LaBRI's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Charter

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Introduction

This document presents the culture that we, members of the Laboratoire Bordelais de Recherche en Informatique (LaBRI), wish to promote in our working environment, whether on the laboratory premises, at the university, or outside (such as in the context of work trips and committees), for building an environment conducive to research and innovation.

Equity, diversity and inclusion play important roles in the development of quality knowledge. The European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE (https://eige.europa.eu/?lang=fr)) has identified that research developed in an unequal context is more likely to have results that are flawed, less relevant, or even distrusted by society (1 (https://eige.europa.eu/sites/default/files/structural-changes-final-report_en_0.pdf)).

This document, which is intended to be educational, aims to make each person aware of the existence of undesirable situations and behaviours and to question their own behaviour. Even though this charter is primarily intended to maintain a high degree of generality, it mentions situations that may be encountered by certain groups to which we wish to pay particular attention.

In a second document, the charter uses examples of situations to help readers understand its general points.

Definitions

The notions of equity, diversity and inclusion are often combined with the notions of parity, gender equality and equal opportunity. The following is a clarification of these three concepts, which will be used in the remainder of this document.

Equity is the absence of unfair, avoidable or remediable differences between groups of people, whether those groups are defined socially, economically, demographically or geographically or by other dimensions of inequality (e.g., sex, gender, ethnicity, disability or sexual orientation) (2 (https://www.who.int/health-topics/health-equity)). The notion of equity (as opposed to equality) recognizes that equal treatment is not sufficient to take into account the historical background of each individual.

Diversity is about recognising, respecting and celebrating each other's differences (4 (https://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/about-edi/what-does-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-mean)). These differences include the values, attitudes, cultural perspective, beliefs, ethnic background, sexual orientation, gender identity, skills, knowledge and life experiences of each individual in any group of people (3 (https://eige.europa.eu/thesaurus/terms/1085?lang=en)).

Inclusion is about creating an environment where everyone feels welcome and valued. An inclusive environment can only be created when we are more aware of our unconscious biases and prejudices, and learn to recognize and overcome them (4 (https://www.ph.ed.ac.uk/equality-diversity-and-inclusion/about-edi/what-does-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-mean)).

Equity, diversity and inclusion are directly affected by issues of discrimination, harassment and bias. We present their definitions below. The definitions of subjects such as discrimination and harassment are set out in detail in the penal code, in particular articles 225-1, 222-33, 222-33-2 to 222-33-2-3 of the penal code.
**Discrimination** consists of acts and situations in which a person is treated unfavourably compared to others because of their characteristics (real or supposed). As a reminder, the grounds for discrimination recognized in France ([link](https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/loda/id/JORFTEXT000018877783/)) include: origin, gender, family status, pregnancy, physical appearance, particular vulnerability resulting from one's economic situation, surname, place of residence or bank domiciliation, state of health, loss of autonomy, disability, genetic characteristics, morals, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, political opinions, trade union activities, ability to express oneself in a language other than French, membership or non-membership, real or assumed, of a specific ethnic group, nation, alleged race or religion.

**Harassment** is characterised by repeated comments or actions that can end up having harmful consequences for the person who is subjected to them. Harassment also occurs when such comments or behaviour are imposed on the same victim by several people. Harassment affects the rights and dignity of its victims, which can lead to an alteration of their physical or mental health. Harassment exists regardless of the existence of a hierarchical relationship between the victim and the perpetrator.

**Cognitive bias** is a systematic deviation of logical and rational thinking from reality. Cognitive biases are a source of prejudice and can lead to supporting or opposing a particular person or idea in an unfair way, based on one's personal preconceived opinions and not on a logical analysis of facts or reality.

**Founding Principles**

**Building an equitable and diverse community**

I, as a member of LaBRI, wish to guarantee equal treatment and opportunities to each of my colleagues, thus creating an attractive environment for a wide variety of profiles: fair working conditions; opportunities for good integration in the laboratory with the purpose of harmonious collaborations; and transparent assessments with a strong focus on reducing bias.

I am committed to ensuring fair treatment for everyone in all my decision-making situations, whether in recruitment, employment and working conditions, or career development and progression. In particular, in any scientific or professional assessment situation, I will:

- Remain aware of recommendations to avoid bias and discrimination (even aspiring to participate in training on these topics);
- Help in the constitution of committees with diverse profiles, avoiding, as much as possible, the over-solicitation of minorities;
- Use transparent and objective criteria;
- Systematically declare all my conflicts of interest, even minor ones, whether they are relational, collaborative or hierarchical.

I will avoid any **discriminatory act** that could, directly or indirectly, hinder the professional career of anyone. LaBRI brings together people with different levels of education and backgrounds, who work for different employers and in different contractual situations, as well as in a variety of professions essential to supporting research. All of these differences must be respected and the laboratory must be an inclusive workplace for all its members, regardless of status.

I commit myself with my colleagues to protect and nurture diversity in my scientific and professional community. I understand that diversity is an asset, both to our work environment and to the development of science. I will remain vigilant in my practices and communications to maintain and value the diversity present in our laboratory, and I will encourage my colleagues to do the same.

**Inclusive communication**
The laboratory is a multicultural environment and includes non-French speaking members, notably among its doctoral, post-doctoral and visiting staff, all of whom may find themselves isolated in a solely French speaking environment. I will remain conscious of this fact so as not to discredit the remarks made in a language not mastered by someone, whether it be French or another language.

I will try not to isolate anyone, to actively include all members of our laboratory, and to take into account the presence of each person in any communication. My actions in this sense will include the promotion of inclusive writing (whether by systematically flexing nouns to the masculine and feminine, or any other method) and the presence of texts in French and English in my communications within the laboratory (with at least a short summary in the second language).

**Personal dignity, respect for work and people**

LaBRI promotes a work environment that ensures personal dignity and a climate of trust and respect, where everyone is welcome and encouraged to express themselves with confidence. At the same time, I understand that each person must reflect on their modes of expression, put themselves in the other person's shoes and question the impact of their behaviour on others. Everyone's work must be respected. I accept that the points below, without being exhaustive, can harm this climate of trust and lead to moral harassment:

- Repeated interruptions when someone is speaking;
- Attempts at intimidation or undermining confidence;
- Any intrusive or belittling remarks, in particular comments or jokes referring to personal characteristics or stereotypes, whether written or verbal, offending the dignity of the person;
- Behaviour against a person that has the purpose or effect of degrading working conditions that are likely to violate their rights and dignity, alter their physical or mental health, or compromise their future career.

LaBRI also warns of situations of moral harassment which can develop more easily than it seems, sometimes without our knowledge, due to strong psychological pressure or work methods that do not respect each individual's pace. I will remain vigilant to avoid the following practices, in all contexts (administration, teaching and research):

- Setting unattainable goals without help or intermediate targets;
- Setting deadlines at the last minute;
- Not meeting procedural deadlines;
- Sending multiple emails a day on the same subject demanding an immediate response or making requests without consideration for the person receiving them;
- Making remarks against a minority, suggesting that their success is related to quota policies;
- Imposing my work schedule on others without taking into account their possible constraints, for example, on Wednesdays;
- Threatening retaliation in the event of delay or lack of results.

**Protection against sexist acts and sexual harassment**

During their studies or their careers, and particularly when they hold temporary positions, women in our scientific community are too often victims of inappropriate, discriminatory or even violent behaviour or comments. These situations are detrimental to their professional lives, and push some of them to abandon or change careers. This state of affairs is partly inherited from gender inequalities in society, and is reinforced by the very low number of women in our community.

These behaviours, whether they are sexist acts or sexual harassment, are mostly targeted at women. Nonetheless, these behaviours can affect everyone in our laboratory, including men, and they can take different forms depending on the situation, especially among LGBTQIA+ people.
Taking into account the prevention policies against sexist acts and sexual harassment put in place by our supervisory bodies, I commit myself to avoid any such behaviour. This includes, in particular:

- The dissemination of sexual, discriminatory or violent statements, images or videos in the laboratory;
- Insistent non-reciprocal attentions, or unwanted solicitations, of a sexual or romantic nature, as well as insistent invitations to go out together despite a refusal;
- Unsolicited physical contact;
- Unsolicited questioning about sexual intimacy, orientation and practices;
- Inappropriate comments about clothing.

**Actions, assistance and procedures**

Whether you are a member of LaBRI, an invited guest or a visitor, if you are a victim or a witness of behaviours that contradict one of the points in this charter in a professional context, on the laboratory’s premises or outside, it is important not to isolate yourself, not to minimise the situation, not to reject it, and to rely on the charter by recalling its principles and examples.

If you wish to discuss a problem, there are several possible contacts who are also available to listen and help you:

- Team or department managers,
- Doctoral correspondents, members of the societal issues committee, members of the laboratory council,
- Parity correspondent,
- Prevention assistant,
- Depending on your employer or host institution, the medical or psychosocial services of the CNRS, the University of Bordeaux, Bordeaux INP, or Inria,
- External partners and associations.

The laboratory’s management team and its director are there to provide help and assistance to any member, permanent or not, of the laboratory.

LaBRI is committed to disclose clearly and fully the means of communication, contacts and possible actions for the protection and assistance of victims or witnesses. In particular, a page on the intranet (link here) lists the contacts related to the issues raised.