

Innovation Fund Denmark's Gender Equality Plan

Innovation Fund Denmark is committed to promoting diversity across all aspects of its work — from staffing and recruitment to applications and grant allocation — recognizing it as a prerequisite for innovation and a vital component in developing solutions to the complex challenges facing society. Only by maintaining an inclusive focus on equality in all its aspects can we unlock the full potential of talent and foster a broader spectrum of companies and solutions that serve society as a whole. Accordingly, beyond our efforts to promote gender equality, we are dedicated to advancing diversity in terms of ethnic background, religion, disability status, neurodiversity, age, geography, and academic discipline.

Securing a diverse and interdisciplinary pool of applications and grants that represent the best Denmark has to offer is an ongoing process. Experience shows that progress requires efforts at multiple levels and through a variety of initiatives to help drive meaningful change. By taking small steps and focusing on what lies directly ahead — such as application formats and evaluation procedures — we believe that we can gradually contribute to changing the bigger picture.

Inclusive language and bias training

Under the title *'Developing the Talent Base'* in Innovation Fund Denmark's strategy toward 2025, the Fund committed to evaluating its processes, programs, and grants to identify underserved applicant groups with untapped innovation potential — and to work toward ensuring their fair representation.

One concrete initiative involved revising the language used on the Fund's website and in program guidelines, aiming to adopt more inclusive wording that encourages all potential applicants to engage with the Fund. This effort was carried out in collaboration with external experts, such as [Develop Diverse](#), to ensure alignment with current research and best practices for attracting diverse applicants and minimizing bias.

In addition, employees and committee members have received bias training, focused on demystifying biases and fostering a safe environment for acknowledging them — helping prevent unconscious influences from affecting evaluations.

Moreover, deliberate efforts have been made to assemble expert committees with a strong emphasis on diversity — not only in terms of gender, but also geographical representation, age, career trajectories, and professional perspectives. This approach is grounded in the belief that incorporating a broad range of viewpoints leads to more qualified and balanced evaluations.

Emphazing female role models

Recognizing that Denmark continues to face challenges with the underrepresentation of women in entrepreneurship and top-level research, the Innovation Fund has, since 2018, run the [Innowomen](#) initiative — aimed at inspiring more women to pursue their ambitions in research and entrepreneurship.

Each year, four additional women are selected, and by 2025, the list includes more than 30 profiles spanning both fields. The initiative also seeks to highlight the diversity among the designated Innowomen — showcasing a broad range of profiles, backgrounds, and experiences. In this way, it aims to demonstrate different career paths that can align with a healthy work–life balance.

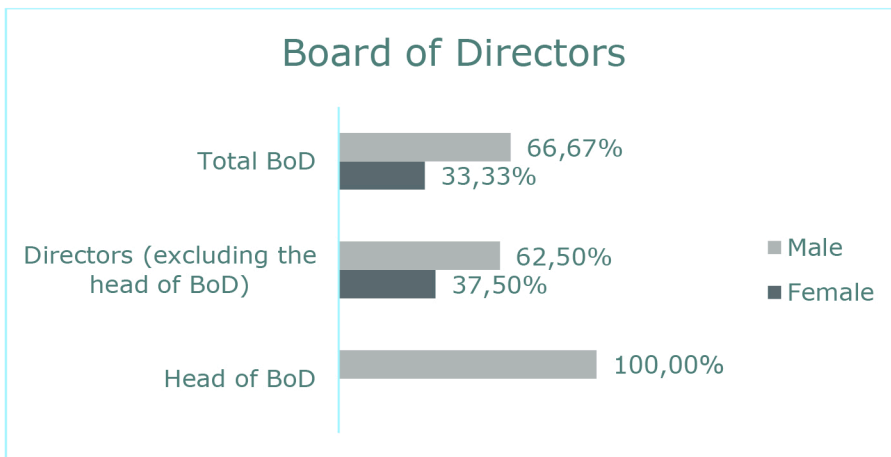
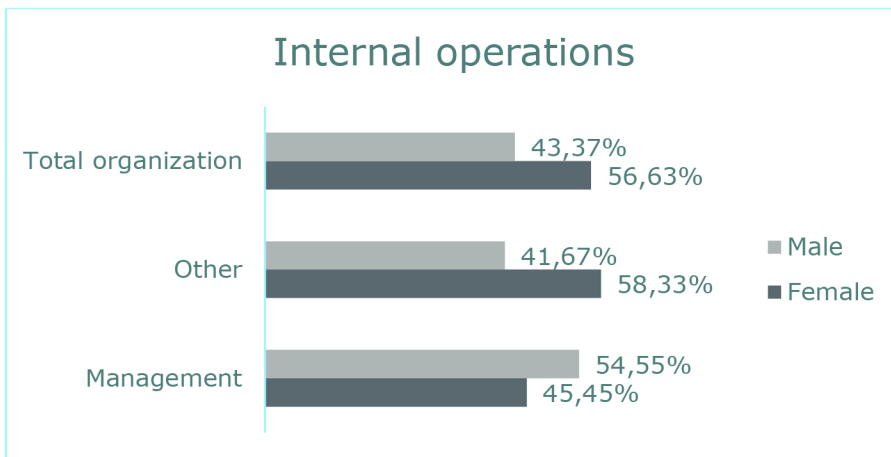
In addition to presenting the women as role models, the Fund also uses the network to gain deeper insights into the barriers female entrepreneurs and researchers face — particularly in relation to the

funding system. The ambition is to cultivate an active network that empowers the Innowomen to carry the dialogue into the institutions and environments they represent.

Committed to monitoring developments in gender equality

Innovation Fund Denmark recognizes that systematic monitoring is essential to keeping key priorities at the forefront of organizational focus. To ensure a sustained commitment to promoting gender equality, the Fund joined the [Diversity Commitment](#) initiative as a partner in 2021. This initiative brings together many of Denmark’s largest foundations and investors and establishes concrete, measurable goals for female participation in grants and funding.

Each year, the Fund publishes data on gender distribution across key areas. For 2024, key figures are:



The remaining data reported by Innovation Fund Denmark can be found in the latest [Diversity Commitment report](#).

Going forward

The initiatives introduced during the previous strategy period have now been integrated into Innovation Fund Denmark’s core activities. We continue to deepen our understanding of the factors that most effectively foster diversity and uphold our responsibility to evaluate our own efforts. Resources are dedicated to developing domain-specific expertise among staff, enabling the organization to adopt

the latest insights on how to promote diversity. In this context, we recognize that both our mobilization efforts and the guidance we provide to expert committees play an important role. Aligned with the Fund's strategic ambition to exemplify best practice in panel evaluations, particular emphasis will be placed on monitoring potential hidden biases in assessments and leveraging data to enhance evaluators' awareness of their own evaluation practices.

Monitoring and evaluation are closely aligned with the key theme '*Visible Impact*' in the Fund's 2024–2026 strategy. Taking a data-driven approach, the Fund collects and analyzes metrics across its instruments and investments — including the effectiveness of its diversity initiatives. These insights serve both to drive internal learning and development and to provide valuable documentation for the broader innovation ecosystem.

On behalf of Innovation Fund Denmark,

Cecilie Brøkner, CEO