2017 to 29.4% in September 2024. The goal of the Rectorate, set in 2019, to increase the proportion of woman professors at the University of Bonn to 30% by 2026 has almost been achieved. The strategy also foresees that 30% of professorships in the seven faculties and of central professorships should be held by women by 2030. It is therefore clear that the University of Bonn is making a significant contribution to fostering a culture of gender equality.

The success of the application from the University of Bonn to the [Programme for Women Professors 2030](#) (M 23) has released start-up funding to enable the appointment of female candidates to three new permanent W2 or W3 professorships. This brings the University closer to achieving the goals outlined above. The University of Bonn recently signed a voluntary commitment drawn up by the German Rectors’ Conference to achieving greater gender equality in appointments. As outlined in the [Reference Framework for Gender Equality 2022–2026](#), established in conjunction with the [Gender Equality Office](#), the University of Bonn also seeks to increase the proportion of women researchers on the path to a professorship. In addition to the establishment of a framework plan, the reference framework sets out clear goals and measures to be implemented in the faculties, departments and central institutions of the University.

One of the central pillars of the University of Bonn’s Excellence Strategy is the funding instrument [Strengthening the Equal Opportunity Process \(STEP\)](#) (M 24) mentioned above. Implemented in 2019 by the then Vice Rector for University Development and Equal Opportunity, Professor K. Sandmann, the program foresees the recruitment and targeted promotion of women researchers. It complements the goal of effecting a sustainable increase in the proportion of women in the academic body of the University of Bonn. The STEP program has gained further publicity during the reporting period, and its services are currently in high demand. The instruments deployed under the aegis of the program are flexible and individually tailored to the needs of women researchers, and have proven themselves suitable in promoting their career development. Several aspects of the program have been adapted since its introduction. For example, it is now explicitly aimed at women

researchers from the postdoctoral phase onward. The goal of strengthening gender equality is pursued through five funding lines:

- Strengthening the financial, human and time resources of women researchers through *support for qualification* (STEP 1) and *onboarding and commitment* (STEP 3)
- Increasing the share of women researchers at the University of Bonn through *recruiting* (STEP 2) and *onboarding and commitment* (STEP 3)
- Working proactively to enable the participation of women researchers in the University decision-making processes through *co-organization* (STEP 4)
- Raising the profile of women researchers through *co-organization* (STEP 4) and *female networks* (STEP 5)

A new pilot project designed to assist women in planning their path to a professorship and achieving the necessary qualifications was introduced in early 2024 within the STEP 1 grant program. The *Career with Family* project provides women postdoctoral researchers with childcare responsibilities with three years of funding for a position. This will be augmented by funding from the Argelander Mobility Grant to enable them to take their family with them on a stay abroad. Should the pilot project prove successful and meet with a positive response, it will be expanded to become an integral component of the gender equality strategy. More than 90 women have already received funding through the STEP program. Three women with exceptional career paths were featured as role models in a 2023 *forsch* article entitled "[How the University of Bonn is promoting equal opportunity](#)."

Seeking to make the appointment procedure more gender-sensitive, an ever-growing team of faculty gender equality officers are involved in all appointment procedures and [gender equality quotas](#) (M 25) have been established for every subject group. These measures are supplemented by the introduction of workshops run within the diversity and awareness workshop series (see section 2.1) focusing on the impact of unconscious bias in the work of appointment committees. The positive impact of these top-down measures is already visible in the increasing sensitivity to gender issues displayed in the faculties and the measures implemented, such as the appointment of faculty gender equality office teams and working groups.

The [University Gender Equality Commissioner and the Gender Equality Office](#) at the University of Bonn offer a wide range of support measures dedicated to the improvement of gender equality and gender mainstreaming. The [MeTra](#) mentoring and training program (M 26) for women doctoral students and postdoctoral researchers, women heads of research groups, lecturers and assistant professors, which was launched in 2004, acts as a comprehensive framework program to provide target group-specific career support to women researchers at the University of Bonn. The program offers career stage-specific training events, an individual mentoring program and regular networking events for each group. Preparations are currently underway to establish an international component of the program, for which there is a great need.

The [Maria von Linden Training Program](#) (M 27) is a workshop program open to all women early-career researchers at the University of Bonn. The program provides training on a range of issues requisite to the planning and later development of an academic career. In 2021, the Gender Equality Office launched a new program titled *#UnsichtbarWarGestern*. In order to empower women early-career researchers, it introduces its participants to the principles of good science communication and provides media and public relations training with the aim of enabling them to raise their public and media profile.



The Gender Equality Office has maintained a [gender and diversity course catalog](#) (M 28) since winter semester 2021/2022 that lists and provides a short description of all the courses taught at the University of Bonn with a specific gender focus. This not only raises the profile of the research and teaching conducted into gender and diversity at the University of Bonn, but also enables students to pursue a specific interest in these topics.

The [Maria von Linden Prize](#) (M 29) was established by the Gender Equality Office in 2022 to recognize outstanding commitment to the cause of gender equality at the University of Bonn. Both individuals and groups can be nominated for the award. The Gender Equality Office also funds [projects for the structural integration of gender equality](#) (M 30). Seeking to effect sustainable change over the long term, this funding aims to help integrate the consideration of gender equality in the institutional structures of the University of Bonn. Projects designed to contribute to effecting cultural and structural change at the faculty level and in other University units (e.g. supporting gender equality, anti-discrimination, raising awareness and career development) can be awarded up to €10,000. One of the most recent projects granted funding was an initiative run in the Faculty of Catholic Theology to develop a module in [theological gender research](#) (M 31).

The Gender Equality Office is also responsible for strategic gender equality controlling. To this end, the office draws up reports and performs statistical evaluations to enable it to act at an early stage to identify processes that both accord with and deviate from the concern of implementing gender mainstreaming in order to develop suitable support measures.

[Gender Consulting](#) advises research networks and third party-funded projects on measures designed to advance the cause of equal opportunity. The services offered include assistance with the application process, the assessment of research projects and the implementation of the measures defined during the project period. The Gender Equality Office works in close cooperation with the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit to advise researchers in their endeavors to incorporate considerations of intersectionality in their work.

One very successful project in this area is the University-wide provision of [free menstrual products](#) (M 32). Responding to a suggestion from the General Students' Committee (AStA), the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity launched a pilot project in cooperation with the AStA in the summer semester of 2022 to install dispensers stocked with free-of-charge menstrual products in a number of toilets on University premises. In 2023, the Rectorate approved long-term funding for an expanded version of the project, which contributes to the achievement of educational equity as well. Now to be administered by Facilities Management, the products are currently available in a total of 24 toilets in 14 central locations. The project has received a remarkable nationwide response and was even covered in the local and regional news media.

The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit is currently collaborating with the Gender Equality Office to develop a standardized concept for the University-wide installation of all-gender toilets. After designing new signage, the project team compiled an [overview of the existing all-gender toilets](#) (M 33) and the facilities they offer and published it online. As the next step, the project will move to draw up minimum standards to serve as a guide for Central Administration and the faculties when installing new all-gender toilets. The project will be accompanied by a targeted public relations campaign also involving social media.

The University of Bonn has identified the transfer of the findings of academic research to their practical application as a major priority. Working alongside with the enaCom Transfer Center, the Gender Equality Office organizes regular women entrepreneurship workshops to account for the



University's third area of responsibility—knowledge and technology transfer, regional engagement and social innovation in the area of gender equality. One effort in this regard was an [exhibition entitled “Patente Frauen—Women Inventors”](#) (M 34) organized in early 2024, focusing on woman inventors from Bonn.

Internal measures maintained by the University of Bonn to provide funding for the endeavors of its students and staff in the area of academic transfer are supplemented by a strategy of external networking. The University of Bonn joined the [Femtec network](#) run by Femtec GmbH in 2023. Femtec offers a career-building program that runs in parallel to university studies. Tailored to the needs of ambitious women STEM students, three consecutive training sessions prepare its participants for the challenges awaiting them in industry, academia and society. The Femtec network was also one of the University of Bonn's partners on the second of this year's Diversity Days, run under the title “[Women Empowering STEM](#)” (See Appendix 2 Overview of the Diversity Days program).

The Femtec initiative is not the only opportunity for women to network and discuss ideas. The University of Bonn maintains a wide range of women's networks in various fields to cater to this need. For example, participants in [LIMES Women in Science](#) have the opportunity to discuss a range of topics such as career planning or soft skills at networking meetings held after a main workshop or lecture event featuring leading women researchers. Similar formats are also hosted at physics ([Women in Physics Bonn](#)), mathematics ([Tea Time with Women in Mathematics](#)), computer science (Strengthening Gender Equality in IT ([GIDIS](#))) and law ([Justitia program](#)). The events organized under the aegis of these programs focus on establishing contacts between women at various stages in their career, introducing role models and discussing ideas on topics such as studying, career progression and life outside the University. Women in Higher Education and Top Science—University of Bonn ([WHATS UB](#)) is an inter-faculty network for women researchers who aspire to, or have already embarked on an academic career. Providing mutual support and raising women's academic profile, this network seeks to empower its members to make the best use of the opportunities that present themselves on the path to a professorship or an academic leadership position.

In order to increase the visibility of gender equality outside its campuses, the University of Bonn supports trans-regional events such as Girls & Boys Day, International Women's Day and the [Orange the World campaign](#), which draws attention to the issue of violence against women and girls, by providing them with publicity in a newsletter and organizing supporting events. The Gender Equality Office takes the lead in this process.

Since the beginning of 2022, the SAP system deployed at the University of Bonn provides a non-binary entry for gender, as required by law. The system now differentiates between four categories: male, female, diverse, and no entry. The Rectorate decided to enable users to choose between the following options for opening correspondence dispatched via SAP: Dear Mr. <title last name> / Dear Ms. <title last name> / Dear <title first name last name> / Good day <title first name last name>. People who do not identify with the gender binary have the option of choosing between a neutral form of address using “Good day” or an inclusive form of address incorporating the ‘\*’ character. This approach to fostering accessible communication is currently being rolled out in other SAP modules (M 35), so that the option will be available to the entire administration in the medium term.

Having taken steps in this way to ensure inclusive forms of address, the University of Bonn administration is currently facing the challenge of ensuring that subsequent texts also continue this inclusive approach. Gender-sensitive language, as part of a low-discrimination university culture, aims to address all people in a respectful manner, irrespective of their gender, and thus to make all

gender identities visible. To this end, a coalition of the Gender Equality Office, University of Bonn academics and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has drafted guidelines for inclusive communication to provide Central Administration and the wider University community with guidance in their efforts to address, respect and value all people, irrespective of their gender. The drafting process was able to draw on existing guides such as the [Gender-inclusive language guidelines from the Faculty of Agriculture at the University of Bonn](#) (M 36).

The Gender Equality Office has awarded its annual [Gender Studies Prize](#) (M 37) since 2003 to the authors of the best theses and dissertations dedicated to the topic of gender equality or focusing on any issue drawn from the discipline of gender and/or queer studies. Including prize money, the prize is awarded during a ceremony at which the prize winners introduce themselves and give a short presentation of their project. The aim of the prize is to raise the profile of gender studies at the University of Bonn.

Originally established as a project of the Gender Equality Office, responsibility for the [contact point for queer students and employees](#) (M 38) was recently transferred to the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit<sup>4</sup>. The Unit serves as a low-threshold point of contact for queer people and contact is mainly made by email. Inquiries are made about a range of topics such as early name changes, gender registration or the correct form of address. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit maintains regular contact with the Queer Department of the AStA.



*Figure 2: Banner of the Safer Spaces for Diversity campaign on the facade of the University Main Building*

The [LGBTQIA\\* employee network](#) (M 39) was established in 2023 to provide lesbian, gay, bisexual, asexual, trans, inter, queer and non-binary members of the University staff with a safe space in which to share experiences and plan activities. Seeking to raise the profile of this community, encourage its members to involve themselves in the University community and thereby foster an inclusive working environment, the network has already provided valuable support to over 30 members of staff. The network plays a key role in the promotion of diversity and inclusion at the University of Bonn.

A safe space campaign (M 40) was launched in summer 2024 by the LGBTQIA\* network. This campaign involved the distribution of door hangers bearing the message “Safer Spaces for Diversity”

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<sup>4</sup> The service is set to move to: <https://www.chancengerechtigkeit.uni-bonn.de/en/inclusion-and-protection-against-discrimination/inclusion-and-protection-against-discrimination>.

and the display of a banner on the University Main Building (see image), which remained visible for several weeks. The Faculty of Protestant Theology also maintains an informal queer network. Open to all faculty members, it is working to establish formal structures. Students, professors and mid-level academic staff in the Faculty of Protestant Theology organize a queer church service in Bonn's *Schlosskirche* every semester.

## 2.4 Inclusion and participation for persons with disabilities and/or chronic illness

Inclusion is a human right and impacts every aspect of the life and operations of the University. In collaboration with relevant stakeholders, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit is currently engaged in developing a strategy geared toward fostering a culture of inclusion at the University of Bonn over the long term. The unit is also engaged in providing advice and support to the various units and bodies of the University and in steering the inclusion process, while always considering the concept of intersectionality. A particular focus is on the topic of accessibility, both in terms of the minimization of physical barriers and the need for accessible (digital) forms of studying, information and counseling services. To this end, the University seeks to maximize the accessibility of the teaching, research and working conditions that it maintains, in order to enable equal and effective participation and make university education open to all. The reduction of physical barriers or barriers constituted by attitudes held in the University community enables all its members to shape their participation in University life in an active, self-determined and low-discrimination manner, which is especially important for people with disabilities.

In order to develop a sustainable inclusion strategy incorporating all the goals described in this report, a project coordinator started in the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit in January 2023 to. The responsibilities include coordinating and developing new activities in the areas of inclusion and participation. The new postholder was tasked with identifying and networking existing structures active in this area, such as the contact points for students at the AStA or inclusion counselors working in the departments. This was followed by the creation of an [inclusion and participation page](#) (M 41) in the equal opportunity portal and the establishment of the inclusion working group (M 42).

The provision of information and training relating to inclusion and participation, along with raising awareness of these issues, are central aspects for fostering acceptance for the development and the implementation of the University of Bonn Diversity Strategy. Measures implemented to this end included workshops on the autism spectrum and ableism for counselors from the University's administration. The summer semester of 2024 saw a collaboration between the Bonn Center for Higher Education (BZH) and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit in the provision of a training program for members of the University teaching staff. Run under the title "Making diversity productive: collaborative work in teaching," it focused on diversity and inclusion. A lecture on the examination law aspects of an inclusive university provided staff from the examination offices and degree program managers with an insight into the latest understanding of the concept of disability and the legal basis for granting and implementing accessibility accommodations, particularly for non-visible disabilities.

In order to raise awareness of the issues involved and because it is important to gain an external perspective on inclusion in professional contexts, the University of Bonn has been participating in the [Inclusion Guides project run by the Hildegardis Association](#) (M 43) since September 2023. Funded by Aktion Mensch and involving a wide range of participating institutions and companies, the project aims to make the recruitment process and working environment more inclusive for women with disabilities. Two expert inclusion guides—both women with disabilities—assist HR, University

Communications and the Central Study Advisory and Counseling Services to realize the visual language, employer branding concept and recruiting strategies deployed at the University of Bonn in an inclusive form.

Other important suggestions for the work of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit, especially in the area of accessible facilities, are made at regular discussions with the [Representative for Students with Disabilities or Chronic Illnesses](#) and the [Representative for Severely Disabled Employees \(SBV\)](#). A guideline for barrier-free building design was developed in cooperation with Facilities Management. The counseling services offered by the Representative for Students with Disabilities or Chronic Illnesses cover a wide range of issues ranging from the commencement of studies to applying for accessibility accommodations. Provision in this area is also available from [contact persons for students with disabilities and/or chronic illnesses in the faculties](#), who also provide counseling on accessibility accommodations in their role as degree program managers.

Since 2022, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has also been a regular participant in the Psychosocial Health working group run by [Healthy Campus](#), a body set up to establish a University health management system. In addition to conducting a survey of student mental health to act as the basis for developing practical approaches to strengthening resilience among the student body, the working group has also designed and launched the Mental Health First Aid workshop (MHFA; M 44). These workshops train laypeople to recognize mental health issues and to do the groundwork requisite for a referral to professional psychosocial counseling centers. After a successful pilot phase in 2023, Healthy Campus now runs two courses of continual professional development on an annual basis. Open to University of Bonn staff members working in a counseling role—e.g. in the examination and doctoral offices—the courses are funded by the *Inclusive University Program* (see below).

The University of Bonn has been an active participant in the “[Kompetenzzentrum Digitale Barrierefreiheit](#)” since early 2022, a project run by *Digitale Hochschule NRW* and coordinated by TU Dortmund University. It performs a range of services in three fields of operation: accessibility testing of websites, the accessibility of digital applications in the context of teaching and learning, and the use of assistive technologies in the context of teaching and learning. Members of staff from the 35 participating universities provide each other with mutual support in their work to implement digital accessibility by pooling knowledge and sharing expertise. The University of Bonn is represented by University IT, the BZH and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit, which take advantage of the advice and training offered by the *Kompetenzzentrum*. The University of Bonn benefits from this participation when implementing the insights thereby gained in the expansion of its own services in the area of digital accessibility.

A sub-working group on digital accessibility has been established (M 45), tasked with discussing the insights developed by the *Kompetenzzentrum Digitale Barrierefreiheit* and developing a concept that facilitates their sustainable transfer into the operations of the University of Bonn. Working on a recommendation from this working group, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit initiated a joint project with the [Digital Science Center \(DiCe\)](#) (which has overall responsibility for the development and implementation of a comprehensive University digital strategy) in the summer of 2024 (M 46). Supported by the members of the DiCe Services & Infrastructure Committee, the first goal of this project is to determine the current status of (digital) accessibility and define initial short-term goals in this area, known as quick wins, which are to be achieved within six months. The second goal is to document the software and applications that have already been realized in accessible form. IT and

Computing Services, University IT (HRZ), the BZH, the Bonn University and State Library (USL) and the Digitalization of Administrative Processes Program (PDaP) are represented on the DiCe committee. The issue of digital accessibility is also anchored in the University of Bonn Digital Strategy. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has participated in a range of external working groups since 2022 including the Accessible University working group of the *Überwachungsstelle des Bundes für Barrierefreiheit von Informationstechnik*, and the Accessibility working group of the German-speaking branch of the International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP).

The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit collaborated in summer semesters 2022 and 2023 with the Location-Based Services seminar to develop a prototype for an accessibility app. As part of a [service-learning module](#), students from the Institute of Geodesy and Geoinformation created a navigable campus map for a section of the Poppelsdorf Campus that highlights low-barrier paths and access points (M 47). Supported by the faculty and Facilities Management, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit is currently making assessments of the accessibility level of selected facilities in the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences (M 48). Conceived as a pilot project, this initiative is intended to serve as a best practice model for the entire University.

A further accessibility measure was implemented with the publication of a [Guide to the Botanic Garden](#) written in easy language (M 49). It was developed by the custodian of the garden working in collaboration with the Representative of Severely Disabled Employees and was published with assistance from the *Gesellschaft für Leichte Sprache e.G.*

The Vice Rectorate and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit were present at the [Science Festival 2023](#) and presented their work in [the area of inclusion](#) (M 50). Organized by the six University of Bonn Transdisciplinary Research Areas (TRA) and the University vice rectorates, the event provided a participative program for University members and guests from Bonn civil society. Within a cooperation with the Accessible Communication initiative, visitors were able to test a range of assistive technologies and take photographs in an accessible photo box. One highlight was the performance by Project Inclusion, a Bonn-based band which had been established through participation in a film project. The Inclusive University program (see below) was presented in the tent organized by the Vice Rectorate for Teaching, Learning and University Development.

The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit also hosted an information stand at this year's [Science Night](#) (M 51), a project run by several stakeholders in the NRW area seeking to address schoolchildren and the wider public. As part of the display of the transdisciplinary research area "Individuals, Institutions and Societies", the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit set up a booth run in cooperation with the [Interfaces, Accessibility and Disability Studies](#) research area from the *Forum Internationale Wissenschaft* (FIW).

Other publicity measures have also been deployed to raise awareness within the University community of the topic of inclusion and draw attention to the support services offered by our partners. For example, [posters and postcards](#) (M 52) have been produced that can be displayed at institutes and central facilities to publicize a range of services. These materials are also on display in the [accessible workstations and quiet rooms](#) maintained at the University and financed by the [Inclusive University](#) funding program from the state of NRW. The internal focus of this project aims to ensure University-wide participation and the needs-driven allocation of funds. It also provides funding for accessible workstations, combined quiet and rest rooms, study assistants and projects. The funds have been put to a range of uses, including the above-mentioned creation of the position of a project coordinator for inclusion and participation in the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit (M



53) and a part-time position for inclusive university sports (M 54). Two projects at the Institute of Geosciences have been awarded funding: The [GEOWINS—GEOWissenschaften INklusiv Studieren](#) project (M 55) works to identify barriers to accessibility in the degree program and test (digital) alternatives that ensure participation. The second project, [Inclusive and Flexible Education in Meteorology and Geophysics: Enabling Accessibility and Self-Determined Learning](#) (M 56), produces accessible Open Educational Resources (OERs). In addition to furnishing specialist libraries and equipping them with a range of hardware and software to enable accessible and low-stimulus working, lifts were purchased for the University Main Building and the lecture hall center. Software was also acquired to record digital accessibility and a hearing loop system was installed in the lecture hall center. In other areas, University Sports was awarded funding to enable the purchase of inclusive sports equipment and is planning further purchases. The program has also funded initiatives to raise awareness of these issues and to provide a range of continual professional development such as the MHFA workshop mentioned above. Such large-scale measures are supplemented by grants awarded to individual students to enable them to purchase equipment or study support services.



*Figure 3: Logo of the GemeinsamAktiv buddy program*

The inclusive buddy program [GemeinsamAktiv](#) (M 57) is planned to start in winter semester 2024/2025. Organized in cooperation with University Sports as an inclusive sports program for University of Bonn students, it seeks to reduce the barriers and inhibitions that prevent take-up of the sports facilities. This is to be achieved by encouraging the formation of personal relationships between the buddies, who undertake a range of activities together, including sports. Drawing diverse participants into the University Sports program through friendship ties, the program is designed to break down social barriers to participation and forge an inclusive and supportive sports community at the University through the establishment of personal relationships.

## 2.5 An intersectional perspective on anti-discrimination

Committed to welcoming all people regardless of their background, the University of Bonn is aware of its responsibility to forge a community that lives up to the values of respect, inclusion and the valorization of the individual. Discrimination and violence will not be tolerated at the University of Bonn. The University expects that all its members and guests conduct their activities on the basis of mutual respect and trust, while remaining aware of and addressing discrimination. The University management sees itself as responsible for providing all its members and guests with protection against violations of their right to personal freedom, dignity, and privacy. It is committed not only to implementing the necessary protective measures requisite to preventing discrimination and violence, but sanctioning all infringements of these rights. Two part-time positions were created in the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit in April and June 2023 to provide the personnel capacity to work on the issue of anti-discrimination (M 58). The two staff members complement each other very well in their respective areas of expertise and can advise each other as colleagues.

Racism, including structural racism, is a challenge facing all German universities. The University of Bonn has adopted a clear stance against racism for the whole institution. [An anti-racism counseling service](#) (M 59) was initiated in 2022 by the former autonomous BIPOC Department of the AStA. Staffed by an external psychological counselor and trainer specializing in empowerment and anti-discrimination, this service gives students the opportunity to reflect on their experiences of racism made in the University context and to develop an individual coping strategy. In individual cases, the counselor works together with the Vice Rector for Teaching, Learning and University Development to enter into a dialogue with any member of the University teaching staff subject to allegations. In addition, a [BIPOC employee network](#) (M 60) was established as a safe space in which employees can network informally, share their experiences and plan joint activities.

“How safe do you feel at university?” This is what the University of Bonn wanted to know from its staff and students in a survey conducted at the beginning of 2023. The central finding: over 90 per cent of the 1,120 respondents felt “safe” or “very safe.” Although the University is generally pleased with this result, it recognizes the fundamental necessity of making improvements. To this end, the University of Bonn moved in recent months to implement a range of measures designed to improve campus safety and thus enhance the sense of security among staff and students. The measures include the introduction and expansion of patrol services in key locations, better visibility of campus security guards, the establishment of a 24-hour emergency number and improved lighting in critical areas such as the *Hofgarten* park.

The [Policies for Protection against Sexualized Discrimination and Violence](#) (SDG) (M 61) updated by the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Unit, the Anti-Discrimination Office (AGG complaints desk) and the University Gender Equality Commissioner, were published on March 2, 2023. The guidelines establish standards of conduct and procedures for dealing with cases of sexualized discrimination and violence. The guidelines are currently being publicized through a number of target group-specific channels (e.g. flyers) and an educational film is currently being planned. An overview of the advice and support available to those affected and the points of contact at which to submit complaints can be found on the [Policies for Protection Against Sexualized Discrimination and Violence web page](#). Workshops and presentations focusing on these issues are currently in planning. They will work to raise awareness of the impact of the policies among those affected by them. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has requested a voluntary commitment to non-discriminatory and non-violent interactions in the context of studies, teaching and the workplace. The counselors staffing the points of first contact for people affected by discrimination and violence will be given intensive training in close coordination with Human Resource Development (M 62). Regular network meetings involving all the stakeholders are planned to facilitate processes of collegial exchange and joint learning. Human Resources Development is currently liaising with the Vice Rectorate and the Gender Equality Office to plan a series of training courses for managers and a separate training course for student counselors, including those from the AStA.

Through signing a joint [declaration of commitment by all universities in NRW](#) (M 63) in September 2023, the University of Bonn reaffirmed its dedication to working against the abuse of power. To this end, the Vice Rectorate appointed a [University Abuse of Power Officer](#) in the summer of 2024 (M 64). Tasked with advising the Rectorate and the faculties in this area, the representative also functions as a contact person for those affected by cases in which people abuse their power, and runs office hours to provide advice and support to those affected.



In May 2024, [two Anti-Semitism Liaison Officers](#) (M 65) were appointed to advise the Rectorate and the faculties and act as contacts for Jewish members and guests of the University of Bonn. The University also maintains a range of other contact points which those affected by discrimination can turn to. In the event of suspected research misconduct, the ombudsperson's office provides preliminary counseling for early-career researchers. Professor Klaus Gärditz is the Research Integrity Ombudsperson. The [Investigative Commission for Research Misconduct](#) has been given overall responsibility for investigating allegations of academic misconduct. The [Internal Reporting Office for Research Misconduct](#) has also been established to process reports of legal violations and misconduct within the University. These reports will be treated with the strictest of confidence and can also be submitted anonymously.

Working on the basis of the General Act on Equal Treatment (AGG), the [Anti-Discrimination Office](#) works to offer advice and support to people who have experienced discrimination on the basis of their ethnic or national origin, gender, religion, disability, age or sexual identity. The [Disciplinary Committee](#) deals with violations of University regulations by students, including cases of discriminatory behavior. Complaints regarding incidents of sexual discrimination and violence can also be submitted via the online discrimination complaints form (M 66), provided by the Gender Equality Office. These reports can also be submitted anonymously. Seeking to facilitate access to the services, plans are currently being drawn up to create a central page on the University of Bonn website listing all contact points and sources of counseling on discrimination, (academic) misconduct and abuse of power.

A [concept to raise awareness](#) (M 67) for inclusive and discrimination-sensitive events includes a range of support and training programs for multipliers. There has been an increase in requests for consultation in this area from a range of administrative and teaching units at the University of Bonn. These inquiries relate predominantly to the need for anti-discrimination measures and workshops to raise awareness about a number of issues such as racism. An increased level of commitment in this area has been registered on the part of the faculty student councils since 2023.

In addition to measures designed to reform the institutional structures of the University of Bonn, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit also engages in a range of targeted activities to disseminate information throughout the University community. This includes the ongoing expansion of the [diversity portal](#) (M 68) which makes information available to all interested parties. The new anti-discrimination web page provides comprehensive information on the action taken and services provided in this area, and a [diversity glossary](#) (M 69) provides definitions of a number of terms in order to foster a common understanding of the important issues involved.

Further measures to raise awareness in this area:

- A [campaign for discrimination-sensitive first-semester weeks](#) (M 70) organized in cooperation with the AStA
- An empowerment workshop for BIPOC students
- Anti-racism workshops for counselors
- A workshop for the Rectorate to raise awareness of the issue of discrimination

Our network partners are strongly committed to the issue of anti-discrimination. For example, the [Bonn Center for Dependency and Slavery Studies \(BCDSS\)](#) Cluster of Excellence maintains a dedicated coordinator for diversity, equity and inclusion, with whom the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit works closely. The empowerment programs of the ZSB and the counseling services of the IO,

specifically tailored to the needs of international students, immigrants and refugees, should also be highlighted in this regard. The large number of programs offered at the University of Bonn precludes a comprehensive list. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit also works together with external partners such as Migrapolis, an intercultural center in Bonn, to strengthen our commitment to the cause of anti-discrimination. The University of Bonn values democracy and human rights as the basis of our open society, and is highly concerned about the growth of anti-democratic tendencies in German society. It condemns all forms of discrimination, racism and extremism in the strongest possible terms. To this end, the University of Bonn participated in the [#Zusammenland—Vielfalt macht uns stark](#) campaign in March 2024 (M 71), which was in line with the move made by the University in 2017 to sign the [Bonn declaration for more cosmopolitanism and tolerance](#).

## 2.6 The sustainable integration of measures in the institutional structures of the University

The Rectorate is committed to realizing a culture of equal opportunity and diversity at the University of Bonn and actively ensures that this ethos informs and animates all University operations over the long term. To this end, the University management works to foster an inclusive University culture and has adopted a systematic approach to uncovering and dismantling structures of inequality and tackling mechanisms of exclusion. The prerequisite for an inclusive University culture is the practice of free and critical academic discussion. Only in this way is it possible to pose the questions and develop the comprehensive solutions that will drive the transformative and sustainable change towards the development of a truly inclusive institutional culture.

In addition to the range of workshops offered to University members and outlined in this report, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit and its cooperation partners themselves undergo a comprehensive program of continual professional development. Furthermore, an intersectional approach is used in the needs-based development of new activities and the adaptation of existing ones.

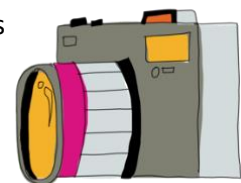
The Vice Rectorate and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit have established four guiding principles to ensure the integration of the concerns of equal opportunity and diversity in the institutional structures and culture of the University over the long-term: (1) building trust through networking, (2) good communication through a range of information channels, (3) the involvement of University members in all processes in order to learn from their perspective and incorporate them in design processes wherever possible, (4) establishing equal opportunity and diversity as a focus in research.

**Networking:** The BRIDGES mission statement (see section 2) provides an excellent foundation on which to perform work to integrate the principles of equal opportunity and diversity in the institutional structures and culture of the University. It was drafted to foster a work culture that enables the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit to approach cooperation partners easily and take action to reflect and incorporate their perspectives and expert knowledge in its work. Partners include liaison persons within the teaching staff and subject advisors, who provide information that is important to the work of the Unit. In addition to the members of the University-wide diversity network, who often function as partners of the measures and cooperation projects outlined in this report, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit maintains an intensive exchange with the contacts for diversity, gender equality and equal opportunity in the research networks and the six [Clusters of Excellence](#). Together with Gender Consulting, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit is planning closer collaboration with key contacts to foster exchange among colleagues. In terms of research, the

managers of the [Transdisciplinary Research Areas](#) (TRAs) play a key role in identifying leading research figures.

The University also maintains an intensive dialogue with the diversity officers of the [Bonn Research Alliance](#) (BORA), a body composed of the 12 institutions of academic research in the Bonn region that belong to the Fraunhofer, Helmholtz, Leibniz and Max Planck institutes active on the national level, and two regional organizations, namely the *Johannes-Rau-Forschungsgemeinschaft* and the United Nations University (UNU). The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit is also a member of [Diversity an Hochschulen](#), a nationwide network of postholders from over 60 universities with operative and strategic responsibilities in the area of diversity and anti-discrimination. Seeking to enhance its commitment to diversity, the University of Bonn joined the [Rheinland Netzwerk Chancengerechtigkeit](#) in summer 2023, a body dedicated to intensifying exchange between universities and other academic institutions in the Rhineland region and generating synergies. The University of Bonn maintains a close quarterly dialogue with the universities in the audit cohort from which it regularly draws stimulus for its work in this area. As a member of the German U15, a strategic stakeholder group of internationally-leading research-led universities in Germany, the University of Bonn maintains close ties with a number of leading Canadian universities with whom there is an ongoing collaboration regarding the development of a joint DEI concept paper.

**Communication:** The wide range of support, counseling and participation services provided at the University of Bonn is listed in the [equal opportunity and diversity portal](#). Members of the University can use the contact form on the portal page [chancengerechtigkeit.uni-bonn.de/en](https://chancengerechtigkeit.uni-bonn.de/en) to submit their needs, ideas and critical comments. The proactive approach of University Communications and the regular dialogue that it maintains with the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit ensure that the latest developments from the University are quickly brought to the attention of the Vice Rectorate and the Unit. University Communications supports the communication strategies of the Vice Rectorate and the Unit through a social media strategy and the publication of articles in the University newsletter. Larger events, such as the Diversity Days (see Appendix 2), are also supported by the social media team. For example, in the run-up to the Diversity Days 2022, University Communications featured selected network partners within the scope of an online visual story entitled [“Vielfalt leben! – Wie verschiedene Menschen sich an der Universität für Diversität engagieren”](#) (“Living diversity!—How different people are committed to diversity at the University”). The September 2022 edition of the University magazine *forsch* featured an interview with the Vice Rector and the head of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit. Under the headline [“Everyone Benefits”](#) they explained the central importance of the topics of diversity and equal opportunity to the University of Bonn. December 2022 saw publication in the *Bonner General-Anzeiger* of an article *“Uni Bonn hat noch Luft nach oben bei der Gleichstellung”* (“University of Bonn still has room for improvement in terms of gender equality”), which focused on the measures implemented to increase the proportion of women professors. An extensive communication campaign was launched in winter semester 2023/2024 as part of the German Rectors’ Conference-funded Promoting Diverse Networks project, which is discussed in more detail below.



**Participation:** The University of Bonn endeavors to make all its events as inclusive and non-discriminatory as possible. Over the past year, the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has received a large number of requests from a range of offices in the University for assistance in realizing such low-discrimination, inclusive events. In order to respond to this demand, the Unit moved to develop an awareness concept, which it published through the Safer Spaces for Diversity campaign. The Unit

and the Vice Rectorate are able to reach a wide public to provide information about this issue both through the events that they organize and through participation in events organized by network partners (e.g. *Bergfest* with a focus on empowerment, First-Semester Students Welcome, PostDoc Day and Sustainability Day). They deploy a range of formats (flyers, postcards and memory games) to disseminate information.

In the winter semester 2023/2024, the Vice Rectorate and the Unit implemented the [Promoting Diverse Networks](#) project. Funded by the BMBF and coordinated by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) initiative "Diversity at German Universities", the participatory approach of the project included

- a media campaign presenting individuals from the University of Bonn who are committed to diversity or are conducting research about it,
- a lecture series organized in cooperation with the [Diversity Research Unit](#) of the Faculty of Arts focusing on the work conducted on diversity at universities, by government and civil society actors,
- a series of workshop discussions about a range of diversity topics bringing together all status groups to share ideas, perspectives and requirements regarding diversity at the University of Bonn
- the development of a staff survey on diversity with the support of the [Center for Evaluation and Methodology \(ZEM\)](#).

The project has resulted in the stronger and more sustainable integration of diversity issues into the operational structures of the University of Bonn and the involvement of all status groups has resulted in the generation of a number of important ideas and impulses for the diversity work conducted at the University. The ideas from the [workshop discussions](#) were visualized to enable those working in this area to draw on them over the long term. The media campaign had a wide reach and was successful not only in publicizing the commitment of various stakeholders at the University of Bonn to the issue of diversity, but also in generating new interest in this important issue. New collaborations have emerged within the University of Bonn which will make a sustainable contribution to diversity engagement, not least through expansion of the diversity network. The staff diversity survey (see above) planned for winter semester 2024/2025 will be anonymous and voluntary. The data from the survey and the findings of the workshop discussions will be put to use in a range of tasks, including the evaluation and further development of measures.

**Research:** The transfer of research findings into practice is another column for sustainability. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit works closely with researchers involved in this area to this end (see the section on networking above). An important partner in this process is the Diversity Research Unit (see above) in the Faculty of Arts. Working to coordinate the various programs of research and teaching developed in this area, it liaises closely with student initiatives and groups. It also acts as a platform to bring together all those currently conducting or planning diversity research, thereby taking a truly interdisciplinary approach. The central aim is the inclusion of all aspects of diversity into teaching.

Further examples of initiatives to integrate the aspect of diversity in University research include:

- The [Research Group for Theological Gender Studies](#) (ATG) at the Faculty of Catholic Theology (KTF) makes a number of contributions to the process of making the findings of gender studies research accessible to both KTF students and a broad internal and external public. The findings and perspectives of theological gender research are integrated in the teaching

of the faculty and are explored at individual events such as lecture series and research projects conducted in cooperation with partners both within the University and beyond.

- June 2024 saw the organization by the Institute of English, America, and Celtic Studies of the first [Queer Week](#) at the University of Bonn. Aiming to raise awareness of the aspects of queer studies and queer linguistics researched and taught at the institute, the program included a wide range of academic lectures, workshops, queer activism and art. Some courses with relevant topics were opened up to the entire university.
- The research area [Interfaces, Accessibility and Disability Studies](#) maintained at the *Forum Internationale Wissenschaft* (FIW) combines technology and digitalization research with anthropological inquiries into human abilities, lifelong development and cultural as well as individual differences.

## 2.7 Establishing structures for diversity management at the University of Bonn

The establishment of the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit and their direct connection to the Rectorate (see section 2) means that initiatives in the area of equal opportunity and diversity can be implemented quickly and directly. The two bodies remain in intensive and regular communication with the other vice rectorates and University units in order to benefit from feedback, strategic insights and synergies. The needs of the faculties are also taken up directly in a series of joint retreats and meetings held every semester. Seeking to provide guidance to the faculties in equal opportunity and diversity matters, the head of the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit has for the past two years been taking part in the Vice Rector's meetings with the individual faculties held every semester. This direct exchange has proven highly effective and has resulted in improved coordination with the activities of the faculties in the area of diversity. The move to reappoint the Vice Rector for Equal Opportunity and Diversity for a further term, results in good planning security and will enable stakeholders to continue to work on the priorities outlined in this report.

Special mention should also be made of the excellent level of complementarity in the distribution of tasks between the Gender Equality Office and the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity. While the former is tasked primarily with working toward gender equality and implementing the appendant training and mentoring programs devised to this end, it also performs the tasks of gender equality controlling and provides counseling in cases of sexualized discrimination and violence. For their part, the Vice Rectorate and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit focus on further dimensions of diversity and the implementation of the diversity-related measures outlined in the Excellence Strategy (Pathways to Research, see section 2.1, and STEP, section 2.3). The constructive collaboration between the three stakeholders is facilitated by the adoption of an intersectional perspective, and the profitable relationship which they maintain is valued by all involved. In this way, the experience and insights gained from the efforts geared toward achieving gender equality can be applied to the design of measures and programs that focus on other dimensions of diversity.

The Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit receive important support from Central Administration in the form of advice on legal issues and assistance in the organization of events and communication strategies. Working in close cooperation with the Vice Rectorate, Central Administration also undertakes its own measures in this area.

As outlined in previous sections, the Vice Rectorate for Equal Opportunity and Diversity and the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit network intensively with a range of partners in their quest to develop further project ideas and target-group specific programs geared toward effecting sustainable

long-term change. All stakeholders, but especially the members of the Diversity Working Group, function as important multipliers in the work to ensure continuous progress toward the achievement of more equal opportunity and diversity.

### 3 Report on the development goals from the second self-evaluation report

The University of Bonn set itself the following development goals in its second self-evaluation report:

- Establishment of a diversity-led study success monitoring system
- Adoption of a systematic approach to assisting applicants in their efforts to select a suitable degree program
- Selection of a suitable degree program in curricular flexibilization
- Provision of academic support

#### 3.1 Establishment of a diversity-led study success monitoring system

In its efforts to develop the conditions of teaching and learning that it maintains, the University of Bonn has committed to implementing a systematic approach that ensures that these become fully reflective of the diversity of its student body. Factors relating to the social and educational background and personality of applicants and students are taken into account during the entire process from study orientation through to graduation. Reliable data on the educational progression of student cohorts—including study success, changes of subject and institution and the transition from the bachelor's to the master's phase—is becoming increasingly important for universities. To address these priorities, the University of Bonn Key Data Portal (KDP), a web-based quality management platform for visualizing study schedule analyses, has been further developed. The portal enables those involved in quality management at the University of Bonn to generate customized module, examination and study schedule analyses. In this way, those working in this area will be in a position to collaborate with the BZH to develop specific analysis concepts for individual degree programs and to refine student surveys to ensure their effectiveness.

The strategic decisions made within the scope of the ongoing process of system accreditation (see section 2.1) and the associated expansion of the analysis and evaluation tools deployed to this end are of central importance when determining the type and scope of the data to be collected and selecting the methods required for their analysis when seeking to reconcile the demands of study success with the needs of diversity. Before further data can be collected, the demands of data minimization mean that it is first necessary to determine the extent to which procedural changes, the further aggregation of existing data and the application of alternative methods of evaluation constitute a suitable alternative to realizing the goals set.

Working on the basis of previous experiences, the insights drawn from existing data and the results of the systematic study schedule and study success analyses, it was possible to select the evaluation procedures that determine the level of success experienced by students in choosing a degree program that best fits their interests and aptitude, and which can be used to determine the factors affecting this success. The dimensions registered within this process are as follows:

- Basic knowledge, cross-sectional qualifications and specific expertise
- Good study and learning conditions for different target groups
- Gender



- Age groups
- Student background

### 3.2 Adoption of a systematic approach to assisting applicants in their efforts to select a suitable degree program

The [Online Self-Assessments \(OSA\)](#) conducted at the University of Bonn are subject-specific study orientation tests designed to give potential students an insight into a degree program and help them to choose what to study. Subject to ongoing further development in a process of cooperation between the ZSB, the Center for Evaluation and Methodology (ZEM) and the faculties, OSAs give their users an insight into the respective subject and thereby enable prospective students to test for themselves how well their personal skills, interests and expectations match the requirements and actual content of their intended degree program. OSAs also enable prospective international applicants and other individuals who experience difficulties in accessing face-to-face events to gather reliable information about the content and requirements of a degree program. The Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit was consulted in order to ensure the diversity-sensitive and non-discriminatory formulation of the questions. To further enhance accessibility, two inclusion guides (see section 2.4) will contribute their perspectives during a workshop in the coming winter semester.

### 3.3 Selection of a suitable degree program in curricular flexibilization

The work of the system accreditation process (see section 2.1) was based on the [Guiding Principles in Studying and Teaching](#) from the University of Bonn and the Recommendations for a Sustainable Organization of Studying and Teaching from the German Council of Science and Humanities. Among the measures implemented within this process was a degree program checklist drawn up within the scope of sub-projects, which included a section on equal opportunity as a criterion of quality. The checklist serves the purposes of both strengthening educational equity and achieving curricular flexibilization in the service of working toward the achievement of gender equality and fostering a family-friendly and inclusive university culture. It contains a total of nine criteria for internal quality checks, which the degree program coordinators are required to follow. These criteria were agreed on together with the Equal Opportunity and Diversity Unit.

Since 2021, funding for teaching projects has been awarded annually under the aegis of the [vielfältig.nachhaltig.digital](#) program. Funding is allocated following a competitive selection process to projects that work to affect the structural flexibilization of curricula and create new forms of learning. The program suggests three possible approaches: the creation of individualized study pathways; the development and integration of dialogue, participation and reflection-led learning and supervision formats; and the acquisition of sustainability-oriented skills. Successful projects to date include the provision of support to individual students through adaptive testing, the reorganization of introductory courses, the introduction of new concepts of teaching and learning, and the creation of supported learning platforms. The project seeks to promote the development of creative work spaces and holistic learning platforms.

The Bonn study support program (Be Strong!) is designed for students in all phases of their studies. The three pillars of the program, “Well oriented!”, “Subject fit!”, and “Be empowered!”, take a systematic approach to the provision of needs-driven and targeted advice and support to students in all phases of their degree studies. In addition to providing services that enable students to explore and reflect on the degree programs open to them, students can also access targeted specialist



support, interdisciplinary foundation courses and resource-strengthening programs covering the key study skills #SkillPOWER, #HealthPOWER, #SocialPOWER and #FuturePOWER.

### 3.4 Provision of academic support/academic monitoring

The [Center for Diversity Research in Teaching \(ZeDiL\)](#) is a central research unit at the University of Bonn tasked with conducting research into diversity in university teaching. The center aims to use the findings of its work to provide support to those working in this area and thereby enable them to anchor the issue of diversity in degree curricula. Working in close coordination with the faculties and subject areas, it uses existing data to perform the following tasks:

- Develop and supervise the implementation of didactic concepts that conceive of student diversity as an instrument with which to develop skills in teaching and learning,
- Conduct of empirical studies on the level of success registered in developing the individual potential of students at the University of Bonn,
- Implement the insights thereby gained into the curricular design process, the design of the learning environment and the organizational structures of the University of Bonn.

Unfortunately, the director of ZeDiL was appointed to another position shortly after taking office and the research unit only resumed its work after the reappointment of Professor Lauermann to head the center in summer 2023. Restructuring measures are currently being developed to prepare the center to perform new tasks related to the digitalization of teaching.

## 4 Outlook on the development goals

The development goals outlined in this report are based on the five strategic priorities of the University of Bonn's Equal Opportunity and Diversity Mission Statement. All activities and measures currently in planning to achieve these goals will be specified in the Diversity Strategy, which will be finalized in summer 2025 and be given expression in a detailed project and action plan. Based on an understanding of the future needs of the University, the development goals have been shaped by feedback from a range of participatory processes involving all University status groups and partners. These development goals will remain in effect for the next three years.

### 4.1 Educational equity

#### 1) Expanding the level of support provided to first-generation academics

The University of Bonn is working to strengthen the programs that provide support to first generation students. This includes the expansion of existing scholarship programs and counseling services and provision of opportunities to meet role models.

Verifiable through: the number of scholarships awarded by new scholarship programs, evaluation of the volume and quality of internal university networking on scholarship programs, and increased levels of cooperation with schools

#### 2) Integrating international students and staff in the University community

The existing preparation and support programs working with international students, researchers, teachers and persons with refugee background will be subject to improved coordination, increasing their levels of efficiency and accessibility.

Verifiable through: the provision of new sources of information on the University website, the provision of more information and counseling services in English, an increase in the volume of counseling and referral services dealing with accommodation for international students

## 4.2 Family friendliness

### 3) Improving the compatibility of university studies and a career with family by expanding the provision of childcare services

The University of Bonn seeks to improve the ability of its students and staff to combine university studies, academic research and a career with family. This is to be achieved through the establishment of a University daycare center and expansion of existing flexible childcare services such as those provided during the school holidays.

Verifiable through: the realization of plans to construct a University childcare center on the Poppelsdorf Campus, thereby implementing a childcare concept tailored to the needs of the University, an increase in the number of parent-child rooms, expansion in the level of childcare services provided during the school holidays etc.

### 4) Establishing a family-friendly management culture at the University of Bonn

As part of cultivating a working culture and studying conditions that take into account individual family situations and life phases, managers and teaching staff should be sensitized about possibilities to support students and staff with family or caring duties. In addition, subject-specific recommendations will be made on appropriate forms of accessibility accommodations for pregnant and breastfeeding students.

Verifiable through: the adaptation of existing family-friendly structures (e.g. management principles) through the development of part-time and shared management practices, the expansion of personnel development offers for managers dealing with compatibility issues, the systematic review of the design of accessibility accommodations for students with family responsibilities, taking into account best practice examples

## 4.3 Gender equality

### 5) Increasing the proportion of women in management positions

The University of Bonn has set itself the target of increasing the proportion of women in senior positions, in particular professorships. Action is to be taken to recruit more women to serve on bodies at the faculty and University level. Special priority will be accorded to increasing the level of representation of international women researchers in these contexts.

Verifiable through: an increase in the proportion of (international) women in postdoctoral positions, early-career research group leadership positions and in the professoriate, the establishment of an English-language grant program as part of the MeTra program, the expansion of programs available to women working in the field of transfer

### 6) Strengthening the provision of inclusion and support for LGBTQIA\* people

The University of Bonn is working proactively to promote the inclusion and support of LGBTQIA\* persons within the University community. Measures implemented to this end include the formulation of defined minimum standards for all-gender toilets, the introduction

of guidelines to ensure gender-inclusive language in internal University communication and further expansion of the LGBTQIA\* employee network.

Verifiable through: the number of new all-gender toilets, adoption of the language guide for internal communication, the development of the membership of the LGBTQIA\* employee network and the number of events that it organizes

## 4.4 Inclusion and participation

### 7) Improving accessibility and counseling

The University of Bonn is working toward making improvements to the accessibility of both its buildings and IT services. It is currently overseeing the expansion of the information and support services tailored to the needs of students with disabilities and chronic illnesses and provided on both the central and faculty levels.

Verifiable through: the establishment of standards for barrier-free building design, integration of the consideration of digital accessibility in the Digital Strategy, implementation of the DiCe project for digital accessibility, provision of a campus navigation function in the University of Bonn app that also takes accessibility into account, an increase in the number of faculty contacts for students with disabilities

### 8) Internal and external communication

The University of Bonn is committed to raising awareness of the issues of disability and diversity through internal and external strategies of intersectional and inclusive communication, thereby making a contribution to the promotion of a change in culture throughout the University.

Verifiable through: training courses for editors, the publication of a guide for accessible social media communication

## 4.5 Anti-discrimination

### 9) Establishing consistent anti-discrimination standards in teaching and learning

The University of Bonn regularly focuses on the issue of diversity (including the aspects of studying and working with disabilities) in its internal and external strategic communication and, in so doing, raises awareness for this topic among its target groups. The University places special emphasis on the importance of inclusive visual communication as a factor in effecting cultural change.

Verifiable through: establishing diversity as a permanent topic of strategic communication planning, conducting the regular “Lend your face to the university” photo campaigns, the establishment of guidelines for accessible social media communication

### 10) Establishing an intervention working group as part of the University of Bonn anti-discrimination strategy

The University of Bonn has set up a working group to develop and optimize its existing anti-discrimination procedures and provide support to those working in this area. Tasked with developing a range of preventative measures, intervention strategies, guidelines and procedures, the working group will also draw up measures to ensure the transparency and

effectiveness of the University complaints procedure to enable a rigorous and fair response to complaints of sexualized discrimination, violence and abuse of power.

Verifiable through: the evaluation of guidelines and procedures, the conduct of surveys of counseling centers on the volume of counseling performed, increasing visibility and accessibility through establishment of the central “Counseling and reporting centers” web page, counting the number of clicks on the website, conducting a staff anti-discrimination survey

An intersectional perspective is central to achieving these goals and ensuring that the University of Bonn continues its transformation into a diversity-sensitive, equitable and inclusive university. To this end, any work put into the strategic priorities is based on an intersectional understanding of diversity. This also means that the various needs have to be considered individually in the different programs and measures to permit the provision of support in a targeted fashion.