

Karriere_Mentoring III: Mission Statement

We define Karriere_Mentoring III as a program that is characterized by mutual appreciation and respect. All participating actors (i.e. mentees, mentors, trainers, coaches and program coordinators) contribute equally to its success.

Karriere_Mentoring III (KM III) originated from the need to mitigate the structural disadvantages women* face in planning and developing their academic careers. In this regard, we view **KM III** as a commitment aligned with "Social Justice & Diversity", aimed at identifying invisible barriers so that they can be overcome.

KM III is a program aimed at the advancement of women*. It is our understanding that gender is a social construct closely tied to specific expectations in relation to gender roles, critically affecting the distribution of societal resources. Furthermore, **KM III** recognizes that the diversity of genders goes beyond the binary conceptualization of female and male. We therefore include transgender, intersex and non-binary gender identities. Our approach to gender is intersectional: we examine the reciprocal effects and overlaps of factors such as gender, socio-economic status, age, background, etc.

We define **KM III's** target group as female* researchers and scientists (with the asterisk we include all individuals who identify as female, intersex and/or non-binary). The program is intended for female* researchers and scientists, with both straight and non-linear career trajectories. In order to foster equitable opportunities, the selection process of **KM III** therefore considers the biographies of potential mentees, taking into account periods of child rearing, career breaks, being first-generation academics, engaging in second chance education, disabilities and/or (chronic) illness, caring for relatives, relocating, experiences gained outside of university as well as analogous factors.

Contributing to a medium and long-term increase in the proportion of women in scientific and academic leadership positions (department and institute heads and/or university professors according to § 98 or § 99 of the University Act) represents the overarching goal of **KM III**. Academic structures are characterized by informal exclusion mechanisms. In order to empower participating female* researchers and scientists within these structures, **KM III** equips them with tools relevant to their careers. The program provides a safe space to individually consolidate career plans and formulate strategies for professional development. This process involves examining the entire spectrum of possible career paths. Within this framework, **KM III** places particular emphasis on advancing the field-specific expertise of mentees through the mentoring relationship and on expanding their academic networks.

KM III supports female* scientists and researchers through

- workshops and training courses that aid career planning and development
- coaching that promotes personal growth and development
- peer networking that facilitates empowerment
- professional mentoring that assists in building academic profiles

Ultimately, **KM III** renders female* scientists and researchers visible in their individual (life) experiences, raising awareness within universities to acknowledge these realities also. For the participating universities, **KM III** represents an asset for reducing structural barriers to equitable opportunities, strengthening their reputation in relation to commitment to equality, and increasing their attractiveness as employers.