



Gender Equality Plan

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1. Information on the organisation

Name	TICASS S.c.r.l. – Innovative Technologies for Environmental Control and Sustainable Development
Field of activity	Research, experimental development, innovation and technology transfer (NACE/ATECO 72.19); managing body of the Ligurian research and innovation cluster EASS
Legal form	Società consortile a responsabilità limitata
Registered office	Via Domenico Fiasella 3/16, 16121 Genova (IT)
Date of adoption	29.07.2026
Approved by	Board of Directors on 28.07.2026
Publication	https://www.ticass.it/gender-equality/
Period of validity	2026-2028



2. Introduction

TICASS recognises gender equality as a fundamental value and as a precondition for the quality and relevance of research and innovation. As a non-profit organisation that promotes, coordinates and carries out research and technology transfer activities in the fields of energy, the environment and sustainable development, TICASS is committed to ensuring equal opportunities, equal treatment and a respectful and inclusive working environment for all those who work with the consortium company, irrespective of gender.

This Plan sets out objectives, actions, responsibilities and indicators to remove barriers to equality and to integrate the gender dimension into research activities and organisational life, while at the same time valuing all forms of diversity linked, for example, to age, culture, physical ability, sexual orientation, political and/or religious belief and multilingualism. TICASS takes on this commitment both as part of its own mission and in line with the requirements of the Horizon Europe Framework Programme.

The Plan has also been drawn up with reference to the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN 2030 Agenda, in particular Goals 3: *Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages*; 5: *Gender Equality*; 8: *Decent work and economic growth*; 10: *Reduced inequalities*.

The Plan was developed through a participatory approach involving management and staff by means of the dedicated working group (Equality Team), and was formally adopted by the Board of Directors.

The Plan is organised into several chapters. The dedicated working group is described in Chapter 3, while Chapter 4 provides a snapshot of the gender distribution within TICASS as at the date on which this Plan was drawn up. Chapter 5 sets out, on the one hand, the gender equality measures already implemented within TICASS and, on the other, the weaknesses revealed by the analysis of the current situation, together with the identification of the main intervention areas. Chapter 6 then sets out the objectives of the Plan, identified on the basis of the analysis presented in the previous chapters, and the measures adopted within the various intervention areas. Periodic monitoring of the implementation of the Plan is described in Chapter 7, while Chapter 8 sets out the dissemination strategy.

3. Resources and responsibilities (Equality Team)

TICASS commits dedicated resources and expertise to the implementation of the Plan. Coordination is entrusted to an Equality Team, a dedicated working group which also acts as the equality committee provided for in the adoption procedure.

- **Gender equality officer:** Michela Mazzocchi (e-mail: michela.mazzocchi@ticass.it). She coordinates the implementation of the GEP, collects the data and prepares the annual monitoring report.
- **Equality Team / working group:** Michela Mazzocchi as gender equality officer, Alberto Pellissone as Chief Executive Officer, Giulia Cremonini as representative of the research staff.
- **Resources committed:** 40 hours/year, indicatively allocated as follows: 15 hours for data collection, monitoring and the annual report; 10 hours for training coordination and 15 hours for drawing up and managing the harassment policy.

The resources required to implement the planned actions are provided through the direct contribution of the staff assigned to the Equality Team and, in kind, through the expertise and facilities of the organisation.

The Board of Directors undertakes to allocate annually, from the ordinary budget, the financial resources necessary to implement the actions provided for in the Plan.



Should the gender equality officer or a member of the Equality Team leave or become unavailable, the Board of Directors will arrange for a replacement within one month.

4. Current gender distribution

The table below provides a snapshot of the gender distribution as at the date on which this Gender Equality Plan was drawn up (22.07.2026).

Staff and collaborations

Category	Women	Men	Other / n.a.	Total	% women
Employees	5	1	-	6	83%
Contractors and external collaborators (co.co.co., self-employed)	3	4	-	7	43%
Coordination / management roles	2	2	-	4	50%

Governance bodies

Body	Women	Men	Total	% Women
Board of Directors	1	4	5	20%

TICASS has a workforce of 13 people, including employees and external collaborators.

It should also be noted that *coordination/management roles* refer to positions entailing hierarchical responsibility for other staff, scientific or managerial responsibility for a project with budget ownership, or delegated powers conferred by the Board of Directors. These coordination/management roles include people already counted among the employees or the external collaborators.

As regards the Board of Directors, account should be taken of the specific nature of TICASS governance, which also involves members of the Consortium – companies, research bodies and institutions external to the employees and collaborators of TICASS.

5. Gender equality analysis: strengths and areas for improvement

The gender distribution set out in Chapter 4, together with the internal analysis carried out by the dedicated working group (see Chapter 3), made it possible to identify the strengths of TICASS, i.e. the measures already in place, and the main weaknesses to be addressed through this Plan.

Area	Measures already in place	Areas for improvement
Recruitment and career	Staff recruitment is carried out irrespective of gender. Roles of responsibility and coordination of projects, functions and technical-scientific activities are held on an equal basis by men and women.	Gender-neutral recruitment practices are well established but not formalised.
Leadership and decision-making		Under-representation of women in decision-making bodies such as the Board of Directors



Area	Measures already in place	Areas for improvement
Work-life balance	Formalised policies on flexibility and leave Availability of remote working	
Gender dimension in research	Attention to the sex/gender dimension is already present in project proposals, but is not yet tracked systematically	
Gender-based harassment and violence		Absence of a policy and of a dedicated reporting channel

Although this is the first Gender Equality Plan formally adopted by the organisation, and although gender equality issues have not so far been addressed through a structured approach, a number of measures and good practices are already implemented and well established in the activities of TICASS.

The analysis carried out shows that, although recruitment is always conducted irrespective of gender, women are currently in the majority. Roles of responsibility and coordination held by employees or external collaborators are evenly divided between men and women, whereas women are under-represented in leadership positions and decision-making bodies. However, given the consortium nature of TICASS, these positions are also held by the members of the company, namely companies, research bodies and external institutions.

6. Objectives, intervention areas and implementation strategies

On the basis of the previous chapters, objectives and actions to overcome the weaknesses identified have been defined for each intervention area recommended by the Horizon Europe programme.

6.1 Intervention areas

A. Work-life balance and organisational culture

The organisation already offers a good level of balance between private life and work, thanks to the adoption of organisational practices geared towards flexibility and staff well-being.

In particular, remote working (smart working) is governed by an established procedure setting out access arrangements, criteria for use and responsibilities, while ensuring operational continuity and organisational effectiveness. All staff make equal use of it, working on average one day a week remotely.

Considerable flexibility in the organisation of working hours is also provided for, compatibly with service requirements, in order to facilitate the reconciliation of professional and personal commitments. This approach is particularly important for employees with family care responsibilities, especially parents, who are thus able to balance family and work needs more effectively. As regards the use of family leave, it is difficult to make an assessment on the basis of gender because the small size of the workforce and the current composition of family units do not currently allow a statistically significant gender comparison of such use; the data will be collected and assessed in the annual monitoring exercise.

In view of the measures already in place and their effectiveness, the objective of the organisation is therefore to maintain and consolidate existing practices, ensuring over time the continuity of flexibility measures and of support for work-life balance. The use of remote working, flexible hours and parental leave by gender will therefore be monitored annually.



B. Gender balance in leadership and decision-making

As noted above, the analysis of the composition of the decision-making bodies of TICASS has revealed an under-representation of women on the Board of Directors. While respecting the competences and appointment mechanisms laid down in the Articles of Association, this situation represents an area for improvement on which the Company intends to act within the framework of this Plan.

To this end, TICASS undertakes to promote greater gender balance in its governing bodies and decision-making processes, fostering more balanced representation and ensuring transparency in the allocation of positions of responsibility.

In the designations and appointments falling within its remit, criteria geared towards gender balance will be applied, while respecting competence and merit. Similarly, the assignment of scientific and project coordination roles will follow transparent, documented criteria based on the principles of equal opportunities.

Since the composition of the governing bodies depends in part on designations made by the members, TICASS will act directly in those areas over which it exercises decision-making power, such as the assignment of coordination roles, delegated powers and internal appointments. At the same time, it will encourage its members to pay greater attention to gender balance in designation and appointment procedures, periodically sharing monitoring data and issuing recommendations aimed at fostering more balanced representation.

C. Recruitment and career progression

TICASS has already reached an advanced level in the adoption of gender equality practices in recruitment and professional development processes. Selection procedures are based on the principles of transparency, impartiality and equal opportunities, with the aim of ensuring that every application is assessed solely on the basis of skills, qualifications and experience.

Vacancy notices are drafted using neutral and inclusive language, in order to encourage broad and diverse participation.

Selection activities are managed by staff with a balanced gender representation.

Career progression paths are likewise based on objective, transparent and merit-based criteria.

Professional development opportunities are accessible to all staff without gender discrimination and are grounded in the recognition of skills, performance and individual potential, in line with the principles of equal opportunities promoted by the Company.

All of these are long-standing practices which are not, however, always formalised. During this first year of implementation of the Plan, TICASS will undertake to formalise these procedures.

D. Gender dimension in research content and projects

TICASS promotes the integration of the gender dimension into research and innovation activities, in line with the recommendations of the European Commission and with the requirements of the main national, regional and European funding programmes.

Within the research projects in which TICASS participates, attention is already paid to the gender dimension, where relevant to the scientific objectives, the methodologies adopted and the expected impacts, although this is not yet tracked systematically.

During the implementation period of this Plan, TICASS undertakes to further strengthen this approach through the following actions:

- systematically integrating, where relevant, the analysis of the gender dimension into the design and drafting of research proposals, thereby helping to improve the scientific quality and social relevance of projects;



- raising awareness among and training project managers and staff involved in proposal design on the principles of the "gender dimension" required, in particular, by the Horizon Europe programme and by other funding programmes that call for such an approach.

E. Prevention of gender-based harassment and violence

TICASS recognises the importance of ensuring a safe and inclusive working environment that respects the dignity of all people and is free from any form of bullying, sexual harassment, discrimination or harmful behaviour. To this end, within the framework of this Plan, it undertakes to develop and implement a structured system for preventing, managing and countering harassment:

- a policy for the prevention of and response to harassment will be drawn up and approved;
- a contact person or a dedicated and confidential channel for receiving reports will be identified. This channel must guarantee confidentiality, protection of the reporting person and protection against any retaliation, in compliance with the legislation in force on privacy and personal data protection;
- a procedure for handling reports will be defined, governing the arrangements for receiving, taking charge of, assessing and managing reported cases, and identifying responsibilities, response times and measures to protect the people involved. The procedure will be based on the principles of impartiality, timeliness, confidentiality and respect for the rights of all parties concerned;
- the policy and the procedure will be made available to all staff and will form an integral part of internal information activities.

Setting up dedicated procedures for reporting harassment, discrimination and inappropriate behaviour, together with the activation of a confidential channel for collecting and handling reports, is one of the most sensitive measures provided for in this Plan. Defining these instruments will require careful analysis of the applicable legal framework, in order to ensure full compliance in terms of confidentiality, personal data protection, procedural safeguards and the prevention of potential conflicts of interest in the handling of reports.

Lastly, the organisation undertakes to monitor periodically the effectiveness of the measures adopted, verifying their implementation and updating them where necessary in light of legislative and organisational developments and of any issues that may arise.

6.2 Training

Staff training is extremely important for all intervention areas and will consist of a short information session, lasting approximately 1–2 hours, dedicated to gender equality, the prevention of discrimination and harassment, inclusive language and good organisational practices.

The training will be repeated annually and will be included in the induction programme for new recruits. The attendance register and the training material distributed will be kept as evidence of the actual delivery of the training programme.

In addition, the Equality Team, and in particular the officer coordinating the Plan, will undertake a specific training and updating programme in order to acquire and consolidate the technical, methodological and regulatory skills needed to coordinate, implement and monitor the Plan, in particular as regards the prevention of gender-based harassment and violence.

6.3 SMART objectives

The table below summarises, by intervention area, the objectives of the Gender Equality Plan, formulated so as to be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-oriented, i.e. so-called "SMART" objectives.



#	Objective (SMART)	Intervention area	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Deadline
1	Monitor the use of remote working, flexible hours and parental leave by gender	Work-life balance	Annual report	0	1	July 2027
2	Formalise work-life balance measures and support for parenthood	Work-life balance	Policy adopted	0	1	January 2027
3a	Encourage members to promote greater gender balance in designations to the Board of Directors	Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	N° of formal recommendations sent to members, accompanied by monitoring data	0	1	Next available members' meeting
3b	Increase the presence of women in decision-making bodies	Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	% women on the Board of Directors	20%	≥ 30%	Next renewal of the Board of Directors
4	Collect sex-disaggregated data on staff and governing bodies on an annual basis	Recruitment and career	Annual report	0	2	July 2027 and July 2028
5	Introduce a formal procedure for selection and for the assignment of coordination and management roles, in order to consolidate existing gender equity practices	Recruitment and career	Selection and role-assignment procedure formalised and approved	0	1	December 2026
6	Integrate the sex/gender dimension into project proposals, where relevant	Gender dimension in research content and projects	% of new proposals for which the integration of the sex/gender dimension is documented	0	100	July 2027
7	Prevent gender-based harassment and violence through a dedicated policy and reporting channel	Gender-based harassment and violence	Ad hoc training session for the Equality Team	0	1	December 2026
			Harassment prevention policy and procedure defined and approved	0	1	January 2027
			Dedicated channel operational	0	1	January 2027



#	Objective (SMART)	Intervention area	Indicator	Baseline	Target	Deadline
8	Annual review of the Gender Equality Plan	All	Annual report	0	2	July 2027 and July 2028
9	Basic staff training on gender equality and unconscious bias	All	% of employees and collaborators trained	0	100	December 2026 and December 2027
10	Training for members of the Board of Directors	All	Dedicated session during a Board meeting	0	1	December 2026 and December 2027

7. Monitoring and evaluation

7.1 Periodic monitoring

This Plan will be subject to periodic monitoring and to an annual review, in order to verify its effectiveness, the implementation of the measures envisaged and any need for updates.

The annual report will be drawn up by the gender equality officer with the support of the whole Equality Team.

The annual review will assess in particular the following aspects:

- the analysis of the gender distribution of staff, with reference to the various roles and levels¹;
- the gender composition of decision-making bodies and positions of responsibility, in order to monitor the balance of representation;
- applications received and people recruited, by gender;
- training hours delivered and participation, by gender;
- use of remote working, flexible hours and parental leave, by gender;
- number of reports received through the dedicated channel;
- the state of implementation of the actions and measures provided for in the Plan, verifying that they have actually been implemented within the timeframes and in the manner established;
- the maintenance of conditions already in line with the objectives of the Plan, verifying that the good practices and balances achieved continue to be guaranteed over time.

The results of the monitoring will form the basis for updating the Plan and for defining any new corrective or improvement actions, as part of a continuous process of promoting gender equality and equal opportunities within the organisation.

7.2 Interpretation and dispute resolution

The Equality Team is responsible for interpreting the Plan and ensuring its correct application. Any doubts or disputes concerning the implementation of the measures are submitted to the gender equality officer, who proposes a solution; in the event of disagreement, the matter is referred to the Board of Directors for

¹ data are processed and published in aggregate form and, where the small number of individuals concerned does not allow their identification to be ruled out, the datum is omitted or merged



a final decision. Reports of gender-based harassment or violence will follow the confidential procedure provided for under area E, which is separate from this one.

7.3 Review procedure

The Plan is reviewed annually. On the basis of the monitoring results, the gender equality officer proposes updates to objectives, targets and measures to the Board of Directors. An extraordinary review is provided for in particular circumstances, such as significant organisational changes or new regulatory requirements. Every revision is approved by the Board of Directors and republished on the website.

8. Dissemination strategies

The Plan is communicated internally and externally in order to ensure transparency and buy-in, in line with the criteria of the Horizon Europe programme concerning the publication and dissemination of the Gender Equality Plan.

The dissemination actions set out in the table below will be undertaken in particular:

Dissemination action	Target audience	Timing
Publication of the Plan on the TICASS website	General public / stakeholders	Upon adoption
Communication of the adoption of the Plan to all TICASS staff by e-mail and through a presentation session	Staff and collaborators	Within 1 month of adoption
Communication of the adoption of the Plan to the corporate bodies	Members, Board of Directors	Next available meeting
Awareness-raising among staff and decision-making bodies on the measures adopted under the Plan.	Staff, members, Board of Directors	Next available meeting
Annual report made available by e-mail and through a presentation session (to staff) and by publication on the TICASS website (to the public)	Staff / general public	Every year



9. Correspondence table with the Horizon Europe programme criteria

Horizon Europe requirement	Required content	Where it is met in the Plan
Publication	Formal document, published on the organisation's website, signed and/or adopted by top management	Ch. 1 (organisation details, approval and adoption dates, place of publication); signature of the legal representative at the end of the document; Ch. 8 (dissemination strategy)
Dedicated resources	Commitment of resources and gender equality expertise for the implementation of the Plan	Ch. 3 (Equality Team, gender equality officer, 40 hours/year, Board commitment on financial resources); Ch. 6.2 (dedicated training programme for the Equality Team)
Data collection and monitoring	Sex/gender-disaggregated data on staff; reporting at least every two years based on indicators	Ch. 4 (gender distribution as at the drafting date); Ch. 6.3 (indicators, baseline, targets and deadlines); Ch. 7.1 (annual monitoring and review)
Training	Awareness-raising and training on gender equality, including unconscious bias, for staff and decision-makers	Ch. 6.2 (training of staff and of the Equality Team); Ch. 6.3, objectives 9 (staff and collaborators) and 10 (members of the Board of Directors)
Recommended content areas	Work-life balance; leadership and decision-making; recruitment and career; gender dimension in research; gender-based violence and harassment	Ch. 6.1, letters A, B, C, D and E, each with at least one corresponding SMART objective in Ch. 6.3

Genoa, 29.07.2026

The legal representative

Alberto Pellissone

Chief Executive Officer