

ACTION PLAN FOR **DIVERSITY, EQUALITY AND INCLUSION 2030**

APPENDIX A **UNIVERSITY-WIDE INITIATIVES**



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Initiative 1: Better working conditions for staff with young children

Background

It is widely acknowledged and well documented that employees' family circumstances can significantly impact their working life and career development. Balancing family and working life can be particularly challenging for those starting a family and raising young children in the early stages of their careers. That is why it is important for the university to offer attractive, family-friendly working conditions for staff who are going on parental leave or have young children; both for the individual employee and for AU's ability to attract and retain highly skilled members of staff.

Goals

Long-term

AU has a well-defined policy framework, based on legislation and collective agreements, to support employees in achieving a better balance between work and family life. The aim of the policy framework is to ensure that:

- Members of staff at AU with family responsibilities for young children feel included and supported in their working life and career development.
- Managers have clear leadership guidelines with regard to employees who are going on parental leave or have small children.

Goals

Short-term

Activity 1 will be completed by the end of 2026.

Activities

This initiative comprises four activities. Each activity addresses a key issue related to work and family life. A working group will be set up for each activity. The working groups will identify and describe the challenges related to the issue in question and draw up recommendations for how to tackle these challenges.

Activity 1: Parental leave fund models

Activity 2: A workplace that supports parental leave (through its culture and physical work environment)

Activity 3: Research stays abroad, conference participation and research mobility in the early stages of a research career

Activity 4: Organisation of work tasks

Responsibility

A working group will be established for each of the four activities. The senior management team will approve the composition of the working groups and the terms of reference for their work. The working groups will draw on relevant experience from the faculties and administrative units.

Each working group will issue recommendations, which will be reviewed by AU's Committee for Diversity, Equality and Inclusion. The recommendations will then be presented to the senior management team as a decision-making proposal, which will also outline suggested next steps. The Rector's Office will be responsible for the project management of Initiative 1.

Timeline

The first activity will be launched in 2026. After that, it is expected that one activity per year will be launched and completed, so that all activities will be concluded by the end of 2029.

Focus areas

Recruitment – Career development – Leadership – Workplace culture

Initiative 2: Effective leadership in a diverse institution

Background In recent years, as part of the university's work with diversity, equality and inclusion, managers at AU have participated in workshops on topics such as unconscious bias and inclusive leadership processes. It is now time for managers to address the need to foster an inclusive workplace culture that gets the best out of the diversity of its staff.

Goals
Long-term Managers develop their skills to lead diverse groups of staff by training their ability to leverage diversity and manage any challenging issues that arise. By developing these skills, managers also improve their ability to foster a work environment in which all voices are valued and heard – and in which everyone communicates respectfully with each other.

Goals
Short-term Develop a training course that can be offered from 2028.

Activities With input from the faculties, AU HR will develop a new training course on leading diverse groups of staff. The course will be voluntary. It will be aimed at both new and experienced managers, and it will focus on empowering individual managers by training them in specific leadership practices that promote an inclusive workplace and leverage the potential of diversity. The course will cover topics such as how to include international members of staff, minority groups, and people in different life phases and of different generations. It will also cover communication style, inclusive language and conflict management.

It will provide a training space in which participants can develop their ability to translate knowledge of theories and methods into concrete practice – based on specific cases and dilemmas. Managers will have the opportunity to give each other feedback and share experiences, which they can use to reflect on their own leadership practices. The course will draw on research in the field with a particular focus on how to support responsible and proactive leadership.

Responsibility AU HR will plan and develop the course with input from the faculties, so that the course reflects their needs. The DEI committees at the faculties and a representative selection of both new and experienced managers will be involved in designing relevant cases.

Timeline The initiative will be launched in 2027. The course will be ready to offer from 2028.

Focus areas Recruitment – Career development – **Leadership** – **Workplace culture**

Initiative 3: A well-defined framework for language and intercultural communication

Background

AU strives to be an international, research-intensive campus-based university, and this is reflected in the growing number of international staff at the university. AU's increasingly international profile has increased the need for a clearer language framework. Experience shows that unclear language expectations can lead to challenges in communication and the performance of tasks, which may contribute to tensions between colleagues and perceptions of discrimination.

Goals

Long-term

- AU has a well-defined framework and clear expectations for language.
- Fewer people experience miscommunications and conflicts due to challenges related to language and intercultural communication.
- There is a clear alignment of expectations related to language skills in connection with recruitment and employment.

Goals

Short-term

Activity 1 will start in 2026 and be completed by the end of 2027.

Activities

This initiative comprises three activities:

Activity 1: Language policy/principles for language use.

Activity 2: Procedure and tools for aligning expectations for language skills in connection with recruitment and employment.

Activity 3: Overview and further development of language and intercultural communication courses offered at AU.

Responsibility

A working group will be established for each activity and will be responsible for developing the content of the activity. The working groups will include stakeholders and individuals with relevant expertise and will ensure that a diversity of experience is represented.

Recommendations issued by the working groups will be submitted to the senior management team.

The Rector's Office will be responsible for Activity 1.

AU HR will be responsible for Activities 2 and 3.

Timeline

Activity 1: Will be launched in 2026 and is expected to be concluded by the end of 2027.

Activity 2: Will be launched in 2028 and is expected to be concluded by the end of 2028.

Activity 3: Will be launched in 2029 and is expected to be concluded by the end of 2029.

Focus areas

Recruitment – Career development – Leadership – Workplace culture

Initiative 4: Respectful communication and behaviour

Background	AU sets out clear norms for mutually respectful behaviour and collegial interaction in its staff policy (sections 2 and 7), but there is a need to build on existing initiatives and make these norms more accessible and applicable in daily practice. This will be achieved by translating them into proven, practice-oriented initiatives that help staff communicate respectfully with one another and treat each other with decency.
Goals Long-term	AU has a shared workplace culture in which respectful communication and behaviour as well as respect for difference is a natural part of daily professional life. Staff and managers have a common language and tools to handle difficult situations with trust and integrity.
Goals Short-term	Collect examples and relevant data by the end of 2026.
Activities	In an inclusive process, examples will be collected from the faculties, departments/schools and units of existing or tested initiatives that promote respectful communication and behaviour, prevent inappropriate behaviour and manage conflicts. Based on the examples and experiences collected and an analysis of data from WPA 2025 (and other data sources), recommendations will be drawn up for specific initiatives that can strengthen AU's overall effort, and proposals will be made for how these initiatives can be implemented and communicated.
Responsibility	AU HR is responsible for the initiative. A working group will be set up with both employee and management representatives from academic and technical/administrative staff. The working group will be responsible for collecting experiences and preparing recommendations to submit to the senior management team.
Timeline	Will be launched in 2026 and is expected to be concluded by the end of 2027.
Focus areas	Recruitment – Career development – Leadership – Workplace culture

Initiative 5: A more data-driven approach to working with diversity, equality and inclusion

Background

There is a general wish for AU's work with diversity, equality and inclusion to be informed by data and for this data to be easily accessible to relevant stakeholders. A PowerBI report on the gender of employees (male/female) is already available, based on data from HR Kuben, but there is a demand for more comprehensive data that reflects a broader approach to diversity.

Goals

Long-term

Relevant stakeholders can access up-to-date DEI data on employees easily and securely, and this data can be used as a basis to set and follow up on university-wide and local DEI priorities.

Goals

Short-term

By the end of 2026, one or more PowerBI reports – and potentially a consolidated dashboard – will have been developed to expand the data available for AU's work on diversity, equality and inclusion. Relevant stakeholders will have been identified and notified about the reports.

Activities

AU HR Data and Digitalisation will develop a proposal outlining which types of data can and should be included in a PowerBI report. This could include age and citizenship, which are available in HR Kuben, and in the long term also data on salaries and WPA results.

Stakeholders at the faculties and in the administration will be involved early in the process to help identify which data will be useful to the university, how this data will be used in practice, and whether it should be communicated to users, such as local committees. A draft proposal will be discussed in AU's Committee for Diversity, Equality and Inclusion. After this, the reports (and potentially a dashboard) will be produced in PowerBI.

Responsibility

AU HR, Data and Digitalisation is responsible for the initiative.

The faculties and the administration will be involved through staff who support their DEI committees (the 'DEI network').

Timeline

The initiative will be launched in 2026 and is expected to be concluded within the same year.

Focus areas

Recruitment – Career development – **Leadership** – Workplace culture