



**INSPIRE**

# **Support Package 1**

**Setting up Communities of  
Practice for Gender Equality  
plans and policies**



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## List of Acronyms

CoP	Community of Practice
GEP	Gender Equality Policy/Plan/Program
SPkg	Support Package
GE	Gender Equality
HE	Higher Education

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## Introduction: Aim of Support Package 1

This Support Package (SP) seeks to motivate and guide the creation and development of Communities of Practice (CoPs) that encourage and strengthen the design, implementation and evaluation of inclusive gender equality plans and policies (GEP) in universities and research centers.

Its contents and resources are supported by a wide range bibliographic review on this theme and by the analysis of the experience of the Latin American CoP, created and coordinated by the Women, Science and Technology UNESCO Chair of FLACSO Argentina, within the framework of the ACT On Gender project<sup>1</sup>. Twenty representatives from fourteen universities and research centers<sup>2</sup> in LAC participated in that CoP. It was developed over three years through periodic meetings. Its purpose was the identification and analysis of the diverse expressions of gender inequality in these institutions and based on that information, the design, implementation and evaluation of plans and policies aimed at reversing such expressions, taking into account the specifics of each institutional and social context.

### Support Package 1 includes:

- a) A guide for creating and developing Communities of Practice in universities and research centers with the aim of promoting Gender Equality in all institutional dimensions. This guide contains:

Chart 1. Contents of the SPkg 1 Guide

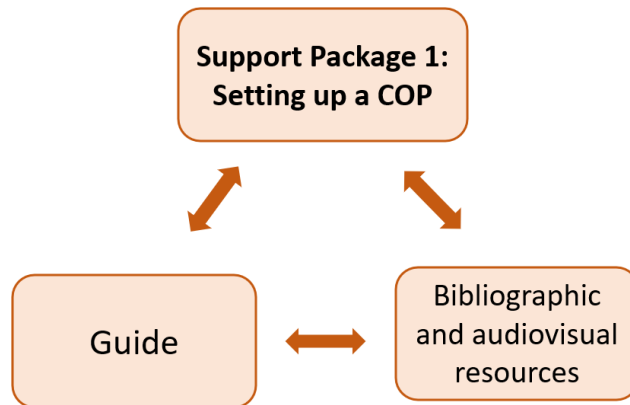
1. Definitions of Communities of Practice-CoPs: CoPs as tools to encourage and/or strengthen gender equality policies in universities and research centers
2. Guidelines for the creation and development of CoPs for GE in universities and research centers
3. Outcomes of the SPkg1: Setting up Communities of Practice for Gender Equality plans and policies
4. Resources to support the development of the CoPs

<sup>1</sup> ACT is a Horizon 2020 project that seeks to advance gender equality at universities, research centers and research funding organizations by facilitating collaboration between experienced institutions in the implementation of gender equality plans with less experienced ones. This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme (under grant agreement No 788204). It was developed between 2018 and 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The following universities and research centers participated in the LAC CoP: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México (UNAM); Universidad de Chile (UChile); Pontificia Universidad Católica de Perú (PUCP); Universidad de los Andes -Colombia; Instituto Tecnológico de Costa Rica; Universidad de la República Uruguay – UDELAR; Universidad de Buenos Aires- Argentina; (UBA) Universidad Nacional de Rosario- Argentina (UNR); Universidad Nacional de Río Negro – Argentina (UNRN); Universidad Nacional de San Martín – Argentina (UNSAM); Universidad Nacional de Quilmes- Argentina (UNQui); Universidad Federal de Rio Grande do Sul- Brasil; CONICET- Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones científicas y técnicas- Argentina; FLACSO Argentina.

- a) A selection of **bibliographic and audiovisual resources** that address and/or elaborate specific topics for the creation and development/management of CoPs.

Figure 1. Components of the Support Package 1



# 1. Definitions of Communities of Practice

## 1.1. What is a community of practice (CoP)?

According to Etienne and Beverly Wenger (2015: 2), it is a "a group of people who share an interest, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and deepen their knowledge and expertise on that topic through ongoing interaction that strengthens their relationships".

Its members agree to interact regularly in a safe environment that encourages dialogue, the identification and analysis of problems, the exchange of ideas, and the drafting of proposals and resources to solve them. The three key dimensions of a CoP are, according to Wenger (2015): mutual commitment, a joint purpose and a shared background of knowledge and resources. (See Resource 1.1)

This methodological approach is characterized by going beyond established organizational structures by promoting links between organizations and encouraging the creation of networks and/or other ways of articulation. These processes are broadened when the CoPs are developed in virtual environments, as they enable connections between a wide amount of geographies (cities, countries, regions), cultures and diverse historical and institutional networks.

The CoP promotes the development of group sense of belonging. At the same time it requires coordination, planning and management based on a consensual and collaborative work agenda. It also should be flexible in order to reorient its agenda according to the needs of its members and the context dynamics.

*“Communities of practice are dynamic social structures that require “cultivation” so that they can emerge and grow”<sup>3</sup>*

Several authors (Jubert, 1999; Wenger and Snyder, 2000; Vásquez Bronfman, 2002; Lesser and Storck, 2001; Seely Brown, 1991) have contributed to broaden and deepen the concept of a CoP. Among other aspects that characterize CoPs, the following stand out:

- Group work
- Common goals and interests
- Sense of belonging
- An environment that fosters exchange and mutual learning for the generation of action-oriented knowledge
- Sustainability over time based on a systematic and agreed-upon work plan
- Create and implement practices or tasks to achieve agreed proposals. For example, prepare, implement, evaluate and/or discuss the results of a questionnaire; share and analyze gender inequalities expressions in academic institutions; discuss documents or theoretical and/or methodological approaches; prepare a presentation for a conference or other events related to its main aims, etc.

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<sup>3</sup> Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, & William Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

According to Palmen and Müller (2023), some of the aspects that make CoPs unique are:

- They are based on a learning process developed through interaction and participation, in which knowledge is built on action and action is built on knowledge.
- Their internal logic is not a top-down transfer (from the more experienced to the less experienced), but rather they generate an environment of exchange and shared learning.
- They adopt non-hierarchical relationships: their members recognize each other as peers, valuing horizontality in the exchanges and decision-making (see Figure 2).
- Implied horizontal management and conflicts as part of all relationships. Hence the central role of CoP coordination is to achieve the commitment and conviction that the institution's experiences and achievements can become more stable and broader.
- Each CoP should establish its common purpose and motivate a sense of belonging of all its members.
- Understanding and dealing with the diversity of its members (which may pose a challenge for the CoP's existence and sustainability) is fundamental.
  - CoPs may be integrated by people belonging to different areas/sectors of the same organization (intra-organizational CoPs).
  - Or they may be integrated by people representing different organizations (inter-organizational CoPs).<sup>4</sup>

(See Resource 1.2 y 1.8)

The academic institutions that make up a CoP have different histories, cultures, resources and political visions, and this diversity may pose a greater complexity for the definition of a common agenda. Yet at the same time, it offers a wealth of experiences and knowledge that adds value to the construction of ideas and innovative practices.

“Findings also show that when CoPs were transnational, multiinstitutional, and interdisciplinary, their heterogeneity did raise some challenges in relation to the divergence of members' contexts and geopolitical idiosyncrasies and that this should be considered when designing CoPs which transcend national and institutional boundaries.” (Thomson et al. 2022: 3) (See resource 1.4)

### **Sense of community**

Both CoP modalities (intra/inter-organizational) require building bonds of trust and collaboration, but in the case of the second type, this challenge is greater as they imply merging different organizational trajectories and cultures. Therefore, it is essential to value mutual learning and exchange to create a sense of community in order to support each other.

In this sense, belonging to a space made up by peers in higher education who are trying to promote ideas, actions and proposals for change in their institutions can contribute to legitimize them. (See Resource 3.1)

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<sup>4</sup> This Support Package 1 is aimed at inter-organizational CoPs, i.e., including representatives from different universities and research centers, located in different social, political, cultural and economic contexts.

Figure 2. CoPs and other types of groups

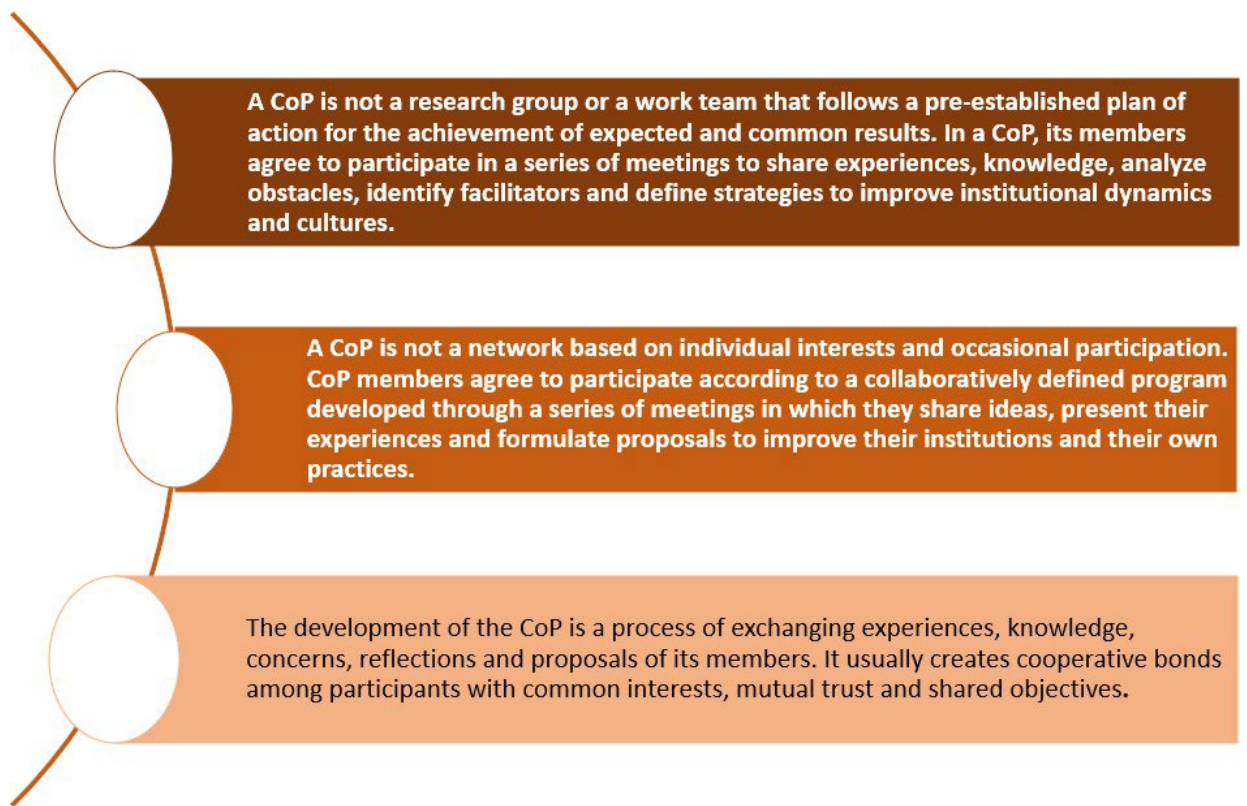


Figure 3. Elements of a CoP



Source: edited from Creando comunidades de práctica y conocimiento en la Universidad una experiencia de trabajo entre las universidades de lengua catalana", Zoia Bozu y Francesc Imbernon Muñoz, <http://rusc.uoc.edu> (See Resource 1.11)

In short, **inter-organizational CoPs are a valuable strategy for:**

- Identifying, creating and sharing good practices and conditions for their replicability.
- Collaborative learning with emphasis on practice (learning by doing): planning interventions, designing resources, and evaluating strategies, etc.
- Documenting the generated knowledge.
- Promoting horizontal collaboration by strengthening links and relationships between work teams from different institutions.
- Providing a shared context for people to communicate and share information, stories, and personal experiences in a way that builds understanding and insight.
- Enabling dialogue between people who come together to explore new possibilities, solve challenging problems, and create new, mutually beneficial opportunities.
- Stimulating learning by serving as a vehicle for authentic communication, mentoring, coaching, and self-reflection.
- Capturing and sharing existing knowledge to help people improve their practice by providing a forum to identify solutions to common problems and a process to collect and evaluate best practices.
- Introducing collaborative processes to groups and organizations as well as between organizations to encourage the free flow of ideas and exchange of information.
- Helping people organize purposeful actions that deliver tangible results.
- Generating new knowledge to help people transform their practice to accommodate changes in needs and technologies

See Resource 1.6

Source: Cambridge, D. & Suter, V. (2005) Community of Practice Design Guide A Step-by-Step <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2005/1/community-of-practice-design-guide-a-step-by-step-guide-for-designing-cultivating-communities-of-practice-in-highereducation>

## 1.2 CoPs as collaborative environments to promote and/or strengthen gender equality policies in universities and research centers

**Why is the strategy of setting a CoP positive for the achievement of gender equality in higher education?**

The starting point of the CoPs that aim to promote and/or foster gender equality policies in HE and research institutions is that "universities are no strangers to the reproduction of a patriarchal order that, in recent decades, is being questioned, especially by students, teachers and the feminist movement as a whole" (Bonder 2022: 5). Therefore, its goal is to contribute to promote and/or strengthen "the institutionalization of the gender equality approach in the framework of university policies and governance structures and the mainstreaming of the gender equality approach (in its various meanings) in all university practices" (Bonder 2022: 3).

The activities developed by each institution with this purpose find in a CoP an environment for the exchange of experiences and the creation of strategies that legitimize transformational processes of the bureaucratic structures and institutional cultures that reproduce multiple expressions of gender inequality in these institutions. In this sense, these CoPs are double as disruptive because:

- a) they stimulate the visibilization and questioning of the power structures and dynamics that reproduce gender inequalities through explicit and subtle forms of discrimination against women and people with non-binary identities and other social groups, proposing and promoting actions to reverse them;
- b) they function as non-hierarchical environments that foster collaborative learning and the creation of strategies and interventions that promote individual and collective change, in the short and long term.
- c) their goals include reviewing, from a gender equality perspective, the composition of decision-making bodies, faculty and administration, organizational policies and processes, and interpersonal relationships that discriminate against and are particularly detrimental to women and other identity groups.

In other words, to promote sustainable change, both levels must interact. According to Bonder (2022: 3), "It is clear that the current context demands a structural transformation of higher education, therefore, it is a moment of "opportunity" to take advantage of learning about values, competencies, interpersonal relationships and institutional cultures and knowledge of social, cultural and economic issues that have generated research and gender equality policies in these areas". (See Resource 1.9)

This requires building **alliances with feminist and diversity movements** in order to give legitimacy and strengthen transformative proposals.

CoPs working for gender equality necessarily trigger processes that are both political and technical. According to Palmén and Müller (2023), the members of the CoPs are "agents of change" who propose alternative formal and informal organizational strategies and procedures, and in this sense are "catalysts" of "disruptive practices for real change".

In summary, CoPs are a strategic commitment to promote and/or strengthen the GEP, with focus on promoting collaborative work and learning between various institutions, supporting the production and dissemination of knowledge about their progress and results, obstacles and challenges to build fairer and more egalitarian higher education institutions. *"CoP Members go beyond current practice to explore the cutting edge of the domain, to innovate"*<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Cambridge, D. & Suter, V. (2005) Community of Practice Design Guide A Step-by-Step <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2005/1/community-of-practice-design-guide-a-step-by-step-guide-for-designing-cultivating-communities-of-practice-in-highereducation>

## 2. Guide/guideline for setting up a CoPs for GE in universities and research centers

**How to design and develop CoPs for GE in universities and research centers?** This process involves different stages: planning, implementation and evaluation over a defined period of time. During this process:

- Institutions that make up a CoP must assume the **commitment** to carry out a joint work plan, through the exchange of knowledge, experiences and purposes.
- It must be **coordinated** by a team responsible for its development and the achievement of the expected results. This team may be in charge of two or three people, with academic training in the field of gender studies and/or experience in institutionalization processes and/or the design and planning of gender equality policies.
- It is recommended to define a **time scope** for the development of the CoP, which could be between 1 and 2 years, establishing intermediate results to achieve the objectives of the CoP. This temporal dimension will certainly have to be reviewed and agreed upon in the first meetings, but this definition is important for planning and to provide an idea of the timeframe from the outset.

### **Important!**

This guide provides orientations for the creation of a CoP focused on the planning and implementation of GE plans and policies in universities and research centers. **It does not imply the adoption of a single model to be followed.**

Rather, the development of CoPs should be based on a flexible working methodology that is sensitive to the needs, experiences and demands of the participants and of the institutional and social contexts.

It is convenient that each group develops its own work plan, establishing short and midterm objectives, defining a program of activities and expected results organized according to an implementation schedule.

Chart 2. Stages for the establishment and development of a CoP for GE (on-site or online)

Establishment and development of a CoP for GE stages	
Stage 1: Identification and call for potential institutions to integrate the CoP.	Stage 4: Elaboration/design of the CoP work plan: objectives, actions and schedule.
Stage 2: The first step: getting to know each other's experiences, needs and expectations to start building a sense of community.	Stage 5: Implementation of the work plan and regular assessments.
Stage 3: Description and analysis of the state of progress and challenges of the GEPs in the institutions that are part of the CoP.	Stage 6: Collaborative self-assessment of the CoP's work process.

Source: Prepared by the authors

## 2.1 Stage 1. Identification and call for potential institutions to integrate the CoP.

- ✓ **Mapping of existing academic institutions** in a defined geographical area that are developing plans and/or policies for gender equality, or that are interested in initiating this process.
- ✓ **Identify institutions that show interest in integrating a CoP** to develop and/or strengthen their GE policies.

For institutions that are developing GE plans/programs/policies, it is important to find out:

- Date of initiation of their GEPs.
  - Objectives and action plan
  - Status within the institutional structure
  - Allocated budget
  - Number and professional profiles of the responsible team
  - Activities developed since its creation and materials produced (publications, workshops, videos, etc.)
  - Evaluations carried out and its results
- ✓ **Define and apply eligibility criteria** for the selection process of the institutions that will be part of the CoP (**See Chart 3**)
  - ✓ Elaborate the **list of selected institutions and the areas/persons to be contacted**.
  - ✓ **Engage in communication** with institutions that are potential members of the CoP in order to present its proposal and action plans. The offer should be clear and stimulating, explaining the objective of this project and providing information on the convening institutions and the means of contact for queries. It is important to establish a time limit for receiving responses.

Chart 3. Eligibility criteria of CoP member institutions

<b>ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA OF COP MEMBER INSTITUTIONS</b>	
<b>What does it include?</b>	<b>Brief description</b>
<p>This list of criteria is not elaborated in hierarchical order.</p> <p>The institution responsible for establishing a CoP may apply all of the criteria or choose those that it considers most appropriate or relevant.</p>	<p>These criteria are for orientation purposes only and do not exclude the possibility that each institution responsible for setting up the CoP define other criteria (in addition to and/or in place of those described).</p>
<p><b>Eligibility criteria N° 1. Expresses interest in the creation and/or strengthening of gender equality policies.</b></p>	
<p><b>Eligibility criteria N° 2. Expresses interest and commitment in participation in a CoP for exchanging ideas, experiences, projects, reflecting and cooperating with other institutions, on the planning, implementation and evaluation of gender equality plans/policies.</b></p>	
<p><b>Eligibility criteria N° 3. Willingness to formalize this commitment through signing a Memorandum of Understanding.</b></p> <p><i>Note: this criteria is intended to assess/measure the degree/level of institutional support or endorsement for their participation in the CoP.</i></p>	
<p><b>Eligibility criteria N° 4. Geographical representation.</b></p> <p><i>Note: it is important to count with a broad representation of institutions of each CoP, integrating various institutions from the same country and/or from different countries from the same region..</i></p>	
<p><b>Eligibility criteria N° 5. Degree/level of development of GEPs in the university and/or research center.</b></p> <p><i>Note: decide whether the CoP will be integrated by institutions with a similar or heterogeneous level of development of their GE policies. Decisions should be justified in order to contribute to the processes' transparency.</i></p>	
<p><b>Eligibility criteria N° 6. Participation in networks</b></p> <p><i>Note: Participation of institutions in gender equality policies networks and/or in higher education and/or other issues related to aims of the INSPIRE Project</i></p>	

## 2.2 Stage 2: The first step: knowing each other's experiences, needs and expectations to start building a sense of community.

- The CoP develops its work agenda through **periodic meetings**, to exchange information, knowledge, experiences and positions on gender equality in higher education institutions. It is advisable to establish an agenda of topics to be addressed and discussed at each meeting.

- The work plan starts with the **presentation of the objectives of the INSPIRE Project**, the explanation of the expectations, priorities and experiences of the representatives of each institution.
- It is essential that during the **firsts meetings the group gets to know the basic characteristics, objectives and dynamics of a Community of Practice** aimed at strengthening Gender Equality in universities and research centers. Emphasize the sense of **horizontality, trust, cooperation, reciprocity, innovation and collaborative creation**.
- Establishing **agreements and commitments** is necessary: regular attendance to meetings, participation in defining a work agenda and common interest issues. Confirmation of the commitment to participate in the CoP for a determined period of time (between one and two years) is recommended as also it be formalized through the signing of a MoU ([See Resource 2.2](#)).
- It is recommended to maintain **permanent and systematic communication** among all members. This is the coordinating team's responsibility. ([See Resource 2.4](#))

#### **CoP first activities:**

**Share the history** of gender equality programs/plans in each of the CoP member institutions:

- *Who initiated their development?*
- *Which are their objectives and their place within the institutional structure?*
- *Which activities does your institution implement to promote and/or integrate GE (awareness plans, training programs, protocols, curriculum content reviews, creation of specific areas or units within the institutional structure, etc.)?*
- *Which are the main achievements of these interventions?*
- *Which were the obstacles/resistances encountered and how are they addressed?* ([See resource 3.2](#))
- *How many members integrate the team and which are their professional profiles?*
- *How is it valued by the different actors of the institution; Are there sectors that reject it or ignore those plans or policies?*
- *Do they have relationships with other institutions that develop similar projects, and if so, how do you evaluate this experience?*

*For systematize institutional analysis [See Resources 2.3 and 2.7](#).*

### **2.3 Stage 3: Analysis of the state of progress of the GEPs in the institutions that integrate the CoP.**

The information gathered in the first steps of the CoP will facilitate the identification of common or specific problems, resistances, advances and facilitating factors that affect the creation and development of GEPs in HE institutions and research centers. It will also enable the definition of issues that require more complex theoretical and methodological approaches to be understood and solved.

The CoP coordinators can facilitate its development by:

- Elaborating an **agenda for each meeting**, with specific guidelines/task.
- Elaborating and sharing **reports of main topics discussed at each meeting**
- Designing and completing **fact sheets** (see Annex 2) with relevant information on the progress of GEPs in each institution. Also for examine statistical data use GEAM tool (see Resources 2.2 and 3.3)
- Organizing a **bibliography repository** consisting of research reports, evaluations, papers, etc. about different dimensions of the institutionalization of GEPs in higher education institutions and research centers .
- Creating and managing a repository (common joint space in the cloud) to compile documents produced by all members of the CoP.

#### 2.4 Stage 4: Elaboration/design of the CoP development/working plan: objectives, actions and schedule.

At this stage, shared decisions are made, regarding:

- **Significant issues** to analyze and discuss throughout different moments/phases of CoP development. Among others:

Chart 4. Examples of issues

1. Conditions for the creation and first actions of gender equality policies, plans and programs.	2. Enabling factors and obstacles for gender equality policies, plans and programs development due to the institutional structure and/or culture.
3. Mainstreaming gender and intersectionality approach in the curriculum and teaching practices.	4. Institutional commitment to GEPs financing (access, sustainability, critical situations, etc.).
5. Visions and proposals for assuring the continuity and improvement of GEPs in each institution and/or country.	6. Methodologies for evaluation and improvement of GEPs.
7. Attitudes, assessments, resistance of different sectors within each institution and its environment/context.	8. Socioeconomic and political context's influence on the emergence and development or withdrawal of GEPs in universities and research centers.

- Each institution decides how to define the **budget** to implement the CoP work plan.
- The CoP might elaborate an **activity plan** to be developed by all CoP members, or by some of them. For example: a collaborative publication, research projects on issues of common interest, audiovisual production material for dissemination of the experience and its results, participation in networks at national, regional and/or international level, organization of forum or conference to present articles related to their experiences and learning processes within the CoP.

See [Annex 3](#) for the Working Plan model.

Elaborate an **Operational Plan** (see [Annex 4](#)) to organize these activities and results, taking into account:

- time and resources needed (human, economic, logistical, etc.)
- indicators to follow up on what was planned and to be able to measure/record the achieved results.

## 2.5 Stage 5: Work plan implementation.

Throughout its implementation, documenting the process is useful: progress and achievements of each institution, obstacles, conflicts and unforeseen situations, etc.

Dissemination of the CoP objectives and its working methodology is also useful to increase its visibility and INSPIRE similar activities.

During the implementation process, it is recommended to hold periodic meetings to exchange information on the progress achieved.

## 2.6 Stage 6: Collaborative self-assessment of the CoP's work process

All CoPs have a life cycle. As Sanz Martos (2010) explains, when a community of practice ceases its planned activities, in many cases it becomes another project for exchange or work.

Experience indicates that an adequate time frame for the development of a CoP is from one to two years, with biweekly meetings. Once the CoP has concluded, it is recommended to carry out a collaborative self-evaluation to identify and analyze its contributions for each member and their institutions, particularly, regarding the development of GEPs. Also they can inspire other institutions to organize and develop similar processes.

Suggested guiding questions for the self-evaluation:

- *What did we intend to happen in the CoP and its member institutions?*
- *What actually happened?*
- *Which barriers, supportive factors and remedial measures were addressed and which were solved?*
- *What worked and might be recommended to other institutions with common interests?*
- *What should be changed or improved?*
- *What were the most significant lessons learned and recommendations for similar initiatives?*

### 3. Outcomes of the SPkg

Chart 5. Outcomes of the SPkg

SPkg expected outcomes	
Outcomes	Description
<b>Outcome 1:</b> SPkg 1 distributed in the selected CoPs	Motivate a significant number of institutions to apply to start a CoP. Give them access to SPkg 1, gather their opinions about its relevance and influence the creation and development of each CoP.
<b>Outcome 2:</b> Kick-off meeting and report	First meeting of the CoP members and systematization in a report.
<b>Outcome 2.1:</b> List of interested or involved institutions in the development of a CoP	Registration of universities and research centers that wish to form a CoP to start and/or strengthen GEPs in universities and research centers.
<b>Outcome 2.2:</b> Memorandum of understanding signed and presented	The signed and sent (to the CoP coordination) Memorandums of Understanding ratify the institutional commitment of the universities and/or research centers to form part of the CoP.
<b>Outcome 2.3:</b> CoP work agenda prepared and presented	Each CoP will prepare a work agenda agreed upon by its members, as an instrument that organizes the tasks to be developed throughout the meetings. At the same time it ratifies the commitment of all members to participate and collaborate during the established period.
<b>Outcome 2.4:</b> Consensus on CoP work plan.	Each CoP will design a work plan that includes the description of the activities to be carried out (exchange, production, analysis and/or sharing knowledge and experiences); also practical and strategic recommendations for implementation in the universities and research centers that make up each CoP. These work plans are key resources to motivate, create and strengthen a CoP dedicated to formulating or strengthening gender equality policies in academic institutions.

<b>Outcome 3:</b> Feedback on SPkg1: evaluate usefulness of the SPkg1 to promote processes of creation, development and in achieving positive results of the CoP.	The CoP coordination will evaluate the contents and guidelines of SPkg1, in order to make adjustments that improve the final version of the document.
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## 4. Resources to support the development of the CoPs

Chart 6. Resources to support the development of the CoPs

<b>1. KNOWLEDGE RESOURCES</b>	
<b>Included</b>	<b>Description</b>
Bibliographic references, with their corresponding access links	Publications (documents, articles, reports) that deal with the concept of community of practice, and other key literature for the design of gender equality policies in academic institutions.
English	
<p><b>1.1</b> Wenger, Etienne y Beverly: Community of Practice: a brief introduction.  <a href="https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/">https://www.wenger-trayner.com/introduction-to-communities-of-practice/</a></p> <p><b>1.2</b> Palmén Rachel, Müller Jorg (2023): “Reflecting on a Community of Practice approach to institutional change for a greater gender equality in R&amp;I and HE – Policy and practice” Chapter 1, en “A Community of Practice Approach to Improving Gender Equality in Research 2, <a href="https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003225546">https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003225546</a></p> <p><b>1.3</b> Minna Salminen-Karlsson (2016):The FESTA handbook of organizational change  Implementing gender equality in higher education and research institutions, Universidad de Uppsala, Suecia  <a href="https://www.festa-europa.eu/sites/festa-europa.eu/files/Handbook%20of%20organizational%20change.pdf">https://www.festa-europa.eu/sites/festa-europa.eu/files/Handbook%20of%20organizational%20change.pdf</a></p> <p><b>1.4</b> Thomson, Aleksandra ; Palmén, Rachel; Reidl, Sybille; Barnard, Sarah; Beranek, Sarah; Dainty, Andrew and Hassan, Tarek (2022): “Fostering collaborative approaches to gender equality interventions in higher education and research: the case of transnational and multi-institutional communities of practice”, JOURNAL OF GENDER STUDIES, VOL. 31, NO. 1, 36–54, Routledge, <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2021.1935804">https://doi.org/10.1080/09589236.2021.1935804</a>,  <a href="https://openaccess.uoc.edu/handle/10609/139398">https://openaccess.uoc.edu/handle/10609/139398</a></p>	

1.5 European Commission. 2021. The Communities of Practice Playbook: A Playbook to Collectively Run and Develop Communities of Practice. <https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2760/443810>

1.6 Cambridge, D. & Suter, V. (2005) Community of Practice Design Guide A Step-by-Step <https://library.educause.edu/resources/2005/1/community-of-practice-design-guide-astepbystep-guide-for-designing-cultivating-communities-of-practice-in-highereducation>

1.7 What Next? Managing the Transition to Independent CoPs: ACT Transitions to Independent CoPs: [https://www.genderportal.eu/sites/default/files/resource\\_pool/transition\\_to\\_independent\\_cops\\_0.pdf](https://www.genderportal.eu/sites/default/files/resource_pool/transition_to_independent_cops_0.pdf)

1.8 Hodkinson, Phil y Hodkinson, Heather (2004). A constructive critique of communities of practice: moving beyond Lave and Wenger. Sydney, New South Wales, OVAL Research. <http://hdl.voced.edu.au/10707/18014>

Spanish

1.9 Bonder, Gloria (2022): “La institucionalización del enfoque de igualdad de género en universidades de América Latina: Experiencias, reflexiones y contribuciones para el futuro de la educación superior”, Compilación: Gloria Bonder, Coordinación autoral: María del Carmen Tamargo, Edición: Anabella Benedetti, Cátedra Regional Mujer Ciencia y Tecnología, FLACSO Argentina - <https://catunescomujer.org>

1.10 Sandra Sanz Martos: “Las comunidades de práctica o el aprendizaje compartido”, UOC, P07/B0290/02655, <https://www.uv.mx/dgdaie/files/2013/04/Sanz-Comunidad-Desde-Practica.pdf>

1.11 Zoia Bozu y Francesc Imbernon Muñoz (2009): Creando comunidades de práctica y conocimiento en la Universidad: una experiencia de trabajo entre las universidades de lengua catalana. Revista de Universidad y Sociedad del conocimiento, Universidad Abierta de Cataluña, <http://rusc.uoc.edu>

## 2. Methodological Resources/tools for the planning and management of CoPs

Included	Description
Tools for systematizing and analyzing information on the institutions that are part of the CoP and for the process of creation, development and evaluation of the CoPs.	These methodological resources are useful in the organization and planning and evaluation phases of the CoP.

2.1 GEinCEE institutional Analysis

<https://geincee.act-on-gender.eu/>

2.2 Gender Equality Audit and Monitoring (GEAM) tool

<https://geam.act-on-gender.eu/>

2.3 ACT Co.creation toolkit

[https://zenodo.org/record/5342489/files/ACT\\_D2.7\\_Co-creation\\_Toolkit\\_Version2.0\\_31AUG2021.pdf?download=1%3Fdownload%3D1](https://zenodo.org/record/5342489/files/ACT_D2.7_Co-creation_Toolkit_Version2.0_31AUG2021.pdf?download=1%3Fdownload%3D1)

### 3. AUDIOVISUAL RESOURCES

Included	Description
Videos	They are useful to inspire and support activities on key themes that will be addressed by CoPs.
3.1 Introducing CoPs as an instrument for institutional change- ACT Project, <a href="https://vimeo.com/504769756">https://vimeo.com/504769756</a>	
3.2 ACT on Overcoming Resistance <a href="https://vimeo.com/493415371">https://vimeo.com/493415371</a>	
3.3 GEAM Tool - An introduction <a href="https://vimeo.com/438557308">https://vimeo.com/438557308</a>	
3.4 The ACT Co-creation Toolkit <a href="https://vimeo.com/436466471">https://vimeo.com/436466471</a>	

## 5. Estimated costs for the SPkg 1

Resource type	What it includes?	Description in relation to SPkg1 aim	Estimated costs
CoP facilitators	Hours of work for the preparation, coordination and periodic evaluations of the CoP.	-Identification and selection of participating institutions. -Elaboration of the working plan and selection of resources to be used during the development of the project. -Preparation, coordination and registration of each meeting reunión. -Dissemination of resources provided by the participants.	2200 euros

<p>Kick-off meeting. It can be online or on-site.</p>	<p>Hours of work for its preparation. Elaboration of explicative materials on the characteristics, objectives, and expected results of the CoP in the framework of the INSPIRE project. Eventual travel costs.</p>	<p>Dissemination of these materials to academic institutions, research networks and scientific journals.</p>	<p>1300 euros</p>
<p>Participation in conferences/congresses/symposia on issues related to INSPIRE objectives.</p>	<p>Hours of work for the preparation of the presentations. Eventual travel costs.</p>	<p>Preparation and presentation of partial results of the CoP work</p>	<p>1500</p>

# Annex 1. Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

## A. General MoU Consideration

Each INSPIRE CoP member will be required to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

For each CoP, the KSH lead will develop a specific MoU based on its KSH work program and a template MoU provided by the WP4 lead. The MoU will be signed by an authorized representative of the CoP member organization.

The following is a tentative template of issues that are desirable to be made explicit in the MoU in order to establish objectives, agreed commitments, responsibilities to be assumed by each CoP member; timelines and other technical-administrative aspects relevant to the functioning of the CoP.

## B. Contents

### 1. Purpose of this MOU

The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding, hereinafter the "MoU", is:

- 1.1 Affirm the establishment of "Communities of Practice", hereinafter "INSPIRE CoPs" for collaboration in promoting and/or strengthening gender equality policies in universities and research centers throughout Europe and Latin America.
- 1.2 Define the commitments of the Consortium and the INSPIRE CoP.
- 1.3 Confirm that INSPIRE CoP members who have signed this MoU have expressed their interest in receiving support from the INSPIRE Project to carry out gender equality actions and/or improve gender mainstreaming in research and teaching,
- 1.4 Define the role of INSPIRE CoP facilitators/coordinators.
- 1.5 Define the role of the INSPIRE CoP member institutions.

### 2. INSPIRE Project Objectives

- 2.1. INSPIRE aims to promote areas of research and collaborative exchange to develop and strengthen the implementation of inclusive gender equality plans with an intersectional approach in universities and research centers, while identifying good practices and systematizing lessons learned through the Communities of Practice.

### 3. INSPIRE Consortium Commitments

By signing this Memorandum of Understanding, the INSPIRE Consortium commits to support the activities of the "Communities of Practice" and in particular to provide technical and financial support for the activities included in the work plan of each CoP, especially through the recruitment of experts, as well as through access to online resources in the Knowledge Sharing Hub.

It will also provide, through the HUB member who assumes the coordination role, ongoing and self-managed virtual support, as well as facilitating exchange opportunities for experienced

institutions to engage and work with less experienced organizations to promote institutional change on gender equality.

#### **4. Membership**

4.1 Members of the "Communities of Practice - CoP INSPIRE" refer to the institutions signing this MoU, hereinafter "Member" or "Members".

4.2 Individual member of the "INSPIRE CoP-Communities of Practice" refers to a person who is part of a higher education or research and innovation organization, or a network of research organizations. The member may be an employee, or an individual linked to these institutions in various ways, such as being a board member, advisor, head of an area, department, directorate or other type of organizational unit within the university or research/innovation center, among others. CoP members include both professionals working to promote gender equality and researchers working on gender-sensitive projects in their specific field.

#### **5. Commitments of CoP members**

5.1 Membership in the "INSPIRE CoP Communities of Practice" is free of charge.

5.2 By signing this MoU, Members undertake to support and contribute to the activities of the CoP and, in particular, undertake to:

5.2.1 Have a detailed agenda, with established and achievable gender equality objectives, for the life of the CoP within the framework of the INSPIRE Project.

5.2.2 Share lessons learned from institutional change projects, and from institutions with greater knowledge and experience in transformation.

5.2.3 To help develop and use tools, to share their lessons learned and to stimulate gender equality activities in less advanced institutions.

5.2.4 Exchange experiences with other institutions that wish to carry out structural changes and advance in gender knowledge, and offer mentoring to them.

5.2.5 Help provide information and training on gender in academic careers, and establish gender equality plans, thus encouraging less advanced organizations to participate in institutional change.

5.2.6 Help create and facilitate forums in the form of meetings, conferences, workshops where more and less experienced stakeholders can meet and share their experiences.

5.2.7 Participation in research activities aimed at developing gender equality measures and tools for monitoring and implementation of GEPs.

5.2.8 Participation in research activities aimed at evaluating CoP development and learning outcomes.

## **6. CoP Coordination**

The coordination of INSPIRE CoPs may be assumed by:

6.1 A member of one of the HUBS of the INSPIRE Project, who will focus on supporting the CoP in defining the objectives and work plan to promote institutional change processes that strengthen gender equality policies in the institutions that are part of the CoP.

6.2 The coordination will designate Facilitators who will accompany the members of the CoP in the development of the activities by providing materials, guides and other instruments to contribute to the development of the work plan and achieve the proposed objectives.

6.3 Each CoP may suggest other forms of coordination not foreseen in this model MoU.

## **7. Admission and Termination of Participation**

7.1 Existing communities of practice within HE and I&I organizations have been included by the Consortium as members of the Communities of Practice, supported on the basis of their organizational attributes, and their interest and commitment to promoting institutional change to advance gender equality.

7.2 Participation in the Communities of Practice may be terminated if the Steering Committee decides that a Member no longer meets the criteria for participation, and/or fails to fulfill its obligations to the Communities of Practice, and/or acts in a manner contrary to the aims, objectives or values of the Communities of Practice, and/or the Member withdraws from participation.

## **8. Confidentiality**

8.1 The Project Consortium, the CoP coordination and the Members will treat any information strictly confidential. If deemed necessary, they may sign a confidentiality agreement defining what type of information will be considered confidential.

## **9. Dispute resolution**

9.1 Any dispute related to the development of the CoP and the execution of this MoU may be brought for resolution to the INSPIRE Project Consortium for resolution.

## **10. Responsibility**

10.1 Except as provided in Article 8, the Project Consortium and the CoP Member(s) shall have no liability to each other in the execution of this Memorandum of Understanding.

## **11. Duration of the MoU and its Extension**

11.1 This MoU is maintained until the end of the INSPIRE project and/or until the period of time that each CoP sets for its operation.

11.2 This MoU may be extended at any time by mutual agreement between the INSPIRE Project Consortium and the CoP Members.

## **12. Withdrawal**

12.1 Any Member may cease to participate in the CoP and the INSPIRE Project by giving written notice to the CoP Coordination and/or the Project Consortium. The notification period is one calendar month.

## **13. Statement of Intent**

13.1 The parties accept and agree that this MoU is a statement of intent and is not legally binding on either party.

13.2 It is therefore understood that, by signing this MoU, the Members and the Consortium acknowledge that the success of the project depends on each Member adhering to its provisions.

## **14. The signatory parties**

14.1 The Parties signing this MoU are the following: the legal representatives of the INSPIRE Project consortium; the legal representative of the INSPIRE member coordinating the CoP; and the legal representatives of each CoP member institution.

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## Annex 2. Fact Sheet

Model to systematize information on the state of progress in the institutionalization of gender equality policies in the higher education institutions that make up each CoP.

### COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE - INSPIRE PROJECT GENDER INSTITUTIONALITY IN UNIVERSITIES AND RESEARCH CENTERS

<b>COUNTRY &amp; CITY</b>
<b>NAME OF UNIVERSITY/ RESEARCH CENTER</b>
<b>TYPE OF INSTITUTION: public/private</b>
<b>INSTITUTION SIZE: Number of teaching/non-decent staff/researchers/students</b>
<b>GENDER INSTITUTIONALITY</b> (agency/unit/area/coordination/secretariat/directorate, department,etc.). For example: Coordination of Gender Equality Policies).
<b>YEAR OF CREATION OF THE GENDER INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK</b>
<b>FUNCTIONAL DEPENDENCY IN THE ORGANIZATION (e.g. Rector's Office, Academic Secretariat, etc.)</b>
<b>AUTHORITY IN CHARGE/RESPONSIBLE FOR THE GENDER AREA/SECRETARIAT/COMMISSION/ETC. GENDER (Indicate name and rank/position and contact email)</b>

<b>HUMAN RESOURCES OF THE AREA/SECRETARIAT/COMMISSION/ETC. (number and profiles)</b>
<b>BUDGET (for the design and implementation of actions for gender equality)</b>
<b>TIMELINE OF THE GENDER INSTITUTIONALITY (background, date of creation, outstanding activities, changes in its status or area of dependency)</b>
<b>MISSION/FUNCTION/OBJECTIVES OF THE GENDER INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK</b>
<b>REGULATIONS (indicate if there are dispositions, resolutions, etc. that endorse/legitimize the creation of gender institutionality) Note: Please indicate links to access documents or send them attached.</b>
<b>STATE OF PROGRESS OF THE INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK AND OF THE DESIGN OF THE GE POLICY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emerging</li> <li>2. Medium</li> <li>3. Advanced</li> </ul> <p>Comments:</p>
<b>STATE OF PROGRESS OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GE POLICY</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Emerging</li> <li>2. Medium</li> <li>3. Advanced</li> </ul> <p>Comments:</p>
<b>PERSON RESPONSIBLE / TO CONTACT (indicate name / position and contact e-mail)</b>

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## Annex 3. CoP Working Plan

MATRIX FOR THE DESIGN OF THE COP WORKING PLAN - CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN OBJECTIVES, ACTIVITIES AND RESULTS

<b>Objectives (general and specific)</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Expected outcomes</b>	<b>Results indicators</b>
<b>Objective 1</b>	<b>Activity 1.1.</b>	<b>O1</b>	<b>Indicator A 1</b>
	<b>Activity 1.2.</b>		
<b>Objective 2</b>	<b>Activity 2.1.</b>	<b>O2</b>	<b>Indicator A 2</b>
	<b>Activity 2.2.</b>		
	<b>Activity 2.3.</b>		
<b>Objective 3</b>	<b>Activity 3.1.</b>	<b>O3</b>	<b>Indicator A 3</b>
	<b>Activity 3.2.</b>		

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## Annex 4. CoP Operational Plan preparation template

Operational Plan								
Objective								
Activity	Period		Responsa- bles	Place	Resources			Indicator
	Since	Until			Human	Economic	Others	

- Activities per objective/goal: the activities necessary to achieve each objective are agreed upon. Sub-activities can be defined (visits, meetings, etc.).
- Timing: indicating the estimated period of time in which each activity is expected to be carried out.
- Assignment of tasks/responsibilities: who is/are responsible for each activity; in a collaborative work plan this is key so that everyone and the group as a whole is clear about what is expected of each member and in what time frame. The assignment of roles and responsibilities is linked to the construction of a sense of "co-responsibility" for the achievement of the objectives proposed by the CoP as a collaborative environment.
- Decide in which areas the activities will be implemented and therefore the results to be achieved will be evaluated: this is very important given that the CoP may propose different types of actions in its work plan, as developed above; therefore, the definition of the areas of implementation will be directly and logically related to the type of objectives, activities and results proposed. However, we can think that each university or research center that integrates the CoP can be areas of implementation of actions and or recommendations; also the CoP itself to the extent that it proposes objectives and activities of knowledge production and other networks and/or institutions if it is thought of activities of incidence and dissemination of knowledge.
- Estimate the budget (human, economic, etc.). Prepare a simple budget that identifies the expenditure items involved in the implementation of the action plan: human resources, inputs, materials, etc. It is also recommended to foresee the budget implementation schedule, which should be consistent with the implementation schedule of the planned activities.

- Monitoring and results indicators: define indicators for monitoring the implementation of planned activities according to the implementation schedule and identify identifiers to evaluate not only what has been done (output and coverage indicators) but also the effects and/or results that may or may not have occurred as a result of the activities carried out by the CoP. This implies an interesting challenge that will also contribute to the production of learning and knowledge. Undoubtedly, these outcome indicators are related to the objectives proposed by the CoP in its action plan; therefore, it is important to identify and define the expected results of change from the outset in order to be able to design some metrics and/or appreciative inquiry of their degree of achievement.

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