

Annual Report
on
Diversity and Inclusion
- 2024 -

IT University of Copenhagen

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Status Statement of 2024

This is the third annual report from the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion at ITU. Throughout 2024, we have undertaken various initiatives and gained valuable experiences in advancing our diversity and inclusion agenda. Our commitment to fostering an open and inclusive environment where both students and staff can thrive remains steadfast. I am pleased to share the progress we have made this year.

A comprehensive draft document titled "Faculty Recruitment Process Recommendations" was completed by December 2024, aligning with the Diversity Committee's action plan. This document draws on recruitment experiences from the ITU Computer Science Department from 2017 to 2024, which has significantly improved its faculty gender balance over these years.

With regard to research communication and press work, ITU's media contact list includes 23 men and 16 women, reflecting a 59/41 percent split. The press team actively works to balance the gender ratio when referring to researchers, considering other parameters such as seniority.

The 'Maternity/Paternity/Parent' page on the ITU intranet has been updated to reflect the latest legislation and accommodate the diverse family structures of ITU employees. The leaflet has been phased out, and the page has been enhanced for better readability, making it easier to update in response to any evolving needs in this area.

In 2024, the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion has established a forum with ITU's Sexual Harassment Committee (SHC). Going forward, the SHC will participate in a D&I committee meeting on an annual basis.

The committee mailbox has received many inquiries, suggestions, and feedback. One employee suggestion has resulted in ITU making menstrual hygiene products freely available to all staff and students on campus. In 2024, the university acquired five dispensers which were installed in restrooms on Rued Langgaards Vej and Emil Holms Kanal.

A project group within Student Affairs and Programmes has been working to improve learning conditions for students with impairments. Updates to ITU's intranet for teachers include information, case examples, and recommendations for handling exams. Workshops on Universal Design for Learning and neurodiversity were organized to support teachers in creating inclusive learning environments.

ITU's MSc in Games programme has been working to promote greater diversity recognising the sector-wide diversity issues outlined in the The National Academy of Digital, Interactive Entertainment's 2024 report on DEI. At ITU, the Design track has admitted an average of 40% non-male students, while both tracks combined averaged 27% over the last five years. In 2024, an initiative in the Games programme, led by Head of Study Programme, launched a mentorship programme for female game workers in collaboration with leading Danish games companies.

Finally, ITU has joined the Sunflower Program. In early 2025, workshops for managers, frontline staff, and teachers are held to enhance understanding and awareness of invisible disabilities and the barriers they create. Data from the Danish Study Survey conducted in autumn 2023 was analyzed in a workshop in April 2024. An action plan was developed and approved by the Board of Studies in June 2024, running from June 2024 to June 2028, focusing on Wellbeing, Learning Environment, and Physical Environment.

Sincerely, Per Bruun Brockhoff, Rector

Introduction

The annual report on diversity and inclusion follow from the dedicated and structured framework for working systematically with diversity and inclusion at ITU, among others in compliance with ITU's [Gender Equality Plan](#).

The report refers to the overall [goals for gender equality](#) at ITU - goals that are based on the current university strategy, the vision statement for gender equality at ITU, the (education) Quality Policy, and the (ministerial) Strategic Framework Contract.

Based on the overall goals concrete actions has been specified within the three primary areas (as outlined below) in the [action plan](#) for 2024.

Area	Responsible
Staff at ITU	Head of HR, Kirsten Uldall Juhl
Recruitment of students	Head of Communications, Camilla Rosengaard
Study environment	Temporary stand-in for Dean of Education, Head of Studies, Lene Rehder

The report provides a status on the specific actions for 2024, as well as additional initiatives, on diversity and inclusion within the organisation the past year.

The [Committee for Diversity and Inclusion](#) is responsible for gathering information and preparing the annual report on diversity and inclusion.

Competence Development and the Acquisition of Knowledge of the Members of the Committee

The committee members and supporting HR employees have engaged in various activities within the DEI area during the year, e.g.:

- A part of the Gender Equality in Research and Academia in Denmark (GEAR) network and participation in the annual equality seminar in the GEAR-network
- Memberships of the network of Diversity in Practice at KVINFO
- Participating in the launch of the diversity barometer 2024, Equalis
- Participating in the conference "Management of diversity and inclusion" at the Center for Ledelse
- Participating in workshop: *Exploring neurodiversity support in Danish higher education* held at Copenhagen University by Dansk Universitetspædagogisk Netværk Special Interest Group on Bias-Aware Teaching and Learning (BATL/SIG)
- Participating in ATV Diversity Committee, including co-organising ATV Tech Talks on Neurodiversity
- Talk for Villum/Novo Nordisk Foundation Living Labs workshop at *Is It a Bird* consultants

- Member of international advisory board for Chalmers Technical University's Gender Initiative for Excellence (GENIE) project
- Participating in Cfl-Topledertræf with the topic's including leadership
- Participating in workshop about neurodiversity for teachers by "Studenterrådgivningen" at ITU.
- Participating in the awarding of the Nina Bang Prize 2024
- Participation in Women in Research event at ITU in Spring 2024

Status from the Sexual Harassment Committee

Since September 2023, no reports of sexual harassment have been received from employees. Among students, we have handled one complaint involving allegations against one or more teachers. This case was referred to the Board of Equal Treatment (Ligebehandlingsnævnet), which found no grounds to proceed with the complaint.

Additionally, a few incidents during study start 2024 and events at ScrollBar were addressed and handled through dialogue with the parties involved. Following the Here To Help campaign, it is the committee's perception that students have a better understanding of where to seek assistance if they experience harassment.

We are currently supporting an upcoming event for students, organized in collaboration with ScrollBar and the Student Council, aimed at increasing awareness and competence in handling such incidents especially in the context of ScrollBar. This event is planned for spring 2025.

Status on Action Plan for 2024

The primary focus and purpose of the action plan for diversity and inclusion at ITU is to implement initiatives that promote diversity and inclusion among staff and students.

Below is a status on the initiatives for 2024 as outlined in the action plan.

Best practice in recruitment

A short but rather complete draft document called *Faculty recruitment process recommendations* has been written by December 2024, in accordance with the Diversity Committee's action plan. It is based on recruiting experiences from the ITU Computer Science Department 2017-2024. The department has considerably improved faculty gender balance over those eight years.

The document *Faculty recruitment process recommendations* gives advice on all six main steps of the faculty hiring process, which can be condensed as follows:

1. *Announce position and receive applications*: Make the call text broad, using inclusive language. Announce internationally, in English, disseminate widely; use social media; personally encourage (female) applicants.

2. *Shortlist applicants*: Avoid using only quantitative indicators; actively counter bias; ask yourself “would this be a great colleague?”; “would this applicant contribute a useful new perspective?”; do shortlisting fast.
3. *Assess shortlisted applicants*: The assessment committees must be balanced and diverse; consider non-promotable work; help the assessment committee chair start the process.
4. *Interview some qualified applicants*: The hiring committee must be balanced and diverse; invite qualified but under-represented applicants early; arrange a short 15-25 minute online pre-interview as soon as possible. Make the applicant give a department talk and meet existing faculty; set up a meeting schedule. Understand the applicant’s relocation constraints.
5. *Offer position(s)*: Make informal job offers fast. Offer personal and rapid help with understanding the public Danish salary system, forskerskat, the Danish pension system, etc etc. Always reply in less than 24 hours. Make sure that the formal contract offer is sent early, also for positions that start maybe 6-12 months into the future.
6. *Negotiate conditions*: Offer relocation support, apartment search, and partner job search, as relevant. Use your personal network. Ensure speedy salary negotiations by working with the union representative. Facilitate contact to colleagues who moved to Copenhagen recently, to provide an honest impression of living here as expat. Be very flexible with the starting date.

Review of the recruitment process

This action has been “upgraded” to an ITU-project (October 2024) and the work on reviewing the recruitment process will thus continue in 2025.

Expert lists

There are currently 23 men and 16 women on ITU’s media contact list – a 59/41 percent split – which reflects the overall gender balance among scientific staff at ITU. The press team actively works to balance the gender ratio when we refer to researchers (other parameters such as seniority are also considered). The team is planning a push in the coming months to spread awareness in the individual sections about what the press team at ITU offers researchers in terms of promoting their work externally. Part of this effort will be aimed specifically at female (and junior) researchers by addressing common issues and concerns about appearing as experts in the media.

Tenure Track

There exists a 2019 draft recommendation about introducing tenure-track assistant professors at ITU, which was never implemented for a range of reasons, including covid lockdowns and the need to introduce faculty competence profiles. As planned, the recommendation has now been updated to reflect status 2024, including the new 1 January 2020 Stillingsstruktur; the resulting recommendation is [here](#)

Maternity/paternity/parental leave – folder

The 'Maternity/Paternity/Parent' page on the ITU intranet has been updated to reflect the latest legislation, while also considering the diverse family structures of ITU employees. The leaflet has been phased out, and the page has been enhanced for better readability, making it easier to update in response to any evolving needs in this area.

Students with impairments: Taskforce for Teaching Activities

A small project “group” (two employees, project category C) in Student Affairs and Programmes has, besides the daily work that is being done, been working on improving the learning conditions for students with impairments. ITU’s intranet for teachers has been updated with information, case examples and recommendations regarding handling exams. Workshops have been organized internally (“TeachIT – Universal Design for Learning” in October 2024) and with external consultants (“A tailored workshop about neurodiversity for teachers - by Studenterrådgivningen" in November 2024) to provide more support for teachers with a focus on neurodiversity and how to create an inclusive learning environment for all students. A broad dialogue with teachers, managers, and administrative staff in the organization confirms the need to continue the work and to focus on creating sustainable solutions through collaboration across the organisation.

Introducing the sunflower at ITU

ITU has enrolled in the Sunflower Program. In early 2025, two workshops are planned: one for managers and frontline staff, and another for teachers. The aim of the workshops is to enhance understanding and awareness of invisible disabilities and diagnoses, as well as the hidden barriers created by ignorance and a lack of understanding in academic, teaching, and work environments.

The workshops will also focus on strengthening employees' ability to interact empathetically and effectively with students, colleagues, and visitors who have invisible disabilities or diagnoses, and who may choose to make their condition visible using the Sunflower symbol. Additionally, the workshops aim to foster a cultural shift, ensuring that employees and students with disabilities feel better supported, understood, and included.

Follow up on the Danish Student Survey

Data from the Danish Study Survey, conducted in the autumn of 2023, was analyzed by students, teachers, administrations and educational management during a workshop in April 2024. Following this discussion, an action plan was developed and discussed by stakeholders during late spring 2024. Board of Studies approved the new action plan at the end of June. The approved plan runs from June 2024 to June 2028 and consists of initiatives and projects within three overall themes (Wellbeing, Learning environment, and Physical environment).

Actions will be carried out by and involve students, staff and management. The Action Plan is dynamic and updates on progress, adjustments, etc. will be published regularly.

Diversity and inclusion in Games

In June 2024, DADIU (The National Academy of Digital, Interactive Entertainment) presented its DEI report and recommendations, which were prepared by members of the DADIU steering committee representing the Royal Danish Academy, Syddansk Musikkonservatoriet, and ITU. In 2024, DADIU had 23% female-identifying participants and 2 individuals who identified as neurodiverse. There are no statistics for nationality or ethnicity, except for the observations that no local students appeared to have a migration background, and that non-Danish participants came from EU countries, China and the US.

The report identifies as the biggest challenges the uneven gender distribution in their sending institutions, as well as clear gender tendencies in particular domains (e.g. programmers majorly identifying as male). Various structural issues contribute to barriers for attracting more diverse students, primarily the lack of

diverse role models and the persistence of a narrative about videogames being made by white men for white men.

DADIU has begun addressing these issues in several ways. Gendered language is avoided in official communication. The proportion of female teachers is increased. DADIU promotional material and presentation of the programme at the sending institutions will emphasize diversity and highlight strategies for removing barriers. Furthermore, the DADIU teachers will help develop more diverse games and further work towards an inclusive environment at events and the regular work environment. The expected positive impact of these activities will then be made visible in external communication developing the narrative of a new games education for a changed, diverse industry.

The observations made at DADIU are largely congruent with those in the ITU Games programme. While more diverse along other parameters, particularly ethnicity and neurodiversity, ITU Games has similar challenges in reaching gender parity. While the Design track of the education has managed to admit 40% of non-male students on average, both tracks combined only averaged at 27% over the last 5 years. Counteracting the scarcity of non-male applicants is beyond the scope of an individual, small study programme. However, the Games programme has, through an initiative led by Head of Study Programme, taken steps to helping non-male graduates navigate barriers in the games industry. In 2024, a mentorship programme for female game workers was launched in collaboration between ITU and leading Danish games companies (IO Interactive, SYBO, Triband, Ghost Ship Games).

Bias/diversity training

Activities within this action were “put on hold” due to the Dean of Education leaving ITU and due to prioritizing of resources.

Further initiatives on Diversity and Inclusion

In December ITU acquired and installed five RedLocker dispensers with free menstrual hygiene products for staff and students on campus. The dispensers are located in 0A37, 2A62, and 3A32 at Rued Langgaards Vej and in 2FA02 and 3FA02 at Emil Holms Kanal.

In 2024 the ITU leadership programme, that will be launched in 2025 for all managers at ITU, was designed in collaboration with Rambøll. The programme will, among others, include a focus on inclusive leadership, equipping managers to practice inclusive leadership with an emphasis on creating a psychological safe environment within their teams – fostering that all are comfortable being themselves, taking risks, admitting mistakes, and voicing their opinions.

Data on Gender Equality at ITU

The efforts to promote equality and diversity at ITU are supported by monitoring and annual follow-up of key figures of the distribution of men and women. This includes student applicants, student admissions, students graduated and recruitment of scientific staff, technical and administrative staff, and managers which may be accessed [here](#)