

Gender Equality Plan (GEP) - Association for Digital Democracy (ADD)

Adopted: 7 February 2025 | Valid for: 2025 – 2028 | Next review: Q4 2027

Context & scale

ADD is an entirely volunteer-run, non-profit association with no large budget at the time of adoption. This lean GEP therefore relies on in-kind volunteer effort and cost-free resources, yet fulfils the process-related requirements set out by the European Commission for Horizon Europe funding. When ADD secures external funding or hires staff the plan will be scaled-up; Section 9 describes this growth path.

1 Commitment

ADD is committed to gender equality, diversity and inclusion in every aspect of its work. We recognise that gender intersects with other identities (ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, socioeconomic background and nationality) and therefore apply an intersectional lens. Our Board unanimously endorses this plan and will publish it on the website.

2 Scope

The GEP covers all board members, working-group coordinators, volunteers, members and contracted researchers who act on behalf of ADD, regardless of location.

3 Minimum process-related requirements & lean measures

EC requirement	ADD lean measure (volunteer-based)	Timeline
Public document	GEP signed by the Board, published at https://digitaldemocracy.world/equality-plan	Immediately after adoption
Dedicated resources	A Gender Equality Focal Point (GEFP) is appointed from the elected Board (min. 2 volunteer hours/month).	
• A Gender Equality Task Force (GETF) of at least 3 volunteers supports implementation.	GEFP appointed within 30 days	

Data collection & monitoring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple spreadsheet stored securely (GDPR-compliant). • Findings summarised in the public <i>Annual Update on Gender Equality</i>. 	<p>Once per calendar year the GEFP compiles a gender-disaggregated head-count of board, active volunteers, applicants and remuneration (if any).</p> <p>First report: Q1 2026</p>	
Training & capacity building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A 30-minute peer-discussion is held at the following board meeting to reflect and record action points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All board members and task-force volunteers complete one free, online gender-equality or anti-harassment course each year (e.g. UN Women I-Learn, Council of Europe HELP). <p>Starting Q4 2025</p>	
Gender dimension in R&I content*	<p>Each research proposal / publication includes a short section (< 1 page) on how sex/gender factors are considered, or why not applicable.</p>	<p>Immediately</p>

The fifth row reflects an additional Horizon Europe scientific requirement beyond the four process obligations.

4 Governance & decision-making

- **Score voting:** Maintained for elections so that minorities with strong preferences gain representation.
- **Balanced leadership target:** From the next electoral cycle onwards, ADD strives for **no more than 60 % of any gender** on the Board, provided enough candidates stand. Progress disclosed annually.
- **Escalation:** Alleged breaches (including harassment) are handled under the Code of Conduct, with the option of an **external mediator** should internal resolution fail.

5 Objectives & indicators (scaled to size)

Objective	Baseline (2024)	2028 target	Indicator & collection method
Improve gender balance on Board	33 % women	≥ 40 %	Annual head-count (Q1)
Ensure transparent, bias-aware recruitment	Ad-hoc	Standard template adopted	Use inclusive language checklist in future calls
Foster a harassment-free culture	0 formal procedures	100 % of reported cases resolved within 60 days	Incident log overseen by GEFP
Build baseline intersectional competence	No structured learning	≥ 80 % Board & GETF complete online course yearly	Training completion self-report

6 Policies & practices

1. Inclusive recruitment & volunteering

- Job/volunteer calls use gender-neutral wording and require no photos.
- Candidate shortlists aim for gender parity where feasible.

2. Culture & work-life balance

- Meetings are scheduled using time-zone polls; minutes are shared openly.
- Volunteers may request asynchronous contribution options.

3. Leadership rotation

- Meeting chairs rotate to avoid dominance and ensure diverse voices.

4. Gender dimension in projects

- Project templates include a checkbox and guidance note on sex/gender relevance.

5. Harassment prevention

- Updated Code of Conduct explicitly references gender-based violence and cyber-harassment.
- GEFP acts as first confidential contact point.

6. Intersectionality

- All guidance notes invite reflection on combined forms of discrimination (e.g. gender + disability).
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7 Data protection & ethics

Personal data are stored only in aggregated form, on encrypted drives (EU servers) and deleted after annual reporting. Data collection respects GDPR and, where required, members' consent.

8 Resources & budget (in-kind)

Because ADD currently has **no core funding**, tasks rely on volunteer labour and cost-free resources.

Resource	Allocation
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GEFP volunteer time	2 h/month
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GETF collective time	~6 h/quarter
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Training	Free MOOC/library resources
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Mediation (if needed)	Pro-bono first tier; budget request to Board if external cost incurred
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Contingency: If external funding is awarded or staff hired, the Board commits to revisiting this section and allocating paid hours and a monetary budget proportionate to organisational growth.

9 Growth path & scalability

Trigger event	Action
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Receipt of ≥ €50 000 unrestricted funding OR hiring first employee	• Convert GEFP to 0.1 FTE paid position.
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• Set aside minimum €2 000/year for training & data infrastructure.	
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> 3 employees	• Establish formal HR policies on parental leave, flexible work, equal pay analysis.
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• Commission external GEP audit every 3 years.	
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10 Timeline & milestones (2025-2028)

- **Q2 2025** – Publish GEP; appoint GEFP & GETF.
- **Q4 2025** – First online course completed; inclusive language checklist approved.
- **Q1 2026** – First gender head-count & Annual Update published.
- **Q3 2026** – Peer review of progress; adjust indicators if needed.
- **Q4 2027** – Prepare revised GEP (2029-2032).
- **Q1 2028** – Publish second Annual Update; decide on scaling actions (if triggered).

11 Monitoring & review

The GEFP reports every year to the Board. Results are shared with members and published on the website. The plan is reviewed biennially, or sooner if funding triggers scaling.

12 Transparency

All documentation (this GEP, annual updates, Code of Conduct) is accessible under a dedicated *Gender Equality* page on the ADD website. A plain-language summary is provided for accessibility.

13 Approval

Approved by the Board of the Association for Digital Democracy on 7 Febraury 2025.

Signature, 7 Febraury 2025.



Samuel Färdow Kazen, Chairman, Association for Digital Democracy