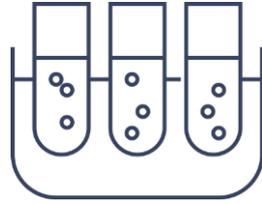




BLUE BIOECONOMY  
CoLAB



# Plan for Gender Equality

Inspired by the Ocean  
Driven by the Market  
Powered by Knowledge



# PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY (GE)

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## 1. FRAMEWORK

"When we talk in terms of gender equality, we must be aware that the concept is more than a goal in itself. Gender equality is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development, and building excellent government." **Kofi Annan**

Equality between women and men is a principle of citizenship enshrined in the 1945 United Nations Charter and the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It is also described in several International Labor Organization conventions and the founding legislation of the European Union, particularly since the 1957 Treaty of Rome. Since then, various European policy instruments have promoted gender equality.

Following the guidelines of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Treaty on European Union, the European Pact for Gender Equality, and the provisions of the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic (art. 13) and the Labor Code (art. 23 to 65), gender equality (GE), in addition to being a fundamental human right, is essential to achieving peaceful societies with full human potential and sustainable development. The Constitution of the Portuguese Republic has guaranteed the Principle of Equality since 1976, whereby no citizen can be treated differently in terms of gender, sexual orientation, ethnic origin, among others (Art. 13), just as everyone has the right to work in conditions of equality and dignity, prohibiting any form of discrimination in access to employment, particularly based on gender (Art. 59). Gender equality is also reinforced by specific laws and public policies in Portugal, which aim to combat discrimination and promote equal opportunities for men and women in different sectors. These include the Parity Law (Organic Law no. 3/2006 of August 21), which establishes parity between men and women on candidate lists and political representation quotas, and the Equal Pay Law (Law no. 60/2018 of August 21), which ensures the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value.

The development of public policies, both national and European, has led to a new look at the conditions that allow and facilitate the reconciliation of professional activity with family and personal life. Organizations are becoming increasingly aware of the urgent need to adopt and implement measures to combat gender discrimination.

Bearing in mind the importance of GE, and as a way of demonstrating the commitment of B2E CoLAB Associação para a Bioeconomia Azul - Laboratório Colaborativo (hereinafter " B2E CoLAB CoLAB " or "B2E CoLAB") to the topic, and by the provisions of article 7 of Law no. 62/2017, of August 1, regulated by



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Normative Order no. 18/2019, of June 21, B2E CoLAB presents its Gender Equality Plan for 2023 and beyond, intending to achieve effective equal treatment and opportunities for the different genders, thus promoting non-discrimination based on gender.

In this sense, the objectives leading this Gender Equality Plan are as follows:

- Identify B2E CoLAB's gender indicators.
- Identify actions that are already being carried out to promote gender equality, as well as identify weaker points where it is necessary to intervene, introduce changes, and reinforce practices that have already been applied.
- Define and adopt good practices in terms of promoting gender equality, within the framework of compliance with the existing regulations mentioned above in this section, and the relevant international benchmarks.

## ***B2E CoLAB CoLAB and INDICATORS relative to the Staff Board***

B2E CoLAB Associação para a Bioeconomia Azul - Laboratório Colaborativo, is a non-profit association operating at full capacity since 2020, focused on shaping a new blue bioeconomy, through research, education, innovation, and business, for a better and more sustainable world.

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To fulfill its mission and build a shared understanding and appreciation of the ocean, B2E CoLAB is strongly committed to Excellence, Innovation, Partnerships, Public Engagement, and Sustainability. From this perspective, B2E CoLAB is particularly aligned with the following Sustainable Development Goals: Life Below Water, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-Being, Quality Education, and Gender Equality.



Figure 1: B2E CoLAB's Sustainable Development Goals

The GE Plan was prepared based on an internal diagnosis of equal opportunities for women and men and proposes a set of objectives to be achieved for the institution to implement measures and achieve the respective targets to promote GE in B2E CoLAB.

The B2E CoLAB GE Plan will come into force in 2023 and will be communicated to all members. With the implementation of this plan, B2E CoLAB's Board of Directors is responsible for all the commitments made and approves their content.

To achieve its mission, in November 2023 B2E CoLAB will have a staff of 13 employees and 5 executive members of the Board.



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Below are some indicators relating to B2E CoLAB's workforce, allowing us to characterize the proportion of men and women in the organization (as of the date of the report).

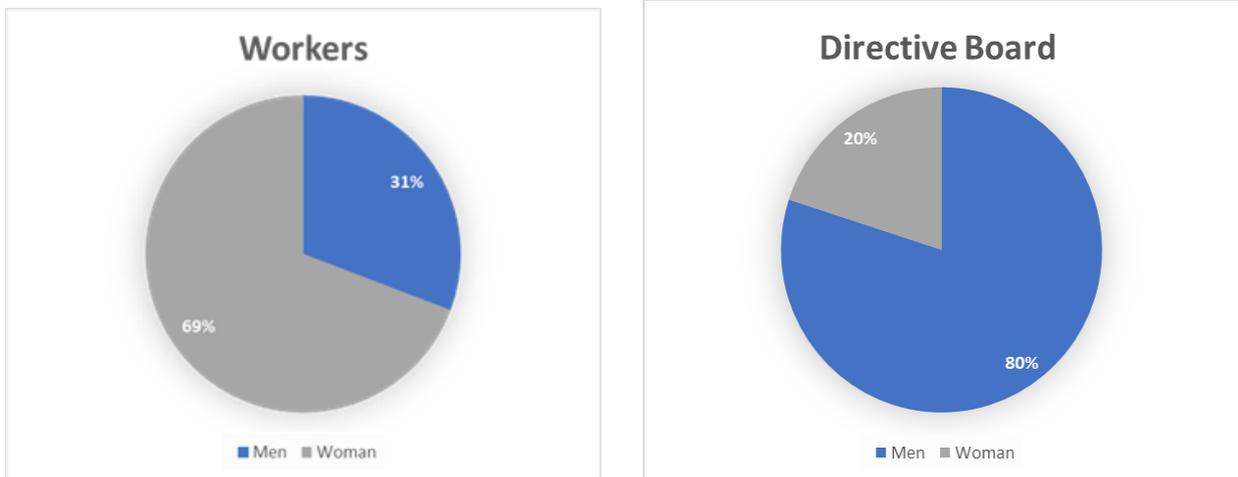


Fig. 2 Relative frequency of women and men among B2E CoLAB COLAB employees and directors.

- Of the 13 workers, 69% are women.
- The Directive Board is made up of 5 members, only one of whom is a woman (20%).

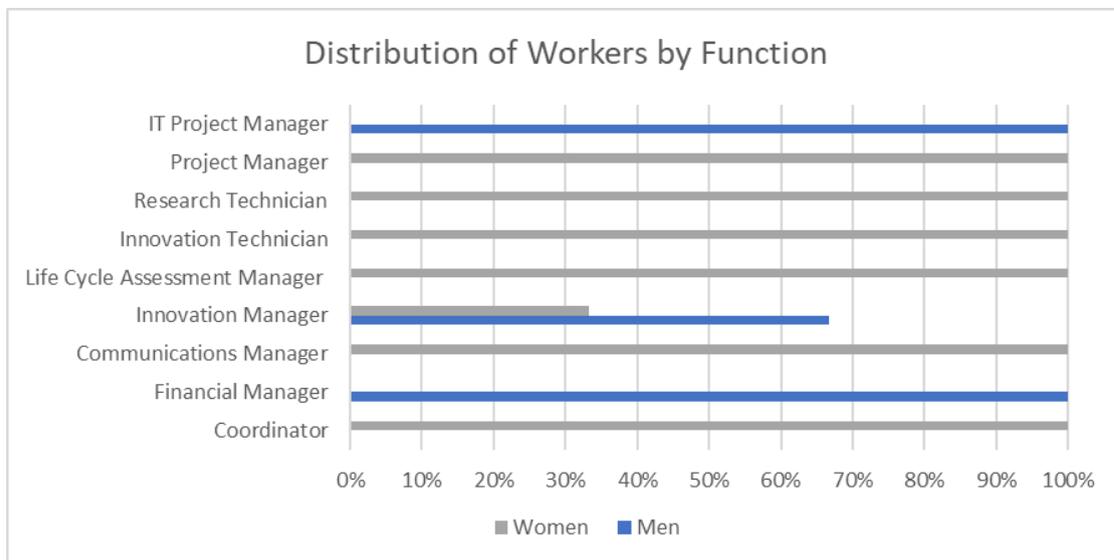


Figure 3: Relative frequency of women and men by function.

- Two men account for 100%, one in each function, of the workers in the IT Project Manager and Finance Manager positions.
- The role of Innovation Manager is held by two men and one woman.
- All the other positions are held by women.



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## **2. DIAGNOSIS OF PRACTICES IMPLEMENTED IN THE B2E CoLAB FAVORING GENDER EQUALITY (GE)**

Based on the Guide for the preparation of Equality Plans, made available by CITE - Commission for Equality in Labor and Employment, and under Normative Order No. 18/2019, B2E CoLAB carried out a survey to identify the practices and actions already used that should be reinforced, practices that need to be implemented and forms of evaluation for maintaining them. B2E CoLAB's goal with the implementation of these actions is to ensure a fully inclusive organization concerning GE.

The areas assessed and the organization's practices are described below:

### **a) Strategy, Mission, and Values**

B2E CoLAB considers the GE principle to be an essential condition for the development of its activity. Part of its mission is to promote the creation of highly qualified jobs, of all genders, which actively contribute to increasing the economic and social value of products and services. To this end, B2E CoLAB works to promote equal opportunities in recruitment processes, in the personal development of human resources, encouraging their development and in day-to-day working practices.

B2E CoLAB's values include integrity, cooperation, innovation, and sustainability, which will only be possible if we maintain an internal policy based on respect and valuing people, protecting, and including our employees, their families and society. B2E CoLAB prioritizes the use of inclusive language in its communication and the non-use of stereotypical or sexist images on its website and social networks.

### **b) Equality in Job opportunities**

B2E CoLAB has a transparent recruitment policy, with information on the skills required to fill the vacancy, the duties to be performed, and the amount and frequency of the remuneration previously stipulated in an open call for tenders. The language of the notices is neutral and includes a policy of non-discrimination and equal access where it is made clear that no candidate may be privileged, benefited, disadvantaged or deprived of any right or exempted from any duty on the grounds of ancestry, age, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family situation, economic situation, education, social origin or condition, genetic heritage, reduced working capacity, disability, chronic illness, nationality, ethnic origin or race, the territory of origin, language, religion, political or ideological convictions and trade union membership. The selection process considers the candidate's competencies, such as experience, training and skills. During the probationary period, B2E CoLAB respects the period of actual performance of the contract, to assess the interest of



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maintaining it, ensuring health and safety conditions in the workplace.

B2E CoLAB also considers the principle of gender parity when setting up selection teams, with mixed teams.

## **c) Initial and continuous training**

At B2E CoLAB, all human resources go through an initial induction period where they receive the necessary training on regulations, internal rules, access, equipment, tools, and platforms that can be used.

Everyone must do a minimum of 40 hours of training a year and everyone is encouraged to take part in training on different topics that can in some way develop their skills and competencies, ensuring that access is transversal and equitable throughout the organization.

## **d) Equality in work conditions**

At B2E CoLAB, salaries are proposed exclusively based on skills, training and experience, and gender is not considered in any way when setting contractual salaries.

B2E CoLAB is governed by principles of meritocracy as the basis for the assessment and progression of its human resources, as well as by the principle of equality, without any discrimination based on gender.

B2E CoLAB intends to develop a progression plan for its human resources based on the following principles:

- Recognition of the merit and potential of human resources.
- Equal opportunities, encouraging professional development, valuing the skills and experience of human resources.
- Alignment between the goals and expectations of human resources and strategic guidelines and objectives.
- The career development of each human resource should be based on individual performance, experience, and merit, under the specific rules defined in the aforementioned documents.
- The Performance Management and Evaluation System is based on meritocratic principles as the basis for evaluation and career progression and aims to promote the principle of equality, without any discrimination based on gender.

## **e) Parental Protection**

B2E is committed to ensuring the rights of maternity and paternity for its employees, respecting leave/absence from work in the various situations provided for by law. Within the scope of protection for workers with children up to 3 years old, the possibility of working from home is granted, as well as flexibility of hours



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and the possibility of carrying out continuous shifts to workers with children up to 12 years old, regardless of their gender, and by free choice of each one. Employees have the possibility of aiding children and family members when necessary and provided that it is duly justified and documented.

### **f) Reconciling professional life with family and personal life**

B2E CoLAB believes that gender equality issues should cover the entire family sphere of its human resources and that, in addition to ensuring their rights under the law, it strives to maintain a facilitating routine.

Whenever possible, training sessions should take place during normal working hours, so that all human resources can take time out of working hours for family or other activities of personal interest.

Timetables are flexible, as far as possible, to promote a fruitful balance between professional duties and the family life of each human resource.

At B2E CoLAB, regardless of the marital status or family situation of the human resource, the best compromise is always sought when it comes to scheduling vacations, so that, without affecting the normal course of work activities, human resources can reconcile these periods with those of their personal interests and/or needs.

### **g) Prevention of harassment at work**

B2E CoLAB favors an organizational culture based on values and conduct of non-discrimination of any kind and non-tolerance of the practice of any kind of harassment or acts of intimidation, so compliance with respect for the dignity of women and men in the workplace is a priority.

## **3. MEASURES TO BE IMPLEMENTED TO PROMOTE GENDER EQUALITY (GE) IN THE B2E CoLAB**

Based on the diagnosis made, although B2E CoLAB already carries out several actions in the field of Gender Equality, it is considered that some additional measures should be implemented, some new (N), others just as a reinforcement (R) of practices already in place. The actions included will be monitored by the person responsible for implementing the Gender Equality Plan.



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Table 1: Objectives of the Gender Equality Plan in B2E CoLAB. For each action, the Type [New (N) or Reinforcement (R)], measures, indicators and target are defined.

Objectives	Type	Measures	Indicators	Goals
Providing information to employees on their rights and duties in the field of equality and non-discrimination	R	Disseminate, in an appropriate and accessible place, information on the rights and duties of workers with regard to equality and non-discrimination based on gender	Evidence of implementation	By the end of the 2nd half of 2024
Ensuring the implementation of the GE Plan, its monitoring, follow-up and sustainability	N	Define and monitor strategic GE KPIs	Evidence of KPI definition and follow-up	KPIs defined and monitored during the reference year
Making B2E CoLAB employees aware of the importance of GE	N	Make B2E CoLAB's GE Plan known to employees	Evidence of sharing the Plan with the entire B2E CoLAB Team	By the end of 2023
	N	Organize an initiative with the entire B2E CoLAB Team aimed at accepting and promoting GE	Evidence of the implementation of the initiative	Initiative carried out during 2024
Guarantee the principle of equality and non-discrimination in access to employment	R	B2E CoLAB undertakes to refer to the "Non-discrimination and equal access policy" in recruitment notices.	Evidence of each new call for tenders	Ongoing until the end of 2025
Ensure an R&S process consistent with the principles of non-discrimination between men and women.	R	Draw up internal guidelines to ensure, whenever possible, fair gender representation on selection teams	Incorporate standards into the Recruitment and Selection procedure.	End of 2024
	R	Include in the procedure recommendations for the R&S teams to present the Managers with a list of candidates that is balanced in terms of gender representation and, ideally, with more candidates from the less representative gender in the position in question, provided there are candidates with suitable qualifications and always based on the insurmountable concept of meritocracy.	Evidence of list in accordance with recommendations	Until the end of 2024
Protect and promote parenthood policies	R	Accompany the return of workers absent for long periods of time due to parental leave and ensure their reintegration into the team, facilitating access to training if necessary.	Follow-up records	Until the end of 2024
Promote the reconciliation of professional, family and personal life for workers.	N	Listen to employees with a view to identifying and implementing other measures to help reconcile work, family and personal life.	Evidence of decision-making	Until the end of 2023



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Objectives	Type	Measures	Indicators	Goals
	R	Promoting the approval of teleworking requests for all male and female workers who request it in a justified manner	Evidence of decision-making	Until the end of 2023
Prevent and combat discrimination/harassment at work	R	Actively promoting the culture and practices of combating harassment, discrimination, or intimidation by holding a training and/or awareness-raising session, or by disseminating documents on the subject.	Evidence of the training and/or awareness-raising session, or the dissemination of documents	Until the end of 2024

In the event of a complaint of discrimination and/or harassment, B2E CoLAB will carry out the necessary diagnostic steps with the parties involved, followed by an evaluation procedure and the issuing of an opinion with recommendations and possible measures to be implemented.

The different phases for resolving complaints and/or harassment are detailed below:

1. The complainant must submit their complaint and if they choose to identify themselves, they must request a hearing with B2E CoLAB's Compliance officers. B2E CoLAB has an internal channel dedicated to the submission of complaints, under the responsibility of the Coordination and HR Manager, via the email address IG@B2E CoLAB.pt, known to all employees. Regardless of whether the complaint is anonymous, or a hearing is requested, B2E CoLAB must ascertain, to the best of its ability, knowledge, and obligations, the motives and subject matter of the complaint by the complainant. Part of the investigation into the complaint may involve clarifying the facts with the accused.
2. If, in the light of the findings of fact, and after careful analysis, it is found that the facts presented by the prosecutor are true, disciplinary proceedings will be initiated against the accused, including possible sanctions, including termination of the contract, if this falls within the regulatory framework in force. The prosecutor has the right to consult the course of the proceedings and to consider whether the measure adopted by the company is appropriate; if he or she does not agree, the prosecutor may initiate legal proceedings against the accused. In this context, the accused is responsible for the damage suffered by the complainant, and not B2E CoLAB, which has already followed its full protocol for receiving complaints, establishing and analyzing the facts constituting the complaint of discrimination and/or harassment, and, where appropriate, applying sanctions.



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3. If the complainant (whether victim or witness of harassment) so wishes, he or she can use the national or regional mechanisms for handling this type of complaint, namely the authorities for working Conditions - Autoridade para as Condições do Trabalho (ACT) ou à Inspeção Regional do Trabalho.

#### **4. MONITORING/PLAN'S EVALUATION**

For the Gender Equality Plan developed in this document to be effective, a constant monitoring process is essential. Therefore, the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the Plan will be carried out by the HR manager who will be appointed for this purpose. This person will be responsible for collecting and analyzing data, as well as monitoring the progress indicators associated with each of the measures that make up this Plan. Based on these results, we will be able to assess the progress made and, if necessary, adjust, proposing corrective measures as soon as a situation is identified that justifies it.

By the end of the last quarter of each year, on a date to be set, this person will have to analyze in greater depth the various indicators defined in the Plan for each of the measures and identify any need for adjustments in the event of deviations or aspects for improvement. In the case of 2023, this analysis should take place by the end of the third quarter.