



Gender Equality Plan

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC

September 2026

Executive Endorsement

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) reflects the institutional policy and operational culture of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC. Formally approved by executive leadership, it establishes our shared commitment to maintaining a fair, respectful, and non-discriminatory working environment across all organisational operations, governance structures, and collaborative frameworks.

Built upon the core process pillars and strategic priority areas established by the European Research Area and thoughtfully aligned with the guidance of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2026–2030, this document guides our daily administrative, technical, and governance practices. It reinforces equal opportunity, professional dignity, and fair and balanced representation as permanent, living values of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC.

Operational implementation, monitoring, and progress reporting across these goals are managed as part of the standard EDIC annual activities plan cycle.

For and on behalf of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC-

Firmado por ERNESTO FAUBEL
CUBELLS - DNI 73553027Q el día
19/10/2026 con un certificado
emitido por ACCV RSA1
PROFESIONALES

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Digitaal ondertekend
door M0430789E JAN
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Datum: 2026.10.16
16:23:50 +02'00'

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Document Control

Attribute	Details
Document Type	Official Institutional Policy
Effective Date	October 7, 2026
Target Audience	All LDT CitiVERSE EDIC Staff & Members
Access Level	Public

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
EDIC	European Digital Infrastructure Consortium
EU	European Union
GEP	Gender Equality Plan
HR	Human Resources
LDT	Local Digital Twin

1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC maintains an inclusive, fair, and respectful workplace. The consortium bases its institutional standards on equal opportunity, non-discrimination, and professional dignity.

This Gender Equality Plan (GEP) sets out the operational commitments of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC. Anchored in the equal opportunity principles of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union and EU gender equality frameworks and structured around established European process pillars and strategic priority areas, this document establishes the framework for the organisation. Further aligned with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2026–2030, GEP ensures fair treatment, balanced representation, and unbiased processes across all consortium activities.

1.2. Scope

This Gender Equality Plan applies to LDT CitiVERSE EDIC's organisational operations and governance structures. It governs professional conduct, working conditions, and operational standards across the organisation.

The provisions cover personnel engaged by the EDIC and members of its governance and advisory bodies. Annual monitoring and reporting framework metrics are integrated into standard administrative processes.

1.3. Institutional Commitment and Governance

Gender equality, equal opportunity, and mutual respect are foundational to LDT CitiVERSE EDIC. The consortium treats equality as an executive responsibility embedded across all operational levels. Governance bodies ensure these standards are maintained within their respective operational areas. EDIC pursues distinct qualitative and quantitative objectives calibrated to its operational framework -

- **Qualitative Objectives** - Maintain an inclusive physical and virtual workspace, support work-life balance through flexible working practices, ensure transparent selection for leadership roles, and promote awareness of bias and algorithmic fairness in technical workflows.
- **Quantitative Objectives** - Target balanced female representation across core personnel and governance bodies - establishing an initial baseline target of 30% female personnel, progressing toward a 40% benchmark as organisational capacity expands, with an ultimate ambition of parity (50%). Maintain a zero-tolerance framework with clear procedures for handling misconduct. These figures are monitoring benchmarks and organisational aspirations, not mandatory quotas, and do not override merit-based selection or other legitimate organisational requirements.

Monitoring and reporting against these objectives are integrated directly into EDIC's standard annual activity planning and governance review cycles.

2. Process Pillars

2.1. Public Document

To fulfil European Commission requirements for formal establishment, this Gender Equality Plan is published as an official public document of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC. Upon executive endorsement, the signed plan is made permanently accessible on the official EDIC website.

Internally, the document is distributed electronically to all incoming personnel, executive management, and other persons with relevant organisational responsibilities during onboarding and engagement initiation. Progress reports and annual monitoring updates are integrated into EDIC's published Annual Activity Plan to maintain ongoing transparency.

2.2. Dedicated Resources

In accordance with the European Commission Proportionality Principle, LDT CitiVERSE EDIC integrates gender plan oversight directly into its operational structure. Statutory responsibility rests with the Director and Chair, while operational implementation, baseline data collation, and web publishing fall under executive administration (managed centrally and transitioned to HR leadership as capacity grows). EDIC allocates up to 15 hours annually of administrative capacity to conduct monitoring reviews, update public records, and integrate baseline reporting into the EDIC Annual Activity Plan.

2.3. Data Collection

Systematic data collection provides an objective foundation for establishing baseline indicators, assessing institutional balance, and tracking organisational progress over time. EDIC collects and evaluates gender-disaggregated data annually across three primary structural pillars-

Table 1 EDIC Gender Monitoring Metrics

Metric	Focus Area and Description
Workforce Composition	Gender ratio of personnel engaged by EDIC, including breakdowns by contract type (full-time and part-time) and recruitment balance.
Governance & Decision-Making	Gender ratio across executive leadership, the Assembly of Members, Directorate, and other formal EDIC governance bodies.
Conduct & Grievance Procedures	Annual logging of formal harassment or equal opportunity grievances filed, including resolution status and compliance with zero-tolerance frameworks.

Data collation occurs annually, with aggregated summary metrics integrated into EDIC's published Annual Activity Plan. To ensure continuous institutional evaluation, monitoring processes are reviewed annually and expanded as necessary, as organisational scale warrants.

All data collection adheres to Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR). To safeguard individual privacy, all reported data are anonymised and presented exclusively in aggregated formats.

2.4. Training

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC integrates targeted awareness-raising into its standard operational workflows to reinforce equal opportunity principles, maintain professional conduct standards, and address unconscious bias risks. During onboarding, all incoming team members and leadership contributors receive introductory materials detailing EDIC's professional conduct expectations and the principles and procedures for preventing and addressing harassment set out in this GEP. To support ongoing awareness, EDIC shares direct access to open-source European reference frameworks and guidance materials on inclusive innovation and objective decision-making.

Capacity-building measures are maintained through brief annual updates embedded within regular leadership and executive planning cycles. These sessions allow the Directorate and relevant organisational leads to review core gender metrics, ensure selection standards remain objective, and reinforce equal opportunity practices across EDIC operations. These guidance measures, training and capacity-building requirements are reviewed periodically and adapted as organisational scale evolves.

3. Strategic Priority Areas

3.1. Work-Life Balance

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC maintains an agile, modern, and inclusive working environment structured to foster work-life harmony and mitigate burnout across all operational levels. Recognising the operational demands and regular travel required for European urban innovation projects, EDIC representation and EDIC project activities, EDIC incorporates flexible and hybrid working arrangements where feasible, ensuring team members can balance professional deliverables with personal and caregiving commitments. Institutional practices further reinforce respect for personal time by prioritising scheduling within standard business hours and fully adhering to applicable national labour legislation and European Union directives regarding statutory parental, maternity, paternity, and caregiving leave.

3.2. Gender Balance in Leadership and Decision-Making

Achieving balanced gender representation across decision-making bodies is essential for sound governance, institutional equity, and well-rounded strategic direction. LDT CitiVERSE EDIC maintains an aspirational benchmark of 30% to 50% female representation across executive leadership and governance roles as the organisation expands. Selection processes remain strictly anchored in professional merit, individual competence, and technical qualification, ensuring equal opportunity while upholding the highest standards of operational excellence. Additionally, EDIC actively encourages female technical leads, experts, and research contributors to represent the organisation at international conferences, European Commission assemblies, and public dissemination events.

3.3. Gender Equality in Recruitment, Contracting & Career Progression

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC structures its recruitment and contracting processes to ensure complete transparency, objectivity, and freedom from bias at every stage. All vacancy notices and calls for experts are formulated using clear, gender-neutral terminology that focuses strictly on required technical skills, professional qualifications, and defined operational deliverables. To support impartial decision-making, evaluation panels and selection committees incorporate balanced representation where feasible, helping to ensure objective and fair candidate assessments across all appointments.

Career progression, contractual extensions, and performance evaluations are managed through transparent, standardised criteria aligned with principles of equal opportunity. Professional advancement and compensation remain strictly anchored in objective merit, individual performance indicators, and equal pay principles for work of equal value, ensuring that all team members have equal pathways for professional growth within the organisation.

3.4. Integration of the Gender Dimension into Research and Teaching Content

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC considers gender dimensions within its technical frameworks, toolboxes, and municipal guidance assets to support inclusive digital twin deployments across European cities. The objective is to ensure that reference architectures, testing environments, and technical resources made available to participating municipalities account for diverse population needs and prevent unintentional bias in urban digital solutions.

Where applicable, EDIC personnel and technical contributors are encouraged to consider gender-differentiated usage patterns and accessibility factors when defining technical specifications, sandbox

guidelines, and procurement advice. This basic integration ensures that EDIC's technical outputs and deployment frameworks remain aligned with European standards for inclusive digital infrastructure without imposing rigid administrative requirements on participating partners.

3.5. Measures Against Gender-Based Violence & Sexual Harassment

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC enforces a zero-tolerance stance toward all forms of discrimination, gender-based violence, bullying, and sexual harassment across all physical, digital, and remote working environments. The organisation is committed to maintaining a safe, respectful, and dignified operational climate for all individuals engaging in EDIC activities, ensuring that clear standards of professional conduct are maintained across all consortium activities.

- Protective measures and clear reporting avenues apply universally, ensuring that anyone working within or alongside the organisation can raise concerns without fear of reprisal, victimisation, or professional disadvantage.
- Reports of inappropriate conduct or harassment are handled through confidential channels with appropriate management oversight, guaranteeing discreet, impartial, and prompt review in accordance with applicable labour standards.
- The organisation focuses on preventive awareness by communicating behavioural expectations clearly to all contributors and ensuring that available guidance and reporting procedures are accessible across internal communication channels.

4. Alignment with the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2026–2030

LDT CiTiVERSE EDIC aligns its internal gender equality framework with the overarching priorities of the EU Gender Equality Strategy 2026–2030, adapting these strategic goals to fit its mandate as an institutional digital infrastructure facilitator. Keeping the administrative structure light, EDIC translates key European targets into pragmatic, daily operational practices across four core areas-

Table 2 Operational Alignment with EU Gender Equality Strategy Priorities

EU Strategy Priority Area	EDIC Practical Implementation
Combating Cyberviolence & Digital Abuse	Extends standard conduct rules and confidential reporting avenues directly to virtual channels, online meetings, and shared code or data repositories.
Closing Digital & Tech Leadership Gaps	Ensures equal exposure, merit-based access, and fair representation for female experts across EDIC leadership, governance bodies and expert groups.
Mitigating Technology & Data Design Bias	Encourages relevant EDIC personnel and technical experts to consider data completeness and population representativeness in the design and assessment of digital infrastructure and services.
Proportional Governance & Mainstreaming	Integrates gender-conscious practices directly into existing operational workflows without adding additional compliance layers.

This targeted alignment ensures that EDIC fulfils European policy expectations, protects its digital working environments, and supports inclusive technology deployment while keeping administrative overhead strictly minimal.

5. Implementation, Monitoring, and Governance

The execution, monitoring, and oversight of the LDT CitiVERSE EDIC Gender Equality Plan are integrated directly into established organisational workflows. Institutional oversight rests with executive management to ensure alignment with European Union requirements, while routine administrative coordination - including public document hosting and baseline data tracking - is maintained through standard administrative channels. Relevant organisational leads ensure that deployment guidance and technical activities reflect inclusive design principles.

Progress monitoring is embedded into standard annual reporting frameworks. Baseline metrics and qualitative updates are incorporated directly into EDIC's regular reporting cycles and presented to the General Assembly of Members for review and institutional endorsement. This ensures ongoing accountability, transparency, and operational alignment across all consortium activities.

Baseline data collection monitors qualitative and quantitative indicators across direct personnel, executive management, and governance roles, alongside formal workplace conducts tracking. Annual data reviews support continuous process improvement and equal structural opportunity across all operational levels.

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC

Gender Equality Plan — Annexes

Annex I – Gender Equality Action Plan · Annex II – Protocol against sexual harassment and harassment on grounds of sex

Draft V1 · *For internal legal review*

Drafting note: these annexes accompany and form part of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC. Placeholders in [square brackets] are to be completed on adoption. Legal references are to Spanish and EU law applicable to the EDIC, which has its statutory seat in València (Spain).

Annex I – Gender Equality Action Plan

This Action Plan operationalises the Gender Equality Plan of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC. For each measure it sets an indicator, a baseline, a target, a deadline and a responsible role, so that progress can be measured objectively in the annual review. Targets for balanced representation are monitoring benchmarks and organisational aspirations, not rigid quotas, and do not override merit-based selection. Baselines marked “to be set” are established at the first annual data collection. Aggregated results are integrated into the EDIC Annual Activity Plan and presented to the Assembly of Members for review.

A. Process pillars					
Public GEP	GEP signed and published on the EDIC website	Not yet published	Published and permanently accessible	Within 30 days of signature	Director
Dedicated resources	Gender Equality reference person designated	None appointed	1 reference person (+ 1 alternate)	Q4 2026	Chair
Data collection	Annual gender-disaggregated dataset compiled	No baseline yet	Dataset compiled every year	Q1 each year (from 2027)	Reference person
Training and awareness	% of new staff and governance members receiving the onboarding pack	n/a (1 staff member)	100%	At each onboarding	Reference person
B. Strategic priority areas					
Work-life balance	Flexible / hybrid working policy documented	Informal practice only	Written policy in force	Q1 2027	Director
Gender balance in governance	% of the under-represented sex in governance and leadership	To be set at first count	≥30% → ≥40% → parity (≈50%)	30% by 2027; 40% by 2029; parity aspiration by 2030	Assembly of Members / Chair
Balanced selection panels	% of selection panels with balanced composition	n/a	≥40% where feasible	From next recruitment	Reference person
Gender-neutral recruitment	% of vacancy notices using gender-neutral language and pay information	To be set	100%	From next vacancy	Reference person
Equal pay	Pay register (registro retributivo) maintained; gender pay gap monitored	Not yet drawn up	Register in place; gap monitored and justified	Register by Q1 2027; reviewed annually	Director / HR
Gender dimension in outputs	% of technical deliverables that consider gender-differentiated needs	To be set	Increasing, target ≥50%	Reviewed annually from 2027	Technical leads
Anti-harassment protocol	Protocol (Annex II) adopted and communicated	Not yet adopted	Adopted and circulated to all	With GEP signature	Chair
Grievance handling	Formal complaints logged and resolved within the protocol time limits	0	100% logged; resolved within set deadlines	Ongoing	Reference person

Annex II – Protocol for the prevention of, and response to, sexual harassment and harassment on grounds of sex

1. Purpose and legal basis

LDT CitiVERSE EDIC is committed to a working environment free from sexual harassment and from harassment on grounds of sex, gender identity, sexual orientation or any related ground, across all physical, digital, remote and travel settings. This Protocol sets out the preventive measures and the procedure for reporting, investigating and resolving such conduct.

It is adopted in accordance with Article 48 of Organic Law 3/2007 of 22 March on the effective equality of women and men; Organic Law 10/2022 of 6 September on the comprehensive guarantee of sexual freedom; Law 15/2022 of 12 July on equal treatment and non-discrimination; Directive 2006/54/EC; and Article 31 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. This duty applies irrespective of the number of employees.

2. Scope

This Protocol applies to all persons who work within or on behalf of the EDIC — staff, the Director and Chair, members of the Assembly of Members and of advisory or governance bodies, seconded personnel, trainees, volunteers, and contractors and experts while carrying out EDIC activities — and to conduct occurring in any EDIC context, including online meetings, shared repositories, messaging channels, events and work-related travel.

3. Definitions

- Sexual harassment: any verbal, non-verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature with the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity, in particular where it creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment (Art. 7.1 LO 3/2007).
- Harassment on grounds of sex: any conduct related to a person's sex with the purpose or effect of violating their dignity and creating such an environment (Art. 7.2 LO 3/2007). It includes harassment related to gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy or maternity, and the exercise of work-life balance rights.
- Digital / cyber harassment: the above conduct carried out through digital channels, online meetings, email, messaging or shared repositories.
- Reprisal (victimisation): any adverse treatment or consequence suffered by a person as a reaction to a complaint, or to participation as a witness or in the investigation.

4. Guiding principles

- Zero tolerance and respect for the dignity of all persons.
- Confidentiality and protection of the privacy of everyone involved.
- Promptness, diligence and defined time limits.
- Impartiality, contradiction and presumption of innocence.
- Protection of the complainant, the person reporting and witnesses against any reprisal.
- Proportionality of measures and of any disciplinary response.

5. Preventive measures

The EDIC promotes prevention through clear communication of the standards of conduct to all contributors; inclusion of this Protocol in the onboarding pack; awareness-raising within the training measures of the GEP; accessible reporting channels; and periodic review of risks in remote, hybrid and travel settings.

6. Reference person and competent bodies

The EDIC designates a Gender Equality / Harassment Reference Person and an alternate, whose role is to receive reports, provide information and guidance, and manage the procedure with confidentiality and impartiality.

[Designate the Reference Person and the alternate on adoption — e.g. the Operations Manager as Reference Person, with an independent external adviser as alternate.]

Conflict of interest — where a report concerns the Reference Person, the Director or the Chair, or where either is otherwise conflicted, the matter is handled instead by the alternate and, where appropriate, referred to the Assembly of Members and to an independent external adviser, so that no person investigates a matter in which they are involved. Given the current size of the EDIC, the EDIC will retain access to an independent external adviser (labour-law professional) to instruct or support any case where internal impartiality cannot be guaranteed.

7. Reporting and procedure

7.1 Reporting. A report may be made by the affected person or by any third party who becomes aware of the conduct, in writing to the Reference Person at [*dedicated confidential email address*] or through the confidential channel designated by the EDIC. Verbal reports are recorded in writing and acknowledged.

7.2 Acknowledgement. The Reference Person acknowledges receipt within 3 working days, informs the reporting person of the procedure, and assesses whether precautionary measures are needed.

7.3 Informal procedure (optional). Where the facts and the wishes of the affected person allow, a swift informal resolution may be attempted (for example, making the person responsible aware that the conduct must cease). The affected person is never required to use the informal route and may go directly to the formal procedure.

7.4 Formal procedure. On a written complaint, an instructing person (the Reference Person or the alternate, subject to Section 6) opens an investigation: gathering the account of the parties, interviewing witnesses and examining evidence, always under contradiction and confidentiality. Precautionary measures may be adopted during the investigation, in particular separating the parties, without this prejudging the outcome or worsening the working conditions of the affected person.

7.5 Time limit and report. The investigation concludes, as a rule, within a maximum of 15 working days (extendable, on reasoned grounds, to 30), with a written report setting out the facts found, the assessment and a proposal of measures.

7.6 Decision. The competent body of the EDIC adopts a reasoned decision. Where the conduct is substantiated, it applies to the corresponding measures (Section 8) and support measures for the affected person. Reports made in bad faith or knowingly false may themselves be subject to measures.

8. Consequences and disciplinary measures

Substantiated sexual harassment or harassment on grounds of sex is a serious breach of the standards of conduct. For staff, it may give rise to disciplinary measures up to and including dismissal, in accordance with Article 54 of the Workers' Statute and applicable labour law. For governance members, contractors, experts or volunteers, it may lead to proportionate measures including exclusion from EDIC activities or termination of the engagement. This is without prejudice to any administrative or criminal liability.

9. Protection against reprisals

No person who reports in good faith, acts as a witness or takes part in the procedure may suffer any adverse treatment as a result. Any reprisal is itself a breach of this Protocol and is dealt with under the same procedure.

10. Confidentiality and data protection

All information handled under this Protocol is confidential and processed in accordance with Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (GDPR) and Spanish Organic Law 3/2018 (LOPDGDD), for the sole purpose of prevention and investigation, with access limited to those strictly involved. Case data feed the GEP monitoring only in anonymised and aggregated form.

11. Support and external avenues

Using this Protocol does not limit the right of the affected person to turn to the Labour and Social Security Inspectorate (Inspección de Trabajo y Seguridad Social), to the courts, or to the competent authorities. Employees who are victims of gender-based violence hold the rights recognised in Organic Law 1/2004 (adaptation or reduction of working time, geographical mobility, suspension and leave). The 016 helpline provides confidential support in cases of gender-based and sexual violence.

12. Monitoring, review and entry into force

The number and status of cases are logged (anonymised) and reported, in aggregate, within the GEP annual monitoring. This Protocol is reviewed periodically and adapted as the EDIC grows. It enters into force on approval by the executive leadership together with the GEP.

Approved together with the Gender Equality Plan, for and on behalf of LDT CitiVERSE EDIC:

Ernesto Faubel Cubells — Chair Date: _____

Firmado por ERNESTO FAUBEL CUBELLS - DNI ***5302** el día
27/10/2026 con un certificado emitido por ACCV RSA1 PROFESIONALES

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