

# DESIGNING THE BLUEPRINT AS IRELAND'S FIRST ATHENA SWAN BRONZE LIBRARY



Sharing Maynooth University Library's journey of breaking ground and building inclusion.

## Laying the Groundwork

In 2023, MU Library championed the **expansion of our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)** initiatives.

**Athena Swan** was chosen as a globally recognized **framework** to self-evaluate our culture and identify areas for growth.

The process involved **data gathering**, a written **analytical application** and the development of a five year **action plan** outlining our commitment to improving EDI.

## Framework Assembly

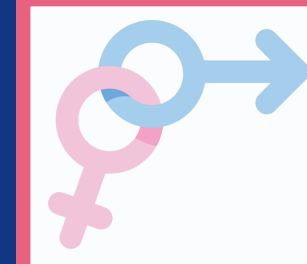
A library staff **self-assessment team (SAT)** was established to steer the initiative.

We ensured **representation** across all grades, departments and genders.

Doodle was used to schedule **regular, hybrid meetings**.

We used **real-time document tracking** to ensure efficiency and accountability.

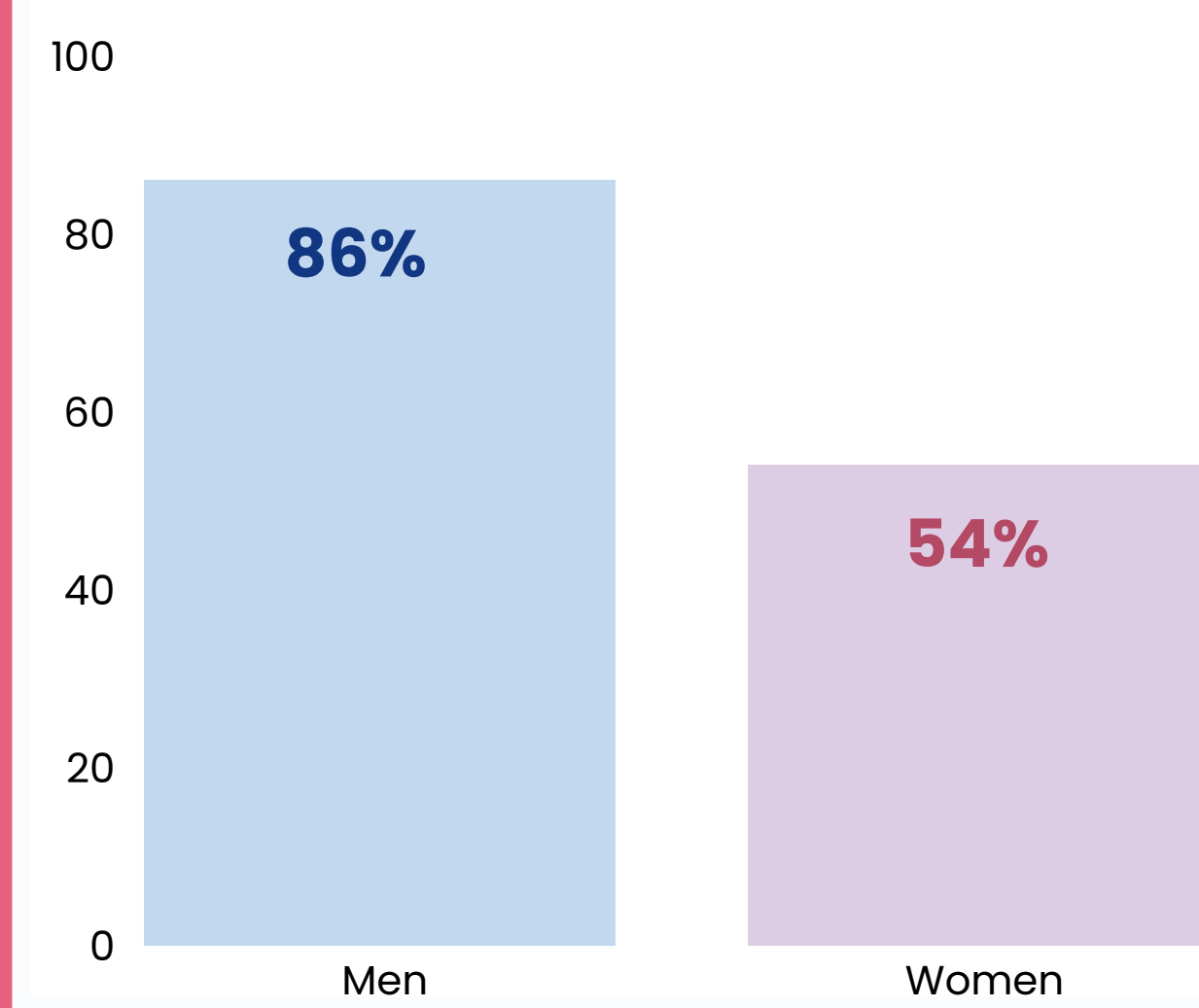
We embraced **collaboration** with HR and MU's EDI Office.



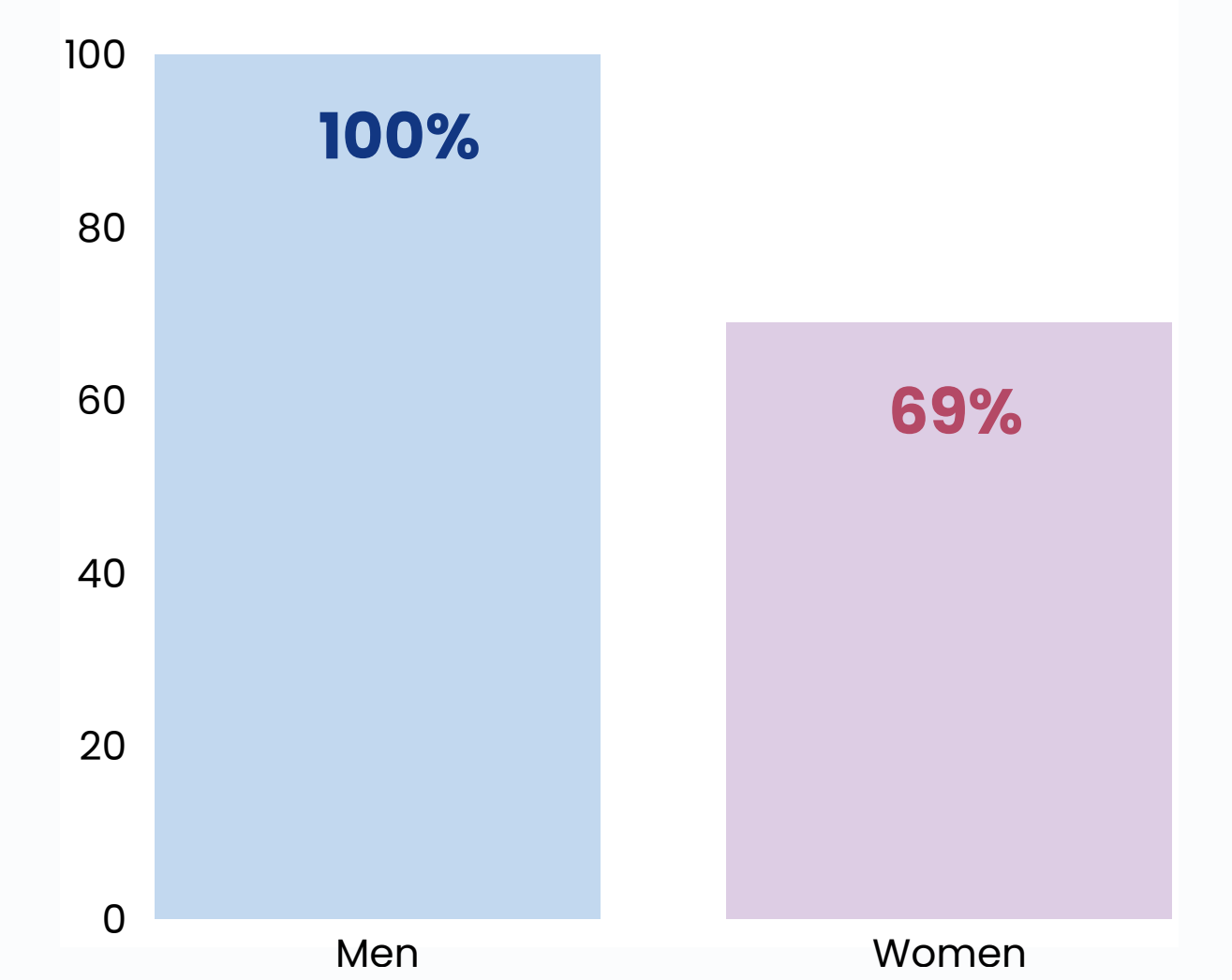
## Turning Data into Insight

We achieved a high engagement rate of **70%** in our staff survey (83% W and 17% M). The survey revealed a **perception gap** in how staff experience the workplace depending on their gender.

Women and Men are equally visible in leadership roles in the University



The prevailing atmosphere / culture in the Library is inclusive and friendly



## Building Foundational Pillars

After analyzing the data as a team, we identified **key themes** and used them to define **four priority areas** with corresponding strategic actions. These four areas function as the foundational pillars for all subsequent EDI processes and activities.



## Drafting the Blueprint

The SAT then drafted a comprehensive **7,500-word application** using the Athena Swan Bronze award template.

We **split into pairs** based on expertise and interest to translate our four priority areas into seventeen **specific, measurable actions**.

Collaborating with HR and MU's EDI Office gave us further context to ensure our **goals were achievable** within five years.

The resulting **action plan** now serves as our definitive blueprint for reaching our EDI objectives.

Our approach ensured that every piece of **critical feedback** from our focus groups and surveys was **addressed**.



## Beyond the Bronze

Following our June 2025 submission, we became the **first library in the U.K or Ireland** to receive the Bronze Award.

To ensure sustained progress, we have transitioned the SAT into a **formal Library EDI Committee**.

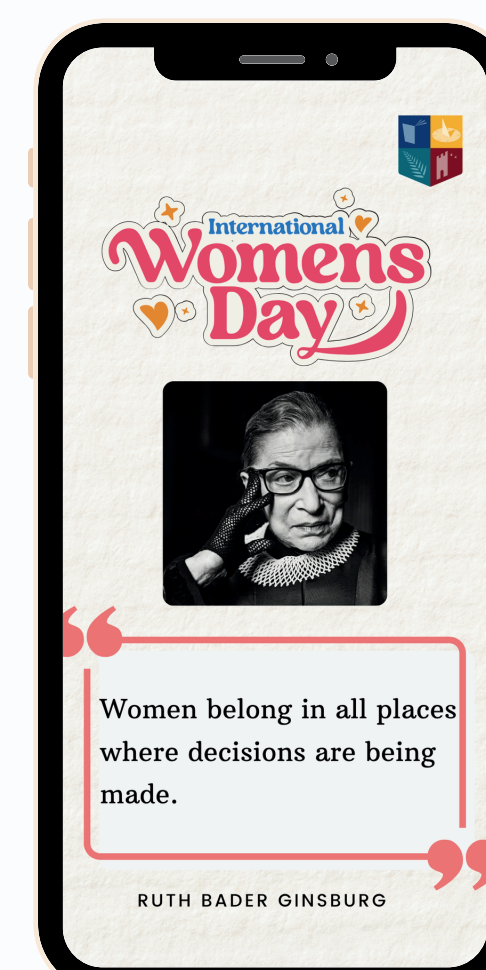


Backed by a **dedicated budget**, the committee **meets quarterly** to drive our five-year action plan.

Some actions we are working on include **auditing** the library's accessibility, **revising** staff meeting formats for maximum inclusion and **promoting** gender diversity within our collections.

We are also developing **new staff training** to reinforce that EDI is a **collective responsibility** across the whole MU Library community.

## Follow our EDI Journey



Scan to read more. Find links to the Athena Swan website and MU Library's social media channels. [#MULibraryEDI](#)



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