



Gender Equality Plan

(GEP)

Lithuanian Citizen Science Association

Piliečių mokslo asociacija

Period: 2026-2028

Approved: February 2026
Version 1.0

1. PREAMBLE AND INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

The Lithuanian Citizen Science Association (Piliečių mokslo asociacija, hereafter PMA) is a non-governmental research organization established in 2020 that brings together researchers, practitioners, and community members engaged in citizen science activities across Lithuania. PMA is committed to advancing gender equality in citizen science research, outreach, and governance. This Gender Equality Plan is developed in compliance with the Horizon Europe eligibility criterion requiring participating organizations to have a GEP in place, and in alignment with the European Research Area (ERA) priorities and the Lithuanian Law on Equal Opportunities. This GEP covers the period 2026-2028 and sets out concrete objectives, measures, and monitoring mechanisms to promote gender equality within PMA's operations, research activities, and partnerships.

2. SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

This plan applies to all PMA activities, including: (a) Internal governance and decision-making structures; (b) Research projects coordinated or participated in by PMA; (c) Events, training programmes, and public engagement activities; (d) Recruitment, career development, and mentoring within PMA-affiliated projects; and (e) Communication and dissemination activities. For the purposes of this GEP, "gender equality" encompasses equal rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for all individuals regardless of gender, including measures to address structural inequalities and promote gender balance in citizen science research environments.

3. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK

This GEP is grounded in the following legal and policy instruments: European Commission: Horizon Europe Regulation (EU) 2021/695, requiring GEPs for research organizations; European Research Area Policy Agenda 2022-2024 (Action 5: Promote gender equality and foster inclusiveness); Republic of Lithuania: Law on Equal Opportunities of Women and Men (IX-1826); Republic of Lithuania: Law on Equal Treatment (IX-1862); and EU Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025 and its successor framework.

4. KEY THEMATIC AREAS AND OBJECTIVES

4.1 Work-Life Balance and Organizational Culture

PMA recognizes that a supportive organizational culture is foundational to gender equality. As a network-based association, PMA commits to: (a) Ensuring flexible meeting schedules and remote participation options that accommodate diverse caring responsibilities; (b) Promoting inclusive language and gender-sensitive communication in all internal and external communications; and (c) Conducting an annual organizational culture survey with gender-disaggregated analysis.

4.2 Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

PMA aims to maintain and improve gender balance across its governance and project leadership structures: (a) Target minimum 40% representation of any gender in the PMA Board and Advisory Committee; (b) Ensure gender-balanced representation in project coordination and work package leadership roles; and (c) Track and report gender composition of decision-making bodies annually.

4.3 Gender Equality in Recruitment and Career Development

PMA will promote equal opportunities in all recruitment and capacity-building activities: (a) Use gender-neutral language in all vacancy announcements and call texts; (b) Ensure gender-balanced selection panels for researcher recruitment within PMA-coordinated projects; (c) Provide mentoring opportunities with attention to gender balance, particularly for early-career researchers; and (d) Organize at least one annual training session on gender equality in research for PMA members.

4.4 Integration of the Gender Dimension in Research Content

Citizen science research at PMA will integrate gender considerations systematically: (a) Include sex/gender analysis where relevant in research design, data collection, and interpretation; (b) Collect and analyze gender-disaggregated data on citizen science participant demographics; (c) Encourage research proposals that address gendered dimensions of science engagement, digital participation, and environmental behavior; and (d) Incorporate gender perspectives in project deliverables and publications.

4.5 Measures Against Gender-Based Violence and Harassment

PMA maintains a zero-tolerance approach to gender-based violence, harassment, and discrimination: (a) Adopt and publicize a Code of Conduct covering all PMA events, meetings, and online spaces; (b) Designate a confidential contact person for reporting concerns related to harassment or discrimination; (c) Provide information on available support services and reporting mechanisms through the PMA website; and (d) Require all consortium partners in PMA-coordinated projects to adhere to the Code of Conduct.

5. GOVERNANCE AND IMPLEMENTATION STRUCTURE

Role	Responsibility	Appointment
GEP Coordinator	Overall coordination and monitoring of GEP implementation; annual reporting	Appointed by PMA Board
PMA Board	Strategic oversight; approval of GEP updates; resource allocation	Elected per PMA statutes
Advisory Committee	Expert guidance on gender mainstreaming in research; review of annual progress	Nominated by members
Project Leaders	Integration of GEP measures in project-level activities and deliverables	Per project consortium agreements
All PMA Members	Awareness, compliance, and active contribution to gender equality objectives	All registered members

The GEP Coordinator reports to the PMA Board on a biannual basis and prepares an annual Gender Equality Progress Report that is made publicly available on the PMA website.

6. ACTION PLAN 2026-2028

Action	Indicator	Timeline	Responsible
Conduct baseline gender audit of PMA membership and governance	Audit report completed	Q2 2026	GEP Coordinator
Adopt PMA Code of Conduct	Code published on website	Q1 2026	Board
Integrate gender-disaggregated data collection in active projects	Data protocol in place for all new projects	Q3 2026	Project Leaders
Organize gender equality training for PMA members	Minimum 1 training/year; 20+ participants	Annually	GEP Coordinator
Publish annual Gender Equality Progress Report	Report published on PMA website	Q1 annually	GEP Coordinator
Review gender composition of Board and Advisory Committee	Minimum 40% any gender target met	Annually	Board
Include gender dimension checklist in project proposal templates	Checklist integrated in templates	Q2 2026	GEP Coordinator
Establish confidential reporting mechanism for harassment	Mechanism operational	Q2 2026	Board
Mid-term GEP review and update	Updated GEP approved by Board	Q4 2027	GEP Coordinator
Final GEP evaluation and planning for next cycle	Evaluation report; GEP 2029-2031 drafted	Q4 2028	Board + GEP Coordinator

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

PMA will employ the following monitoring framework to track GEP implementation:

7.1 Quantitative Indicators

- Gender composition of PMA Board, Advisory Committee, and project teams (annual census)
- Gender-disaggregated participation data for PMA events and training activities
- Number and proportion of research outputs integrating gender dimension
- Number of reported incidents and resolution outcomes (anonymized)

7.2 Qualitative Indicators

- Feedback from annual organizational culture survey
- Self-assessment of gender mainstreaming integration in project deliverables
- Stakeholder feedback on inclusiveness of PMA activities

7.3 Reporting Cycle

The GEP Coordinator will prepare a concise annual progress report summarizing key indicators, achievements, and areas for improvement. This report will be presented to the PMA Board, shared with members, and published on the PMA website to ensure transparency and public accountability.

8. DEDICATED RESOURCES

PMA commits the following resources to GEP implementation: (a) Staff time: The GEP Coordinator role (estimated 0.1 FTE equivalent from existing PMA leadership capacity); (b) Training budget: Allocation within PMA's annual operational budget for at least one gender equality training event per year; and (c) Project-level resources: Gender equality activities budgeted within the management and dissemination work packages of PMA-coordinated EU projects

9. DATA COLLECTION AND PROTECTION

All gender-related data collected under this GEP will comply with the EU General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and Lithuanian data protection legislation. Gender data will be collected on a voluntary basis, stored securely, processed in aggregated and anonymized form for reporting purposes, and used solely for the purposes outlined in this GEP.

10. PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION

In line with Horizon Europe requirements, this GEP is a public document. It is published on the PMA website and made available to all consortium partners, funding agencies, and the wider research community. Annual progress reports will likewise be published online.

11. REVIEW AND AMENDMENT

This GEP is a living document subject to periodic review. A mid-term review is scheduled for Q4 2027, with a comprehensive evaluation and renewal planned for Q4 2028. Amendments may be proposed by the GEP Coordinator or any PMA member and require approval by the PMA Board.

**Approved by the PMA Director
Dr. Monika Mačiulienė**

Date: 2026 / 02 / 01

Signature: _____

