



GENDER EQUALITY PLAN CREF

2025-2027



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INDEX

INDEX	2
1. INTRODUCTION	2
The Legal Basis	2
The GEP as a Tool for Equal Opportunities in Research	3
GEP Requirements and Actions	3
The CREF Working Group	4
2. CREF	4
3. THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN OF CREF: ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS	4
a. Public Disclosure and Dissemination	5
b. Dedicated Resources	5
c. Context Analysis and Gender Situation	6
d. Training	7
4. CREF'S COMMITMENT TO INTEGRATING THE GENDER DIMENSION IN RESEARCH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT	8
Activities 2021-2023	8
Activities 2024-2027	9
5. AREAS AND NEW ACTIONS	9
The Five Thematic Areas:	10
AREA 1: Work-life balance, organizational culture, and combating stereotypes. Objectives and Actions	10
Objective 1: Work-life balance	10
Objective 2: Promoting an inclusive organizational culture and combating stereotypes	10
Objective 3: Adopting inclusive language in the institution's official communications	11
Objective 4: Increasing the perception of well-being in the working environment	11
AREA 2: Gender balance in boards/committees and top positions	11
Objective 1: Monitoring gender balance in top positions, commissions, and committees	12
AREA 3: Gender balance in recruitment and career progression	12
Objective 1: Reducing gender asymmetries in recruitment and guaranteeing equal opportunities in selection processes for vacant positions	12
AREA 4: Integration of the gender dimension into research content	13
Objective 1: Integrating gender culture into dissemination activities	13
AREA 5: Combating gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	13
Objective 1: Raising awareness on harassment and sexual violence and activating a support desk	13

1. INTRODUCTION

The Legal Basis

The Treaty of Lisbon (December 1, 2009), which identifies equality between women and men as one of the founding values of the European Union (Art. 2 of the Treaty on European Union), established that the fundamental principle of gender equality is one of the pillars on which the entire European Union project is built at the level of community law. To promote gender equality, the European Union has pursued paths and activities to understand the causes of remaining disparities and has introduced specific measures to ensure equality between the sexes.

One of the objectives of the European Union within the framework of the Europe 2020 Growth Strategy is to build a Europe that guarantees gender equality, where gender-based violence, sex discrimination, and structural inequality between women and men belong to the past; a Europe where women and men, girls and boys, in all their diversity, are equal and free to pursue their life choices, have equal opportunities for personal fulfillment, and the same chances to participate in and lead our European society.

The GEP as a Tool for Equal Opportunities in Research

In line with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025, the European Commission has introduced the adoption of a Gender Equality Plan (hereinafter, GEP) as a mandatory requirement for public institutions seeking funding from the Horizon Europe program.

The adoption of this plan has therefore become an essential prerequisite for accessing European funding and constitutes a policy measure activated by the European Commission to promote gender equality in research and innovation.

GEP Requirements and Actions

The European Commission defines a Gender Equality Plan as a set of actions aimed at promoting gender equality within an organization through institutional and cultural change. It sets four essential requirements that a GEP must mandatorily meet to be declared eligible:

- Public disclosure / Dissemination
- Dedicated resources
- Data collection and monitoring
- Training

In addition to these requirements, the European Commission identifies five thematic areas that every institution should address in its plan:

- Work-life balance and organizational culture;

- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making;
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression;
- Integration of the gender dimension into research and teaching content;
- Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

The CREF Working Group

To achieve the goals necessary for gender equality, as well as to identify concrete actions and dedicated strategies, the Museo Storico della Fisica e Centro Studi e Ricerche "Enrico Fermi" (CREF), through Administrative Director's Decree No. 40 of 26/04/2022, established the GEP Working Group for drafting the Gender Equality Plan, subsequently amended by Decree No. 48/2023 on March 15, 2023.

Following an open call addressed to all institutional staff, the new Gender Equality Team (GET) was appointed via Administrative Director's Decree No. 38 on February 7, 2025, to prepare the GEP 2025-2027.

The new composition is as follows:

- **Dr. Anna Lo Piano**, technologist and working group coordinator;
- **Dr. Miriam Focaccia**, senior researcher;
- **Dr. Dario Mazzilli**, researcher;
- **Dr. Aurelio Patelli**, researcher;
- **Dr. Marta Pepe**, administrative officer;
- **Dr. Angelica Sbardella**, researcher;
- **Dr. Jacopo Signorini**, administrative officer.

2. CREF

The Museo Storico della Fisica e Centro Studi e Ricerche Enrico Fermi (CREF) is a national public research institution established by Law No. 62 of March 15, 1999. CREF possesses a public law legal personality and holds statutory, regulatory, scientific, administrative, organizational, financial, asset, and accounting autonomy. It is subject to the supervision of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR).

CREF pursues its mission as a study and research center in the field of physics, promoting and developing scientific research with objectives of excellence aimed at expanding knowledge and fostering original, interdisciplinary applications, while encouraging a broad and targeted dissemination of scientific culture. Concurrently, CREF operates as the Historical Museum of Physics, aiming to preserve and disseminate the memory of Enrico Fermi, who, along with his research team, achieved scientific results of extraordinary impact for modern culture and society.

3. THE GENDER EQUALITY PLAN OF CREF: ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS

This Gender Equality Plan is drafted in accordance with the guidelines provided by the European Commission. It aims to present a snapshot of the current gender situation within CREF and, consequently, introduce measures or tools that can positively influence the working environment, fostering shared values of equity and individual respect.

This document is structured around the unique characteristics of the Institution, which conducts institutional research and outreach activities, and is designed to be an agile, easily updatable tool with verifiable targets.

Two fundamental considerations must be made regarding this GEP:

- **On one hand**, the small size and the brevity of its "new" scientific and institutional life make statistical analyses difficult to interpret and the identification of systematic critical issues in gender equity more complex. For this reason, the presence or absence of signs of gender disparity cannot be considered fully representative of the actual state, but rather an aspect to be closely monitored.
- **On the other hand**, these same characteristics represent an opportunity for CREF, as they simplify the actions and changes required to achieve the plan's objectives, reducing the inevitable difficulties and resistance normally found in large and/or long-standing organizations.

a. Public Disclosure and Dissemination

This Gender Equality Plan is drafted by the GET, as presented in the introduction of this document; it will be verified and signed by the Administrative Director of the Institution and presented to the Board of Directors for its adoption.

The plan will be published on the institution's official website, as well as in the "Transparent Administration" section, and sent via institutional email to all staff and interested parties (PhD students, associated staff).

b. Dedicated Resources

Following the adoption of the 2022-2024 GEP, approved by the CREF Board of Directors with resolution No. 68 on 27/06/2022, a total financial resource of 13,000 euros was allocated for the years 2022-2024 to implement the Plan, which will be renewed for the next three-year period. For a GEP to be effective, it is necessary to involve the entire organization by systematizing internal skills and planning targeted interventions from external sources. Among the internal resources provided, special mention must go to the working group that dedicated time to drafting and updating this Plan. This group was recently renewed during an open meeting with the institution's staff to showcase the work completed and future projects. The meeting met with widespread participation and confirmed that the topics addressed by the GEP are of general interest.

As a demonstration of the institution's commitment to promoting values of inclusion and corporate well-being, a Single Guarantee Committee (CUG) was established (via

Administrative Director's Decree No. 193/2024). Although they perform different tasks, the two committees will coordinate their efforts to enhance their respective activities. To establish an action plan and begin a path of awareness and training, CREF assigned a 3-year consultancy role to an external collaborator through a public notice (Notice No. 7/2024) to assist the Gender Equality Team and the Single Guarantee Committee, and to provide staff training, for a total of 6,500 euros gross. Following the comparative procedure, Dr. Giorgia Ortu La Barbera was selected.

The consultant is tasked with:

- Providing advice on drafting and implementing GEP guidelines for gender-sensitive or gender-neutral language in internal and institutional communications;
- Providing advice on drafting an anti-discrimination and anti-harassment policy;
- Conducting specific training and consultancy sessions for the Gender Equality Team (GET) and the Single Guarantee Committee (CUG) on the knowledge and skills required to implement gender policies at CREF;
- Designing, researching, and studying organizational and practical solutions to propose to the GET;
- Conducting training activities for CREF staff on various topics, such as gender equity, gender bias and stereotypes, gender representation in scientific disciplines, and inclusive language (at least 3 training sessions for a total of 6 hours over the 3-year contract);
- Acting as a Confidential Counsellor, following the definition of a policy governing her duties, procedures, and methods for reporting discrimination, inappropriate behavior, and harassment.

c. Context Analysis and Gender Situation

To fulfil its institutional purposes, CREF relies on its own staff as well as employees from Universities, Research Institutions, and other Public Administrations through scientific/technological research assignments or technical collaborations granted free of charge according to the procedures outlined in Section 9 of the Association Regulations (Board of Directors Resolution No. 10 of March 22, 2013).

Pursuant to Art. 5 of the Statute, the Organs of CREF are:

- **President:** Holds the legal representation of CREF and ensures the unity of its scientific direction. Currently held by a female figure.
- **Board of Directors:** Responsible for direction and planning, and approves all general and fundamental acts for the organization. It consists of 1 woman (33%) and 2 men (67%).
- **Scientific Council:** An advisory body on planning and strategic vision, composed of 4 men (67%) and 2 women (33%).
- **Board of Auditors:** The body tasked with monitoring the financial and economic management of the Institution. It is appointed by decree of the Minister of University and Research and consists of three effective members and two alternates, designated by the MEF, MUR, and MIBACT. It is currently composed of one woman and four men.

CREF also employs an **Internal Evaluation Committee (CIV)**, composed of three internationally renowned experts (two men and one woman), tasked with evaluating the scientific results achieved by the Institution in relation to the goals defined in the Three-Year Plan, preparing a dedicated report to submit to the Board of Directors. To pursue its goals, CREF uses an organizational model divided into two structures:

- a. Museum and Research Structure;
- b. Administrative Structure.

The **Museum and Research Structure**, headed by the Scientific Director (currently male), carries out museum and research activities based on the President's directives. It coordinates and implements interdisciplinary research projects, capitalizes on research results, promotes initiatives for the professional growth of researchers, disseminates scientific culture, and protects the historical memory of the monumental complex of Via Panisperna through the Enrico Fermi Museum.

- The permanent research staff consists of 7 female researchers (32%) and 15 male researchers (68%).
- Regarding levels, there are 3 Research Directors, all of whom are men (100%).
- Among the Senior Researchers, there are two men (40%) and three women (60%).

Among the temporary research staff:

- 16 post-docs: 6 women (31%), 10 men (69%)
- 6 research grants: 5 male grant holders (83%) and 1 female grant holder (17%)
- 12 PhD scholarships funded by the Institution, with 7 male PhD students (50%) and 7 female PhD students (50%).
- The Museum's Technical Committee, consisting of 8 people, is coordinated by a female senior researcher.

The **Administrative Structure** manages the administrative and accounting activities required to ensure the Institution's functioning, manage its institutional headquarters, and execute museum and research activities. It currently consists of 10 active staff units assigned to 6 offices, each of which has an appointed supervisor (organizational position). The role of Administrative Director is assigned to a man.

The permanent administrative staff currently consists of 11 units (6 men and 5 women), distributed as follows: 5 female administrative officers, 2 male administrative officers, 1 technical operator, 2 technical collaborators, and 1 technologist.

Within the structure described above, the following roles have been assigned: Head of the Accounting Office (held by a man), Head of the Personnel Office (woman), Head of the General and Regulatory Affairs Office (man), Head of the Research Office (woman), and Head of the Communication and Events Office (woman).

To the administrative staff, two third-level technologist figures must be added: the Head of Communication (woman) and the Head of IT Systems (man).

The chart below is updated as of November 2025.

d. Training

Training on gender equality in the scientific field is of crucial importance to overcome deeply rooted stereotypes, which often operate at an unconscious level. Through targeted training paths, it is possible to deconstruct biases and promote an inclusive

culture. Creating a common platform and language fosters collective reflection, offering a solid foundation for dialogue and exchange.

- **2022:** The first step was to introduce the concept of gender equality and present the path taken by the EU. A training seminar on the GEP was organized, titled "*Gender Equality Plan, or the Strategy for Gender Equality*," held by Dr. Francesca Pecori.
- **2025:** In May 2025, the GET, alongside a representative from the CUG, met with Dr. Georgia Ortu La Barbera for a specific two-hour training session on the Gender Equality Plan. In July, the GET coordinator, Dr. Anna Lo Piano, attended an 8-hour training course titled "*Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and the Integration of the Gender Dimension in Horizon Europe Projects*," organized by Eucore. On October 15, the first of the scheduled two-hour workshops for institutional training on gender issues was held by Dr. Ortu La Barbera, titled: "*Is it a Fact or a Stereotype?*"
- **2026:** In the first half of 2026, two training workshops were conducted by Dr. Giorgia Ortu La Barbera. The first, on May 14, aimed to present the "*Code of Conduct for the Protection of the Person and Organizational Wellbeing*" to the staff of CREF and the Sony CSL Rome laboratory, drafted in collaboration with the Single Guarantee Committee. The workshop addressed the concepts of harassment, moral and sexual harassment, discriminatory acts, and reporting procedures. The second workshop, scheduled for June 23, aims to introduce the concept of "broad/inclusive language" and serves as an initial step toward drafting the institution's guidelines for language use in communications and official documents.

4. CREF'S COMMITMENT TO INTEGRATING THE GENDER DIMENSION IN RESEARCH AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

By statute, CREF has a dual mission: pairing its research activities with a strong commitment to public engagement. Within the "History of Physics" project, gender studies research is conducted to highlight the role of women in the history of science. This research is linked to dissemination outreach through various methods: docufilms, participation in public engagement events, and the organization of thematic workshops and conferences.

Activities 2021-2023

On the occasion of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science, established by the UN General Assembly in 2015 and celebrated worldwide, CREF organized a webinar in 2022 for students to share the stories and research of young female scientists from a historical perspective.

On February 22, 2023, as part of the series "*Open Lectures at CREF: Intersections of Physics and History*," the event "*Not Just Boys at Via Panisperna*" was organized, featuring lectures by Dr. M. Focaccia, which are available on the Institution's YouTube channel.

CREF also sponsored and financed a docufilm where CREF researchers were involved in the concept and production phases: *"A Chair for Laura Bassi. Bologna 1732,"* which tells the story of the first woman in the world to secure a university professorship. The docufilm premiered on RAI Storia in May 2020.

Furthermore, CREF researchers participated in advanced scientific dissemination projects concerning the history of 19th-century Italian female scientists in collaboration with RAI Storia: *"Donne e Scienza"* (Women and Science), which resulted in three episodes broadcasted in October 2021 for the RAI Storia program *Italiani*.

Activities 2024-2027

Within the public lecture series *"Intersections of Physics and History"* dedicated to the Manhattan Project, two out of four lectures focused on the recovery and celebration of two fundamental female figures: Lise Meitner and Laura Capon Fermi. The lectures were delivered by two scholars specializing in gender studies: Paola Govoni (UniBo) and Simona Cerrato (SISSA). They explored the life and work of Lise Meitner, who made a critical contribution to the understanding of nuclear fission, and Laura Capon Fermi, an exceptional science communicator and a direct witness to an extraordinary period in the history of national and international physics.

On November 22, 2024, CREF organised a study day in honor of Giuseppina Amaldi, reconstructing her profile as a scientist and communicator using her books, notes from the Amaldi archive, and documents from the RAI Archives. The workshop was organized in collaboration with the Amaldi family and the Sapienza University Library and Archive. CREF also participated in a docufilm dedicated to Giuseppina Amaldi, directed by Alessandro Scillitani, in collaboration with the Amaldi family and the Zanichelli publishing house.

The movie was shown at Researchers Night in 2025, Sapienza University in 2026, and will be presented during the Genoa Science Festival in October 2026.

For the 2025 lecture series, an event was organised in collaboration with the Musée Curie in Paris titled: *"The Atom Unveiled: A Journey into the Paris of the Curies through Stories, Discoveries, and Political Commitment."* Camilla Maiani, head of mediation at the Curie Museum, presented the figures of Marie and Irène Curie, incorporating a gender perspective.

5. AREAS AND NEW ACTIONS

Implementing a project to achieve gender balance in the workplace is a European measure designed to promote equal opportunities. The greatest difficulties in achieving balance stem from a lack of clear targets and indicators. The Gender Equality Plan represents a useful solution to overcome these challenges, as it provides operational tools that can deliver specific measures aligned with the legal, organizational, economic, and social context of the Institution.

Gender equality does not mean that men and women must be equal in numbers, but rather that, given equal skills, they have equal access to opportunities. For a GEP to be

effective, the European Commission recommends addressing five thematic areas through actions with specific targets.

The Five Thematic Areas:

- **Area 1:** Work-life balance, organizational culture, and combating stereotypes.
- **Area 2:** Gender balance in boards/committees and top positions.
- **Area 3:** Gender balance in recruitment and career progression.
- **Area 4:** Integration of the gender dimension into research content.
- **Area 5:** Combating gender-based violence, including sexual harassment.

The objective sheets to be undertaken are detailed below, specifying the areas involved.

AREA 1: Work-life balance, organizational culture, and combating stereotypes. Objectives and Actions

- Work-life balance
- Promoting an inclusive organizational culture and combating stereotypes
- Adopting inclusive language in the institution's official communications
- Increasing the perception of well-being in the working environment
-

Objective 1: Work-life balance

- **Action 1:** Organization and scheduling of routine work activities within appropriate hours. Allowing remote access to coordination meetings.
 - *Notes on the action:* Scheduling meetings and activities by management or area heads can be discriminatory when scheduled during specific daily time slots, such as early morning or late afternoon. To the extent possible, diverse needs must be accommodated, and remote access to meetings should be supported.
- **Action 2:** Sign individual agreements with administrative and research staff to enable smart working tailored to individual needs.
- **Direct Target:** Tenured and non-tenured CREF staff, collaborators.
- **Indirect Target:** Families and colleagues.
- **Operational Managers:** Administrative Director, Personnel Manager, Directors, and Project Leaders.
- **Evaluation Indicators:**
 - Monitoring meeting schedules.
 - Adoption of smart working and analysis of the number of days worked remotely by staff, broken down by gender.
- **Timeline:** 2024-2025

Objective 2: Promoting an inclusive organizational culture and combating stereotypes

- **Action:** Organizing a seminar on gender stereotypes in the scientific research field for all staff.
 - *Notes on the action:* Organizing interactive seminars builds a foundation for dialogue and stimulates awareness of one's own or others' biases and attitudes.
- **Direct Target:** Tenured and non-tenured staff.
- **Indirect Target:** Collaborators.
- **Institutional Managers:** Board of Directors, Scientific Director, Administrative Director.
- **Operational Managers:** GET, Communication and Events Office, CUG.
- **Evaluation Indicators:** Seminar participation rate.
- **Timeline:** Autumn 2025
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Objective 3: Adopting inclusive language in the institution's official communications

- **Action:** Seminar on gender language to assist in drafting guidelines.
- **Sub-actions:** Meetings to review and standardize official documents—from public calls to internal regulations—to align and standardize language with the new guidelines.
- **Direct Target:** Administrative and Communication staff.
- **Institutional Managers:** Board of Directors, Administrative Director.
- **Operational Managers:** GET, Head of Communication, Communication and Events Office, General and Regulatory Affairs Office.
- **Output:** Official guidelines for the use of inclusive language.
- **Timeline:** Seminar in January 2026, followed by practical review meetings.

Objective 4: Increasing the perception of well-being in the working environment

- **Action:** (To be verified) Seminars or workshop training on the culture of respect in the workplace.
- **Direct Target:** CREF staff.
- **Institutional Managers:** Board of Directors, Administrative Director, Scientific Director.
- **Operational Managers:** GET - CUG.
- **Evaluation Indicators:**
 - Percentage of staff participating in the initiatives out of total employees.
 - Administration of anonymous questionnaires on the perception of well-being in the workplace.
- **Timeline:** 2026

AREA 2: Gender balance in boards/committees and top positions

Objective 1: Monitoring gender balance in top positions, commissions, and committees

- **Action:** Annual report distributed to all staff.
- **Direct Target:** Management and Staff.
- **Indirect Target:** Staff.
- **Institutional Managers:** Board of Directors, Scientific and Administrative Directorate.
- **Operational Managers:** GET.
- **Evaluation Indicators:**
 - Number of women out of the total members of each institutional commission/committee.
 - Number of women in leadership positions compared to men.
- **Timeline:** 2025-2026

AREA 3: Gender balance in recruitment and career progression

Objective 1: Reducing gender asymmetries in recruitment and guaranteeing equal opportunities in selection processes for vacant positions

- **Action:** Compliance with legal regulations regarding the composition of selection committees and CREF regulations for awarding research contracts.
 - *Specifically, Art. 57, paragraph 05, No. 1 of Legislative Decree No. 165/2001 stipulates that: "Public administrations, in order to guarantee equal opportunities between men and women for access to work and treatment at work: a) reserve for women, unless there is a justified impossibility, at least one-third of the seats on selection committees, without prejudice to the principle referred to in Article 35, paragraph 3, letter e); in the case of a fractional quotient, rounding is made to the higher unit if the decimal place is equal to or greater than 0.5 and to the lower unit if the decimal place is less than 0.5."*
 - Compliance with this legal provision is guaranteed in every selection procedure by verifying the presence of at least one woman on committees composed of three members.
- **Direct Target:** Selection committees.
- **Indirect Target:** Candidates.
- **Institutional Managers:** Board of Directors, Administrative Director, Administration.
- **Operational Managers:** Administrative Director, General and Regulatory Affairs Office.

- **Evaluation Indicators:** Number of women present on each selection committee out of total members for every recruitment procedure carried out for permanent and non-permanent staff (research contracts and scholarships).
- **Timeline:** 2024-2026
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AREA 4: Integration of the gender dimension into research content

Objective 1: Integrating gender culture into dissemination activities

- **Action:** Organizing events and workshops focusing on female figures in the history of science.
- **Direct Target:** Research staff and the general public.
- **Institutional Managers:** Scientific Director.
- **Operational Managers:** Museum Coordinator, Head of Communication, and Communication and Events Office.
- **Evaluation Indicators:** Number of events covering gender culture topics out of the total events organized during the reference period.
- **Timeline:** 2025-2027

AREA 5: Combating gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Objective 1: Raising awareness on harassment and sexual violence and activating a support desk

- **Action:** Selection and appointment of a professional to act as a Confidential Counsellor (*Consigliera di fiducia*), tasked with training activities to combat gender-based violence and providing professional listening support.
- **Direct Target:** CREF staff.
- **Institutional Managers:** Board of Directors, Administrative Director, Scientific Director.
- **Operational Managers:** GET, Administrative Director.
- **Evaluation Indicators:** Confidential Counsellor support desk service activated and access procedures communicated to all staff.
- **Timeline:** 2025