

Mission Statement

for Equal Opportunity and Diversity

of the University of Bonn

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



Excellence through Equal Opportunity and Diversity

The University of Bonn stands for top-level research within an extensive global network, for sound communication of science in 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 teaching and 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. It signed the *Charta der Vielfalt* in January 2017 and between 2017 and 2020 successfully completed the *Stifterverband's* diversity audit *Vielfalt gestalten*. 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.

The Vice Rectorate and the Unit are tasked to develop strategic ideas for further strengthening excellence through diversity and inclusion at the University of Bonn and for ensuring equal opportunity to the highest possible degree. Moreover, the Vice Rectorate and the Unit implement measures to promote equal opportunity and diversity. They support and connect organizational units and members of the University of Bonn that share the same aims, e.g. within the Diversity Network. These efforts are guided by the BRIDGES principle, which stands for “building networks for participation, individual diversity, recognition and appreciation.” The Vice Rectorate and Unit thus act as bridge builders, driving forces and advisors and liaise closely with, among others, the Rectorate, the dean’s offices and divisions, the Central Gender Equality Officer and the gender equality officers of the faculties, the Office of Family Services, the Representative for Persons with Disabilities or Chronic Disease, the Anti-Discrimination Office (the complaints desk in accordance with the General Act on Equal Treatment, or AGG), and Human Resource Development, Organizational Development and Health Management.

Our Vision—an inclusive and cosmopolitan University

The University of Bonn strives to guarantee and further develop the best possible study, research, teaching and working conditions. It ensures that its members can participate in the University community regardless of their age, gender, sexual identity or orientation, ethnic or social background, religion or beliefs and whether or not they have a disability or chronic condition. Discrimination is not tolerated and will be sanctioned; it is incompatible with an inclusive, cosmopolitan university culture that promotes equal opportunity.

The University of Bonn aims to make the diversity of its members more visible and to communicate the relevance of equal opportunity and diversity to its various status groups. In particular, this includes raising awareness of the potential that lies in every individual and in the diversity of the different perspectives and needs. Besides, the knowledge and reflection about equal opportunity and diversity are improved and their appreciation increased.

The University of Bonn is making a sustained effort to promote and improve equal opportunity and diversity over the long term. To this end, University management is committed to embedding an inclusive organizational culture that systematically uncovers and eliminates (structural) inequality and exclusion mechanisms. This requires a culture that embraces free and critical academic debate. The aim is the (further) development of questions, projects and holistic approaches that may have the potential to change structural conditions in research and administration.

Strategic Priorities

An intersectional perspective is key for strategy development and if the University is to continue to evolve into a diverse and inclusive organization committed to equal opportunity. The principle of intersectionality recognizes that forms of discrimination, oppression and unfair treatment meted out to a person on the grounds of various diversity aspects do not exist in isolation. Rather, they unfold or indeed intensify their effects through the simultaneity of the diversity dimensions and their interactions with each other. Thus the University also considers the interactions between various aspects of diversity when pursuing its strategic priorities, which are set out below:

- **Educational equity:** the University of Bonn is committed to ensuring that everyone has the same opportunities in education. Equal opportunity for all is to be improved by promoting people's access to education and ensuring that they encounter as few obstacles as possible along the way, thus smoothing their pathway to success. Extra support is given to previously underrepresented groups, such as first generation academics or persons with a refugee or migration background.
- **Family-friendliness:** promoting the compatibility of family, studying and career for everyone regardless of their situation in life is another key priority. The University of Bonn helps its members to assume their family responsibilities as best as they can, whether they have children or care for other relatives. All family constellations are given the same level of recognition, acceptance and support.

- **Gender equality:** the University of Bonn strives to facilitate more equitable participation by people of all genders and gender identities. In particular, this includes women's equality—with the aim being parity, especially in leadership positions—as well as taking greater account of 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.
- **Inclusion and participation:** the University of Bonn is committed to enabling everyone to participate in university life with self-determination and equal opportunities and sees this as a task for its entire community. Going forward, a framework for students, researchers, teachers and staff with a disability and/or chronic condition will be created in order to utilize and strengthen existing resources and areas of potential by breaking down physical, digital, linguistic, organizational and attitudinal barriers.
- **Anti-discrimination:** the University of Bonn has a responsibility to ensure that the personal rights of all its members are protected and for punishing any violations of these rights. It thus fulfills its duties to oppose any form of discrimination, to foster an environment that is sensitive to discrimination issues and critical of power asymmetries and to take a clear stand against racism and discrimination. Eliminating discrimination is seen as a task for the whole University community, one that promotes a culture of not looking away and not dodging the issue and that calls on all its members to take responsibility, both for themselves and for others. To this end, inequality at the structural and practical levels are addressed.

The University of Bonn needs the active support of its members from all status groups to achieve its objectives and to work on its priorities. All staff have a duty to strengthen the topics of equal opportunity and diversity in the University's culture over the long term and bring them to life through their actions. The University of Bonn enables the members of all its status groups to develop their initiatives and ideas according to the needs of the target groups and to contribute to a change of values with the aim to further develop the mission statement to a strategy for equal opportunity and diversity in a participatory manner and hence to promote excellence.