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ADDRESSING DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT THE ITALIAN SPACE AGENCY

Abstract

Promoting diversity and inclusion at all levels with dedicated measures and initiatives represents a strategic lever capable of triggering new insights, point of views and often even cutting-edge ideas in any sectors. Diversity, inclusion and equity policies can really prove to be real key drivers of transformation, guiding any economic and/or institutional activity towards both growth and increasingly ambitious challenges, in public as well as private ecosystems.

Encouraging respect for diversity through inclusion policies actually translates into opportunities to let the value of each individual emerge, also attracting the attention of new talents right from the recruiting stage. An institution's serene and collaborative work environment paying attention to its employees' needs is, in fact, able to characterize and distinguish the institution itself from its respective competitors and to transform it into a leader within its reference market.

To this end, so-called "diversity charters" have been adopted in the last years in many European countries (including Italy), with the support of numerous public administrations. However, with the exception of a few excellent examples, diversity management policies in the Italian Public Administration are still at an early stage, highly diversified throughout the Country and without a long-term plan and/or vision. Moreover, they seem rather to respond to contingent problems linked to specific cases of discrimination in the workplace or for the access to it, without, overall, truly managing any diversity- and or inclusion-related issues.

In such a context, the Italian Space Agency (ASI) represents one of the institutions that have been active for several years, with encouraging results both in terms of diversity and inclusion as well as of equal treatment measures.

The purpose of this paper is to share the path undertaken so far by ASI for the realization of focused local initiatives - from the definition of a Positive Action Plan for the effective implementation of Diversity and Inclusiveness measures to a Gender Equality Plan, up to ad-hoc training courses addressed to its top- and middle-management - offering, at the same time, possible ideas for the implementation of more specific and forward-looking joint projects which, consistently with ESA's 4.0 strategic vision and the United Nations 2030 Agenda's sustainable development goals - can provide the national, European and extra-European space community with effective stimuli, aspiring to add value to the professional growth of the current and future national and global space workforce.