

Progress Report Diversity & Inclusion Office

February 2024

The University of Groningen formulated the mandate for Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) at the end of 2021. 2022 was a year of 'Setting Up,' establishing the D&I office and the attendant infrastructure. 2023 was a year of 'Quick Wins.' 2024 is intended to be the year of 'Strategic Change.' And 2025 a year of 'Structural Embedding.'

The progress report provides an overview of the progress made on the targets of the 2021-2025 document. It is divided into a brief 1-page executive summary of the status of the targets and thereafter a more detailed overview. In this summary, the targets are clustered as completed, mostly completed, in progress, and to be started. A conclusion focusses on upcoming priorities. The more detailed overview is organised topically, and for planning purposes, there are additional sections on the items that can be considered completed but are either regularly/annually occurring or need to be continually monitored.

Summary

Of the targets set in the 2021-2025 Action Plan, 8 are complete, 8 are mostly complete, 11 are in progress, (of which 1 is somewhat modified), and 2 are still to be started.

The 8 targets that are **complete** include the establishment of a D&I Office, the publication of a statement of commitment, the establishment of and regular meeting with the internal and external advisory boards^{1*}, the representation^{*} of the UG nationally and internationally, the regular meetings^{*} with relevant stakeholders within the University (e.g. confidential advisor, ombudsperson etc), the (continued) monitoring of the numbers of female professors^{*}, the (continued) creation of awareness about privilege and bias^{*}, and the offering and/or endorsing existing training on D&I issues^{*}. Some of these completed targets recur regularly or need continued monitoring.

An additional group of 8 targets is **mostly complete**. These include the establishment of the infrastructure at faculty level, the completion of 6 of the 8 quick wins (e.g. annual events^{*}, incentive fund^{*}, Zwarte Piet^{*}, Pride flag^{*}) and the drawing up a plan of approach to enable the RFF and AJC to form an active academic community.

A further 11 targets are **in progress**. These include the following:

- With the D&I in the faculties team, continue to support the development of faculty D&I strategic plans, and with its working group on measurement, continue the progress on data collection.
- A university wide inclusive language style guide in English is complete, a Dutch language version (more than translation) needs to be developed.
- Working with representatives to support the LGBTQ community.
- Though the creation of the inclusive feedback process through the internal advisory board can be considered complete (regularly occurring), that with the Social Safety team needs to be further

^{1*} These targets that recur regularly or need continued monitoring have been set up in such a way that their monitoring or recurrence has been embedded in the regular tasks of the D&I Office and other parties involved.

developed. Reaching out to students and staff within the university who are studying or researching D&I issues continues to provide a valuable source of feedback.

- Annually revising the Gender Equality Plan.
- With HR, relationships need to be further established to enable the monitoring of the tenure track system, the monitoring of the onboarding process, and the collection of data (about staff application, recruitment, salary and appraisal) and ensuring an open recruitment procedure with diverse BACs.
- Supporting the embedding of D&I in the curriculum, via existing projects like International Classroom, EQUiP, the TAG community of practice, and the Comenius initiative.
- One target that is still in progress was somewhat **modified**. Instead of setting up advocacy groups as a top-down process, supporting existing groups and initiatives in a bottom-up procedure. This was modified upon advice from the Faculty & Advisory Boards, and in line with advice from the Sociaal Economische Raad (SER). As such, it remains a target in progress.

Two targets remain and will be **started** in 2024: the document review and addressing the diversity of committees.

Broadly, alongside maintaining those already in progress, the upcoming priorities are with the targets that need to be started, and to be completed. Emphasis will be on furthering the data collection to form a broader basis for evidence-based D&I (both analysing existing data and drawing on new sources of data), the annual update of the Gender Equality Plan, and working on joint projects with HR and Social Safety. These targets are generally in line with the intention to be a year focusing on Strategic Change.

Changes to the internal context of the D&I Office projected for 2024 move it towards a more strategic positioning, directly under the head of University Services (instead of only related to HR & Health.) In the context of structural embedding, Corporate Communications were to take over the function of the Communications Advisor, but they have indicated that they do not have the capacity to do so. This issue still needs to be resolved, as communication is essential for the visibility and functioning of the D&I Office. We draw the attention of the Board of the University to this point.

At the same time, the external context in which the D&I Office operates brings with it new challenges. The socio-political climate comes with an increase of reported discrimination, reflected in the 2023 publication of the National Programme against Discrimination and Racism. The 2023 mid-term review of National Action Plan for more Diversity and Inclusion in Higher Education and Research calls for urgency in its pursuance, recalibrating priorities and concretizing targets. In all, the professionalization of the D&I function, as is taking place at all the major Universities, brings greater structure to this complex and somewhat sensitive field.