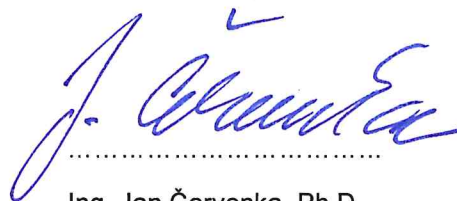


# Gender Equality Plan

10 Dec 2024



Released on: 18 Dec 2024



Ing. Jan Červenka, Ph.D.

CEO



# Motivation

A strong and welcoming community promotes inclusiveness, equality, and cooperation. Diversity adds to our success and pleasure in R&D and manufacturing. It broadens our market strength and enhances the quality of our team. Červenka Consulting continues to support the development of structures and targeted measures that enhance gender equality within its community. This is a strategic priority for the company for the coming years.

As part of the European Commission [Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#), the European Commission is committed to promoting gender equality in research and innovation. This is alongside the well-established regulatory framework within the EU on gender equality which applies widely across the labour market including the SME sector.

Because of the peculiarities of the SME sector, specific actions are needed to overcome possible gender gaps. Still many structural barriers to gender equality in research and innovation persist. These barriers within research have been typically addressed through:

- funding instruments such as Horizon 2020 and following Horizon Europe
- the European Research Area in collaboration with member countries and research organizations

The European Commission introduces gender equality plans as a precondition for securing funding from [Horizon Europe](#), the framework program for research and innovation. The precondition is part of the plans drawn up by the European Commission for promoting gender equality ([Gender Equality Strategy 2020-2025](#); [Gender Equality in the European Research Area](#)). Having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) in place is now an eligibility criterion for certain categories of legal entities from EU countries and non-EU countries associated to Horizon Europe.

As a participating SME, Červenka Consulting and its Board of Directors have supported these strong actions towards gender equality within our community. Over the last 5 years, Červenka Consulting has developed many activities to address gender equality: from raising awareness on gender equality at the interview stage to providing special trainings to its staff to ensure inclusive recruitment and career progression.

The measures, activities and policies that have been developed and implemented to support Červenka Consulting goals, will be presented. It also includes planned initiatives for 2022 to 2025. We acknowledge that gender is always linked to other social categories, such as ethnicity, age, and sexual orientation. This makes an intersectional approach necessary when making plans for gender equality.

## Gender Equality as strategic priority

### Červenka Consulting strategy 2030

Červenka Consulting is a community of engineers, accounting, administrative and marketing & sale staff. People are the heart of the company therefore it is of great importance to safeguard the encouraging working atmosphere, creating a personal, welcoming and vibrant environment that enables individuals to grow professionally and personally. Our people are showcasing their organizational and entrepreneurial skills and demonstrate a willingness to help to each other. In the company, we strive for diversity. Diversity of nationality, gender, social background and cultural heritage adds to our success and pleasure in manufacturing and sales. It broadens our product scope and enhances the quality of our manufacturing process.

### Červenka Consulting plan 2021-2030



## We will have a diverse, international workforce, with a special focus on improving the gender balance in Červenka Consulting

Main objective: Establish an internationally attractive diverse and inclusive working culture.

Červenka Consulting is an SME that embraces diversity of perspectives and staff. This means that we strive for an international, diverse and inclusive working environment, in which staff at all levels can develop their personal professional paths.

Our R&D activities are enriched by the presence of diversity in perspectives, and a diverse and inclusive working environment ensures that our talent can be optimally utilized. In an inclusive organization, everyone can participate on an equal footing in the organization process. In our company, openness and cooperation are central, and diversity, inclusiveness and equality are a prerequisite. We want to rank among the leading SMEs in in the field of software development and make a valuable contribution to society. In the upcoming years, we will expand our policies in this area, set examples and become a thought leading force when it comes to restoring gender balance, especially in technical SMEs.

## An approach to gender equality

In drawing up this gender equality plan, we are using an interdisciplinary approach to gender equality. This first group of measures is aimed at increasing gender equality in terms of numbers: improving recruitment, advancement, and retention of women.

### Career development and coaching

Červenka Consulting offers employees the opportunity to sign up for courses in their field of study according to their own preferences and within a given annual budget, including professional courses to stimulate their professional and personal development. Where time and family constraints make this possible, Červenka Consulting also sends employees to international conferences where they can present their current work and gain industry insights. Červenka Consulting properly prepares and supports their employees for performing managerial and organizational responsibilities.

### Recruitment

Červenka Consulting has set gender targets for women staff members until 2030, as these not only influence the hiring of women scientists, but they also address the retention. Červenka Consulting is a very small company with a linear organizational structure. Therefore, it is not currently possible to seek to increase the number of women in management. The shortage of women is particularly evident in engineering positions, whether in consulting or R&D. Červenka Consulting aims to increase the number of women to 30 % (35 % in FTE) working in R&D by 2030. The proportion of women by job level is periodically measured. The management actively promotes the importance of gender diversity and demonstrably steers towards achieving more gender diversity.

### Gender neutral vacancy texts

The staff member responsible for recruitment is regularly updated on the current policy so that they he/she keeps the right candidates captivated and ensure gender neutrality in the job description. These tips for gender neutral texts include:

- Start with describing the main challenge(s) of the position. R&D activities show that staff are drawn primarily by the topic of interest.
- Don't just describe the position, but also emphasize the embedding in the company
- Make the societal relevance of the position visible: what am I contributing to?
- Make sure that job description is inclusive and appealing to all genders.

## Advancement and retention

Červenka Consulting advice to its staff to take different courses to improve their managerial and organizational skills. Červenka Consulting senior staff also offers support on various levels for (female) staff in performing their managerial tasks. Next to these trainings, Červenka Consulting offers a training to give R&D staff the opportunity to reflect on their work with a group of peers, to sharpen their vision and research practice, while developing professional skills at the same time.

## Equal Pay analysis

It is important for Červenka Consulting that men and women are equally rewarded for equal work. The company has long been working to close this gap. The Equal Pay analysis will be carried out in 2025 and will be repeated every 3 years.

## Media

We acknowledge the importance that women staff are represented and given a voice in the dissemination of their showcases to the wider public. For this reason, we monitor the media appearances (print, radio, television) of our staff of different genders.

## Social safety

Social safety in the workplace is feeling protected against undesirable behavior and the threat of danger as a result of human actions. For a workplace to be socially safe, the culture needs to allow for making mistakes on an individual level and the organization needs to learn from its mistakes at an organizational level. An organization that welcomes the opportunity to learn from its mistakes will become a socially safe workplace, supporting employees to optimize their contribution to the organization as a whole. Social safety requires continuous attention and is also under development. Company management plays a significant role and are accountable for creating a safe work environment at our production site. We encourage our staff to speak up and express concerns about undesirable behavior, irregularities, and research integrity. We strive for a corporate culture without fear of punishment or unfair treatment for raising such concerns yet understand it is sometimes difficult to speak up. Therefore, there is the necessity for a solid care landscape and clear rules and procedures.

## Conditions of employment

An employee is entitled to a total leave of 28 weeks for pregnancy and childbirth. Leave can be adjusted according to personal needs (flexible pregnancy leave). The employment contract can be extended with the amount of maternity leave taken at the request of the employee. Employees are granted paternity leave for 14 days in accordance with the law. We also aim to be "reasonable" and grant holidays (whether paid or unpaid). Over the years of 2021 - 2024 there was not a single instance of any holiday or leave denied allowing for any outside-of-work commitments even at a short notice. Employees, especially parents and students, as well as working seniors and others, are provided with the opportunity to work part-time when possible.

## Fixing the knowledge

We expect to create a community that respects, appreciates, and fosters diversity, and an inclusive working environment that helps all staff to take ownership of their development and helps them to shape their own personalized development path. This means that it will be easier for staff with various backgrounds, circumstances and learner needs to find their way at Červenka Consulting.

## Diversity and Inclusion

In addition to codes of conduct, regulations and (complaint) committees, Červenka Consulting also has some other initiatives and networks that are intensively involved in and committed to equal treatment of employees. Supported by the Executive Board, Červenka Consulting facilitates collaborative projects among women employees, organizes activities, for example, for professional and personal

development; increases the awareness of opportunities for women in different projects and markets, fostering contacts with partner organizations promoting women in workplace.

## Transparency and equal opportunities in career policy procedures

Červenka Consulting aims to conduct ethically responsible and professional appointment and evaluation practices for staff members. The Principles of Conduct set out principles for appointment in order to assist the members of selection panel to apply "best practices" in the proactive assessment and selection of candidates. The Principles define minimum standards that are to serve as the benchmark for conscientious actions.

## Monitoring

In the monitoring phase, the process and progress are regularly evaluated. The findings from the monitoring phase make it possible to fine tune and improve any interventions that are made to achieve optimum results.

Červenka Consulting collects the information about numbers and percentages of women in R&D staff, in M&S staff and women in support staff. Červenka Consulting is going to perform employee satisfaction review in 2025 among the employees, as part of a structural improvement cycle. The Board will monitor Social Safety issues by registration of reports and complaints.

## Discussion on gender equality in the Executive Board

The topic of gender equality and women talent in staff will be discussed twice a year in the Executive Board. This topic entails:

- Action plans for reaching the gender targets
- Recruitment of women talent
- Retention of women talent
- Analyses of possible gender gaps in starting position, promotions and career progression

## Communication

The Gender Equality Plan will be published internally and externally on the company website. Furthermore, it will be shared with all staff in internal newsletters.

Appendix:

## Mandatory GEP requirements of European Commission

Mandatory GEP process requirements	Gender Equality Plan - Actions
<b>Public document</b>	
Signed by top management	Formal document signed by the Executive Board
Published on the company's website	Diversity and Inclusion
Disseminated within the company	As a first step the GEP will be disseminated across various stakeholder groups, and it will be published in the company newsletter.
<b>Dedicated resources</b>	
Funding for gender equality positions or teams	CEO performs duties of Chief Diversity Officer
Reserved time for others to work on gender equality	CEO coordinates diversity committee
<b>Data collection and monitoring</b>	
Gender-segregated data across different roles	Gender data is collected and published on the company's website.
<b>Training and awareness raising</b>	
Whole organization engagement	D&I initiatives
Tackle gender biases of people and decisions	Transparency and equal opportunities in career policy procedures
Joint action on specific topics	Diversity&Inclusion initiatives & networks (section Diversity and Inclusion)
Work-life balance and organizational culture	Conditions of employment (section Conditions of employment)
Gender balance in leadership and decision-making	Transparency and equal opportunities in career policy procedures
Gender equality in recruitment and career progression	Recruitment
Integrating the gender dimension into daily activities	Fixing the knowledge
Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment	Social Safety