

Gender Equality Plan



MTA

SECRETARIAT OF
THE HUNGARIAN ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES



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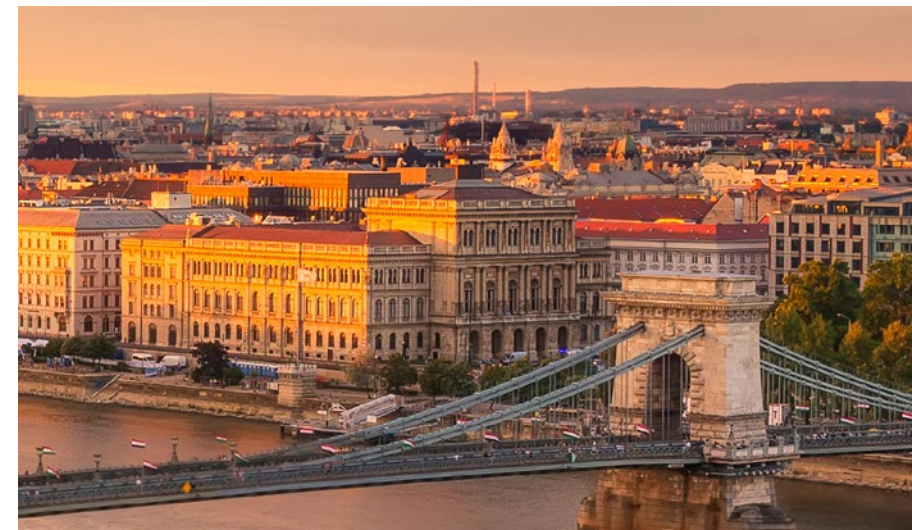
I. Introduction

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) and the Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (Secretariat of MTA, or MTAT) are committed to observing and enforcing equal treatment and non-discrimination as fundamental human rights. Promoting gender equality may contribute to making working and research conditions more attractive and inclusive, ensuring job satisfaction, a high level of motivation, talent retention, and maintaining outstanding research performance.

As set out in its mission statement issued in 2019¹, MTA “supports the advancement of scientific research in Hungary and represents the interests of Hungarian science. In this spirit, the Academy is committed to the development of a trustworthy research career scheme which offers clear conditions and opportunities for young researchers and prioritises measures which promote the careers of female scientists. This career scheme includes a comprehensive set of scientific degrees and titles and a balanced mix of research and teaching duties coupled with their legal and economic conditions. The scheme also strikes a balance between research activities abroad and in Hungary and includes the maintenance of a system of fellowships and grants.”

In addition to the guiding principles it has set itself, MTA also considers itself bound by the rules of gender equality as set out in the Horizon Europe Framework Programme. Taking all of these into account, the Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, overseen by MTA, has drawn up the organisation’s Gender Equality Plan (GEP). This is also intended to fulfil the requirements of the Horizon Europe Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions (MSCA) COFUND call. In the second part of this document, a separate section will be dedicated to the range of available support measures that may be applied to promote gender equality in frontier research, supplemented by performance statistics in calls.

¹ MTA adopted its new mission statement incorporating the views of its scientific sections and proposals put forward by members of its public body at its 192nd extraordinary general assembly on 2 December 2019. The full text of this mission statement can be accessed on MTA’s website: <https://mta.hu/english/mission-of-the-hungarian-academy-of-sciences-110331>



Gender equality is guaranteed by a large number of international and EU regulations. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted under the auspices of the United Nations declares the prohibition of discrimination based on sex and affirms the principle of equal treatment of men and women. On a European level, it is the European Convention on Human Rights and the European Social Charter which prohibit discrimination based on sex and aim to achieve gender equality. The Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union also enshrine the principle of gender equality. In Hungarian national law, the equality of men and women is enshrined in Article XV of the Fundamental Law of Hungary, which states that women and men shall have equal rights, and that the State shall promote equality of opportunity. The primary legislative act in Hungary that guarantees equal treatment in Hungary is Act CXXV of 2003 on equal treatment and the promotion of equal opportunities, which establishes the fundamental principles of equal treatment.

In preparing this Gender Equality Plan, the Secretariat of MTA has followed the guidance issued by the European Commission’s Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, as well as the recommendations made by the European Institute for Gender Equality. The President of MTA has made arrangements to ensure that the Academy’s internal regulations comply with the legislative provisions on equal treatment and equal opportunities.

The objective of this Gender Equality Plan is to promote gender equality within the organisational functioning of the Secretariat of MTA, which is responsible for managing the Academy’s administrative organisation, as well as its research-funding responsibilities and actions, in accordance with international, European and national regulations and recommendations. The Academy intends to achieve these goals in both areas by adopting measures which will be regularly reviewed, based on a survey of the current situation.

II. Secretariat of MTA as an employer working for gender equality

Outline of the current situation

The gender breakdown of the personnel of the Secretariat of MTA shows significant female representation.

Gender breakdown of the personnel of the Secretariat of MTA (31 March 2026)



Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

When it comes to executives, women again outnumber men, albeit to a lesser extent. There is only one organisational unit where male employees constitute a majority, while two units have only women, with all the other units having a female majority².

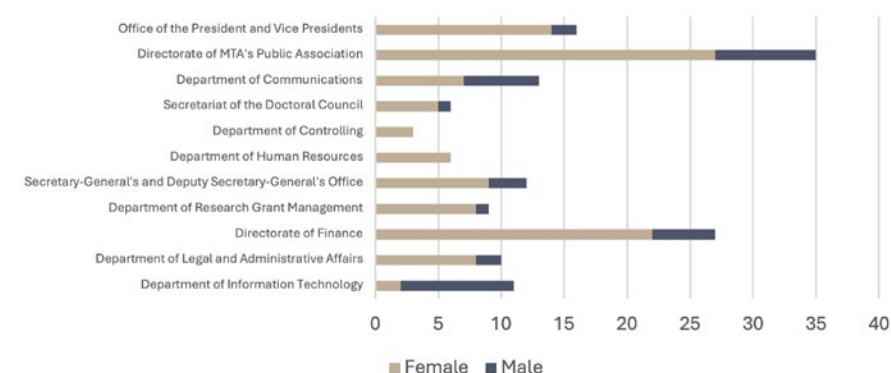
² Organisational chart of the Secretariat of MTA: https://mta.hu/data/dokumentumok/egyeb_dokumentumok/2022/MTA_Titk%C3%A1rs%C3%A1ga_szervezeti_%C3%A1bra_2022okt.pdf

Gender breakdown of the executive personnel of the Secretariat of MTA (2026)



Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

Gender breakdown by organisational unit at Secretariat of MTA March 2026



Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

In order to promote equal opportunities between men and women, the Secretariat of MTA, as an employer, is guided by the principles of **equal treatment and non-discrimination**.

The current recruitment and selection process of personnel is exclusively based on professional competences, with sexual identity being irrelevant. Apart from recruitment, the Secretariat of MTA, as an employer, avoids and refrains from any discriminatory acts towards employees based on age, sex, marital status, nationality, ethnicity, religion or political views, in matters relating to remuneration, wages, benefits, training schemes, the introduction of incentives, as well as proceedings for the termination of a legal relationship. The same principle applies to both vertical and horizontal career paths: in the cases of appointments, promotions and decisions on transfers between organisational units or sets of responsibilities, only the competencies necessary for the position matter.

With due respect for the individual's dignity and with a view to applying the principle of equity, the Secretariat of MTA takes all measures to provide working conditions which respond equally to the interests of the employer and the employees, including civil servants and workers (hereinafter referred to as employees), leveraging human capital in the form of employees' individual values and talents in the best possible way, and promoting the protection and improvement of employment conditions.

Planned measures

1. COLLECTION AND MONITORING OF GENDER EQUALITY-RELEVANT DATA

In order to work towards and maintain a more comprehensive framework for gender equality and equal opportunities, the Secretariat of MTA will conduct an annual survey on the gender breakdown of personnel, job grades and newly recruited staff, and wage variations. The survey will also investigate any disproportionalities and equality complaints to identify their possible causes.

The conducting of the survey as well as the planning, execution and review of the ensuing actions will be coordinated by the Office of the Secretary General and Deputy Secretary General of MTA.

2. WORKING TOWARDS A BALANCED RATIO OF MALE AND FEMALE MEMBERS OF STAFF

Based on the collection of data on a yearly basis, efforts will be made to achieve a balanced ratio of male and female personnel in various organisational units and to ensure that managerial positions are open to all members of staff, regardless of sex.

3. ELIMINATION OF REMUNERATION AND WAGE DIFFERENCES

The Secretariat of MTA determines the remuneration of its civil servants in accordance with the pay scale provided for in Act CVII of 2019 on bodies with special legal status and the status of their employees. It also determines the salary of its workers in line with Act I of 2012 of the Labour Code. Variations in remuneration within the confines of the law are made possible by following the rules of the presidential decision on the job grade structure. (Due regard must be given to the grade of the given job, any additional qualifications beyond the qualification requirements, professional expertise, experience in public administrative functions, any individual competencies relevant to the given job, as well as labour market demand.) The same methodology must be applied for workers' wages. Based on the evaluation of the data, regular screening is needed to identify and eliminate discrepancies between the sexes where appropriate.

4. TREATMENT OF GENDER STEREOTYPES

To provide equal opportunities for men and women, efforts must be made to break gender stereotypes.

5. TRAINING AND AWARENESS RAISING

To increase sensitivity to gender issues, raise awareness of gender equality, and create an inclusive and fair work environment, training and briefing opportunities are key. To inform the employees, help them change their mindset, and to sensitise them to gender issues, the Secretariat of MTA organises regular training events on gender equality topics and holds briefings for employees about measures supporting gender equality. The Secretariat of MTA incorporates an agenda for training executive staff into its annual training plan in order to promote and raise the profile of gender equality, and also introduces incentives for this staff to attend such training.

6. INVESTIGATION AND TREATMENT OF ABUSES

As an employer, the Secretariat of MTA provides its employees with the opportunity to lodge a complaint against any act violating the principle of gender equality, especially instances of discrimination, harassment or unjustified preference. Employees may submit their complaints (in writing or verbally, having them put on record) to the Head of the Department of Human Resources, who will carry out a careful examination and investigation of the case while protecting the identity of the complainant. If this does not resolve the issue, or if the nature of the complaint is not suited to this kind of mechanism, the complainant may approach their employer, the Secretary General of MTA, directly. The complaint may also be processed pursuant to Presidential Decision No 11/2024 (V.28.), which sets out the operating rules for the Internal Abuse Reporting Tool of the Secretariat of MTA, issued on the basis of Act XXV of 2023, which covers complaints, disclosures in the public interest, and rules on reporting abuses.

7. PUBLICATION OF THE GEP

The GEP must be published on MTA's website and the intranet platform of the Secretariat of MTA.

III. Enforcement of gender equality in the research-funding activities of MTA

Outline of the current situation

In recent years, the Academy has continuously diversified and intensified its actions in support of female researchers. However, due to the characteristics of a typical research career path, the large majority of these measures will only be effective in the long term, at the top of a scientific career. Statistical data show that female researchers tend to suffer a setback in their career in the postdoctoral phase, which happens to coincide roughly with childbearing age. While women now outnumber men in master's degree programmes at university and over the last decade have caught up substantially with men in PhD programmes as well, men continue to outnumber women in assistant, associate and full professorships.

A number of initiatives have been put in place by MTA to help retain young women in the research profession. The event series "Women in Science" focuses on this issue, as does the Hungarian Young Academy³, which has also raised this issue high on its agenda. It was partly at their initiative that the Academy introduced uniform rules on compensation for research career breaks due to childbearing in its research calls meant for young researchers. The Presidential Committee on Women in Science⁴ was set up in early 2017 and has since been assigned functions which go beyond those originally laid down in the decision of the General Assembly to establish the committee. One of the primary tasks set by MTA's Presidential Committee on Women in Science is to find solutions to the issue of low female representation among the full members of the Academy. Determined to support the progression of female researchers and university teachers in the academic ranks, the Committee is about to launch a mentoring programme for mid-career researchers. At the same time, the Committee is

³ <https://fka.mta.hu/en/>

⁴ <https://mta.hu/nok-a-kutatoj-eletpalyan-elnoki-bizottsag/a-nok-a-kutatoj-eletpalyan-elnoki-bizottsag-111290>

running a youth engagement project aimed at boosting girls' motivation for research activities and the world of science at the elementary and secondary school levels.

In keeping with its core function, MTA is committed to supporting scientific research and, to this end, runs research grant schemes designed to cater for the entire scientific community in Hungary and, in some cases, the international research community. The Academy's research funding activities focus primarily on basic research, covering all scientific disciplines, including the social sciences, humanities, life sciences, mathematics, physical sciences, and interdisciplinary research. The grant schemes offer funding for excellent research at every stage of the academic career, from postdoctoral researchers to senior research fellows. They also support minority groups, such as researchers with children under the age of 14.

As a science-funding entity, the Academy has introduced exemplary measures to promote gender equality:

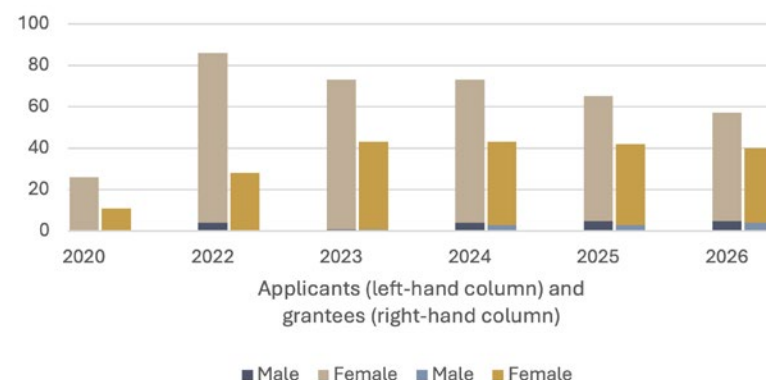
1. GRANT SCHEME FOR FEMALE RESEARCHERS AND RESEARCHERS RAISING YOUNG CHILDREN ("KGYNK")⁵

The Hungarian Academy of Sciences acts as an advocate of young talents in science; it is committed to promoting equal opportunities for female scientists, which should be commensurate with the role of women in science. With both of these objectives in mind, MTA announced in 2018 the first call for applications for the KGyNK grant scheme. The scheme was designed to facilitate the career progression of female researchers with children under the age of 14, as well as single-parent researchers of any sex with children under the age of 18. The scheme provides support for the preparation of a doctoral dissertation, which

⁵ <https://mta.hu/kisgyermeket-nevelo-kutatok-tamogatasa/kisgyermeket-nevelo-kutatok-tamogatasa-112265>

is a precondition for applying for the “Doctor of MTA” title. After two successful rounds of applications, MTA extended the scope of eligible applicants to include researchers of any sex raising a child under the age of 14, or a child living with a disability or chronic illness. MTA also provided funding to publish their research results, thereby helping them resume their scientific careers. Researchers in both categories are required to hold a membership in the public association of MTA and a PhD or an equivalent degree, but they may not possess the title of “Doctor of MTA” nor may they have a pending application for this title. Grant recipients may choose to receive funding for a grant period of three, four, six, eight or twelve months.

Gender breakdown of KGyNK applicants in the period of 2020-2026



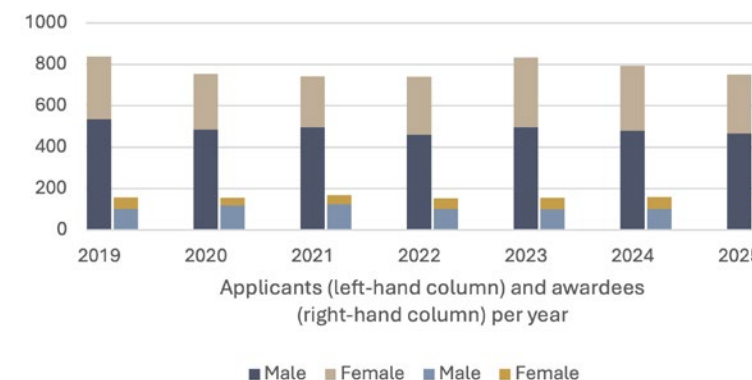
Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

2. BOLYAI JÁNOS RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP⁶

The Bolyai János Research Fellowship is a highly prestigious, performance-orientated national fellowship scheme, established by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences in 1997. It is awarded through an open call by a Fellowship Board convened by the President of MTA and operating within the framework of MTA's public association, with the aim of incentivising and recognising outstanding R&D achievements. Applicants for this fellowship must be under the age of 45 and hold a scientific degree; however, they must not yet have been conferred the “Doctor of MTA” title. The fellowship period may reach a maximum of three years. The Academy's efforts aimed at securing equal opportunities for men and women have also borne fruit in the case of the Bolyai Fellowship: an amendment to the government decree establishing the rules of the Bolyai Fellowship made it possible in 2022 to raise the age limit for Fellowship applicants with a child under the age 18 by two years for each child.

⁶ <https://mta.hu/bolyai-osztondij/bolyai-janos-kutatasi-osztondij-105319>

Gender breakdown of Bolyai Fellowship applicants in the period 2019-2025



Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

3. THE LENDÜLET (MOMENTUM) PROGRAMME⁷

The Momentum Programme was launched by the President of MTA in 2009 to counterbalance the outflow of successful young researchers, provide talent mentoring and retention, expand the channels for career progression opportunities open for young researchers, and to boost the competitiveness of research units. The components of the programme's exceptional success and dynamism — both at home as well as abroad — are its excellence criterion, its carefully elaborated and reliable funding model, and its performance indicators, which are easy to monitor and measure. To date, the Momentum Programme has enabled 284 excellent researchers to establish their own research group.

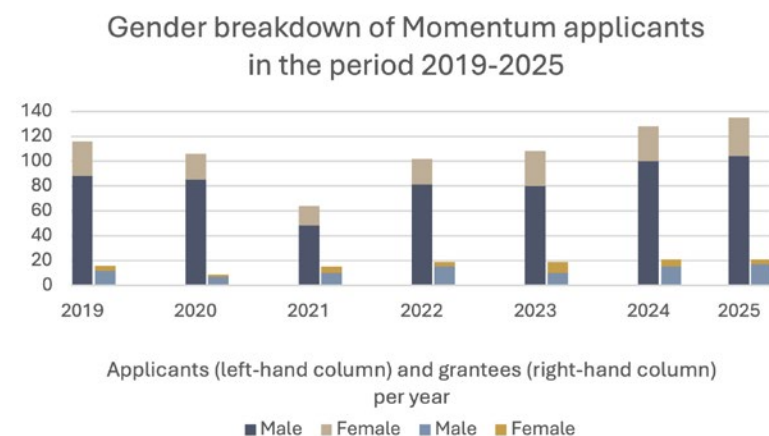
Researcher excellence is at the heart of the evaluation process, regardless of sex or gender. In this regard, 2023 was an outstanding year in terms of gender balance. Of the 108 applicants, 19 were selected for funding and were thus able to establish a Momentum research group. Of the applicants, 28 were female researchers, accounting for 50% of the grantees (9 female researchers). In 2024, six out of the 21 recipient Momentum Principal Investigators were women, corresponding to the ratio of female to male applicants (28 women to 100 men). In 2025, however, this number dropped to 4 out of 21.

As set out in the annual Momentum call, researchers raising a child under the age of 18 are eligible for an age limit extension, calculated on the basis of the duration of leave taken for child care.

Within the Momentum Programme, rather than considering cumulative scientometric data, the most significant publications and key scientific achievements, as listed by the researchers themselves, are considered when evaluating researchers — a fact that is of utmost importance when it comes to evaluating researchers who are

⁷ <https://mta.hu/english/momentum-113569>

raising children, since their number of publications and citations may be lower. This process complies with the CoARA principles. The use of narrative CVs also goes a long way towards enhancing equal opportunities.

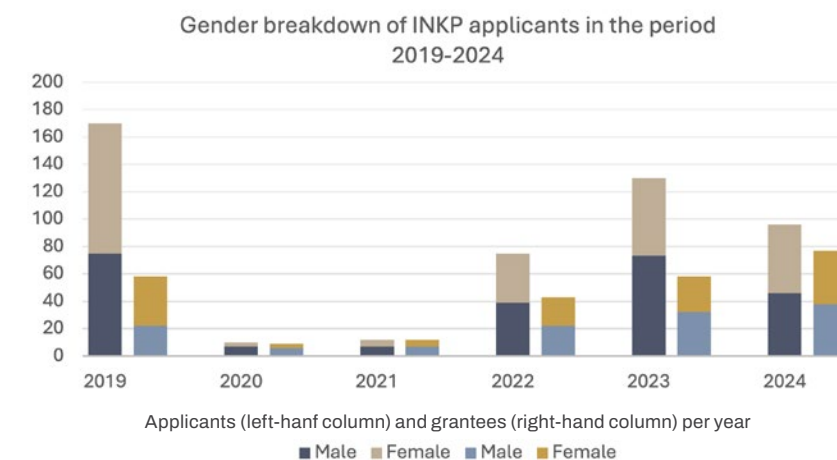


Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

4. YOUNG RESEARCHERS' INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE FELLOWSHIP ("INKP")

Based on a private trust established for a purpose in the public interest, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences set up a fellowship scheme to fund the participation of young researchers at international conferences as part of its mission of promoting scientific research, and this scheme has been continuously funded from the State's central budget since its inception. The fellowship is intended to support the active participation of researchers under the age of 40 who are members of MTA's public association in scientific events abroad, such as international scientific symposia, workshops or conferences. This enables them to showcase their major scientific outputs at these events. Priority is given to supporting the conference attendance of female researchers raising children.

At applicants' request, the age limit may be extended for those raising a child of minor age: women may apply for an extension of two years per child, or for the duration of leave taken for childcare after the award of the scientific degree; men may apply for an extension covering the duration of leave taken for childcare per child.



Source: Data collected by Secretariat of MTA

5. COARA

In 2023, MTA joined the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment (CoARA)⁸, an international coalition advocating for genuine, modern, practice-oriented reform of research assessment practices. The signatories of this agreement have undertaken to create more inclusive and more responsible research assessment schemes. The objective is for evaluations to recognise the diversity of research activities, the characteristics of the various scientific disciplines, and the specificities of researchers' career paths. This will lead to a sustained level of quality, integrity, and diversity in scientific research. To this end, the steps taken by MTA are aimed at ensuring that, in the case of researchers raising young children, their achievements are assessed in light of the actual time spent on research. This takes into account time spent on childcare, thereby working towards equality of opportunity for female researchers by supporting their work-life balance. Within the framework of the reform of research assessment practices, the MTMT Database of Hungarian Scientific Publications (Hungarian Science Bibliography, operated by MTA as part of its essential functions) has introduced the option for researchers to include references to any special features of their scientific careers (such as a career break taken for childcare) in their CVs. In order to enable the assessment of diversity in research careers and scientists' contributions to their research communities, the use of narrative CVs has been introduced for the Momentum Programme and the Academy Prize for Early-Career Researchers.

The Academy takes special care to ensure that a gender balance is achieved among the delegates of organising boards of scientific fora and conferences, experts' panels and conference chairpersons, and evaluation committee members, and encourages other entities in the scientific community to follow this approach.

⁸ <https://coara.eu/>

*Planned measures***1. MAINTAINING RESULTS ALREADY ACHIEVED AND TAKING THEM TO THE NEXT LEVEL**

MTA has set itself the objective of operating and fine-tuning a stable, transparent and researcher-friendly funding system. The evaluation process is based on scientific excellence as the central criterion, and providing equal opportunities for men and women is also a high priority. Within a workplace setting confined by rules, the availability of research grant calls implies a higher chance of improving ratios and enabling women to advance in their careers; therefore, it is crucial to preserve the reliability of the system. This is why maintaining the results already achieved should be the top priority, while allowing for continuous review — based on experience — of the potential to expand the scope of measures and extend them to additional MTA grant and prize schemes. Such a review is carried out each year as part of the preparation of the call announcements for individual grant and prize schemes. This involves taking stock of experiences gathered over previous years.

2. COLLECTION AND MONITORING OF GENDER EQUALITY-RELEVANT DATA

The Secretariat of MTA carries out yearly reviews of gender equality- and equal opportunities-related data collected in relation to the grant and certain prize schemes (e.g. the Academy Prize for Early-Career Researchers), and prepares proposals for modification of the relevant calls as necessary. These proposals are discussed and adopted by the leadership of MTA in line with the organisation's internal administrative procedures.

In addition to collecting and monitoring the data related to gender equality and equal opportunities, the Department of Research Grant Management of the Secretariat of MTA is also responsible for publishing data on the gender breakdown of applicants and grantees when the call results are announced. All this yearly data will be made available to MTA's General Assembly and, via the MTA Briefing of the Government, to political decision-makers.

3. TRAINING AND DISSEMINATION

The staff of the Department of Research Grant Management organise regular information and dissemination opportunities to publicise measures promoting gender equality for researchers interested in a research call.

4. FAMILY-FRIENDLY MEASURES

To help researchers with young children to participate in conferences and public lectures held at MTA premises, the Secretariat of MTA provides supervision of children and baby care facilities on site, if needed.

5. SPECIFIC RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR THE RELEVANT MEASURES

The measures specified in the part of the GEP covering MTA's research funding activities are prepared and implemented by the organisational units responsible for the administrative management of the relevant research calls, under the coordination of the Secretary General of MTA and in accordance with the organisation's internal administrative procedures.

Prepared by: Secretariat of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences

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Approved by:



Gábor Kecskeméti
Secretary General of MTA

MTA