

# European Museum Academy Gender Equality Plan

## Gender equality in the cultural sector

Women dominate the museum and gallery workforce, but gender bias persists in leadership positions. Various EU countries have introduced initiatives to enhance women's roles in cultural heritage and related fields, including promoting gender equality in leadership and publishing gender-related statistics.

The museum sector, while celebrated for preserving history and culture, has historically mirrored societal gender imbalances. As of recent years, concerted efforts to address gender equality in European museums have gained momentum, shedding light on both progress made and ongoing challenges. While women constitute the majority of the museum workforce, their presence in leadership positions and as artists in permanent collections remains limited. The art market also reflects a gender imbalance, with a higher representation of male artists. Initiatives have been introduced to address this issue, but challenges persist. Despite improvements, female artists' representation in museum collections and leadership roles still requires significant attention.

Across Europe, initiatives are emerging to empower women in cultural heritage and related fields, encompassing gender policies and specific actions for museums and archaeology.

Overall, in Europe, the acknowledgment of gender disparities within the museum sector has led to **several positive developments:**

1. **Increased Representation:** Museums have taken steps to diversify leadership positions, appointing more women to directorial and curatorial roles. This has provided female professionals with platforms to shape narratives and influence decision-making.
2. **Exhibition Diversity:** European museums have worked towards displaying a more balanced representation of artists and historical figures, offering a more inclusive view of history and artistry.
3. **Advocacy and Initiatives:** Museums, supported by organizations like the European Museum Academy, have initiated gender equality plans, embedding strategies to foster a fair and inclusive work environment.

## Remaining Challenges

However, despite these strides, significant challenges persist:

1. **Wage Disparities:** Gender pay gaps continue to be a concern within the museum sector, reflecting broader societal inequities. Women, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, often earn less than their male counterparts for similar roles.
2. **Leadership Disproportion:** While more women are occupying leadership roles, true gender parity is still far from realized. The upper echelons of museum management remain largely male-dominated.

3. Underrepresentation of Women Artists: Female artists, particularly those from non-Western backgrounds, continue to be underrepresented in museum exhibitions and collections.

4. Workplace Culture: Reports of workplace harassment and discrimination reveal that efforts to create an inclusive and respectful environment are still a work in progress.

Taking progress and challenges into consideration, the European Museum Academy produced a Gender Equality Plan to further improve equality in Europe's museum sector.

## **European Museum Academy Gender Equality Plan**

The European Museum Academy (EMA), a volunteer-based foundation with experts and members from all around Europe, recognizes the importance of gender equality within the museum sector and is committed to promoting diversity and inclusivity in all its activities. This Gender Equality Plan outlines a comprehensive strategy to ensure equal opportunities and representation for all genders within EMA and the wider museum community.

### **1. Leadership and Decision-Making:**

EMA aims to ensure gender-balanced representation in EMA's leadership positions, including the Board of Directors and advisory committees. However, since the cultural sector is mostly employed by women, the majority of our experts are also women. Yet, it is important for the EMA to implement a transparent and unbiased selection process for leadership roles to prevent gender-based discrimination. Being a volunteer foundation, leadership roles are assigned to those who volunteer, and in case of multiple bids for the same position, all genders are welcome to contribute following a transparent and unbiased selection process.

### **2. Work Policies and Culture:**

As the EMA is a volunteer society of museum experts, it helps implement flexible work arrangements, such as remote work and flexible hours, to accommodate the needs of all genders.

### **3. Training and Professional Development:**

As a volunteer museum society, EMA has experts from various backgrounds from different countries and languages. This lets EMA have a capacity to offer gender sensitivity and unconscious bias training to all its volunteers to raise awareness and promote inclusive behavior. In addition, EMA supports, encourages, and offers help develop a gender equality plan for museums that it partners with.

### **4. Research and Advocacy:**

Conduct/cooperate research on gender disparities within the museum sector and publish reports to raise awareness and advocate for change. EMA requests country representatives to write a short summary of what museums are doing in that year in respective countries and produces a report where gender issue in those countries will be scrutinized.

EMA is always ready to collaborate with other organizations to drive gender equality initiatives within the broader cultural and creative industries.

### **5. Representation in Programming and Exhibitions:**

EMA ensures diverse representation in all its programs, internship and mentoring programme, conferences, award schemes, workshops, courses, and exhibitions, highlighting the work and

contributions of all genders, and encourages museums to incorporate gender-inclusive narratives and perspectives in their exhibitions and collections.

#### **6. Partnerships and Collaborations:**

Collaborate with gender-focused organizations and initiatives to share resources and best practices for promoting gender equality. EMA establishes partnerships with museums and cultural institutions that have successfully implemented gender equality measures. Besides, EMA's partnerships with organizations, academia, and experts help share insights and best practices, fostering a collective movement towards gender equality.

#### **7. Metrics and Accountability:**

EMA sets measurable goals and targets for gender equality within EMA and regularly assesses progress. These are:

- diverse volunteer recruitment: however as cultural sector employees are mostly women, most of our volunteer roles, or experts are females. Having said that it is important to emphasize, EMA is open to all genders.
- Leadership positions within EMA are aimed to be distributed evenly and open to all genders.
- EMA strives towards having real gender representativity when composing judging teams for museum vivists and when representing EMA in EU projects.

#### **8. Community Engagement, inclusive language and communications:**

EMA engages with museum professionals, academics, and the public through workshops, webinars, and seminars to share insights, promote collaboration and facilitate conversations on gender equality and its role in the museum sector. In all activities, communications, documents and materials, EMA is careful to use gender-inclusive language.

As a European foundation and in order to continuously improve, and adapt to changing circumstances, EMA regularly reviews and updates the Gender Equality Plan based on feedback and evolving best practices. By implementing this Gender Equality Plan, the European Museum Academy aims to create a more inclusive and equitable museum sector, believing that museums can become agents of change, ensuring that gender equality becomes an integral facet of preserving and presenting our shared cultural heritage, fostering an environment where all genders can thrive and contribute to the cultural landscape.

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