



Equality training at the MUG

On November 29 and December 9, 2022, the MUG held trainings entitled Fahrenheit University Equality Strategy. They were attended by employees of our University, including representatives of the Main Library, the Welcome Point, the Publishing House, the Communication Section, the Employees' Development Support Department, the Office for Internationalization and the Department of Practical Study of Foreign Languages. In addition, the training was attended by representatives of Gdańsk University of Technology and the University of Gdańsk.

The theoretical and workshop training was conducted by experts on discrimination: **dr Anna Strzałkowska** and **Marta Siciarek**, who familiarized the participants with issues related to discrimination of the LGBTQ+ community and migrants. An important point of the first part of the event was the meeting with **Percy Kowalski** from the organization **Tęczowy Port UG** (Rainbow Harbour of the UG), which was devoted

to the issues of equality and non-discrimination of non-binary individuals.



The training was one of the first initiatives undertaken as part of the *Different and Equal* Campaign. ■

photo: Karolina Derda/GUMed



MARTA SICIAREK

An expert on the integration of migrants and the implementation of the idea of human rights at the local level

Each institution, including a university, is a complex system with a specific culture, so it is also worth taking a systemic approach to planning equality and inclusion strategies. This means taking actions for women, people with disabilities or mental crises, those in caring roles, LGBT+ people, people from other countries and religions, as well as those with a lower economic status. The aim of these activities is to make the MUG a good, safe, comfortable space for development, a place of equal opportunities to achieve goals and access to university resources. And also a space for the implementation of programs supporting given communities, removing barriers or difficulties they experience. Such a policy gives each person a sense of belonging, being at home, which is crucial when acquiring knowledge and working in such difficult disciplines as medicine and healthcare.

Systemic approach means an orderly approach to the equality strategy, a clear specification of the bodies/structures responsible for its implementation, the designation of tools and specific action plans set in time. It can be compared to a tree – we need both a trunk, which in this case is the necessity of inclusion, branches that define specific lines of action (e.g. a specific policy, monitoring, responding to manifestations of discrimination, analysis of the social impact of university projects), and leaves – campaigns, social training, various formulas of involving the university community. The whole should be logically connected, justified, transparent and sustained long-term. ■

**DR ANNA STRZĄŁKOWSKA**

Activist for equal treatment, sociologist, lecturer, University of Gdańsk

When a university has an inclusion/equality strategy, it gives a clear message to its community that discrimination is not allowed within its walls. Therefore, the strategy has both a practical dimension (I know where I can report worse treatment) and a symbolic one (I know that I must not cross other people's boundaries or I will be punished).

Discrimination is a series of behaviors that are often part of the culture of a given institution, so it is worth opening a university discussion about its manifestations. Among them are, for example, peer or environmental microaggression, backbiting, smirks and other degrading behaviors that violate dignity, and in the long run also decrease motivation to study or work, result in problems with well-being and depression. A clear message that the well-being of each person is important at the university and that their diversity is seen and respected is very important in today's polarized world. We are all looking for friendly spaces and we all have an impact on their creation, so this topic is not worth ignoring. A friendly space for cooperation means better learning results and higher effectiveness of teaching or treatment. ■