Human Resources Strategy for Researcher (HRS4R)

RENEWAL PHASE
ACTION PLAN

February 2022

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HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE ACTION PLAN

The Centre Tecnològic de Telecomunicacions de Catalunya (CTTC) endorsed the "European Charter for Researchers" and "The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researcher" in October 2013, showing its support towards providing a high-quality research environment for European researchers.

Since then, CTTC has been working towards implementing the points of the Charter and Code (C&C), fulfilling the requirements of the "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)".

After the Initial Phase of the HRS4R timeline, CTTC prepared and approved the Internal Analysis and the Action Plan on 09/11/2015, obtaining the 'HR Excellence in Research' award on 19/11/2015.

After the first two years of the Implementation Phase, CTTC prepared an Internal Review. CTTC approved the final Self-Assessment document with the HR Strategy and Revised Action Plan on 29/01/2018. After receiving the Interim Assessment with the comments and recommendations from the External Experts, the three-Year Implementation Phase started, for the implementation and continuous monitoring of the HRS4R actions according to the Revised Action Plan.

Then, a new internal review has been performed and an Improved Action Plan elaborated to enter the Award Renewal Phase. The Improved Action Plan has been approved by the Direction on February 7th, 2022. Upon completion of the internal assessment and Direction approval, the outcomes of the Internal Review, including the complete list of actions, for the renewal phase, are submitted to the EC through the HRS4R E-tool (European Commission's official platform), and the Improved Action Plan published on the CTTC's website.

The CTTC Action Plan is organized in four different work packages according to the 4 thematic areas of the C&C:

- WP1: Ethical and professional aspects
- WP2: Recruitment
- WP3: Working conditions and social security
- WP4: Training

In the WP1 dealing with ethical and professional aspects, we do prioritize to extend new measures tied to the code of best practices in research. Such measures cover heterogenous aspects such as the compilation of the CTTC organizational manual, the adoption of a tool to register the working hours, fostering the conciliation between work and family, extending the current open access policy (i.e., dissemination and exploitation results) by including open data, and the adoption of a neutral language to prevent harassment. Also, we have identified the need for improvement in communication aspects, public engagement and related aspects. Thus, actions in this direction are being prioritized also with the commitment and support of the new Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication, thanks to the ongoing activities in the framework of the communication project started in 2021.

Recruitment has been identified as a priority in the implementation phase and considerable efforts have been devoted to it. It is considered a main pillar also for the renewal phase. According to the feedback received from the external experts, in the implementation phase after the previous self-assessment, we have merged actions and include the multiple aspects of the recruitment in the updated Open Transparent and Merit-based recruitment (OTM-R) policy (available at CTTC webpage), while improving the quality control mechanism. Particularly, in the WP2 devoted to the recruitment, related actions are being defined to ensure the quality of the entire process. Thus, the planned initiatives for the renewal phase embrace the training of the involved personnel in the recruitment selection, considering committees formed by different actors to guarantee the transparency, fairness, avoiding the discrimination, and certifying that candidates are exclusively judged on per merit indicators. The recruitment policy is crucial in the CTTC activities and then, it will be continuously monitored to identify further actions for the sake of improving the whole process as well as attracting and retaining talents. Finally, it is planned to describe a set of recommendations to facilitate the researcher mobility once the Pandemic situation offers the scenario to be conveniently carried out.

The WP3 takes over of the working conditions and social security. This WP has been further improved and actions taken due to the pandemic situation, prioritizing benefit policies and the improvement of working environment, also according to the needs expressed by the personnel in the annual surveys. Also, it is worth mentioning the presence and participation of the works council both in the CTTC security and health committee as well as within the HRS4R work group, as additional stakeholder to be taken into account. Other actions have been extended or are still in progress, such as Intellectual Property Rights and Technology Transfer recommendations to be further worked with the new Directorate of Open Innovation & Science/National Programs and their industry leads. An important action to be taken in the next phase is to further work on the complain-based policy. It is also planned to improve the internal communication policy about the organization of events (e.g., PhD defenses, new recruitment calls, new personnel joining, etc.). The conditions in the CTTC buildings will be continuously revisited to deliver a more comfortable, inclusive and pleasant working environment (also in view of facilitating the reincorporation of women at work and promoting social activities). Additionally, it will be also considered further improvements to attain a better and smooth balance between the work and the family needs.

WP4 focuses on the training aspects, which we consider really important for our Institution. In this framework, it will be defined and strictly established the role of the advisors with respect to the early-stage researchers. The idea is to strength this relationship providing effective tools to improve the supervising activities, to better analyze the obtained results and outcomes, to produce surveys of the conducted activities, etc. Furthermore, an important action will be devoted on the continuous training of the personnel to acquire new or more deep knowledge in specific technical topics/tools and complementary skills to improve their career development. This information will be collected through yearly satisfaction surveys and identification of needs from the Direction.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that the HRS4R and HR policies are also embedded in the CTTC R&D Management Systems, recognized by AENOR with the certification of the quality standard UNE

166002, periodically revised and yearly audited. This certification is internally implemented as a project named "MUSSOL" with a manual and a set of 12 procedures (referred to as P01 up to P12). This involves several aspects/principles of the four thematic areas of the C&C (such as the professional responsibility and attitude, contractual and legal obligations, evaluation/appraisal, recruitment, intellectual property, etc.).

2. ACTIONS

WP1 Ethical and professional aspects

A1.1 Further improve and update MUSSOL procedures, according to the actions defined by the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers	
Gap principles	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 11, 35
Timing	Yearly in Q3
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Quality Programs (formerly, Project Management Coordinator)
Indicator(s)/target	Annual revision of MUSSOL Manual and Procedures and updated version including improvements
Current status	Extended
Remarks	MUSSOL procedures are continuously revised and improved as yearly certified by AENOR. This action has been extended to be continuous also in the next phase.
A1.2 Yearly update productivity policies regarding dissemination and exploitation of results and other aspects. Distribute to the staff documents for their information on that respect	
Gap principles	4, 26, 37, 32, 33, 28, 19, 38, 11, 25
Timing	Yearly in Q2
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Productivity policies documentation yearly defined, approved by Direction and distributed to the staff.
Current status	Extended
Remarks	Action extended to the next phase to be continuously fulfilled. The productivity program is yearly approved by the Direction. Every year the economic and scientific objectives are communicated and checked with the Research Units (RUs).

	When the evaluation is completed the RUs receive a complete feedback which allows for full reproduction of the results.
A1.3 Follow improving communication actions and outreach activity programs. Advertise on institutional web page and institutional social networks those activities	
Gap principles	8, 9
Timing	Yearly in Q2
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Annual report on CTTC web page. Published each June.
Current status	Extended
Remarks	Continuously implemented. Annual report updated yearly and published on CTTC web page in June (http://www.cttc.es/press-kit/). In addition to this, in 2020 we approved a Communication project which started in 2021 to completely redefine the communication plan of CTTC, with the redefinition of the institutional image, a new web page, and social media and dissemination plans.
A1.4 Annual diagnostic of gender and discriminatory issues to include in the annual report for the Patrons	
Gap principles	10, 27
Timing	Yearly in Q4
Responsible Unit	Human Resources
Indicator(s)/target	Yearly audit with diagnostic performed in December. Summary included in the annual report.
Current status	Extended
Remarks	Yearly performed and audited, included in the annual report and in the report for the Patrons. Action extended to the next years. Please note that we have updated the indicator, accordingly.
A1.5 Extend the policy for Open Access dissemination of the outputs of the research	
Gap principles	7, 8
Timing	Q3 2023
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	CTTC Open access policy document. The number of open access items.

Current status	New
Remarks	Extend the open access policy, currently limited to publications, to other research results. This task will follow EU open data and their respective data management plan recommendations.

A1.6 Welcome pack manual	
Gap principles	10, 29
Timing	Q2 2022
Responsible Unit	Human Resources
Indicator(s)/target	The document. The number of communications to the staff
Current status	new
Remarks	Create a welcome manual incorporating all CTTC policies, including also those related to gender, discrimination and diversity as well as the instruments to prevent harassment

A1.7 Guide for use of neutral language in all documents/communications	
Gap principles	2, 7, 10, 27
Timing	Q1 2023
Responsible Unit	Human Resources
Indicator(s)/target	Document available to all personnel.
Current status	New
Remarks	Ensure an equal inclusive and nonsexist communication by means of the proposed guide to be distributed and informed to all personnel

A1.8 Work on the "CTTC Mission" definition involving all personnel	
Gap principles	2, 4, 7, 23, 35
Timing	Q1 2024
Responsible Unit	Direction, Directorate of Quality Programs
Indicator(s)/target	CTTC Mission statement available on CTTC website
Current status	new
Remarks	The CTTC Mission will be worked with all researchers at all stage of their careers and will involve all personnel to have a common view of the mission to be pursued, in which all can be identified.

WP2 Recruitment

A2.1 P10 procedures will be further improved according to the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers when appointing or recruiting researchers. In addition, they will be further updated to take into account discrimination and gender issue new policies	
Gap principles	12, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 28
Timing	Yearly in Q3
Responsible Unit	Human Resources, Directorate of Quality Programs (formerly, Project Management Coordinator)
Indicator(s)/target	Yearly updated version of the MUSSOL P10 procedure Registration of the new version in the document
Current status	In progress
Remarks	This action has been implemented as part of the new policy of recruitment for research staff approved by Direction, Works Council and the Board of Trustees. MUSSOL procedures are continuously revised and improved as yearly certified by AENOR. Therefore, P10 procedure, specifically dealing with recruitment, will be continuously updated according to the recruitment policy, which is the document including all recruitment aspects and phases (selection procedures, selection committee, advertising policies, recruitment transparency, judging merit, ...).
A2.2 Further elaborate recommendations on mobility for the career development strategy	
Gap principles	18, 19, 28, 29
Timing	2023 Q4
Responsible Unit	Human Resources, Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Revision of internal regulation documentation to include recommendations on mobility.
Current status	Extended
Remarks	This action has not progressed due to the Covid-19 pandemic and the suspension of mobility actions and travels. The elaboration of this action is on-hold until the pandemic situation is improved.

A2.3 Training all staff involved in the recruitment	
Gap principles	11, 12, 13, 14, 16
Timing	Q2 2023
Responsible Unit	Human Resources
Indicator(s)/target	Nº of courses. Nº of attendees
Current status	New
Remarks	Training of the people involved in the recruitment process and selection panels in different recruitment techniques in the area of OTM-R.
A2.4 Talent attraction plan	
Gap principles	12, 14, 19, 22, 26, 27, 28
Timing	Q2 2024
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication, Human Resources
Indicator(s)/target	Talent attraction plan
Current status	New
Remarks	Elaborate a talent attraction plan, including actions as the creation of a transitional predoc contract to provide some economic support to excellent students during the transition time between graduation and an official grant application that can eventually fund their training towards a PhD; or communication actions to increase visibility of research career opportunities.

WP3 Working conditions and social security

A3.1 Further develop internal policies and procedures towards the host of visiting researchers at all stages of their career. Add an explicit link to EURAXESS portal in CTTC institutional web page	
Gap principles	28, 29
Timing	Q4 2022
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Internal policies and related documents for the host of visiting researchers.

	Explicit link to EURAXESS in the institutional web page.
Current status	extended
Remarks	Internal policies and procedures have been developed including mandatory agreement (e.g., insurance, etc.) for all the visiting students and researchers at all the stages of their career. An explicit link to EURAXESS portal is available in CTTC institutional web page within the section related to Careers (category: Support to the Mobility of Researchers).

A3.2 Update and further develop internal PO7 procedures on Intellectual Property Rights and Technology Transfer recommendations

Gap principles	8, 31, 32
Timing	May 2019 Q2 2023
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Quality Programs (formerly, Project Management Coordinator), Directorate of Open Innovation & Science/National Programs and their industry leads (formerly, Corporate Development Director)
Indicator(s)/target	Updated version of the MUSSOL PO7 procedures, according to the new internal documents.
Current status	In progress
Remarks	With the new Direction and specifically, the new Directorate of Open Innovation & Science/National Programs and their industry leads, the procedure will be further defined and updated.

A3.3 Further establish a complain policy. Include it in the internal regulations of CTTC.

Gap principles	2, 10, 34, 37
Timing	Q1 2024
Responsible Unit	Direction, Human Resources, Directorate of Quality Programs (formerly, Project Management Coordinator)
Indicator(s)/target	Written document on complain policy in the CTTC internal regulations.
Current status	Extended
Remarks	Regarding harassment, CTTC Protocol for the prevention and treatment of sexual harassment and sex-based harassment has been defined and distributed to the personnel. Regarding

	other type of conflicts, complaints, this action has been extended for any aspect that are not already included in the CERCA code of conduct, which CTTC applies. In this action also the work council support might be involved.

A3.4 Further develop internal communication policies about organization of events, PhD thesis defenses, new people joining CTTC, etc.

Gap principles	8, 23, 15
Timing	Q2 2023
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Internal communications on events, PhD thesis defenses, new people joining CTTC, and relevant news are regularly received by the staff. Weekly dissemination of Direction approvals summary. News/events published on the institutional web page (http://www.cttc.es/news-events/)
Current status	Extended
Remarks	Ongoing action. Internal communication has been further developed improving the summary of the weekly Direction approvals to provide more detailed information to the staff. The staff is also informed on the organization of events, PhD thesis defenses, new people joining CTTC, and any relevant news. News and events are also published on the institutional web page (http://www.cttc.es/news-events/). This action has been extended to continuously improve the communication policies at CTTC. In this context a communication project started in 2021 refining the internal communication policies including new plans for online seminars, new templates for internal communications, etc.

A3.5 Improvement in working conditions according to new space and conditioning of polyvalent spaces in the CTTC buildings

Gap principles	23, 24
Timing	Q1 2022, Q2 2022, Q1 2023
Responsible Unit	Direction, Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Nº of users, Nº of internal communications
Current status	New

Remarks	This action is already in progress and will be developed in different phases as indicated in the timing. New polyvalent spaces will be set up in the CTTC buildings, allowing employees to have access to more rooms to meet with colleagues for work-related meetings or for social purposes. These spaces will be devised with the idea of becoming polyvalent enough to accommodate for different interactions to be held on them, from training sessions to regular meetings, to public presentations or even for social activities. They will be equipped with multipurpose furniture, technology solutions, and social elements.

A3.6 New lactation room

Gap principles	23, 24, 27
Timing	Q1 2022
Responsible Unit	Direction, Human Resources
Indicator(s)/target	Availability of the room, Nº of room reservations
Current status	New
Remarks	This action is already in progress. A private space for employees who are nursing mothers will be enabled to allow them breastfeeding or express breastmilk for her babies. The room will contain a comfortable chair for the nursing mother, a flat surface to place a breast pump upon, a fridge to keep milk refrigerated, and a sink to allow for correct hygiene. The space will guarantee the total privacy with a locking door and covered windows. Having a secure and private location helps nursing mothers relax enough for a pumping session and helps them complete the session faster. It gives them a place to carry out this biologically important task while on the job and space to accommodate the supplies necessary. It also facilitates the reincorporation of women to work after maternity leave.

A3.7 Improvement in working conditions enabling new hybrid meeting rooms

Gap principles	23, 24
Timing	Q3 2022
Responsible Unit	Direction
Indicator(s)/target	Nº of room reservations
Current status	New

Remarks	Due to the Coronavirus pandemic, new ways of working and communicating have become more used now. In this regard, meetings which were usually hold on-site are now being held mainly remotely, reducing the travelling and favoring other interaction forms.
	This trend is expected to continue and thus, CTTC plans to set up new meeting rooms supporting both in-person and remote attendance.

WP4 Training

A4.1. Further define the role of the supervisors of early stage researchers, to be included in regulation for predoc and for undergraduate students	
Gap principles	22, 30, 37, 36, 40
Timing	2023 Q1
Responsible Unit	Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Revise and extend internal document
Current status	Extended
Remarks	Ongoing action. Supervisor roles are defined for hosted and visiting early-stage researchers. Further discussions are planned within the work group to extend the supervisors' role definition to all undergraduate and predoc students, involving the analysis of the results from annual feedback survey.
A4.2 Develop a catalogue of training courses	
Gap principles	28, 30, 37, 38, 39
Timing	Yearly Q4
Responsible Unit	Human Resources, Directorate of Institutional Relations and Communication
Indicator(s)/target	Document. Number of courses and attendees
Current status	New
Remarks	The training courses aims to provide additional resources to CTTC staff to continuously improve their career development and CTTC work results and contributions. The training catalogue is a result of the yearly satisfaction survey about their interests and motivation, additional feedback gathered through Human Resources, the Direction and Management

	Team, and the RU leaders. Also coaching and career advice support will be offered. The training will consider soft skills as well as technical training, and it will aim to be aligned with the career development plan. The document draft is negotiated between the Direction and the works council. Specific training will be also promoted by Direction for career development according to CTTC needs.

3. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the actions of the Improved Action Plan in the renewal phase will be continuously monitored to assess the action completion and to identify potential improvements. The plan will be accordingly updated in case of room for improvement will be identified. It is planned also to incorporate feedback/recommendations from the assessment performed by the external experts, as well as any feedback, input and recommendation derived from the site visit, which will be an important opportunity to assess and improve our strategy and plan. Internally, as in the previous implementation phase, the CTTC monitoring work group, namely the HRS4R WG, will continue regularly overseeing progress and performing the day-to-day control of the implementation of the Action Plan, to detect potential lacks as well as to suggest improvements to it. Alarm mechanisms will be activated in case of delays or critical issues. The HRS4R WG is heterogeneously composed by representatives of different CTTC staff categories, of the direction and HR unit, and also members of the works council, keeping a gender balance. Due to the heterogeneity and multiple stakeholder roles covered by the WG members, they also act as implementation committee, being responsible of most of the actions of the HRS4R Plan. The Directorate of Quality Programs is in charge of coordinating all the activities and report to Direction as well as being the main contact with the EC. The work group will celebrate meetings periodically to discuss the progress and possible improvements of the revised HR strategy and Action Plan, according to different feedback collected, such as advices from evaluation committees and any input received from the researchers at all stages of their career. Moreover, it will be considered the feedback from the results of the annual satisfaction surveys, performed each year to know staff's opinion regarding certain issues, including working conditions, quality of the different units, representation of the staff towards the direction, discrimination policies, training, strategic goals and IPR policy. Since the HRS4R is recognized in the CTTC research strategy, there is a strong alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R: it is included in the Strategic and Functional plan, periodically revised by the CTTC Scientific Advisory Board and the HRS4R is considered one of the target strategic objectives to report to the Board of Trustees in the framework of the Program of the Generalitat. The HRS4R process and excellence are also considered important achievements for the CERCA, as also indicated in the CERCA code of conduct (to which CTTC adhered since Nov. 2018). Thus, CTTC Trustees & Boards and main stakeholders are involved in the implementation of the process. Furthermore, the HRS4R and HR policies are also embedded in the CTTC R&D Management Systems, recognized by AENOR with the

certification of the quality standard UNE 166002, periodically revised and yearly audited. So that it will be continuously revised and updated according to the HRS4R revised Action Plan and new actions. HRS4R and gender equality commitment of CTTC (as evidenced in our new Gender Equality Plan) is shared and promoted within the research community through EU-funded collaboration projects and Marie Skłodowska-Curie Actions as Doctoral Networks (DNs) and Industrial Doctorates, attending and organizing events and conferences, as well as by means of the institutional web page and social media. We believe and work on that the methodology above described, involving the HRS4R work group, the staff, different committees and units, the Direction, works council, Trustees and Boards, and the commitment of CTTC with the HRS4R process, since the Award was granted, ensure that the proposed actions are being implemented and the progress carefully monitored, in view of the renewal phase towards further strengthening of the HRS4R.

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