



To the University Council

Date

3 September 2020

Subject

Safeguarding diversity at EUR

Our reference

CvB/RE/BvdH/ra00284840

Your reference

ur00038382

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Enclosure

Department

Executive Board

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Dear University Council,

Thank you for your letter of 23 June with an appeal on safeguarding diversity at EUR (ur00038382).

It is our understanding that you would like to raise your concerns on safeguarding and improving diversity, and give your suggestions for measures that will lead to fair treatment and opportunity. Below we will respond to your suggestions.

1) Visible role models, formal sponsorship of individuals, removing bias from promotion and evaluation procedures. Your letter starts with a list introducing various ideas. The D&I Office has been working, via their communications officer, on a number of undertakings with this goal in mind, for example creating more inclusive communication content and manuals on how to show more diverse imagery. They have also been working on a proposal (in preparation) to show more female scientist, to balance the presence of male professors in paintings throughout the university. In the Board room also there has been a change in imagery, moving to more balance in gendered imagery.

On the idea of formal sponsorship of individuals, we are curious how you would envisage this activity. Concerning the point of removing bias, see point 6 Clear guidelines.

2) Reinforcing current complaints/grievances systems: This a topic that has been expanding in importance over the past year/months. We have installed an Ombudsperson, a network of (an increasing number of) confidential counselors. HR has been working on setting up reporting point for 'Aggression and Violence' (legal requirement), reporting point for 'domestic violence and child abuse' (legal requirement), recording of (almost) accidents (legal requirement) and the safety coordinator has been developing an 'approach to worrisome

conduct'. The Executive Board sees this as a positive development, but recognizes the need for a solid monitoring system and an integral overview of all kind of complaints and grievances being reported (type such as alarming behaviours, racism, discrimination, sexual intimidation etc, magnitude, and location). This would prevent handling recurring issues as 'incidents' and would enable us to uncover the elements in our institution that might keep on producing grievances, and handle grievances outside the location if deemed beneficial. The Executive Board will consider what is the best way forward in the coming months.

3) Ensuring that Student Organisations and Boards do not discriminate and that they have to consider a diversity checklist for activities and members: In the 'Erkennings- en faciliteiten regeling studenten organisatie' already mentions the 'Brede Gedragscode Studentenorganisaties' but it would more compelling if a specific sentence was added, for instance: 'The organization contributes to an inclusive and safe student community. Discrimination related to, but not limited to, ethnicity, philosophy of life or social beliefs, gender, gender identity, origin, socio-economic class and mental or physical differences is prohibited'. This was suggested to be included earlier by the D&I Office and the Executive Board would like to see this included. The D&I Office has also been working on the Inclusive Toolkit for Student organisations and conveying these point to the organisations, by having frequent contact with them (D&I Office presented this toolkit and other related actions to the PFO committee 14th of January 2020). The D&I Office will recruit a project member for student engagement, that will take on these tasks (this was previously done by an LDE trainee). A new task will be to form a student panel, with which the D&I Office wants to secure the student voice in a continuous, constructive matter.

4) Establish diversity offices and workgroups in all schools to promote the programs at different levels: Since a number of years, all faculties have a diversity officer. These faculty diversity officers (FDO) establish their (yearly) plans by discussing topics with their colleagues of their faculty, as such, they adjust their plans to the 'local' situation and needs. Some faculties have platforms/groups installed responsible for the diversity plans, others have one highly placed FDO. Faculty Diversity Officers often discuss their plans and activities during mutual consultations and with their faculty councils.

5) Being vigilant and improving every year the available support for people with functional disabilities working and studying at EUR. Erasmus University Rotterdam finds it important that all its students can make optimal use of their talents. Students with a functional impairment can arrange provisions themselves (via

Osiris Zaak) or in consultation with the study advisor. If they cannot work it out together, the SMF team (in front and behind the scenes) helps with applying for and developing additional facilities. The team currently consists of 2 student counselors. A communication advisor takes office on September 1st. From 2018-2020, the program "Studying with a disability" was executed, in which many improvement initiatives have already been achieved in the field of information provision, accessibility and determining boundaries. There is an ambition for a follow-up program, but it is still unknown when this will start. Three ways in which the SMF team is currently contributing are: working with SMF student ambassadors to coach junior SMF students, improve our information provision and deepen our policies and procedures (1), advising the organization on the 1.5 m campus from an SMF perspective (2) and advising the Eurekaweek board on how to supervise students with a functional impairment (3). There is continuous contact with the study advisers involved within the faculties (Teams chat) and the Rector. The following months will be spent on finishing a university broad policy plan on the topic. Concerning staff, HR has appointed a policy advisor for the 'Banenafpraak' and together with the advisor on health and safety, they have been working on getting insights on needs and related activities. EUR also invests in the sustainability of the jobs of people with disabilities by providing training for managers and day-to-day supervisors. During this two-day training, participants receive information, theory, practical examples and tools to help new employees with guidance. Staff with functional impairment will also benefit from the different activities in the project on Social Safety at Work, such as: the 'Helpmatrix' that HR will draft together with other stakeholders that indicates per risk/situation whom one can consult for help; the dialogue session on social safety at work that will be held when possible (or online); the (further) professionalization of the network of actors to handle reports or complaints of social unsafety (e.g. confidential counselor, Ombudsman). Social Safety will continue to be a topic of interest into 2021 and probably even 2022.

6) Clear guidelines for promoting a most diverse pool of managers for our university and its schools. The HR/D&I policy officer has been working on a number of initiatives that will contribute to this aim. One of which is the improved Inclusive Selection and Recruitment toolkit, to be dispersed among the HR business partners and managers when ready. This toolkit gives guidelines, background information and practical tips on inclusive recruitment, how to write an attractive vacancy text, standardizing the selection process and how to evaluate that process. In line with this toolkit HR is also developing an e-module on inclusive recruitment and selection.

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It is planned that the toolkit will also become part of the new professorial policy (in development). In that new professorial the processes are designed in such a way that it will facilitate equal opportunities in the promotion and evaluation procedures.

In the dossier of 'Erkennen en waarderen' policy makers are also investigating to include training on how to conduct evaluations in this new, 'modernised' way. For now at least in the current academic leadership programme one part is reserved for HR D&I, where this topic is tackled and insight is provided into how to be inclusive and how to organize the recruitment and selection process in such as way as to remove bias.

Another possibility would be to give the Chief Diversity Officer an advisory role in nomination procedures for higher positions (for example for directors of professional services, deans, members of Executive Board).

To conclude, as you know, changing a culture in an organization will take a considerable amount of time and effort. We feel confident in the D&I Office, HR, support services, deans and faculties they take this topic serious, and we will continue to push the diversity and inclusiveness agenda.

The Executive Board of Erasmus University Rotterdam,



Prof. dr. R.C.M.E Engels
Rector Magnificus