

MARIN Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Plan 2026-2029

The MARIN mission as outlined in the strategy 2026-2029 Oceans of Opportunities states that: *We are committed to the sustainable, safe, and secure use of the oceans for a thriving maritime sector.* To achieve the goals set out in the strategy, there is emphasis on operating as one agile team, where we combine leadership, exceptional knowledge, and diverse perspectives in an inspiring work environment. Guided by our core values of collaboration, responsibility, care, and dialogue, we work together to create a culture in which people feel connected, empowered, and heard. These values shape how we engage with one another, how we make decisions, and how we support the continued development of our organization and its people. Our ambition is to further develop and strengthen the culture that already exists, building on our strengths while preparing ourselves for future challenges and opportunities. We do this by facilitating and sustaining a safe learning environment and committing ourselves to inclusivity as being open-minded and valuing different perspectives to strengthen collaboration and our ability to handle customer demands of increasing complexity. We enhance our internal connection, and expand our Diversity and Inclusion plan, by focusing on:

- Awareness
- Equal opportunities
- Inclusivity
- Equal pay
- Actively monitoring and addressing diversity-related gaps

Diversity and inclusion are inseparably linked. Diversity is about different viewpoints, which only holds value when people feel valued, included in the organization, and can voice their viewpoints. As diversity within an organization grows, the importance of inclusion becomes increasingly evident. Inclusion can be promoted by creating an environment where employees feel able and encouraged to speak up, and where they experience that their voice truly matters. MARIN places a strong focus on inclusivity because it is the essential foundation for increasing diversity and ensuring that diverse teams can genuinely thrive and succeed. Therefore, we invest in strengthening collaboration and sustaining a safe learning environment, where we commit ourselves to being inclusive and open-minded across all aspects of the organization.

This DEI Plan (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion, in Dutch: diversiteit, gelijkwaardigheid en inclusiviteit) supports the continued development of our organization. Building on our core values, we aim to strengthen the culture that already defines us. This plan outlines why diversity, equity, and inclusion are important to us, reflects on the initiatives undertaken over the past three years, and sets out the priorities we will advance in the coming three years. It is grounded in our commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion for all employees.

Note that MARIN uses a DEI plan, which tackles the broad topic of diversity and inclusion. We consider gender as one aspect of this plan, but since we are committing to a broader target, we chose deliberately to highlight all aspects.

In the text below, MARIN and all its employees, will be referred to as 'we'. Together we share the responsibility of contributing to an inclusive organization. We invite all MARIN employees, regardless of their role, to help foster a diverse and inclusive workplace. We trust that everyone takes responsibility and welcome any initiatives, beyond those listed here, that support MARIN's continued growth.

What do Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion mean for us?

Diversity (Diversiteit) = variety. It is about the level of differences and similarities between people (employees in the organizational context). This variety is required to inspire change, obtain knowledge on new topics where we can expand, and grow in existing areas by doing things better. We are continuously looking for different perspectives that benefit the MARIN strategy, to ensure that we are not stuck in our own bubble. We invite people from diverse cultures, different educational backgrounds, experiences, etc. to help MARIN grow.

Equity (Gelijkwaardigheid) = the guiding belief that we provide people with the resources and support they need based on their individual circumstances, such that everyone can achieve comparable outcomes. We support employees developing their strengths and provide all personnel with equal opportunities. We also value taking initiative and personal accountability to develop your own path. The goal is equal opportunities, not equal outcomes. We acknowledge that everyone has multiple biases, and we willingly search for them. Not to remove them, but to be aware of these.

Inclusion (Inclusie) = creating a socially safe environment where everyone will be respected and appreciated. We encourage people to be open-minded and value different perspectives. As a result, MARIN is a comfortable space to express yourself, and your opinion will be considered. After speaking up, you get a response to what has been done with your input. In that way, you know that your input is valuable. When you see undesired behavior, you can speak up in a kind manner.

1. Balanced representation

Why this matters

A balanced, diverse workforce strengthens an organization's culture, performance, and long-term success. When employees see themselves represented across all levels of a company, the workplace becomes more inclusive, innovative, and effective. In our recruitment and promotional activities, we promote a balanced representation. We show that everyone is welcome at MARIN, independent of background or gender, while keeping a realistic view on the MARIN population. This is mentioned in our recruitment and promotion policy.

Current situation

Working group DEI with employees

Since 2023, a working group Diversity and Inclusion has been initiated with volunteers from all MARIN departments. This group discusses DEI topics in at least three sessions per year and takes initiatives to activate and achieve the DEI goals of the MARIN strategy and annual plans together with the executive board.

Enhancing our recruitment and selection processes.

We make sure to keep the right candidates captivated and ensure neutrality in the job description. We strive for equal representation in our communication to the labor market. We have performed a pilot selection procedure that aims to ensure an objective and fair hiring process. To achieve this, we defined objective criteria suited for the job description. We have structured each step in advance by aligning expectations with the selection committee, conducting semi structured interviews, and independently scoring each candidate afterwards defining objective criteria suited for the job description. This pilot has been successfully completed and incorporated into the recruitment and selection policy.

Advancement and retention

To support and encourage employees to develop we offer a mentoring program and reflective peer consultation:

1) Mentoring:

We have a mentoring program in place for new employees in the first year of their MARIN career. The mentee can exchange views on various topics they wish to discuss. The sparring partner in a mentoring program is an experienced employee (the mentor) who is committed to mentoring on a voluntary basis, and the program is designed in close agreement with the team lead and HR.

2) Reflective peer consultation (interview):

We host and stimulate peer consultation meetings at team leader level inside MARIN, with groups of up to ten people. Within these meetings, challenges are openly discussed, with the aim of providing guidance and reflecting on actions that someone can take. Experiences are that these meetings are very useful, both for the person who has a challenge and for others who discuss.

Plans for the coming three years

Enhancing our recruitment and selection processes.

- Diversity within teams and departments will be monitored regularly, including gender, with additional criteria to be considered where relevant (see Monitoring section). The purpose of this monitoring is to identify trends and potential barriers to inclusion and equal opportunities. No quantitative targets, quotas, or benchmark percentages are associated with these characteristics. Based on the insights gained, appropriate follow-up actions may be defined where needed.
- We implement the new recruitment and selection process of the successful pilot for objective and fair hiring process to all departments and teams for internal and external hirings.

Advancement and retention

- We expand the mentoring program beyond the first year at MARIN. We give everyone within MARIN regardless of their experience the opportunity to make use of a mentoring program to stimulate their professional and personal development.

- We will set-up a pilot reflective peer consultation program for all interested persons within MARIN.

2. Transparency and equal opportunities

Why this matters

We strongly believe that DEI thrives when we are open about our processes and willing to talk honestly about where we stand today and where we want to be in the future. Being transparent, offering equal opportunities, and explaining the reasons behind our decisions helps to build trust and to support sustainable growth and development within the organization. By doing so, we create a culture where people feel seen, heard, and are confident that decisions are made with fairness, clarity, and genuine care.

Current situation

Appraisal criteria

The yearly appraisals are calibrated over teams and departments, to ensure that these are as fair as possible. MARIN has a job description matrix that is used as input for the appraisal criteria, as objectively as possible, by the individual team leaders.

Training

MARIN offers training and development plans for all employees, based on the MARIN educational plan as well as individual needs of employees. The following DEI-specific training is provided

- Awareness training for management team and DEI group, as conducted in 2025
- Activities to enhance awareness and collaboration on specific DEI topics, tailored to the needs of each team or department
- Specific training for team leaders and managers based on neurodiversity. An example was the training “Autism in the workplace” for managers and team leaders

Equal Pay analysis

It is important that people are equally rewarded for equal work. Each year we monitor the appraisals and benchmark the different salaries per salary scale to ensure we do not value the same work differently. This is done internally, and the results are discussed with the MARIN MT, works council, and DEI working group.

Work-life balance opportunities

MARIN has policies that enable a healthy work-life balance: part-time work, flexible work hours, additional ‘vitality-leave’, an individual budget for extra days holidays, and working from home. The policy on working from home states that this is allowed when the work allows it, which is up to the discretion of the team leaders.

Plans for the coming three years

Appraisal criteria

We investigate and discuss criteria for appraisals with all team leaders and HR and ensure that these are (more) objective criteria. We also reflect on criteria for career opportunities with department managers and HR.

Training

- We will provide DEI awareness training for team leaders, and potentially all MARIN employees
- Inclusion will be a topic in every leadership development program
- We provide training of the DEI working group to enhance the ambassador role

Equal Pay analysis

We ask an independent external agency to conduct data-driven research to what extent MARIN rewards its personnel of different genders equally for equal work. In addition, the MARIN salary will be benchmarked against industry standards. An external party can advise us to what extent we already do this, and which topics need specific attention.

Work-life balance opportunities

We strive to build an organization where all employees have access to fair and appropriate terms of employment. Even though our terms of employment offer flexibility, not all personnel have the opportunity to take advantage of these policies due to the job they have (for instance in the production department). This may create perceived unfairness. We examine which terms do not apply equally to all employees and discuss why some policies are unavailable to particular groups (for instance due to working in shifts) and determine if this is the desired situation. Where differences in our terms of employment exist, we ensure transparency about the reasons behind them, such as operational requirements, legal frameworks, or role specific responsibilities.

3. Leadership

Why this matters

Leadership is explicitly mentioned in the MARIN strategy as one of the requirements to cooperate as one agile team, together with entrepreneurship, commercial and digital skills. A more diverse group of leaders bring more perspectives to the table, which results in better decision making. In addition, people often need a role model that they can relate to. Having a more diverse group of leaders (from middle to top management, including coordinating roles) also results in more role models which can help the development of new leaders. Therefore, it is important to have a balanced representation in the MARIN leadership.

Current situation

Training and coaching

All new team leaders are offered extensive training programs, such as the external course MIOO (Management in Onderzoeks Organisaties) or similar, and internal courses on the appraisal cycle.

Balanced representation

Improving this balance is a gradual process, which is achieved by

- Discussion & conclusion on what the desired balance is for MARIN
- Enhance and support potential leaders, combined with realistic expectations about career opportunities within MARIN
- Actively search for, and support leadership talent within MARIN
- Stimulate female employees towards leadership roles
- Emphasize the role of female project managers in external projects (lead by example)

Plans for the coming three years

Training and coaching

Leadership development will pay attention to:

- Creating awareness about the positive effects of a safe environment within all settings on the achievements and mental health of employees.
- Training and coaching on how to create and sustain a socially safe working environment, leading people and working as a team. We expand the toolbox for leadership and ensure that team leaders are capable of handling the challenges that come with more diverse teams.
- Training, tools, and guidance to have conversations on personal issues.
- For market and RD&I coordinators, specific training will be in place such that these people can fulfil their role to their potential.

Balanced representation

Improving this balance is a gradual process, which we will actively monitor and steer. We have explicitly chosen not to put a quota on the representation, to ensure that the process occurs at the pace that MARIN can handle.

4. Offences

Why this matters

It is our shared goal to create a working environment in which we respect and support one another, and where everyone feels valued and safe. Undesirable behavior in words, gestures, or actions in the workplace is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. MARIN strives for an open, welcoming, and safe company culture, in which employees can always turn to their team leader, manager or HR advisor if they wish to discuss something.

Current situation

Frameworks

The following frameworks are in place:

- External Confidential Counsellor for undesirable behavior, harassment and integrity
- Conflict and Complaint Handling Procedure. This includes the Complaints Committee.
- Procedure for Reporting Undesirable Behavior
- House Rules including the Code of Conduct

Each year, we receive a report from the external confidential counsellors. These reports are discussed, and recommendations are addressed together with the Management Team, HR, and the works council (Ondernemingsraad). The Employee Satisfaction Survey also included questions on the perceived social security, and results are compared between male / female and Dutch / Non-Dutch.

Integration of gender aspects in our research

The focus of MARIN research (such as hydrodynamics, physics, math) is mostly gender neutral. For research in the fields of human-machine interface and human factors, we consider gender aspects in our research through our Ethics Committee.

Plans for the coming three years.

It is important that leaders maintain an open attitude and demonstrate that they are receptive to feedback and discussion. This will also be part of inclusive leadership training. Practice what you preach!

Frameworks

The frameworks are evaluated regularly and are kept up to date.

Integration of gender aspects in our research

Gender is important when considering Human Centered Design and Human-in-the-loop. We strive for a more diverse group of people in our simulator that are asked to provide their input.

5. Spark enthusiasm outside of MARIN

Why this matters

We see a public role for MARIN in society to invest in sparking the interest of (young) girls in Maritime Technology to a wide audience. With increased enthusiasm for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) at an early stage, we can grow as an institute.

Current situation

We have been participating in the national Girlsday initiative for the last three years. We have been inviting primary schools with girls aged 10–12 to visit MARIN and get acquainted with various technical activities. Similarly, we have the technetium initiative, where we invite middle-school students to MARIN.

We are actively attracting women in STEM for internships, graduation projects, and employment at MARIN. This is achieved through processes as described in Section 1.

We are actively involved in the Human Capital Council (HCC) of NML (Nederland Maritiem Land). Within the HCC, sector-wide collaboration and knowledge sharing on human capital are key priorities. By exchanging new insights and best practices, we inspire one another and work together toward a sector where everyone feels welcome. One of the initiatives was a sector-wide study on inclusivity. The results give us clearer insight into where we can improve and how we can continue to strengthen our efforts. In addition, we are active in the Mpowered campaign focusing on the maritime sector.

Plans for the coming three years.

We will continue with these initiatives in the coming years.

6. Monitoring, Resources & Communication

Why this matters

Inside MARIN, most employees are comfortable with numbers and data. These help us to make informed decisions. Through monitoring, we can get data and insights which help us take the next steps. We will keep track of the topics above, look at what is working, and share updates along the way. Below we explain how we plan to do this and processes we will use.

Current situation

Monitoring

We monitor our progress on a regular basis and evaluate what the most effective way forward is. Monitoring is not a goal in itself but is used to measure our progress. Therefore, the conclusions are actively communicated company wide. Topics that we monitor are listed below:

- An internal pay gap analysis is conducted at the end of each year and discussed in the MT and DEI working group. As part of this analysis, the appraisals are monitored as well as the impact on salary.
- An Employee Survey is conducted every three years. The conclusions of these survey results are openly shared and discussed. Follow-up plans are made and discussed in the MT, with team leaders and HR.
- We participated in the NML survey on Inclusivity in 2025.
- There is annual registration of complaints submitted to the confidential advisors.
- Social security is discussed twice a year with the works council.

Communication - Increasing awareness

The MARIN intranet is used to communicate about DEI topics, such as the pilot project for objective hiring, results of the Employee Survey, and updates from the DEI working group.

Resources

A HR representative is responsible for the DEI project, together with a companywide working group of 10-20 employees. The HR representative is in direct contact with the MARIN board to discuss DEI related topics. The goal of the working group is to raise awareness, be an ambassador within MARIN, review actions, and take opportunities to bring the DEI topic within MARIN further.

There is budget available for DEI specific activities. Training on DEI topics is financed through the yearly educational program.

Plans for the coming three years

Monitoring

- Pay gap analysis conducted by an external, independent, company. Conclusions will be shared company wide.
- The Employee Survey results are shared, as well as results from other surveys on social security (such as the NML survey conducted in 2025). These results are translated into actionable items, which are communicated company wide. At the end of the year, progress is shared on these items, and follow-up plans are presented for the next year.
- The Male / female ratio for MARIN down to department level is monitored, as well as the ratio male / female for new employees per year.
- Responses to any internal application / role that has been published per year, and who has been selected.
- We participate in the 3-yearly IMO WISTA survey for woman in the maritime industry.

Communication - Increasing awareness

We will continue with our communication through the MARIN intranet and will actively search for topics based on input from all personnel (topics can be raised anonymously). The progress that has been made following the plans in this plan is shared company wide as part of the DEI group communication.

Resources

There will be a dedicated budget (in the form of a MARIN project number) available for the people in the working group, which allows each person to spend up to 1 hour per week on this topic. Additional hours are part of the normal 'non-billable' hours.

(External) Knowledge

There are many organizations that have similar challenges as MARIN, and there are companies specialized in guiding us through these topics. We are searching for assistance and external guidance to provide training, discuss best-practices with the DEI-group and MT, and ask for help reviewing and prioritizing items.

Published DEI-plan

This DEI-plan is publicly available through the MARIN website and is reviewed and updated yearly. All actions and activities that are formulated in this plan are monitored, evaluated, refined, and are published internally. Key findings and conclusions are published in the MARIN annual plan that is publicly available.

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