

HCI Gender Equality Plan 2025-2027

The action plan is structured around **five main objectives**, aligned with Tunisian and European Commission guidelines for institutional GEPs.

Objective 1 — Work–Life Balance & Organizational Culture

Actions

- **Core Meeting Hours Policy:** Meetings held between **09:30 and 15:30** to align with school schedules and caregiving duties.
- **Flexible Work Arrangements:** Remote work options for parents, caregivers, and employees with special needs.
- **Returnship Grants:** Financial and professional support for women researchers returning from maternity leave or career breaks.
- **Gender-Sensitive Event Planning:** Ensuring safe, inclusive, and accessible participation in all HCI events and programs.

Expected Outcomes

- Increased retention of women in mid-career and senior roles
- Reduction in career interruptions linked to caregiving responsibilities

Objective 2 — Gender Balance in Leadership & Decision-Making

Targets

- Achieve **50% female representation** on the Selection Committee by 2027
- At least **40% representation** of the underrepresented gender on the Scientific Advisory Board

Actions

- Establishment of a **Women in HealthTech Leadership Track**
- Mandatory gender-balanced composition of evaluation panels
- Mentorship and sponsorship by international female board members

Expected Outcomes

- Better decision-making through diversity
- Stronger pipeline of women leaders in HealthTech

Objective 3 — Gender Equality in Recruitment & Career Progression

Policies

- All job descriptions must use **gender-neutral, inclusive language**
- Equal pay for equal qualification and responsibility

Processes

- **Blinded evaluation protocols** for Startup Studio venture selection
- Recruitment panels must include **at least 40% of the underrepresented gender**
- Annual audit of gender pay gaps

Expected Outcomes

- Reduction of unconscious bias
- Fairer access to opportunities and leadership roles

Objective 4 — Integration of Gender in Research & Innovation

Mandates

Startups and research teams must demonstrate how their solution integrates **sex/gender differences**, including:

- Balanced datasets for AI training
- Sex-specific analysis in digital diagnostics
- Gender-sensitive user interface design
- Consideration of women's and men's different biological responses in clinical testing

Requirements for HCI Labeling

Projects applying for HCI Labeling must submit:

- A **Gender Dimension Statement** describing how sex/gender variables were treated
- Evidence of testing in diverse populations

Expected Outcomes

- Reduction of algorithmic bias
- More clinically effective and equitable medical technologies

Objective 5 — Measures Against Gender-Based Violence & Harassment

Policies

- Full compliance with **Tunisian Organic Law No. 2017-58**
- Zero-tolerance approach to gender-based harassment, discrimination, or abuse

Mechanisms

- Confidential reporting channel: **grievance@healthcareinnovation.tn**
- Survivor-centered protocols and protection from retaliation
- Mandatory annual anti-harassment training
- Integration of PSEAH best practices (Protection from Sexual Exploitation, Abuse & Harassment)

Expected Outcomes

- Safe, inclusive work and innovation environments
- Increased participation of women in public events and co-creation workshops

4. Monitoring & Review

HCI adopts a transparent monitoring approach aligned with Horizon Europe expectations.

Annual Gender Impact Report

Published annually and containing:

- Sex-disaggregated data on program beneficiaries
- Leadership representation metrics
- Startup founder gender ratios
- Gender pay gap statistics (within cluster staff)
- Progress toward quotas and targets

Mid-Term Evaluation (2026)

Adjustments will be made based on:

- Lessons learned

- Feedback from women founders and staff
- ERA policy updates

Final Review (2027)

Assessment of:

- Achievement of targets
- Structural changes within the ecosystem
- Recommendations for the 2028–2030 GEP cycle