

Gender Equality Plan

# Diversity and inclusivity in the UMCG



umcg

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## Introduction

With this document about diversity and inclusion at the UMCG, the Board of Directors of the University Medical Center of Groningen (UMCG) intends to emphasise how important it considers this issue to be for the UMCG as an organisation.

In recent years, the Board of Directors has made every effort to reinforce diversity and inclusivity in the broadest sense of the word. The current reason for making our policy more explicit in this respect is that the European Commission is stipulating the submission of an institutional public gender equality plan as a condition for obtaining funding from Horizon Europe, its key funding programme for research and innovation. This precondition will be imposed as part of the plans of the European Commission to promote gender equality (Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025; Gender Equality in the European Research Area).

All in all, this is an excellent opportunity to present the UMCG's vision and the measures it has taken in the domain of gender equality, diversity and inclusion in the broadest sense of the word. The following pages contain a summary of the developments, initiatives and instruments which are already available and will continue to be developed in greater detail within patient care, training and education and research. This document of the UMCG about diversity and inclusivity will include a retrospective of the various activities and measures introduced in recent years and the preconditional policy specially drafted for this purpose. This document will also reveal our plans and objectives for the future. Our ambitions cover a wide range of elements of equality, diversity and inclusivity in our organisation.

## UMCG organisation

The University Medical Center of Groningen (UMCG) is formed by a University Hospital as well as a Faculty of Medicine, in this case, that of the University of Groningen. The UMCG stands at the heart of our society, where we play a special and responsible role: to find solutions for complicated patient and health care questions. We have already been engaged in this since 1614, when the second Faculty of Medicine in the Netherlands was founded in Groningen. Ever since the University Hospital opened its doors in 1797, the Hospital and the Faculty have been inextricably bound up with each other. Patient care, research and training & education form a trinity and cannot exist independently of each other. Through the centuries, we have achieved a great deal together. In various domains, we have taken the lead and broken up fresh ground, both nationally and internationally. We are very proud of this. Our mission and vision therefore are: "Together we can open up new horizons for a sustainable future of health care."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See our strategic project Horizon25  
[umcg.nl/documents/68138/1605370/Koers25-brochure-3-maart-2021.pdf](https://umcg.nl/documents/68138/1605370/Koers25-brochure-3-maart-2021.pdf)

We provide our patients with complex, academic hospital care. Every day, we are getting better at this, because we are continuously opening up new horizons for diagnostics and treatment, using our know-how, research and innovative solutions. We also offer future-oriented training and education for health care professionals. All of this, we do together with other parties. That's how we are creating a health care landscape together, which will be ready for the future. In doing so, certain essential core values have come to the fore, which we have now adopted as a guiding principle for our actions: to take responsibility, to move ahead together and to show that we can be agile whenever it is required.

To us, taking responsibility means that our approach must be people-oriented and that we dedicate ourselves to a diverse and inclusive UMCG. Diversity and inclusivity are important within all of the three core tasks of the UMCG, because it is desirable to be aware of our differences and to use our knowledge and our talents, both in patient care and in research and education.

## View on diversity and inclusivity at the UMCG



We aim to create a safe and inclusive work environment, in which all our employees have equal opportunities and where everyone feels at home, irrespective of their backgrounds and differences. Together we are the UMCG<sup>2</sup>. As a health care and educational institution, the UMCG is one of the leaders and occupies a top position at an international level with research and training and education. And our ambitions remain equally strong. Ground-breaking progress can only be realised if we manage to combine the best of all worlds. Having an open eye and ear for what moves people and what each and every individual may contribute.

We therefore aim for optimal diversity in our work force in terms of culture, religion, orientation, age, ethnicity and sex or gender at all levels, in a safe environment, where people can be themselves and have equal opportunities. This will not only create better cooperation and more profound decision-making, but will also help us understand our diverse patients, to include knowledge about other people's cultures and customs in our research and to educate our students with an open mind. To stay mindful of humanity in everything we do.

Diversity and inclusivity, moreover, links up with our policies around corporate social responsibility, the social safety of our staff and with our ambitions, as formulated in Horizon25, our strategy for the future.

<sup>2</sup> [Together we are the UMCG - umcg.nl](https://www.umcg.nl)

In short, diversity and inclusivity are preconditions for:

- A **safe work climate**, fundamental for the performance of our core tasks
- **Better decision-making**, because everyone is involved, based on his or her perspective
- Giving effect to our **social role** and responsibilities
- **Realising our ambitions** as formulated in Horizon25, as an organisation at the heart of our society.

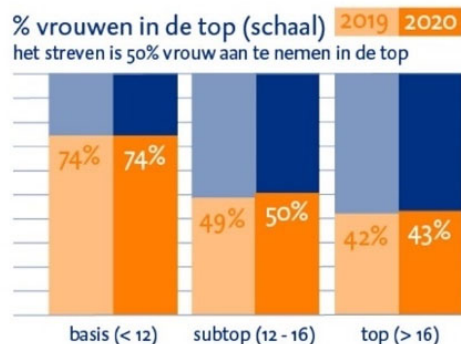
## Diversity and inclusivity at the UMCG

### Gender equality

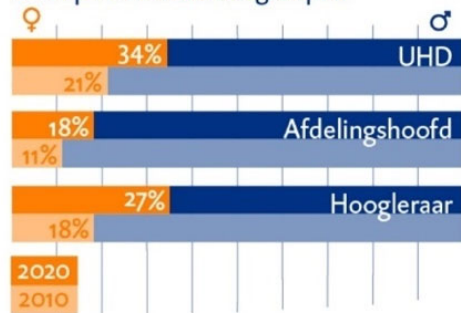
To pay attention to the development of diversity and inclusivity is in our DNA and hardly something new to us in Groningen: 150 years ago, Aletta Jacobs was one of the best known “first ladies”. She was the first woman in the Netherlands officially admitted to a university; “our” University, and “our” Faculty of Medicine. She was the first Dutch woman to gain entry to higher education and the first female physician with a doctorate in medicine.

Since 2012, the UMCG has given increasingly more attention to diversity and inclusivity. Initially, the focus was mainly on male and female ratios within the various positions at the UMCG, with the emphasis on the intake and promotion opportunities for women. To

### Diversiteit op het gebied van gender



### % in specifieke functiegroepen



advance these opportunities, UMCG-wide female talent programmes were introduced in the past. Nowadays, with the recruitment and selection of professors, the basic principle is to apply the ‘zipper merging’ method. This means that we follow the principle of best female, best male, second-best female, second-best male, etc. In the recruitment processes for other positions, we also make sure that gender equality is actively promoted. We are aiming at having a minimum 30% share of female members sitting on selection committees and advisory boards. Furthermore, we (as part of the University of Groningen) are still running female talent programmes within our research departments, such as the Rosalind Franklin Fellowship programme and the Aletta Jacobs chairs, created specifically for women.

In terms of gender equality for women in certain positions, a great deal of good work has already been achieved at the UMCG. In the health care sector in general – and the UMCG is not an exception – women are clearly in the majority. At the same time, it is easy to see that the percentage of women versus men is not the same at every level. As from 2018, we will be aiming to appoint at least 50% women in professorial positions.

Within our recruitment policy, we will also take other positions into consideration where, conversely, it would be desirable to employ more men. For the sake of completeness, we would like to note that we are well aware that gender equality and any particular terminology of male/female ratios often used for this is not always appropriate, nor is it always perceived or felt to be appropriate by some of our staff members. Gender-related data are collected and monitored annually and the results are presented, amongst other things, in our public annual report as well as distributed throughout our organisation.

## Organisation at the UMCG

### Structure

To make sure that the matter of diversity and inclusivity would also be guaranteed in a wider sense at the UMCG, a Diversity & Inclusivity (D&I) Ambassador Group was set up in 2014 at the instigation of the Board of Directors. This is a group of employees in top positions, who have assumed the role of an ambassador in the domain of diversity and inclusivity, both internally and externally. This group has the task to identify, recommend and promote an inclusive range of thought, where necessary. In 2018, they were supplemented by a working group, which lends support to the Ambassador Group and aims to facilitate D&I (self-) awareness and visibility in the widest sense of the phrase, as well as the sharing of knowledge and best practices for diversity and inclusivity. Within this context, they cooperate and align matters with the University of Groningen and other UMCs, they are given the necessary time and resources and will continue to do this work in the future.

### Inclusivity in communication

To make sure that all our employees are kept up to date properly, all important internal communications are issued in two languages (English and Dutch), using various channels or methods. Within our research departments, the language of communication is English. Our training and education programmes are also increasingly bilingual, which is a standard practice whenever we are joined by international students. With our patients and their families, we aim to communicate in the language commonly spoken by them, if possible.

### The work-life balance

The UMCG also pays attention to the work-life balance, at every stage of our employees' lives. Through arrangements in our Collective Labour Agreement (i.e. longer care leave than legally provided) and through our own initiatives in the field of sustainable staff availability, we aim to facilitate the optimal combination of work and personal life. Apart from a variety of custom-made arrangements between employees and managers about, for instance, timetables and part-time work, at the UMCG we provide:

- An on-site crèche at the UMCG
- A Generation Scheme, which allows for reduced working hours from a certain age

- A structural work-from-home plan and future hybrid work for all our employees
- Healthy@work, a concept within which the UMCG has mapped out the wide range of options related to caring for yourself, each other, vital and safe work and professional help.

### Implementation of the Dutch Participation Act

Inspired by social developments and the royal assent to the Dutch Participation Act (the Jobs and Jobs Quota Act) in 2015, the UMCG is making every effort to help create jobs for people with limited capability for work. Within this framework, the UMCG is working closely together with the City of Groningen and the UWV, the Employee Insurance Implementing Body. To realise sustainable jobs (so-called *Afspraakbanen* or Participation Act jobs), the Board of Directors has allocated funds to open up a Jobs Act Desk, to support managers in making work available for the target groups in their own wards or departments.

Year	2013	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Number of jobs	10 <sup>3</sup>	29	50	84	100	123

### Equal opportunities and remuneration

In recruitment, selection and remuneration, the UMCG does not make a distinction according to sex or gender, religious or philosophical beliefs, culture, place of birth and limited capability for work. We have a transparent recruitment and selection policy, which includes guarantees to do justice to diversity and inclusion in this process. To create an inclusive culture, we offer training courses in the field of D&I, on subjects such as 'implicit bias'. All heads of departments, directors of institutes and members of the PhD examining committee have been invited by the Chairman of the Board to attend an 'inclusive selection' course. Employees can also find information about the options for development and training on the website of our training institute. The UMCG remunerates employees according to the positions in which they are appointed. The salaries concerned are entered into a job rating system (FUWAVAZ). The UMCG also works together with the International Welcome Center North (IWCN) to support employees with different cultural backgrounds.

### Social safety for employees

A socially safe, inclusive work environment is an essential factor in the development of our employees. Undesirable behaviour in the broadest sense of the word, such as harassment, aggression, violence, (sexual) intimidation or discrimination is therefore not acceptable. We offer our employees various options to



<sup>3</sup> Benchmark

discuss a problem, conflict or complaint in this field. Apart from the employee's own manager, P&O consultants, company welfare workers or the company medical officer, we also employ several confidential advisors at the UMCG, each with their own area of expertise. For example, besides the Employees and Integrity Confidential Advisors, who are available for all staff members, we also have confidential advisors in specific fields or for specific professional groups, namely the AIOS ANIOS and Medical Staff Confidential Advisor, the Graduate School of Medical Sciences (GSMS) Confidential Advisor and the Scientific Integrity / Research Confidential Advisor. We also conduct employee surveys to check employees' perception of social safety and, if necessary, we take corrective action.

### Talent to the Top Charter & Diversity Charter

The UMCG has committed itself to the Talent to the Top<sup>4</sup> Charter. As a result, the UMCG will annually monitor its position with regard to its quantity of diverse talents in the (sub-) top. The UMCG considers the diversity of talents important, since it will improve decision-making and performances, whilst making the most of the talents of all employees. In addition to this, the UMCG signed a Diversity Charter in June 2021. By having declared our intentions in this way, we aim to express our dedication to a more diverse work force and an inclusive working culture. In our opinion, this will help us stay focused on our commitment to make the most of the power of diversity within the UMCG, and to keep paying attention to making inclusivity a solid part of our corporate culture.

### D& I in (patient) care

Within patient care, it is important to us that each and every patient is accepted as he or she is. All our patients deserve to be treated with an (equal level of) quality of care, irrespective of their age, sex or gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds. To support our staff with this, we give special attention to dealing with patients from different cultural backgrounds and provide facilities, such as the services of interpreters. Social safety is also permanently monitored in our interactions with visitors, patients and employees.

### D&I in training and education

In training and education, diversity arises at two levels: on the one hand, it is important to create a safe and inclusive atmosphere for all those involved in learning (pupils, students, trainees, doctors and nurses in training, etcetera) and so equip them for their work in diversely composed teams at their place of work; on the other hand, health care is characterised by a highly diverse patient population, and this diversity must always be taken into account, both in the treatment of and in the contacts with patients.

The diversity among students is given attention at the start of their studies in various ways. For example, the UMCG Committee for Language and Culture (UCLC) will assist (international) medical students by introducing them to the academic educational culture they will encounter in their studies. This event and digital information are available to all

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<sup>4</sup> Talent to the Top is a foundation whose social objective is to realise more diverse talents in the (sub-) top. See [talentnaardetop.nl](https://talentnaardetop.nl)

first-year medical students and may also be beneficial to first-generation university students. A similar example of an effort to promote the inclusion of a diverse student population can be found in the master programmes for Molecular Medicine and Innovative Treatment (MMIT) and Clinical Psychosocial Epidemiology (CPE). Likewise, the College of Dentistry also introduces its first-year students to a module dealing with cultural diversity.

Obviously, attention is also paid to the diversity of the student population within the domain of university teacher professionalisation. Training courses are available for several university teacher roles (including tutors), while the subject is also included in the course for Junior Academic Teachers.

Giving attention to the diversity of the patient population is a standard part of learning about diseases and treatments (clinical competencies) in the various training courses, but also in the development of the skills and competencies in the field of, for instance, communication. When a treatment plan is developed, the patient's "background" is always considered an important part, which is crucial to the promotion of patient participation. This is therefore a recurring issue during the training. Within the medical continuation courses, a module is currently being developed for all specialisms, at the instigation of the Department of Gynaecology, with the theme "Gender in health care".

In addition to this, attention is paid to diversity with the intake of students.

## D&I in research

To realise excellence in science requires a state-of-the-art, supporting infrastructure and financing policy. It depends on having the right people, by recruiting and educating talented students and future staff members. It also involves an Open Science policy and clearly defined views on scientific integrity and a safe work environment. How research is given shape at the UMCG and what kinds of support are available is described on the Internet page about research<sup>5</sup>. The UMCG's Research Strategy covers specific targets for all the subjects mentioned above. The UMCG Research Code<sup>6</sup> includes the guidelines for the correct and ethical conduct of medical research. We aim to create an academic climate in which staff members feel safe to discuss certain situations with their immediate superior. The focus lies on removing thresholds and developing opportunities in the career development of our scientists. Examples are the academic career policy<sup>7</sup>, a selection policy which defines the targets to appoint 50% female professors, aiming for 25% female heads of departments, a selection committee composed for 30% of women and the adoption of the "zipper merging" method<sup>8</sup>. Exceptional academic talents at the UMCG may be eligible for a Talent Track position. Enrolment may ultimately lead to being appointed professor. A special branch of the Talent Track is the Rosalind Franklin Fellowship programme of the University of Groningen. This programme offers incentives for academic careers in particular to female academics. It is a prestigious programme which has already been running since 2007. In 2020, the Aletta Jacobs chairs (n=16 within the University) were set up to support women in their academic careers. A Happy Hour, chaired by the Dean, helps to keep track of what is of

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<sup>5</sup> [umcgresearch.org](https://umcgresearch.org)

<sup>6</sup> [umcgresearch.org/researchcode](https://umcgresearch.org/researchcode)

<sup>7</sup> [Academic promotion policy | \(intranet\)](#)

<sup>8</sup> Principle of best female, best male, second-best female, second-best male, etc.

interest to our researchers. Besides, the Abel Tasman talent programme gives foreign PhD students the opportunity to conduct their research at the UMCG. In conclusion, D&I is given attention in research by the UMCG Impact Team, in charge of education and creating awareness about an impact-oriented research culture, in which various voices and perspectives are taken into consideration<sup>9</sup>.

## Our ambitions

The coming years we will continue to be fully committed to creating an inclusive and diverse UMCG. We intend to achieve this by giving several impulses in the domain of D&I. Apart from publishing this document, we will pay attention to:

- The further integration of D&I into our recruitment, selection and appointment policies.
- Working towards a structural range of courses on offer to promote awareness and an inclusive culture.
- Increasing the diversity in executive and decision-making positions.
- Extra research into equal remuneration and solving any differences (to promote equal remuneration).
- The reinforcement of our inclusive organisational culture and social safety.
- Annual monitoring of the progress of D&I at the UMCG.

## Resources and budget

The special responsibility for D&I is invested in P&O, and together with the Ambassador Group and Working Group, time is taken to promote D&I within the UMCG. The D&I Working Group is made up of members who are an inclusive mirror image of our organisation. Where necessary, the Board of Directors will decide what funds can be allocated to any required activities and projects.

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<sup>9</sup> [umcgresearch.org/w/impact-umcg](https://umcgresearch.org/w/impact-umcg)

**This plan for diversity and inclusivity at the UMCG was adopted by the Board of Directors of the University Medical Center Groningen on 19 November 2021.**

**"The UMCG aims to realise a safe and inclusive work environment in which all employees feel at home, irrespective of their differences and backgrounds. Together we are the UMCG."**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ate van der Zee', is positioned above the printed name.

Ate van der Zee

**Chairman**