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.