

# ACTION PLAN FOR GENDER EQUALITY

UNIVERSITY OF BERGEN / 2007 - 2009



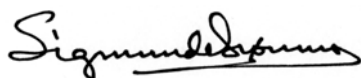
# From words to action!

UiB is a workplace with a traditional gender division of labour; men dominate the highest positions in research, academic leadership and administration. In addition, the gender distribution is very uneven between subject areas and disciplines.

We wish to change this. We are determined to make this university a front-runner in the area of gender equality and we are working to achieve significant results.

This action plan is the result of a top priority, broad-based work internally within the university, work which we believe has created a favourable climate in which to improve the institution's gender balance. In the plan, we set high goals for our activities, which are nonetheless realistic and certainly within our reach.

It is now time to follow up with concrete action that will produce results.



Sigmund Grønmo  
Rector



Kari Tove Elvbakken  
University Director

## Major challenges in work on gender equality

Although gender equality has been on the agenda in the academic world for decades, and the recruitment base has greatly improved over the last 30 years as a result of the female revolution in the education sector, it would appear to be very difficult to change the cultural structures. Norway appointed its first female professor in 1912. Now, almost one hundred years later, only 17 per cent of the professors at UiB are women.

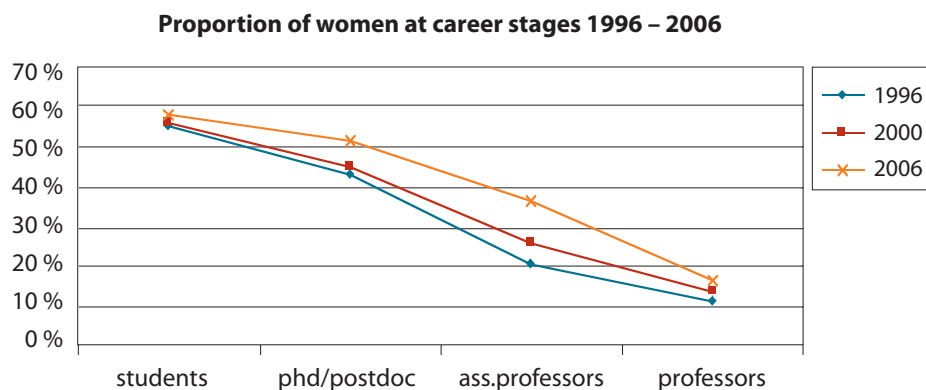
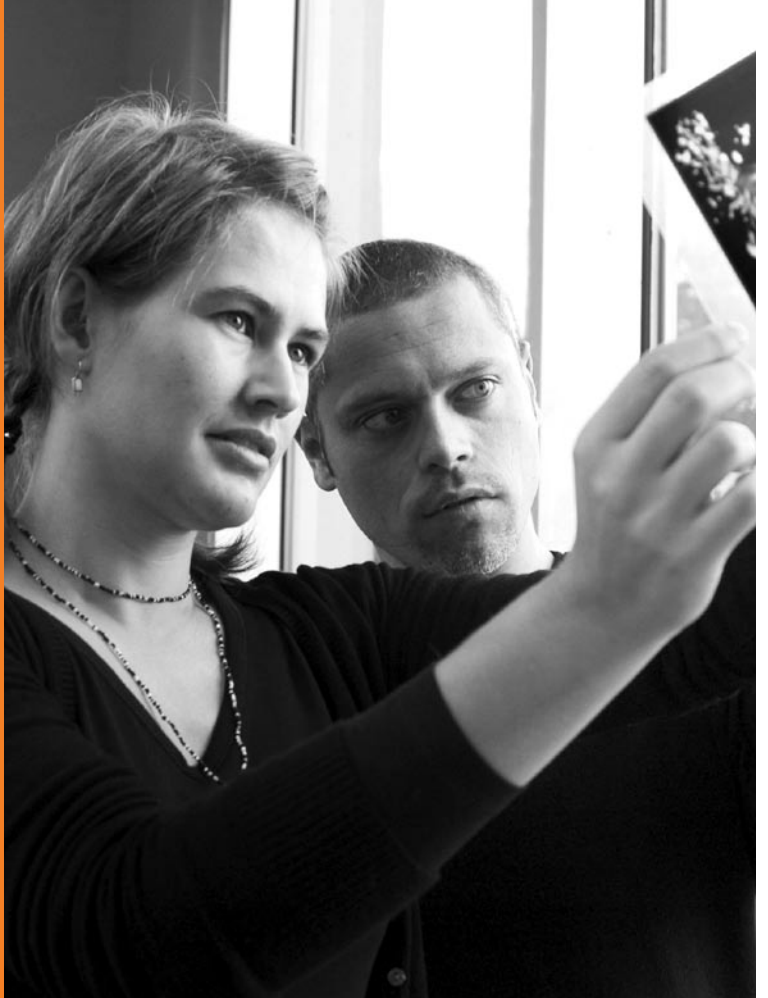
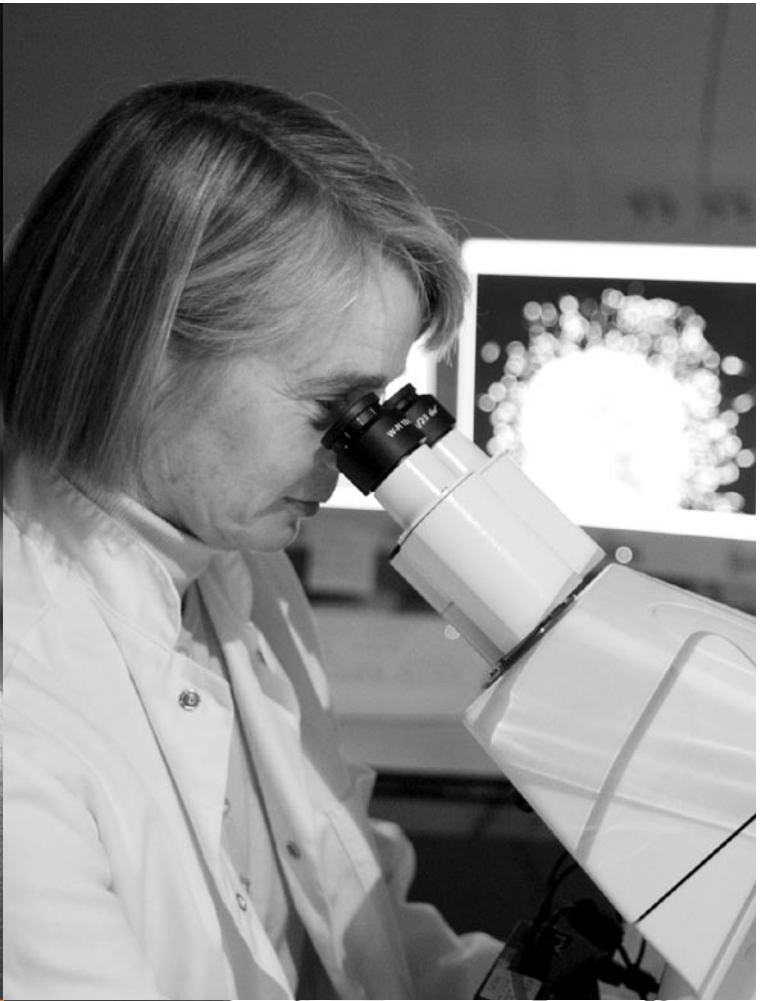


Figure 1: Proportion of women at various academic career stages at UiB 1996 – 2006.  
(Source: UiB statistics on gender equality 2006)

The action plan for improving the gender balance at UiB applies from 2007 up to and including 2009. During the course of this period, many of our professors will retire, and we are facing a major generation shift in many academic environments. The imminent generation shift provides a golden opportunity to achieve more balanced recruitment among younger researchers. The university therefore has a historic opportunity to improve the gender balance among the permanent academic staff. If we do not take advantage of this opportunity, we risk entrenching the current pattern far into the future.

## Glass ceiling or leaky pipeline?

The academic career ladder (Figure 1) also serves to illustrate what is often referred to as “the leaky pipeline”, which shows that women have a greater tendency than men to jump off at certain rungs on the academic career ladder. The transition from recruitment positions to permanent academic positions would appear to be the most vulnerable phase in which the greatest number drop out. Today, it is documented that women face many more, and greater obstacles in academia than men. More often than not, these obstacles are invisible (the glass ceiling) and are not consciously considered, making it difficult to recognise and overcome them. Many of the measures in this action plan deal with uncovering or compensating for this type of gender obstacle.



## Fairness, diversity, creativity, quality

UiB's goal with respect to gender equality builds both on a fairness perspective – that men and women are given equal opportunities when it comes to education, work and cultural and academic development – and that we must take into account the experience and priorities of both genders and recognise their value in influencing the development of knowledge, research and the working environment in general. This will affect the content and increase the diversity of research, and boost the university as a creative and attractive environment, for both research and education. Female researchers also serve as important role models and, therefore, expand the university's recruitment base.

## Equality – a management responsibility

Equality shall be a perspective that permeates all our activities, our personnel policy, our work on improving the psychosocial working and study environment, and research and teaching. A decisive factor in ensuring our success is that the work on gender equality is deeply rooted in the academic environments and in all levels of management in the organisation. We therefore place great emphasis on the faculties themselves setting concrete targets for the work by adapting their own action plans.

## Goals and measures

UiB has set itself the goal of achieving a proportion of 50 per cent women in all new appointments in academic positions during the course of the plan period. In order to reach this goal, we must set aside funds, both centrally and in the faculties to create incentives and reward measures that lead to an increase in the recruitment of women to these positions. Examples of the most important measures to be implemented during the course of the plan period are:

- The allocation of incentive funds to the academic environments when women are appointed to academic positions
- Recruitment-boosting measures, such as qualification grants or extra research term
- Startup packages
- National and international mentor schemes
- Management development
- Network building
- Knowledge-building and information

## Margareth Hagen

**Associate Professor at the Department of Foreign Languages**

**Chair of the Gender Equality Committee**

“The work on gender equality focuses on ensuring that real and equal opportunities are developed at all levels in the institution. Gender equality should therefore be seen as a broad work area. In addition to securing formal rights and ensuring that a wide variety of relevant measures are followed up, the work revolves around establishing an academic culture for gender equality in working conditions and conditions for recruitment and qualification.”



## Jan Petter Hansen

**Head of the Department of Physics and Technology**

**Member of the Gender Equality Committee**

“The reason for having both genders represented in all positions in all the departments is simple: This will give us different role models, which will in turn attract all types of students and employees, and create a varied and expedient academic milieu. The heads of departments have chief responsibility for building up a viable core of both genders in their respective departments. In order to achieve this, we need to start employing a wide variety of measures, so that we are able to recruit the best female talents and female researchers, wherever they are to be found.”



## Annual amendment of the plan

The action plan shall be reassessed at the end of the plan period, amendments will also be made in connection with the status reports submitted to the university board every February. The action plan is available in its entirety at [www.likestilling.uib.no](http://www.likestilling.uib.no).

All new measures implemented are described on the same site. The departmental measures and other information about work on gender equality at UiB are also available there.

**Layout:** Communication & Media Centre, UiB

**Photo:** Paul-Erik Lillholm, Paul Sigve Amundsen, Kjerstin Gjengedal

[www.likestilling.uib.no](http://www.likestilling.uib.no)



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