

Gender Equality Plan

Participant Identification Code (PIC) 871616102

Call identifier: ESPUMA Association

Type of Action: Coordination and Support Action

Project Title: System Action for Gender Equality

Project Coordinator Contact: nicoletanaka.arte@gmail.com

Start Date of Project: 01/03/2026

Project Duration: 36 Months

Preparation: Gender equality is our key performance indicator

Objectives

1. Promote gender balance across all project teams, especially in technical and visual roles;
2. Establish a safe and inclusive work culture;
3. Prevent gender-based violence and harassment;
4. Integrate gender and diversity into communication and public-facing outputs;
5. Increase participation of women and deaf professionals in film/theatre projects;
6. Support work–life balance and mental wellbeing.

Measures

1. Create a Gender Equality Board to coordinate inclusive recruitment and team composition across artistic and technical areas (Why: Address male overrepresentation; How: by formal decision-making structure; Where: across all sites and partner projects);
2. Conduct annual anonymous staff surveys and focus group discussions to assess experiences, barriers, and progress toward equality (Why: identify gaps; How: digital and in-person; Where: all active staff & collaborators);
3. Implement clear anti-harassment policy and conduct awareness training sessions (Why: mitigate risk, protect staff; How: workshops + formal code of conduct; Where: all workplaces and rehearsal spaces);
4. Conduct biannual audit of communication materials (digital, print, videos) for gender-sensitive language and imagery (Why: shape public perception; How: checklists + feedback; Where: website, flyers, trailers, etc.);
5. Develop targeted outreach and inclusive calls via arts networks and disability communities (Why: underrepresentation; How: partnerships + inclusive job offers; Where: France and Sweden projects);
6. Introduce a flexible working hours policy and periodic well-being check-ins (Why: sustainability; How: scheduling tools + monthly feedback; Where: applied to all ongoing projects).

Indicators

1. % of women involved in technical, visual, and production roles;
2. Survey participation rate; % of respondents reporting a positive work culture;
3. # of policies enacted; # of staff trained annually;
4. % of materials revised; % compliant with inclusive standards;
5. # of new female and/or deaf artists recruited; feedback from partners;
6. # of team members using flexible options; well-being scores.

Targets

1. Minimum 30% women in technical and visual roles by Q4 2027; gender-balanced artistic teams ($\geq 50\%$) in all new projects;
2. $\geq 80\%$ staff participation; $\geq 75\%$ report inclusive culture by end of 2027;
3. All staff trained by end of 2027; 2 trainings per year;
4. 100% of materials reviewed by end of 2027; maintain 90% compliance rate after;
5. At least 5 new women and/or deaf collaborators involved by Q4 2027;
6. $\geq 75\%$ of core team using flexible options; 80% report improved balance by end of 2027.

Timeline

1. Board created Q3 2026; targets reviewed annually;
2. First survey Q4 2026; annual review;
3. Policy ready by Q1 2027; trainings Q2 2027 and ongoing;
4. First audit Q2 2027; biannual reviews;
5. Outreach begins Q4 2026; first impact report Q4 2027;
6. Policy draft Q1 2027; implemented Q2 2027; evaluated Q4 annually.

Responsibilities

1. Nicole Tanaka (coordination), Erika Webe (artistic team);
2. Nicole Tanaka;
3. Nadia Cheriff;
4. Nicole Tanaka, Nadia Cheriff;
5. Erika Webe, Isabel Lagos;
6. Aurélie Levraut.

CONTEXT

History

Espuma Association was originally founded under the name Cheburum-Bumbaio on January 11th, 2011, in Lyon, France, at Place des Célestins.

At the time, only two people were employed—a woman and a man—offering circus lessons to children in social centers. The supporting animators were mostly women.

Both employees left the project in 2012.

In 2019, one of the founders, Erika Webe, returned to France and decided to revive the association. She changed its name to Espuma and relocated it to La Bâtie Rolland, a village in the Provence region. She began offering circus lessons in collaboration with the NGO Ecological Conscience. Erika and Miriam Kundt worked together with children.

Location

In 2020, Erika moved to Montreuil, a suburb of Paris in the Île-de-France region, in search of new projects and collaborations during the Covid-19 pandemic. Montreuil is a large, multi-ethnic city.

Leadership

In 2022, Espuma began collaborating with Théâtre des Roches on a theatrical production, and with Gathenhielska Huset to develop a visual language between deaf and hearing artists. Both projects were led by women: Erika Webe and Isabel Lagos.

Daniela Miranda and Erika met at the EIMCD in Montreuil (International School of Corporeal Dramatic Mime). They decided to build an aesthetic and concept together and support each other's projects—both women.

The core team also includes:

- Aurélie Levraut (president)
- Nicole Tanaka (development manager)
- Nadia Cheriff (collaborator)

Structure and Governance

We are a team of women and make decisions horizontally. Every three months, we meet to discuss important matters, project development, and strategic direction.

Organisational Culture

We are women from diverse national backgrounds:

- Aurélie Levraut – France
- Erika Webe – Argentina and Italy
- Daniela Miranda – Brazil
- Nicole Tanaka – Italy
- Nadia Cheriff – France and Tunisia

Key Roles

- Aurélie Levraut: President and Accountant
- Erika Webe: Artistic Director, Author, Performer, and Creative Europe Coordinator
- Daniela Miranda: Project development with children – National Education and Montreuil City
- Nicole Tanaka: Stage Manager and Public Relations
- Nadia Cheriff: Specialized Educator, Project development with women – Red Cross
-

Each project involves different collaborators and partners. Men are included in project teams.

THEATER

First creation – 2021: Caramva

Theme: Gender Equality

Created and performed by: Erika Webe

Music composition: Vivek Maddala

Second creation – 2025: Countersense

Theme: Gender Equality

Created and performed by: Erika Webe

Co-direction: Isabel Lagos

Artistic collaboration: Elena Sadkova

Music composition: Joel Heiras and Fred Marty

External eye – visual comprehension: Eric Whiteford

Lighting design: Shantala Criscuolo

Technical assistant: Luciano Manoni

Filming: Peter Horvat and Carla Castro

Supported by Culture Moves Europe

On stage: Erika Webe

Stage Manager: Erwan Fontaine

New Creation – Cornisa

Theme: Gender Equality

Conception and direction: Erika Webe

Artistic collaboration: Isabel Lagos

External eye – visual comprehension: Eric Whiteford

Video and projections: Tristan Sicard

Original music and sound: Fred Marty

Choreography: Erika Webe in collaboration with Sol Ackerman

Currently seeking partners and supporters.

Cornisa Project was presented to UNESCO and the Democratic Cycle as a model for collective creation with women through the Beinbody methodology—moving trauma from the inside, sharing vulnerability, and being heard.

CULTURAL ACTIONS

BeInBody Project

In collaboration with the Red Cross

Facilitator: Erika Webe

Coordinator: Nadia Cheriff

Target group: Women living in the CHU Comfort Emergency Shelter—refugees from many nationalities, mainly from Africa and Ukraine.

Eclosion Project

In collaboration with National Education, the City of Montreuil, and Angela Davis School

Facilitator: Daniela Miranda

With Erika Webe

Target group: Children during school hours, assisted by teachers—all of whom are women.

THEATRE STATE Project

Description

In collaboration with the Gathenhielska Huset Foundation, we are developing a theatrical and cinematographic visual language with a team of deaf and hearing artists.

Supported by the Västra Götaland Region (Sweden)

First Meeting – Gothenburg, Sweden (2022)

Team: 3 women – 4 men

Directed by: Isabel Lagos

Movement direction: Erika Webe

Actors: Eric Whiteford, Erika Webe

Cinematography: Tristan Sicard

Production assistant: Gustav Bender

Teaser editing: Coriandre

Music: Joel Heirås

First Short Film – Paris, France (2024)

Team: 5 women – 9 men

Directed by: Isabel Lagos and Erika Webe

Actors: Eric Whiteford, Diego Stirman, Anita Stirman, Miriam Kundt, Erika Webe

Cinematographers: Oriane Monfort and Tristan Sicard

Camera assistant: Adam Granqvist

Sound: Erwan Fontaine

Photography: Jérôme Le Rhun

Teaser editing: David Tronchin

Production assistant: Gustav Bender

Set design: Kaleva You

Second Short Film – Trollhättan, Sweden

Team: 5 women – 13 men

Directed by: Isabel Lagos and Erika Webe

Actors: Eric Whiteford, Nehuen Velazquez, Maja Bieler, Pia Eriksson, Jérôme Le Rhun, Erwan Fontaine, Boris Kozlowski, Agnes Salomonsson, Erika Webe

Cinematographers: Tristan Sicard and Adam Granqvist

Sound: Erwan Fontaine

Photography: Jérôme Le Rhun

Teaser editing: David Tronchin and Adrian Zar Isidro

Production assistant: Gustav Bender

Set design: Elias Rokka

Catering and hospitality: Jim Whiteford

Analysis and Assessment of Gender Equality Status Quo

So far, theatre projects have shown gender equality in terms of participation.

Cultural actions are entirely led and supported by women.

The Theatre State cinematographic project currently has more men than women. In future phases, we aim to include more women and deaf technicians and artists.

Key Indicators to Monitor

- Work–life balance and organisational culture
- Gender balance in leadership and decision-making
- Gender equality in recruitment and career progression
- Integration of the gender dimension into research and creative content
- Measures against gender-based violence, including sexual harassment

Collect Additional Data

- To deepen our understanding and guide actions, we will:
- Conduct a staff-wide survey to assess the organisational culture, perceptions of gender equality, personal experiences, organisational practices, and any occurrence of sexist attitudes or behaviours
- Facilitate interviews or group discussions with representatives from all organisational levels and disciplines
- Review internal and external communication materials to assess how messages reflect gender equality, diversity, and inclusion

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Nicolaus". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial 'N' and a stylized 'a'.