

Sclavo Vaccines Association E.T.S. Gender Equality Plan

Release 3.0 July 2024

Introduction – Public Endorsement

The Sclavo Vaccines Association was established in 2008 with a central focus of the Association is scientific research geared towards the study, discovery and introduction of vaccines with the following objectives:

- Develop innovative, safer and more effective immunization technologies to develop new generation therapeutic and preventive vaccines.
- Use advanced technologies for the development of vaccines needed in impoverished communities.
- Contribute to the progress of training, research and innovation for a better control of infectious diseases, also for the benefit of vulnerable categories

The Association also has the objective of creating awareness among the public and national and international institutions of the importance of vaccinating specific categories of at-risk subjects.

The Association, over the past years of operations evolved, increasing the number of Associates with new partners from several European countries, enlarging its activities both in terms of Mission and scope.

The Association has its central location and operative offices in Siena and was acknowledged and recorded in the Registrar of non-profit entities in Siena at N.189/2009.

Subsequently to the introduction of the new Third Sector core and the creation of the National Unified Registrar for the Third Sector (RUNTS) the Association applied for registration meeting all the stringent requirements for this purpose. Its registration number is 16477 in date 18.8.2022 and is now acknowledges as Sclavo Vaccines Association Ente del Terzo Settore (ETS).

The Association has concentrated its activities in the vaccine field mainly in the following areas:

- Vaccines needed for Low-Middle Income Countries (LMIC) against typhoid fever, Ebola, Invasive-non typhoidal Salmonellosis,
- Improvement in the development or the efficacy of existing vaccines, for example against flu,
- Organization of conferences, symposia or events to support or as a consequence of this commitments.

The Association operations mainly concentrate on the preparation and submission of projects to the European Union or the Tuscany Regional Government and their related coordination and scientific activities. The Association uses for the purpose of its operations a fully not-for-profit model, having in force a small group of human resources necessary to adequately carry out the work.

The Association is made out of European research institutions and universities: today the number of Associate Members is 11, which remained unchanged since 2011.

The complete list of Associates is the following:

- | | |
|---|-----------------|
| 1. Università degli Studi di Siena | Italy |
| 2. Azienda Ospedaliera Universitaria Senese | Italy |
| 3. GSK Vaccine Institute for Global Health | Italy |
| 4. Academisch Ziekenhuis Leiden | The Netherlands |
| 5. Institute for Research in Biomedicine | Switzerland |
| 6. Statens Serum Institut | Denmark |
| 7. University of Geneva | Switzerland |
| 8. University of Goteborg | Sweden |
| 9. Fondazione Humanitas per la Ricerca | Italy |
| 10. St. George University of London | United Kingdom |
| 11. Istituto Nazionale di Genetica Molecolare | Italy |

The associate members appoint the Board of Director members, approve the Annual Report, Budget and approve changes in the Association's Statute, which has been upgraded in 2020 to comply with the new third sector code.

The President and the Board of Directors have the responsibility to manage the organization within the limits provided by the statute, the budget and Italian and European laws and regulations.

The Gender policy

The Association has been characterized since its inception by a strong attention to the gender/nationality aspects in its operations. The Board of Directors, appointed by the Associate member institutions, therefore out of the control of the association has also included men and a woman as members.

Submitting mainly EU projects under the various Framework Programs, always teaming up with eminent research institutions very sensitive to this aspects, the attention to this aspect is always present.

Moreover, Grant Agreements with the EU always include sections with "Obligation to aim for gender equality", according to these, the beneficiaries must: "Take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level".

If a beneficiary breaches its obligations under this provision, Consequences of non-compliance may be enforced by the Commission.

In its belonging to the Third Sector, the Association also draws its attention to the aspect of Gender Equality, not intended in the sense of equal number of women, men or other non-binary people, but in the sense that these people need to have equal access to the same opportunities, maintaining their peculiarity, appointing to the internal position people more qualified for it, regardless of gender, ethnicity or nationality.

Over the last years national and regional laws and regulations have pointed in this direction.

We are therefore happy to welcome the opportunity to formalize in one document our spirit of Gender Equality, also in view of the European role that the Association has been playing in the last years and will play in the future.



Prof. Rino Rappuoli
President,
Sclavo Vaccines Association ETS

Siena, August 31st, 2022

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Introduction, Public Endorsement

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1. The Sclavo Vaccines Association E.T.S.: organization and peculiarities

The Sclavo Vaccines Association ETS is a private research organization established in 2008 with a central focus on scientific research geared towards:

- Development of innovative, safer and more effective immunization technologies to develop new generation therapeutic and preventive vaccines.
- Use advanced technologies for the development of vaccines needed in impoverished communities.
- Contribution to the progress of training, research and innovation for a better control of infectious diseases, also for the benefit of vulnerable categories

The Association, over the past years of operations evolved, increasing the number of Associates with new partners from several European countries, enlarging its activities.

The Association has legal personality, has its operative offices in Siena and was registered in the Registrar of non-profit entities in Siena at N.189/2009.

After the introduction of the new Third Sector code (D.Lgs 117/2017) and the opening of the National Unified Registrar for the Third Sector (RUNTS) the Association adapted its By-laws and implemented the changes needed to be registered in the RUNTS and therefore continue being acknowledged as a fully compliant third-sector legal entity. After the application the Association was registered with registration number n. 16477 on 18.8.2022 and is now acknowledged as Sclavo Vaccines Association Ente del Terzo Settore (ETS), as a legal entity.

Specifically, the Association has concentrated its research in the following areas:

- Development of vaccines for Low-Middle Income Countries (LMIC) against typhoid fever, Ebola, Invasive-non typhoidal Salmonellosis,
- Improvement in the development or the efficacy of existing vaccines, for example against flu, and for epidemic use
- Organization of conferences, symposia or events to support or as a consequence of this commitments.

The activities carried out by the Association are concentrated in the preparation and submission of projects to the European Union or the Tuscany Regional Government, their coordination and scientific activities.

The Association is made out of European research institutions and universities: today the number of Effective Members is 11.

The complete list of Associates is the following:

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| • Università degli Studi di Siena | Italy |
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| • Academisch Ziekenhuis Leiden | The Netherlands |
| • Institute for Research in Biomedicine | Switzerland |
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| • Fondazione Humanitas per la Ricerca | Italy |
| • St. George University of London | United Kingdom |
| • Istituto Nazionale di Genetica Molecolare | Italy |

These Associate Members have the right to elect all Board of Director (Consiglio Direttivo) members and an external auditor, approve the Annual Report, the Budget and approve changes in the Association's Statute, which has been upgraded in 2020 to fully comply with the new third sector code.

The President and the Board of Directors have the responsibility to manage the organization within the limits provided by the By-laws, the annual budget and in line with Italian and European laws and regulations.

The Board of Directors is appointed by Member Entities in the Assembly of Associates, voting for candidates to this organ. The number of members is limited (4) and the Association has no control on the

identity of the candidates and the elected members: nevertheless there has always been up to 2022 a woman in in the Board.

The President of the Sclavo Vaccines Association is Prof. Rino Rappuoli, a renowned vaccinologist and up to 2022 a woman, Prof. Donata Medaglini was appointed as Deputy.

Currently the Board of Directors elected by member organizations includes 3 male and 1 female components.

The Association uses for the purpose of its operations a fully not-for-profit model, having in force a small group of human resources necessary to adequately carry out the work.

The President has a wide mandate and scientifically directs the Association, its activities in the vaccination field, and personnel.

The size of the legal entity is very small: given that EU projects involve both financial and Scientific aspects, two senior managers report into the President:

- Prof. Donata Medaglini, Ph.D., Chief Scientific Officer: in charge of Scientific coordination and Project Management for EU projects and other scientific initiatives (congresses, etc.)
- Dott. Gianluca Breggi, M.B.A., Chief Operating Officer: in charge of the Financial Management of EU projects and all Institutional, non-scientific activities of the Association.

Project Management includes three Project Managers directly involved in the projects coordinated or participated by the Association. The three project managers report for scientific matters into the CSO and for institutional matters into the COO.

The number of people working as employees has always been kept at a minimum level, necessary to manage the projects and the legal entity in an efficient, yet effective way, in line with the not-for-profit nature of the legal entity, that also has to ensure self-sustainability and financial reliability towards the EU.

Given the small number of people working for the Association and the types of contracts used:

- 1 Consultant contract for the CSO,
- 1 CCNL Dirigenti for the COO,
- 3 CCNL Chimico-farmaceutico for the Project Managers,

the analysis regarding the levels of compensation will need to be kept generic not to infringe the limits imposed by Italian and EU laws:

- D.Lgs. **675 del 31 dicembre 1996** - *Tutela delle persone e di altri soggetti rispetto al trattamento dei dati personali*.
- **Codice della privacy** (Privacy Code), [Decreto legislativo 30 giugno 2003, n. 196](#), effective 1.1.2004,
- [Regolamento generale sulla protezione dei dati](#) (GDPR, *General Data Protection Regulation - Regolamento UE 2016/679*), effective since 25.5.2016.
- On 19.9.2018, finally, the Decreto legislativo 10 agosto 2018, n. 101, gave full force to the EU Regulations, its amendments and integrations.

The very small size of the organization and the presence of all 4 employees in the same hall, do not favor, suggest or support the establishment of commissions or organisms dedicated to the supervision of the different aspects of the day-to-day life of the Association.

A function in this sense is performed by the RSPP Expert Person Responsible for Safety, Prevention and Protection. This professional is specifically charged by the law to draft and update the DVR (*Documento sulla Valutazione dei Rischi - Document on the evaluation of internal risks*), as well as monitoring the wellness of all employees.

The DVR is an official reference document foreseen by the Laws on health and safety on the workplace ([normative in materia di salute e sicurezza sul lavoro](#)) derived from the Laws D.Lgs 81/2008 and D.L. 78/2010, including work climate and environment.

Much attention is given to keeping communication channels open, encouraging direct feedback from workers to management personally or by way of a safe address to use to voice concerns to the RSPP, also anonymously, if desired.

2. Process for the gender equality plan in the Sclavo Vaccines Association E.T.S.

PROCESS-BASED REQUIREMENTS



Data collection and monitoring

Albeit not formalized in a Gender plan, it has been a constant since the inception of our organization:

- ✓ offering equal opportunities to the candidates applying for jobs in the Association a
- ✓ structuring gender equality in the implementation of R&I projects.

The need of a more formalized Gender Plan became evident in internal discussions with the opening of the Horizon Europe Programme, making this living document a need for those organizations involved in European-funded projects. In the first part of 2022 and with the increasing number of EU projects participated or managed by the Association, that brought about the need to formalize:

1. Obligation to take measures to implement the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Beneficiaries must take all measures to implement the principles set out in the Commission Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, in particular regarding:

- working conditions;
- transparent recruitment processes based on merit, and
- career development.

The beneficiaries must ensure that researchers and third parties involved in the action are aware of them.

2. Obligation to aim for gender equality.

The beneficiaries must take all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.

These norms increase the need to focus on guaranteeing equal opportunities in research activities, in the hiring process and people management without discrimination with regard to gender, nationality, race, religious beliefs.

3. Obligation to include gender dimension in R&I

This obligation is declined into:

- Gender of people working on the project, and**
- Gender dimension in the action.**

These dimensions have already been a substantial part of the proposals presented by the Association for a decade. Having submitted and coordinated Projects under FP7 (already including equality actions), Horizon 2020 and Horizon Europe, EDCTP, IMI, the Association is very sensible to these two perspectives.

The parameters suggested by the EU for audit within the organizations have been analyzed under section 4 of the present document, that include;

- **AUDIT:** what is already present or formalized has been reported and evaluated;
- **PLANNING:** what will have to be formalized;
- **IMPLEMENTATION:** first implementation trends have been included in this section 4 and better defined and detailed in Section 5;
- **Section 5:** includes the **MONITORING** and **EVALUATION** parts.

Future trends of these parameters and categories will be monitored and recorded on an ongoing basis through personal feedback and at least annually through dedicated meetings and updates of this Plan.

As these matters are continuously evolving on the basis of evolving regulations, epidemiological situation and personal need a second edition of this document, 1.b has been released in October 2022.



Dedicated resources

The COO of the Association (male) has former specific experience in personnel management in industry, also with reference to respect of gender needs and people's privacy and personal integrity having been responsible within a SME for the implementation and enforcement of the Privacy code D.Lgs. 196/2003 and the Law on Corporate Administrative responsibility D.Lgs. 231/01, as well as for drafting of Association's internal procedural system, approved by the Assembly of Associates, and the Association's privacy procedure.

Based on these specific previous experience, with mandate from the President, the COO took the responsibility to draft and update the plan in agreement with the CSO and with the support and involvement of the other 3 people in the organization.

The setup and content of this plan was reviewed with the CSO and Project managers (all females) to reflect at 360° the topics to be addressed.

As part of the process, two people from the organization participated in the **Webinar on the Gender Equality** held 23 June 2022 to have more information on the needs and characteristics of the Plan, distributing the presentation and the document **Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans** within the organization, which was read by people in charge of the drafting of this plan.

As a follow-up, the COO will continue monitoring and implementing further the Gender Plan with the involvement of the other people in the Association in dedicated annual meetings and personal interviews.



Public document

This situation sparked a discussion at the management level, including also the President, as well as a request in this sense from personnel and in 2022 the review of what was already in place in the Association took place.

A follow-up discussion brought to the design of the present plan, its contents, with specific regard to the needs of an entity engaged in R&I and the drafting of this document

The extremely lean and flat organization and the use to deal with this matter allowed for a swift and smooth discussion and implementation of this process, generating by the end of the month of August 2022 the present Plan, signed and endorsed by the Association's President and published on the Association's website.

A 2nd release was reviewed and published in the month of July 2023 and a 3rd in July 2024.



Training and capacity building

Aside from what already reported above about knowledge of the **Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans**, the Association's Employees will be encouraged to take part in the webinars that will be organized by the EU on this subject.

New documents issued by the Commission will be downloaded and shared within the organization.

One annual session to cover and discuss these items will be organized by the Association.

One of the employees will be asked to monitor with the COO and the CSO gender aspects.

3. Structure of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP)

The structure of the present Plan reflects the need to correctly expose the past and current situation of Gender Equality application within the Association and the topics to be addressed to further pursue it.

Therefore the present Plan has five sections in line with the structure suggested by:

- the European Commission in the *Horizon Europe Guidance on Gender Equality Plans*:

<https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/ffcb06c3-200a-11ec-bd8e-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-23212966>

- the Webinar that explained it in June 2022 as it is reflected in the table of contents:

<https://ec.europa.eu/research/participants/docs/h2020-funding-guide/other/event220623.htm>

While the contents have been developed in line with *The Gender Equality in Academia and Research* (GEAR), methods, contained in the document published in October 2016 by the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE):

<https://eige.europa.eu/publications/gender-equality-academia-and-research-gear-tool>



The structure and content of this document is designed to reflect the needs of an entity engaged in R&I having a primary interest in managing and participating in European Union Projects.

As it was mentioned above, the small size of the organization does not favor the use of commissions or committees to supervise the day-to-day life of the Association.

Much attention is given to keeping communication channels open with both senior managers, encouraging feedback from workers, also thanks to safe external addresses to use to voice concerns, also anonymously, that will be specified in the following part of the document.

The analysis, diagnostics and objective-settings carried out in these 5 sections, will be then framed into a plan for future activities structured around 5 goals and a Monitoring module that will be detailed and laid out in section 5 of the present Plan.

4. GEP Content Areas

ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION, COMMITMENTS, PLANNING

a) Work-life balance and organizational culture



The *Sclavo Vaccines Association* ETS was established on April 8th, 2008 as *Associazione Sclavo per i vaccini per i Paesi in via di sviluppo*, changing its name to the current one in 2011.

Our core activity is Scientific Research, with particular emphasis on supporting R&D in vaccinology with the following objectives:

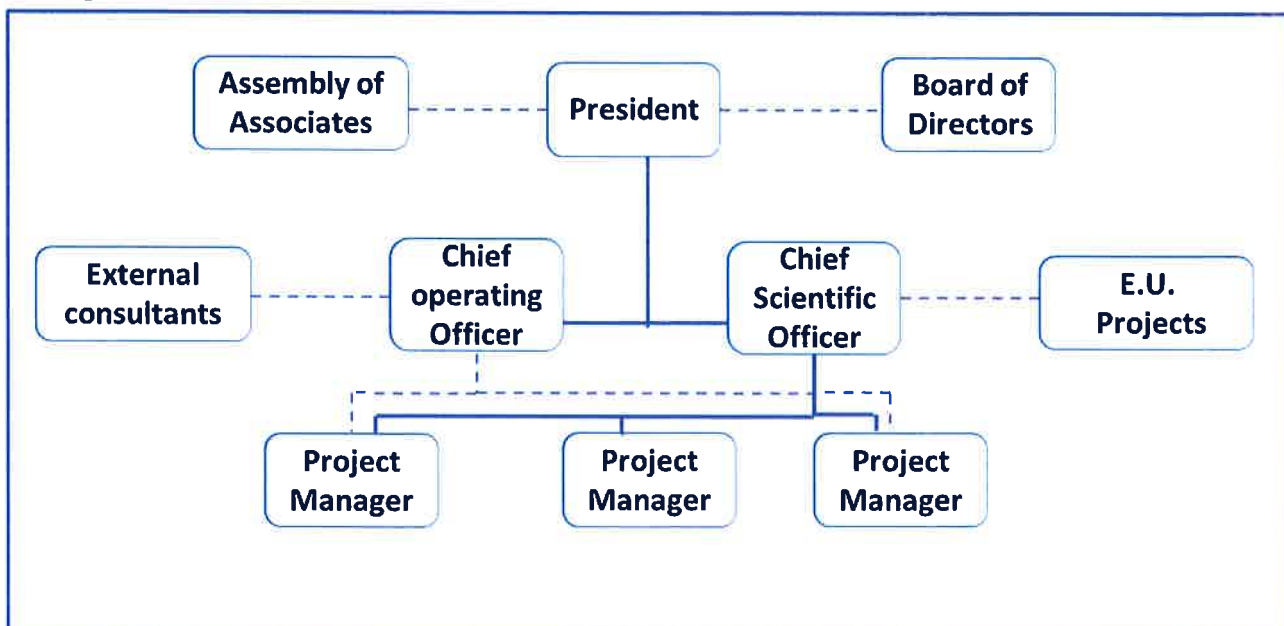
- Develop innovative, safer and more effective immunization technologies to develop new generation therapeutic and preventive vaccines,
- Use advanced technologies for the development of vaccines needed in impoverished communities.
- Contribute to the progress of training, research and innovation for a better control of infectious diseases, also for the benefit of vulnerable categories.

The Association also has the objective of creating awareness among the public and national and international institutions of the importance of vaccinating specific categories of at-risk subjects.

From its inception The Association had as objective not-for-profit activities, and this commitment is reflected in the organization of its activities and work ethics.

Its small size allows to have a accurate but at the same time simple organization of work and activities.

The organizational chart of the Associations is shown below



The two senior managers report into the President for their activities.

The structure foresees also a double reporting of the project managers:

- operative reporting to the Chief Scientific Officer for all matters relating to the Project Management and Scientific Management of project managed
- staff reporting into the Chief Operating Officer for matters regarding personnel, administration, legal, HS&E, and similar institutional matters.

Albeit double reporting may be seen as burdensome at times, in this case the clear division of the two areas of supervision and the presence of senior managers of both sexes allows for a more balanced and gender-sensitive management of the employees working for the Association.

The Association has in place a presence control system that allows for immediate yet precise presence control system. Operative offices are all accommodated in a single wing of a building allowing for visual control on part of supervisors of employees' presence at the same time a detailed time sheet is kept daily for the purpose of tracking personnel's presence or reason for absence.

Time sheets are kept manually and delivered to the supervisor for elaboration of monthly payroll as well as tracking of hours worked on projects.

No electronic or mechanic time recording system is in place: this allows for greater balance for the employee on entering/exiting the workplace without stress of even small delays that in other business environments call for penalizing overtime recovery periods.

Requests for daily absence or use of hours of free absence are requested either verbally to the supervisor or by mail the days before.

Requests for visits, exams, family needs have always been allowed and accounted for with the hours allotted for similar cases by the national contract applied.

Requested maternity leaves were allowed as needed with maximum flexibility offered on the time for re-entry at work, rewarded with an appreciated flexibility by the employee.

During the COVID-19 epidemic the organization went through a series of work organizations changes that allowed all employees to continue working without *cassa integrazione* and providing much appreciated continuity of work on the projects, that successfully continued during these difficult years. A 2020 national laws allowed for simplified part-time working arrangements, the Association has adopted this system with a 40% smartworking arrangement for all employees (2 days work from home and 3 days in presence). This has allowed to adopt this arrangement from the end of the lockdown up to the end of this regulation in August 2022.

From September 1st 2022 a new regulation was issued by the Government to still allow the use of smartworking with a lower administrative burden.

The Association arranged to continue with no term working from home for 40% of the week, preparing individual integrations to the existing project manager contracts, that are all full employees of the Association.

The Association also decided to offer a financial compensation for the use of home utilities, allowed by law crediting each employee for the amount of 600€ net of taxes.

Project management work is often subject of intense periods of work for the submission of a project or for closing annual periods with complex annual report or for the final project reporting. These tasks include both administrative and scientific and financial activities that need to be conducted and completed within strict deadlines fixed by the European Commission. These periods are followed by lower workloads for some interim periods of time. To monitor the effects of this alternance during 2022 an update of the DVR (*Documento sulla Valutazione dei Rischi - Document on the evaluation of internal risks*) is being carried out.

The DVR is an official reference document foreseen by Laws on health and safety on the workplace ([normative in materia di salute e sicurezza sul lavoro](#)) derived from the Laws D.Lgs 81/2008 and D.L. 78/2010 , including work climate and environment.

Employees who may want to communicate concerns about safety or working environment may do so sending a message to the RSPP: Roberto Seravalle <robertoseravalle@gmail.com>

Anonymity may be obtained sending a message for the info@sclavo.org mailbox, accessible to all employees.

The COO of the Association is charged with the responsibility of the document, after discussion with the CSO and support from Project Managers.



b) Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

As it was stated above, the Association has two levels of people involved:

- Members of the Board of Directors, appointed by the Associate members
- Employees and managers, hired or appointed within the Association by the President.

The Association has no control on the first category, as its members are elected by the 11 international associates on the basis of the candidates that made themselves available for this appointment.

Despite this, since its establishment the Board has always included both male and female members.

The President held its position since the establishment of the Association because of his global leadership in the vaccine field. The CSO and COO (female/male) have been part of the Association since its start-up and were selected on an ad-hoc basis based on the skills that were necessary to the Association. These two senior managers are in charge: one of Scientific coordination and Project Management, and the other of Financial Management of EU projects and institutional, non-scientific activities.

In the various internal processes and evaluations, being at the same hierarchy level, the CSO and the COO discuss together the various aspect, therefore ensuring balance both from the gender and scientific side on one hand and financial/legal/managerial fit on the other. This arrangement allows and ensures balance in leadership and decision-making within the organization and towards its members.

Of the top 3 positions, 2 are covered by men and 1 by a woman, but the core scientific leadership is equally shared by the two sexes (President and CSO).



c) Gender equality in recruitment and career progress

Offering Equal opportunities to the candidates applying for jobs in the Association has been a constant since the inception of the organization.

The CSO and COO (female/male) have been part of the Association since its start-up and were selected on an ad-hoc basis based on the skills that were necessary to the Association.

The full application of the respective national contracts supports a comparable treatment of personnel.

With specific reference to the higher number of females in the workforce, an effort was made to attract also candidates of other genders. We believe this is due mainly to the much higher number of female graduates/Ph.D. in some of the disciplines closer to our activities and the higher (60%) of female graduates from Italian universities (Source: AlmaLaurea, Gender Thematic Report 2022)

A recent hiring process in the controlled Fondazione Sclavo using similar rules and also handled by the COO did yield the hiring of a male candidate, after a selection process including candidates of both sexes.

The recruitment process, from the drafting of the job opening, to the evaluations of candidates to the final interviews and proposal to the selected candidate is effectively shared between the CSO and the COO, to ensure balance both from the gender and scientific side on one hand and economics and organizational fit on the other.

The full application of the national contracts also supports a comparable treatment of personnel. The selected candidate is then presented to the President for approval, subsequently validated by the Board of directors.

The **Internal procedure n. 3 Recruitment**, approved by the Board of Directors and the Assembly includes the provision for equal opportunity hiring procedures. Three quotations from Procedure 3 follow:

- *The Supervisor will outline the profile of the ideal candidate, based on the EU Guidelines for Equal Opportunities.*
- *When new hires are involved in projects financed by public entities, the rules which apply to these entities must also be followed. With projects financed by the EC, Attachment I and II of the Grant Agreement are to be considered.*
- *The Supervisor contacts the applicant and informs him/her of the economic offer.*

First two hirings (2011) were published in English, gender neutral, and the selections included people of both sexes: the final selection saw two female candidates hired: one, a US citizen and an Anglo-Italian Citizen. Ensuing two positions (2015) were also published in English, were gender neutral and ended with the hiring of two female candidates.

Further 3 female employees were transferred from the Controlled Fondazione Achille Sclavo in 2019, which also made public selections in English involving people from both sexes.

All employees present today in the organization come from these selections.

At the present day no candidates or employees have manifested the need to put attention on a non-binary sexual tendency: no request can be done in this sense by the Association's representative, unless alerted by the interested party, being this a *sensitive* privacy area.

Looking at the overall n. of people involved in the Association, 2 are men (President and COO) (33.3%) and 4 are women: CSO and 3 project managers (66.7%).

For what concerns equality in compensations of employees, the Association is bound to respect what provided for by art. 16 D.Lgs. 117/2017, Third Sector Code, and to a fair compensation of the workers.

The Code provides that the ratio between compensations among employees should not exceed the ratio of 1 : 8 to be calculated on the annual gross salary over the 12 months of the financial year (January to December).

The employees' workforce in the Association is composed of 1 manager part time (60%), with *CCNL Dirigente* and 3 full-time employees with *CCNL Industria chimico-farmaceutica*, all of them with compensations in line with their respective national contracts.

The ratio of the manager's compensation (projected to full-time) and the average of those of the employees has constantly been lower than 1 : 2,5 therefore well below the limit foreseen by the law.

The compensation of the CSO is regulated by consultancy agreements and is not comparable with the compensation of employees with permanent employment contracts.



d) Integrating gender into research and teaching

The Association does not engage into teaching as it is not an academic institution, but only in research.

The **Gender of R&D participants involved in the action is always a parameter that needs to be adequately addressed in each project proposal presented by the Association, in terms of:**

1. **Gender of people working on the project within the Association and partners:** in the proposal all measures to promote equal opportunities between men and women in the implementation of the action need to be taken. They must aim, to the extent possible, for a gender balance at all levels of personnel assigned to the action, including at supervisory and managerial level.
2. **Gender dimension in the action:** gender dimension in R&I is a concept regrouping the various elements concerning biological characteristics and social/cultural factors of both women and men into the development of research policies, programs and actions.

These dimensions have already been a substantial part of the proposals presented by the Association for a decade. Having submitted and coordinated Projects under **FP7** (already including equality actions), **Horizon 2020** and **Horizon Europe**, **EDCTP**, **IMI**, the Association is very sensible to these two perspectives.

For what concerns point 1., as it was mentioned, special attention has been given to the attempt of hiring people from different genders. As the Association has been more successful in hiring project managers of the female gender, this sex is overrepresented in our project activities.

In project work, specifically in the Vacc-iNTS project, the COO, who has specific experience also in economics, disease modeling and vaccine introduction is leading as Senior Scientist a WP on disease epidemiology and modeling, and participating in a second WP on behalf of the Association.

At the same time, still considering Senior Scientist positions, the association President (male) and CSO (female) alternate themselves as project Coordinators and Scientific Manager, therefore enriching project leadership with different views.

For what concerns point 2., in the most recent proposals presented, sex and gender analysis have been taken into account in the whole R&I process of the project. The integration of sex and gender analysis and dimension have been covered throughout the entire R&I project cycle from the setting of the research priorities, defining concepts, formulating research questions, performing experimental activities, analyzing data generated and evaluating and reporting results, in order to generate innovations which will benefit all citizens and promote gender equality. The integration of sex and gender analysis into the project improve quality and societal relevance of the knowledge and innovation generated, adding value to R&I in terms of excellence, rigor and reproducibility.

Gender dimension (i.e. biological features and socio-cultural factors) has been duly taken into consideration in planning experimental and innovation activities in the proposals, in line with EU recommendations in the European Commission document entitled “Gendered Innovations 2: How Inclusive Analysis Contributes to Research and Innovation” (2020).

Existing literature in the field of immune response to pathogen infection shows that sex could have an impact on immune responses and on the course of the disease in the human body. For these reasons, both male and female patients are recruited in clinical studies.

Specifically for what concerns the COVID-19 epidemic, importantly, since recent statistics have shown that women suffer more than men from the consequences of the socio-economic crisis that accompany a pandemic, attention has been put in place in order to raise awareness on this point and promote equitable and responsible behavior in the young generations.

Dedicated sessions focused on gender- and sex-specific research and precision medicine have been planned within these projects: in addition, gender dimension is taken into consideration in the composition of the Consortium and in assigning WP leading roles to male and female Principal Investigators as well as for appointment of Steering Committees and Scientific Advisory Board when applicable.

Considering that vaccination is the most gender-equitable public health intervention, our vaccine-dedicated projects want to contribute to the achievement of the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), including SDG5 "Gender equality", to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. As part of SDG5, our project's activities want to pave the way for ensuring equal access for women and girls to new health technologies to fuel sustainable economies, benefiting societies and humanity at large.

Partners have in place a gender equality plan. Methodological tools for integrating sex, gender and intersectional analysis into research and innovation content are considered in project build-up, following indications in HE Programme Guide 16 section 9, adding value to research results and increases its societal relevance. In addition, our projects' commitment on gender dimension will contribute to stimulate innovation and respond to social needs, by opening new perspectives, and to a more gender equal society.

Overall, our most recent vaccine projects contribute to achieving the United Nation's SDGs 5 (Gender Equality), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 1 (No Poverty) and 3 (Good Health and Well-being) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).






e) Gender-based violence including sexual harassment

This is an important topic notwithstanding the small size of the organization.

As it was mentioned earlier on the document, the Association has its administrative and operative offices in one single building wing, with 2 rooms one by the other in the same corridor.

The building is inside a campus where entries are carefully controlled. At the same time the wing is most of the times occupied by the Association's and Foundation's employees, and therefore care needs to be given to the presence of personnel in the offices during off-time working hours.

Given that smart working is foreseen, project managers are required to be present during the 3 days when everyone else is present for safety reason, in every sense.

One-to-one meetings, if not conducted in the meeting room, are generally held with an open door policy, except when salary or disciplinary topics are covered in the meeting.

Every employee and collaborator is held responsible for the actions put in place during working time.

Moreover managers have the further responsibility to overlook also on the actions carried out by employees under their responsibility.

Managers are encouraged to enrich the work of its collaborators requesting working time and conditions coherent with their personal and professional characteristics and work organization.

It's considered not in line with managers' expected conduct requiring as due to a superior position personal favors or whatever other request or behavior that may the collaborator feel uneasy or threatened.

Employees are encouraged to voice personal concerns to either one of the Senior managers, that will handle the matter as anonymously as possible with the other senior managers.

At the same time the employee needs to loyally respect obligation contained in the hiring contract being fair, transparent and respectful of colleagues, whatever the gender.

With the present document a possibility to voice these concerns to an external party is also established.

The Association has contracted an external expert as RSPP: Expert Person Responsible for Safety, Prevention and Protection. This professional is specifically charged and drafting and updating the DVR (*Documento sulla Valutazione dei Rischi - Document on the evaluation of internal risks*).

The DVR is an official reference document foreseen by Laws on health and safety on the workplace ([normative in materia di salute e sicurezza sul lavoro](#)) derived from the Laws D.Lgs 81/2008 and D.L. 78/2010 , including work climate and environment.

Employees who may want to communicate concerns about safety or working environment may do so sending a message to Roberto Seravalle robertoseravalle@gmail.com.

Anonymity may be obtained sending a message from info@sclavo.org mailbox, accessible to all employees. With reference to any notice given on an actual or feared violation of what provided for in this document, the Association guarantees that nobody, within the organization may be retaliated, illicitly forced, put at a disadvantage, discriminated for having voiced a violation in the conduct laid out in this Plan.

Similarly, it should be considered as a violation of the conduct laid out in the present plan any form of retaliation towards and employee who, in good faith, may have voiced possible violation of good conduct. Conversely, it should be considered as inappropriate and violating the principles set up in the present plan

the behavior of an employee who may accuse another employee of wrongdoing, knowing that this violation does not exist.

Being these behaviors pursuable both on the basis of civil and penal laws, the Association will pursue serious violation of the code of conduct laid out in this chapter in line with existing laws, regulations and National Collective Work Contract (CCNL), having specific provisions for these cases.

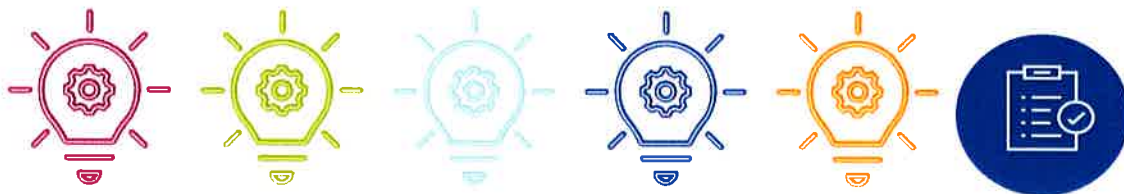
Specifically, artt. 34-37 of the CCNL sets the regulations and norms to be followed in internal relationships between employees and the different gerarchical levels of the organization, identifying:

- Sexual misconduct between employees and in relation to managers
- Discriminations based on personal orientations, beliefs and behaviors.

Disciplinary sanctions are provided for in artt. 38 and 39 may go from oral or written warnings to financial fees, suspension from work with no pay, up to reporting the facts to the judiciary system.

Similarly, being this a very sensitive area for the Association, both from a personal, image and patrimonial point of view, any other subject, somehow contracted by the Association and carrying out behaviors not in line with what provide for by this document, shall be put under scrutiny and possibly sanctioned with the suspension of the contract, followed by the most appropriate civil or penal actions, where applicable.

The Association in order to safeguard its image, personnel and patrimony will not moreover engage in any sort of business transaction with entities that may not be willing to operate in the full respect of the laws in this sense or that enact activities contrary to the values expressed in this plan.



5. Conclusions, future actions and follow-up activities

IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

From the analysis, audit and statements of principles carried out in the previous 5 sections, we can identify 5 Goals to pursue in the next years, plus a monitoring and follow-up module:

- a) Increase inclusion in organizational culture of work-life balance,
- b) Support and plan gender balance in leadership and decision making
- c) Promote, structure gender equality in recruitment and career progress
- d) Continue inclusion of gender dimension into R&I
- e) Prevent and contrast gender-based violence including sexual harassment and mobbing

➤ Setup an Implementation and Monitoring tool over the next years.

Key goals are listed for every one of the 5 sections and detailed in the final Monitoring part:



- a) Increase inclusion in organizational culture of work-life balance,
 1. Draft and publish GEP, disseminating it internally

2. Sign contracts to adopt a 40% smart working schedule and a contribution towards home utility costs
3. Identify team devoted to the GEP implementation and monitoring; approval by B.o.D.
4. Integrate GEP at least annually, monitoring advancement on Goals organizing annual meeting with employees
5. Update of the DVR through direct talks with employees and managers by the RSPP to monitor workloads and working environment
6. Implement suggestion/complaints mailbox with the external RSPP for issue regarding the workload and ask RSPP to monitor content and act accordingly
7. Provide the 3 employees with food vouchers to contribute towards lunch costs for 5 working days



b) Support and plan gender balance in leadership and decision making

1. Involve management in GEP; Maintain gender balance in management positions
2. Identify training opportunities for personnel during the year and arrange at least one meeting (or upon request of two employees) to discuss related items.
3. Follow documents issued by the EU on this subject, download and distribute within the organization to be read by employees.



c) Promote, structure gender equality in recruitment and career progress

1. Use inclusive gender-neutral language in recruitment ads and apply consequent valuation system in the subsequent selection
2. Encourage participation and evaluation of male candidates at the Project Management level, identifying hidden gender bias
3. Apply equally contractual pay raises and perform evaluations when appropriate



d) Continue inclusion of gender dimension into R&I

1. Track gender issues are adequately addressed in every project presented and approved
2. Track continue involvement of both genders in every project presented or approved
3. Verify that project partners for managed projects have gender plans in place and published



e) Prevent and contrast gender-based violence including sexual harassment and mobbing

1. Implement suggestion/complaints mailbox with the external RSPP for issue regarding sexual harassment or mobbing and ask RSPP to monitor content and act accordingly
2. Inform employees on the existence of the whistleblowing option available to all to use
3. Verify that wording of internal procedures reflect these principles
4. Identify, appoint and structure a female Representative of workers for safety within the overall Association's safety plan



➤ Implementation and Monitoring Plan

a) Increase inclusion in organizational culture of work-life balance,

1. Draft and publish GEP, disseminating it internally	
Actions	1.1 First version completed and published; 1.2 Second version completed and published
Responsibility	COO and CSO with support of project Managers
Timeline	1.1 First version: published 6/9/2022; 1.2 Second version 31/12/2022
Indicator(s)	Presence on website; screenshots
2. Sign contracts to adopt a 40% smart working schedule and a contribution towards home utility costs	
Actions	2.1 Sign 3 contract with Project Managers for smartworking; 2.2 credit 600€ contribution
Responsibility	COO
Timeline	2.1 Contract signed 9/2022; 2.2 contribution credited in 10/2022 paycheck
Indicator(s)	Contract signed and individual pay slips
3. Identify team devoted to the GEP implementation and monitoring; approval by B.o.D.	
Actions	3.1 Identify team; 3.2 insert GEP approval on next BoD agenda
Responsibility	COO + CSO
Timeline	3.1 Team to be identified 12/2022; 3.2 Approval by B.O.D. by June 2023
Indicator(s)	Team identified within 2022: COO, CSO, 1 PM; approval on BoD agenda
4. Integrate GEP at least annually, monitoring advancement on Goals organizing annual meeting with employees	
Actions	Call meeting to discuss GEP advancement
Responsibility	COO
Timeline	Within 1 year from revised GEP publication, by end of 2023 and July 2024
Indicator(s)	Meeting minutes; 3.0 release July 2024
5. Update of the Documento Valutazione dei Rischi through direct talks with employees and managers by the RSPP to monitor workloads and working environment	
Actions	Meet RSPP charging for update of DVR, interview employees and finalize
Responsibility	COO + RSPP
Timeline	End of March 2023
Indicator(s)	New updated DVR signed by the President on June 15 th , 2023
6. Implement suggestion/complaints mailbox with the external RSPP for issue regarding workload and ask RSPP to monitor content and act accordingly	
Actions	Make RSPP mailbox known internally and available for this purpose
Responsibility	COO +RSPP
Timeline	End of March 2023
Indicator(s)	Confirmed mailbox availability by mail to employees
7. Provide food vouchers to sustain costs of lunches to employees	
Actions	Provide the three employees with food vouchers to contribute towards lunch costs
Responsibility	COO
Timeline	December 2023 – cards provided to employees
Indicator(s)	Contract signed and confirmed delivery of vouchers for 25€ a week for 5 working days: available from 30.10.2023

8. Election by the employees and appointment by the Chairman of the Workers' Representative for Safety issues (Rappresentante per I Lavoratori per la Sicurezza, R.L.S.)

Actions	Ask employees to identify a candidate and elect the R.L.S.,
Responsibility	COO, employees and Chairman
Timeline	2024
Indicator(s)	Minutes of the Election February 8 th , 2024,

b) Support and plan gender balance in leadership and decision making

1. Involve Management in GEP; Maintain gender balance in management positions

Actions	Management involved in GEP drafting and update
Responsibility	COO + CSO
Timeline	9/2022 for drafting, update ongoing
Indicator(s)	Final Gender action Plan published in 2022

2. Identify training opportunities for personnel during the year and arrange at least one meeting (or upon request of two employees) to discuss related items.

Actions	2.1 Monitor quarterly EC websites for webinars; 2.2 organize 1 meeting within 1 year
Responsibility	COO + 1 PM
Timeline	2.1 Ongoing; 2.2 Within 1 year from GEP publication, by end of 2023
Indicator(s)	Printouts of webinar programs attended/slides available

3. Follow documents issued by the EU on this subject, download and distribute within the organization to be read by employees.

Actions	Monitor quarterly EC websites for new documents and updates/webinars
Responsibility	COO + 1 PM
Timeline	Within 1 year from GEP publication, by end of 2023
Indicator(s)	Printouts of documents downloaded or slides available

c) Promote, structure gender equality in recruitment and career progress

1. Use inclusive gender-neutral language in recruitment ads and apply consequent valuation system in the subsequent selection

Actions	Verify and track every job ad and evaluation of candidates
Responsibility	COO + CSO
Timeline	Upon publication of Job ad and selection, to be determined upon need
Indicator(s)	Copy of Job Ad and candidate evaluation report

2. Encourage participation and evaluation of male candidates at the Project Management level, identifying hidden gender bias

Actions	Verify and track every job ad and candidate evaluation: search for materials on hidden bias
Responsibility	COO + CSO
Timeline	Upon publication of Job ad and selection, to be determined upon need
Indicator(s)	Copy of Job Ad and materials used for internal study

3. Apply equally contractual pay raises and perform evaluations when appropriate

Actions	Monitor CCNL pay raises and apply them as needed
Responsibility	COO
Timeline	Upon deadlines
Indicator(s)	Copy of individual payslips; Food voucher provided equally to the three Project Managers

d) Continue inclusion of gender dimension into R&I

1. Track gender issues are adequately addressed in every project presented and approved

Actions	Review every project DoW to identify appropriate treatment of gender issues
Responsibility	CSO/PMs
Timeline	Upon submission or signature of each new project managed by the Association: annual report
Indicator(s)	Annual report contents on projects submitted/managed and related gender treatment

2. Track continue involvement of both genders in every project presented or approved

Actions	Review every project DoW to identify appropriate treatment of gender issues
Responsibility	CSO/PMs
Timeline	Upon submission or signature of each new project managed by the Association: annual report
Indicator(s)	Annual report contents on projects submitted/managed and related gender treatment

3. Verify that project partners for managed projects have gender plans in place and published

Actions	Review every project DoW to identify appropriate treatment of gender issues
Responsibility	CSO/PMs
Timeline	Upon submission or signature of each new project managed by the Association: annual report
Indicator(s)	Annual report contents on projects submitted/managed and related gender treatment

e) Prevent and contrast gender-based violence including sexual harassment and mobbing

1. Implement suggestion/complaints mailbox with the external RSPP for issue regarding sexual harassment or mobbing and ask RSPP to monitor content and act accordingly

Actions	Make RSPP mailbox known internally and available for this purpose
Responsibility	COO +RSPP
Timeline	End of March 2023
Indicator(s)	Confirmed mailbox availability by email

2. Inform employees on the existence of the whistleblowing option available to all to use

Actions	Inform Employees of existence of the mailbox and ways to use it
Responsibility	COO
Timeline	End of March 2023
Indicator(s)	Electronic mail sent to employees

3. Verify that wording of internal procedures reflect these principles

Actions	Review internal procedures for inconsistencies or missing provisions
Responsibility	COO
Timeline	End of December 2023 => postponed to end 2024
Indicator(s)	New, updated procedures approved by the BoD

4. Identify, appoint and structure a female Representative of workers for safety within the overall Association's safety plan

Actions	Identify, appoint and structure a female Representative of workers for safety in DVR
Responsibility	President, COO, RSPP, Employees
Timeline	First quarter 2024
Indicator(s)	Person elected on February 8 th 2024 by colleagues.