



ÚOCHB <sup>AV</sup><sub>CR</sub>  
IOCB PRAGUE

Ústav organické chemie a biochemie  
Akademie věd České republiky, v. v. i.  
Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry  
of the Czech Academy of Sciences



# Equal Opportunities Plan

The Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the CAS (IOCB Prague) is committed to providing a positive working environment for all employees regardless of their nationality, gender, ethnicity, or disability status. These principles have been formalised within this Equal Opportunities Plan.

The plan is effective through 31 December 2026.

**Zdeněk Hostomský**  
IOCB Prague, Director



**Ullrich Jahn**  
IOCB Board, Chairman



Prague, 29 October 2021

# IOCB Prague Equal Opportunities Plan (EOP)

## Equal Opportunities Statement

The mission of the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the CAS (IOCB Prague) is the pursuit of scientific knowledge through innovative research and the education of new generations of scientists. We understand that the success and productivity of our researchers requires a stable and supportive social environment. We take into account the personal circumstances that might affect our employees and their partners and/or families and make every effort to support them in achieving a healthy work-life balance. As an institute, we are committed to providing a positive working environment for all employees regardless of their nationality, gender, ethnicity, or disability status.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Number of employees as of 15 July 2021

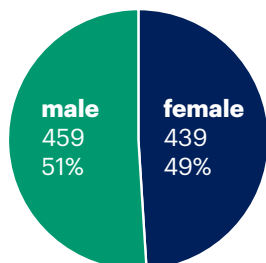
As of 15 July 2021, the institute employs a total of 898 employees (692.7 FTE), of which 439 are women and 459 are men, including academic staff, PhD students, and technical and administrative staff. Of this number, 214 staff members (23.8%) are foreign nationals.

### 1.2 Composition of the workforce at IOCB Prague

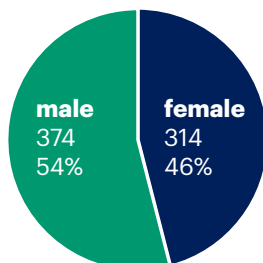
Gender / Area	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
Scientific	314	374	688	45.6%
Technical and Administrative	125	85	210	59.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>898</b>	<b>48.9%</b>
%	48.9%	51.1%		

Table 1: Composition of IOCB Prague workforce disaggregated by gender and type of work.

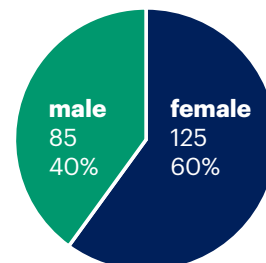
#### Total IOCB Prague staff



#### Scientific staff



#### Nonscientific staff



Overall, the number of men and women at the institute is balanced. Of the scientific staff, the proportion of women is marginally lower (45.6%), while on the technical and administrative workforce there are more women than men (59.5%). This composition indicates a relatively gender-balanced workforce at IOCB Prague. The institute compiles a monthly internal report on changes in employee numbers and status.

### 1.3 Composition of scientific staff

Qualification Level / Gender	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
Group leaders	6	34	40	15%
Junior group leaders	2	6	8	25%
Senior researchers	2	10	12	16.7%
Junior researchers	21	47	68	30.9%
Postdoctoral researchers	74	95	169	43.8%
PhD students	106	112	218	48.6%
Undergraduate students (BSc, MSc, or equiv.)	50	41	91	54.9%
Scientific technicians/lab managers	52	20	72	72.2%
Emeritus researchers and Adjunct professors	1	9	10	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>45.6%</b>

Table 2: Composition of scientific employees disaggregated by gender and level of seniority.

Among scientific staff, the percentage of women decreases as the level of seniority increases, but the overall picture is positive: there are more female undergraduate students (54.9%) than male, a nearly even proportion of female (48.6%) and male PhD students, and slightly fewer female (43.8%) postdoctoral researchers than male. A large percentage of women (72.2%) hold scientific technician or lab manager positions, reflecting the fact that upon returning from maternity leave many women look for a role in science but hesitate to take up a leadership position immediately and should be encouraged to do so. Among junior and senior researchers, many of whom act as deputies for group leaders and thus have a relatively high degree of autonomy within the groups, the percentage of women is 30.9% and 16.7%, respectively.

The area where there is most scope for improvement is group leaders, where the proportion of women is only 15%. This imbalance may reflect historical bias, but progress is being made, as demonstrated by the fact that women account for 25% of junior group leaders. In the most recent cohort of junior group leaders recruited to IOCB Prague, there are four men and two women, illustrating that the gender balance is gradually changing.

Finally, although women make up only 10% of the emeritus and adjunct professors at the institute, this is an anomaly, as most emeritus professors have only a small FTE allocation reflecting their desire to stay in touch with research beyond their active career. Here, too, historical bias plays a role.

## 1.4 Composition of non-scientific staff

Qualification Level / Gender	Female	Male	Total	Percentage Female
Section heads	9	5	14	64.3%
Administrative and technical support staff (without university degree)	82	51	133	61.7%
Administrative and technical specialist (with university degree)	34	29	63	54%
<b>Total</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>59.5%</b>

Table 3: Composition of non-scientific staff at IOCB Prague disaggregated by gender and level of seniority.

Among non-scientific staff, there are more women than men across all categories. While this is more pronounced for administrative and technical support staff without university degrees (e.g. clerical, premises management, etc.; 61.7% female), it is also the case for university-educated specialist staff (e.g. project managers, accountants, ITS specialists, lawyers, etc.; 54% female). It is worth noting that among the heads of administrative and technical sections, roughly two thirds of the positions are held by women (64.3%).

## 1.5 Composition of new employees

We propose the collection of data (as categorised in the tables 1–3 above) on an annual basis in order to monitor the changes in the composition of new employees over time.

## 1.6 Part-time versus full-time employment

IOCB Prague is flexible in offering part-time employment in justified cases. This is important because part-time work is one of the solutions to the work-life balance problem for parents of young children and other caregivers (e.g. caregivers of elderly or disabled relatives). Among research staff at the postdoctoral level or higher, 22.5% (women 10.2%, men 12.3%) work part-time. While some PhD students have part-time contracts, for many this is because in the Czech system PhD students receive a state-funded stipend and are then employed at their research institution on a 50% basis.

## 1.7 Current practice at IOCB Prague

### 1.7.1 Support for parent employees

According to Eurostat, 17.9% of employees in the EU27 work part-time, while in the Czech Republic this percentage drops to a mere 5.5%. In the context of Czech society, IOCB Prague is a very progressive employer (37.1% of employees work part-time). Part-time work is not only possible but also actively encouraged.

Because enrolment in state-funded kindergartens in the Czech Republic is typically open to children aged three years and older (in many cases in Prague and Central Bohemia, children must be four years old to enrol), IOCB Prague offers a dedicated childcare supplement for mothers returning to work before their child has reached the age of four years. The supplement is paid pro rata to part-time employees (mothers) for an FTE of up to 50%, above which the full amount is paid, taking into account the fact that many graduate students are employed on a 50% contract and draw the remainder of their income from a PhD stipend. Currently, the supplement is provided to 33 mothers. Similar support is available to parents

(both mothers and fathers) of disabled children on a case-by-case basis, and although it is not stipulated in the institute's statutes, the management and/or director have made clear that employees may apply for this form of assistance.

It is not only mothers who are supported. Fathers and mothers alike can take advantage of places in a local day care centre allocated to employees of IOCB Prague (children aged two years and older). Additionally, the institute has initiated discussions with nearby day care centres (with English speaking staff) on the possibility of IOCB Prague employees using their services if the need arises.

When schools and day care centres were closed in March 2020 as a result of the covid-19 pandemic, IOCB Prague, in cooperation with Children's Group "Dětská skupina Oříšek", quickly arranged alternative care on a flexible basis for employees' children from one to ten years of age. There were approximately 11 children per day enrolled in this alternative day care option. Furthermore, employees were allowed to work from home.

In the context of the broader scientific community, employees of IOCB Prague raise money for the Martina Roeselová Fellowship, which provides financial support to non-IOCB parent-researchers (men and women) in the Czech Republic. The money they raise is tripled by IOCB Tech, the technology transfer subsidiary of IOCB Prague.

Parents of young children travelling to conferences and workshops can apply for financial support to help cover the cost of childcare (nanny, accompanying family member) in order to take their child to the conference with them.

Fathers and mothers of children up to the age of 15 can apply for financial support to help cover the cost of a children's camp (one in summer and one in winter per child). Subsidies were awarded for a total of 119 camp stays in 2019, 111 camp stays in 2020, and 105 camp stays 2021.

Women in Science at IOCB Prague plays an important role for female scientists at the institute. It organises various events, such as discussions on childcare options and ways to facilitate the grant application process during maternity.

IOCB Invited Lectures are held during core working hours, when children are in childcare, allowing parent employees to attend. Prior to the covid-19 pandemic, the institute's informal postdoc group meetings alternated between mornings and afternoons to accommodate employees needing to pick up their children from school or kindergarten. Although the regular institute Happy Hours social events are held in the late afternoon or early evening, parent employees are permitted to bring their children with them and can thus take advantage of the informal networking benefits these gatherings provide.

Parent employees commuting to Prague from greater distances have priority in the allocation of parking spaces within the IOCB Prague complex.

## **1.7.2 Role models for early career researchers**

IOCB Prague's Women in Science initiative celebrates the achievements of female scientists and encourages employees (especially early career researchers) to take inspiration from them in informal settings. This typically involves asking invited female foreign speakers from the IOCB Invited Lectures series who present their research in a morning plenary lecture to also conduct an afternoon seminar to talk about their path and how they have managed to combine family life with a successful career in science. The events are open both to women and men, and participants are encouraged to engage in discussion regardless of whether or not they are parents.

As part of the IOCB Invited Lectures series, PhD students and postdoctoral researchers (women and men) are invited to join the speaker for lunch and a follow-up scientific discussion in the absence of more senior researchers, such as their supervisors. This gives them the opportunity to talk openly with speakers about gender issues and the solutions they apply at leading research institutes and universities abroad.

## **1.7.3 Gender-neutral language in communication and position advertising**

There is an ongoing effort to advertise positions using gender-neutral language (in Czech e.g. 'postdoktorand/ka'). Improvements are being considered for English-language advertising, such as the addition of '(m/f)' to adverts for open positions, or a statement encouraging applications from underrepresented groups. Furthermore, institute activity reports and internal and external documents relating to revisions can be written in gender-neutral language. The writing of scientific and science-related texts by academic staff falls within the individual research freedom of the particular authors.

## **1.7.4 Formal support for the equal-opportunity agenda**

In the interest of fostering inclusivity, all communications are provided in English and Czech. Czech language courses are provided for foreign staff at the institute, and Czech and English language courses are available to employees through the language centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

Formally, IOCB Prague's support for the equal-opportunity agenda is partly underpinned by the HR Excellence in Research Award. An ethical proxy has been created, and two employees have been elected to the position (currently one male and

one female). The ethical proxies serve to provide confidential consultation and advice to IOCB Prague employees in matters relating to equal opportunities. At present, an equal opportunity officer position is being prepared, and the appointment of the officer is one of the targets of the Equal Opportunities Plan. Discussions are underway on how best to define the officer's role, responsibilities, and appointment procedure.

The IOCB Prague initiative Women in Science enjoys broad support from the institution's management. For example, when external funding for informal events (e.g. a sharing session with a distinguished female researcher) is sought, IOCB Prague management frequently matches this. The Women in Science initiative also receives a flexible annual budget for the organisation of such events.

IOCB Prague works closely with EURAXESS Czech Republic, which provides assistance to incoming foreign researchers (even before their arrival) on a wide range of matters, including health insurance queries, visa and residence permits, language courses, cultural excursions, and events for researchers and their families to learn about the Czech language, culture, and traditions (e.g. a St. Nicholas Day party for children, language courses for family members, etc.). This support makes the transition into life in the Czech Republic easier for researchers from other countries, especially in the early stages of their stay.

## 1.7.5 Salary support for postdoctoral researchers

In order to encourage mobility and attract highly qualified researchers with PhDs from leading institutions to IOCB Prague, a postdoctoral fellowship was established that provides the holder with one to two years of salary funding. Candidates are selected twice per year by a selection committee. From 2016 to 2020, a total of eight women and twenty-three men have applied for and received this funding, reflecting the number of applications submitted. Postdoctoral researchers are also eligible to apply for the PPLZ support scheme provided by the Czech Academy of Sciences (one or two fellowships available to IOCB Prague per round, typically no more than three per year). From 2016 to 2020, five women and four men have received this funding.

## 1.7.6 Access to information on the intranet and internet

Information connected to the equal-opportunities, including documents about measures designed to support parent employees, is available on the institute's intranet and, where relevant to external visitors, on the internet. All documents are available in both Czech and English.

During the covid-19 pandemic, the communications department was proactive in supporting the international research community by summarising, in English and Czech, current legislation and restrictions as soon as they were announced by the Czech government.

# 2. Evaluation and monitoring

This is IOCB Prague's initial Equal Opportunities Plan (29 October 2021), with action targets planned for the short term (by 31 December 2022), medium term (by 31 December 2024), and long term (by 31 December 2026). Upon conclusion of each period, the IOCB Prague will assess the degree of success of various actions under the following headings: i) Career Development and Reduction of Underrepresentation; ii) Combining Work and Family; iii) Visibility of Equal-Opportunity Work.

Additionally, the actions will be monitored throughout the duration of the plan, with the aim of improving the Action Plan so that timely measures can be taken to correct detected deficiencies.

# 3. Planned actions, challenges, and measures

The actions to be implemented are broken down according to the planned timeline of their achievability. The Equal Opportunities Plan will be available publicly on the IOCB Prague website and will also be circulated among employees and posted on the institute's intranet.

## 3.1 Short-term goals (by 31 December 2022)

Challenges	Measures	Responsibility
<b>Equal Opportunities Plan (EOP) available publicly and to employees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Create webpage on IOCB Prague website to introduce the Equal Opportunities Plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communications office</li> </ul>
<b>Create a role of equal opportunities officer</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Clearly define responsibilities and appointment procedure</li> <li>■ Appoint an equal opportunities officer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ IOCB Prague Board</li> <li>■ Executive management</li> </ul>

<b>Gender-neutral language in job advertisements</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Ensure that advertisements are phrased to encourage applicants from all backgrounds</li> <li>■ Update job advertisement template to include gender neutrality</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communications office</li> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> <li>■ Group leaders</li> <li>■ HR department</li> </ul>
<b>Publication of the equal-opportunity agenda on the intraweb and website</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Provision of information on the equal-opportunity agenda and contact persons</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communications office</li> </ul>
<b>Visibility of female researchers</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Increase awareness of gender equality at the institute through formal (invited lectures) and informal (personal career path workshops) events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Women in Science group</li> </ul>
<b>Mapping the needs and requirements of employees at IOCB Prague</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Conduct a staff survey to identify needs and requirements relating to the equal-opportunity agenda</li> <li>■ Analyse results and revise medium and long-term goals if necessary</li> <li>■ Consult with the trade union</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> </ul>
<b>Need to collect sex/gender disaggregated data on staff and students</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Update process to collect monthly report on employee numbers to include sex/gender with names</li> <li>■ Annually collect data as categorised in tables 1–3 of this document</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ HR department</li> </ul>
<b>More women to apply for awards and IOCB Prague fellowships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Encourage group leaders to nominate women (especially early career) for awards</li> <li>■ Increase promotion of IOCB Prague fellowships among group leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project office</li> <li>■ IOCB Prague Board</li> <li>■ Group leaders</li> </ul>

### 3.2 Medium-term goals (by 31 December 2024)

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Awareness of possible bias in hiring decisions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Arrange an (online) course on unconscious bias in hiring decisions and encourage those in positions to hire staff to attend</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> <li>■ HR award coordinator</li> </ul>
<b>Training/mentoring available for underrepresented groups</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Leadership skills courses for female researchers</li> <li>■ Help underrepresented groups find informal mentoring opportunities</li> <li>■ Investigate possibilities of offering formal mentoring to (not only) female group leaders</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ HR award coordinator</li> <li>■ IOCB Prague Board</li> </ul>
<b>Ensuring that English and gender-neutral language is used in internal communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Upon revision of documents, ensure that they are available in English and that they are written in inclusive/gender-neutral language</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Executive management</li> <li>■ Communications office</li> </ul>
<b>Transparency in internal issues relevant to equal opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Invite the equal opportunities officer to relevant meetings where appropriate</li> <li>■ Support the open exchange of information</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> <li>■ IOCB Prague administration (IOCB Prague Board, executive management)</li> </ul>
<b>Ensuring that anti-sexual harassment and bullying policy exists</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Make this an integral part of the ethical code of IOCB Prague</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ IOCB management</li> <li>■ HR award coordinator</li> </ul>

<b>Raising awareness of the gender dimension in research and science</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Give examples of where these issues might be relevant (e.g. effect of medical interventions on men/women, sex cohorts of laboratory animals) in project proposals/implementation</li> <li>■ Invite an external speaker to give a brief course on this</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Project office</li> </ul>
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### 3.3 Long-term goals (by 31 December 2026)

<b>Challenges</b>	<b>Measures</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>Review of previously achieved goals and formulation of a new Equal Opportunities Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Prepare a plan for the next period</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> <li>■ IOCB Prague management</li> <li>■ IOCB Prague Board</li> </ul>
<b>Group leaders (GL) must be able to provide information on equal opportunities to candidates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer available to attend hiring interviews</li> <li>■ Information sheet prepared for GLs including all equal opportunity information that candidates might require</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Group leaders</li> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> </ul>
<b>Mapping the needs and requirements of IOCB Prague employees</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Revise long-term goals according to survey findings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Equal opportunities officer</li> </ul>