



Gender equality **Plan**

2024-2026

The CNRS's commitment to professional equality between women and men is a priority, and this new plan reaffirms it with force and conviction. Significant progress has been made in recent years, particularly in terms of the percentage of female researchers recruited, promoted, and given responsibilities, or laureates of CNRS awards. In addition, more and more institutes and regional delegations are supporting concrete actions to raise awareness and level inequalities through the work of the networks of gender equality contact points in the laboratories.

This momentum needs to be maintained, strengthened and extended to other areas, as shown by the new initiatives in the CNRS gender equality plan 2024-2026. Strengthening diversity and remedying inequalities in the ranks of support staff, attracting new talent to scientific careers, reducing the impact of parenthood on careers, and integrating equality into all CNRS policies are just some of the challenges we must take up to make further progress towards gender equality.

Antoine Petit, CEO of the CNRS

This new action plan is a continuation of the one for the period 2021-23, while incorporating new areas. In addition to continuing and consolidating actions already taken in the 2021-2023 period, the 2024-26 action plan opens up new fields concerning not only the careers of female researchers but also those of supporting staff, as well as cross-functional actions to better integrate equality into all CNRS policies.

For the period 2021-23, the CNRS has implemented most of the 40 actions planned and progress has been made. For the first time, in-depth analyses have been carried out on pay gaps and obstacles to the recognition of women's skills in support staff positions; the average income gap has narrowed; measures have led to a significant increase in the recruitment and promotion of female researchers; and a sustainable policy to prevent and combat gender based violence has been put in place.

Another major step forward for the deployment of equality policies at all levels of the CNRS is the development of a network that already includes about 500 equality contact points in the laboratories.

The law of 6 August 2019 on the transformation of the public sector introduced the obligation for all public sector entities to adopt a three-year gender equality plan, renewable once, starting in 2021. Broken down into objectives and actions, it is accompanied by indicators and a timetable, and must be sent to the Ministry of higher education and research once it has been adopted by the CNRS's governing bodies.

For the CNRS, the actions in the plan are linked to the Contract of Objectives and Performance and to the action plan for the HRS4R label awarded by the European Commission.

The Gender Equality Plan is structured around the five axes predefined in the Law on the Transformation of the public sector, as well as a new axis on transversal actions defined by the CNRS:

1. Assessing, preventing and bridging the gender pay gap

2. Ensuring equal career opportunities

3. Promoting work-life balance

4. Combating gender-based violence, harassment and discrimination

5. Governing, monitoring and evaluating the gender equality policies

6. Integrating cross-cutting actions

Please note: the new actions added to the 2024-26 plan are highlighted in yellow.

Axis 1: Assessing, preventing and bridging the gender pay gap

Each year, the CNRS Social Report provides data on the pay gap. It shows that the average pay gap between men and women at the CNRS has narrowed in recent years (14.4% in 2019; 13.3% in 2022). However, this tool is not designed to identify the main causes of the gap.

For this reason, an in-depth analysis of all salary data for all staff for the year 2021 has been carried out in 2022-23. A detailed report includes recommendations for remedying these discrepancies (career progression, bonuses, income from intellectual property, etc.) for both female researchers and support staff.

These recommendations are reflected in the new actions of the 2024-26 plan.

In 2023, the CNRS adopted new management guidelines on the Ripec, which stipulate that the proportion of female researchers receiving individual bonuses must be at least equal to the proportion of female researchers in each grade.

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Closing the gender pay gap	Comply with, publish and disseminate the equality index (law of 19 July 2023)	HR	Indicators included in the decree	Annual monitoring indicators	Annual publication of figures from 2024
	Specify in the CIA instruction that it is forbidden to reduce the CIA of people who took a maternity, paternity or adoption leave.	HR	Draft the instruction	Disseminate to all managers	Annual dissemination of the instruction from 2024
	Raise awareness of and remedy gender bias in job descriptions, IFSE and individual bonuses	HR/Gender equality unit	Awareness raising actions	Number of managers sensitized	Creation of a new awareness raising tool in 2024
Promoting equality in additional income	Promote fair recognition of women's participation in inventions by work collectives and the fair setting of coefficients for invention patents/incentive bonuses	Equality committee/ Innovation Directorate/ CNRS Innovation/ SPV/Intitutes/ Gender equality unit	1) Percentage of women 2) Distribution of coefficients	1) Percentage increase 2) Increase in women's share of coefficients	2024-2026

Axis 2: Ensuring equal career opportunities

A number of major initiatives have been carried out to make scientific careers more attractive to the general public and secondary school girls, such as the publication of the comic strip "Les décodeuses du numérique" and the "La science taille XX Elles" exhibitions (jointly with the Femmes & Sciences association).

Strong actions have been taken to limit gender bias in recruitment: a letter from the CEO to the national committee, enrolment of all committee members in the dedicated e-learning programme, renewal of the gender equality observers in all sections. The Gender Equality Committee and the Gender Equality Unit (Mission pour la Place des Femmes) are also organising awareness-raising campaigns on stereotypes for new recruits and staff.

As a result of these initiatives, the proportion of women recruited as researchers is much higher in the period 2020-2022 (39.4% of recruits are women) than in the previous period (36.3% between 2017 and 2019). However, only a small proportion of staff being renewed each year, the impact of these recruitments on the proportion of women in the workforce is necessarily low (34.3% of research staff are women in 2019 and 34.7% in 2022).

The principle of "cascade" promotions (promoting a percentage equal to or greater than the percentage of women eligible for promotion), initiated by the CEO, has begun to reduce the glass ceiling. The proportion of female grade A researchers has risen from 30.1% in 2019 to 31.7% in 2022

At the same time, the percentage of female lab directors has risen from 22.4% to 25%. This trend still needs to be strengthened and extended to all positions of responsibility.

For support staff, the situation is more complex and is the subject of particular attention in this new action plan. Between 2019 and 2022, the proportion of women in the highest grade (IR) has increased from 32.4% to 32.7% only. At the same time, the proportion of women in grade IE increased from 49.0% to 50.2%. However the proportion of women in the lowest grades is also increasing, which is not a positive development: 56.7% of AIs grade were women in 2019, rising to 58% in 2022, and the proportion of T grade women has risen from 66.0% to 66.5%

Based on an in-depth survey carried out in 2023 on the value and recognition of support staff professions, more targeted actions will be taken to make these careers more attractive to women.

With regard to employees on fixed-term contracts, a new procedure will encourage the extension of fixed-term contracts following maternity leave, thereby removing an implicit barrier to the recruitment of women.

Finally, the visibility of women has increased in recent years thanks to the maintenance of parity in the awards given by the CNRS (medals) and increased vigilance regarding the participation of women in scientific events.

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Attracting and retaining talent pools	Strengthen actions aimed at pupils and students in order to encourage women to engage in scientific careers (3rd and 10th grade internships, presentations highlighting female role models)	<i>Institutes/ DIRCOM and Réseau Com'on/ HR/Gender Equality Unit and equality contact points network</i>	Number of young people targeted	Monitoring indicator	2024-2026
	Develop mentoring actions for researchers at different career stages	<i>Institutes/HR</i>	Number of mentees and trainees	50 mentees or trainees per year	2024-2026
	Carry out a study on the rising generation of women scientists in the various disciplines	<i>Institutes</i>	Carry out the study	Indicator of completion	Study completed in 2024
Recruiting without gender bias	Continue the presence and role of gender equality observers of the sections in the next mandate of the CoNRS	<i>Executive Board</i>	Number of sections with an observer	One person in each section	2024-2026
	Provide a training tool on gender non-biased recruitment to all members of support staff recruitment and promotion bodies	<i>DRH/MPDF</i>	Number of members trained	All members trained	Implementation of the tool in 2024
Guaranteeing equality in career progression	Apply the principle of "cascade promotions" (proportion of women promoted greater than or equal to the proportion of those eligible for promotion) to all levels and grade	<i>CoNRS/ Executive board/ Institutes/HR</i>	Percentage of women promoted	Percentage of women promoted equal to or greater than those eligible for promotion in all levels and grades	2024-2026
	Introduce measures and enhance attractiveness to increase the number of women in decision-making positions	<i>"Executive Board/ Institutes/HR"</i>	Percentage of women in positions of responsibility	Increase over the period	2024-2026
	Ensure that the percentage of women in decision-making bodies and positions of responsibility is equal to or higher than the percentage of women in the of all staff in the lab	<i>Lab directors /Decision bodies</i>	Percentage of women	Percentage equal to or higher than the percentage of women in the lab's staff as a whole	2024-2026
	Train manager to encourage unbiased assessment of support staff (annual file, setting objectives, promotion proposals, etc.).	<i>HR/Gender Equality Unit</i>	Number of managers trained	All managers	Development of the training tool in 2024
	Remedy gender gaps in responses to calls for projects	<i>Institutes/ Lab directors/ Gender Equality Unit/ SPV</i>	1) Proportion of female PIs 2) amounts of funding according to gender	Monitoring indicators	Completion of the inventory in 2024

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Taking career breaks better into account	Harmonise the criteria to reduce the impact of maternity leave in the evaluation of applications for recruitments and promotions	CoNRS/HR	Presence of criteria in application forms	Indicator of achievement	Letter from the CEO to be sent in 2024
	Ensure that the proportion of staff who have taken maternity leave or who are taking part-time parental leave are promoted in a proportion equal to or greater than that of those eligible for promotion	CoNRS/DRH CoNRS/HR	Percentage of women promoted after maternity leave or parental leave	Percentage of women promoted equal to or greater than those eligible for promotion	Instructions to be sent in 2024
Increasing the visibility of women at the CNRS	Analyse the award criteria and categories of CRISTAL	Executive Board/ HR/ Institutes /Regional districts	Parity and number of awards between job sectors	Overall balance in parity	2024-2026
	Ensure that women are present at scientific events at all levels and in a proportion that meets or exceeds that of the discipline, and only support events that meet these conditions.	Instituts/DU Institutes/ Lab directors	Number of institutes that grant their financial support only if this criterion is met	All institutes	2024-2026
	Ensure the right proportion of women in media expertise activities	Institutes/ DIRCOM	1) Percentage of women proposed as experts by the institutes 2) Number of women scientists who have followed a media training module	1) Proportion equal to or greater than percentage of women in the scientific field 2) Increase in the number of women scientists who have taken the module	2024-2026

Axis 3: Promoting work-life balance

Teleworking and the dissemination of time management charters have helped to improve the work-life balance. Initiatives to encourage fathers to take childcare leave and the possibility of parental support interviews have been introduced locally, but there is still much progress to be made.

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Enabling work to be organised in a way that promotes professional equality	Propose a standard article for taking equality into account in the internal rules of laboratories, time management charter, etc	HR/Lab directors	Percentage of laboratories that have updated their charter	All laboratories	Note to lab directors concerning the updating of time charters in 2024
	Systematically offer pre- and post-leave interviews for maternity or parental leave and develop support measures for employees returning from leave.	Institutes/ HR	1) Draft a note 2) Number of women who have benefited from support measures	1) Implementation indicator 2) Follow-up indicator	Note to managers to be sent in 2024
	Encourage a gender equal use of telework (guarantee the right to disconnect, ensure the flow of information, etc.)	HR/Gender Equality Unit	Guide with best practice	Indicator of achievement	2024
Encouraging investment in parenthood	Launch communication campaigns to encourage fathers to take childcare leave and generalise parenting support interviews	HR	1) Number of fathers taking childcare leave 2) Number of HR departments in which the interviews are carried out	1) Monitoring indicator 2) All regional departments	2024-2026
	Facilitate parenthood during travels (possibility to book a ticket for children going with their parent; payment of the costs for in-house day care during scientific events...)	DCIF/ Gender Equality Unit	Update of market and services conditions	Indicator of achievement	Note of the DCIF in 2024

Axis 4: Combating gender-based violence, harassment and discrimination

Significant progress has been made in this area, in connection with the implementation of the National Action Plan against gender-based violence in higher education and research (2021-25).

A survey has been carried out among all CNRS staff in 2022, and awareness-raising and prevention initiatives on gender-based violence are gradually being extended and offered to all types of staff. Information and resources are available on the [intranet](#).

A free, anonymous support system for victims and bystanders has been set up, through a partnership with the France Victimes federation. A dedicated phone number and e-mail address have been set up to provide personalised assistance.

The [CNRS reporting unit](#) has been set up and has been the subject of a multi-media communication campaign in French and English.

Thanks to the actions carried out as part of the 2021-2023 plan, a large number of employees have been made aware of the issue. These awareness-raising campaigns must be part of a long-term approach in order to "inform and raise the awareness of as many staff as possible about situations of violence and the players to be mobilised", as recommended by the interministerial circular of 9 March 2018.

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Raising awareness and providing training for CNRS staff on issues of harassment, gender-based violence and discrimination	Pursue awareness-raising and prevention actions against gender-base violence and all types of discrimination	<i>Gender Equality Unit/ HR/Network of equality contact points</i>	Number of employees trained	Monitoring indicator	2024-2026
	Give to all new recruits, then to all staff, a charter of good conduct	<i>Gender Equality Unit</i>	Preparation of the charter	Indicator of achievement	Charter drawn up in 2024

Axis 5: Governing, monitoring and evaluating the gender equality policies

Finally, the governance theme has largely been implemented. The Gender Equality Committee, which includes one or two representatives from each of the 10 institutes, has been renewed in 2022. It is now co-chaired by Béatrice Marticorena and Jean-Louis Vercher. The number of networks of equality contact points in the labs has increased, led either by the regional districts or by the institutes, in cooperation with the Gender Equality Unit. With nearly 500 representatives these networks facilitate the dissemination and implementation of gender equality policies within their work teams.

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Promoting equality as a priority for the CNRS	Draw up an annual communication plan on the CNRS's actions and values in favour of equality	DIRCOM/ CEO's chief of staff/Gender Equality Unit	Implementation of the communication plan	Indicator of achievement	First annual plan in February 2024
	Continue to develop, improve the visibility of and promote the networks of equality contact points in the laboratories, in cooperation with the regional districts and the institutes	Gender Equality Unit/ Institutes /Regional districts	Number of regional districts and institutes that set up a network of gender equality contact points in the laboratories	All regional districts offices and institutes	2024-2026
	Monitor indicators, identify obstacles and solutions and make recommendations to the Executive Board.	Executive Board/ HR/ Gender Equality Unit/ Gender Equality Committee / Unions	Implementation of a tool to monitor indicators	Indicator of achievement	Implementation of the tool in 2024

Axis 6 : Integrating cross-cutting actions

Objective	Action	Responsible entity	Indicator	Target	Schedule
Promoting research results	Promote the integration of the sex and/or gender dimension in research content	Gender Equality Unit/ Institutes	Number of actions	Increase in the number of actions	2024-2026
Mainstreaming equality in all CNRS policies	Take equality into account in the CNRS's international cooperation actions	DEI/Institutes	1) Percentage of women participating in international cooperation initiatives 2) Number of actions dedicated to equality included in international cooperation agreements	1) Increase in the percentage of women 2) Increase in the number of actions dedicated to equality	2024-2026



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