

TEMPLATE 3: INTERNAL REVIEW

Name Organisation under review: **Institute of Physical Chemistry, Polish Academy of Sciences (IPC)**

Organisation's contact details:

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Web-link to published version of organisation's HR Strategy and Action Plan:

<https://ichf.edu.pl/en/hrcsr>

Web-link to organisational recruitment policy (OTM-R principles):⁴⁵

http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf;

https://ichf.edu.pl/theme/ichf/pliki/employment_policy.pdf

SUBMISSION DATE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION: 10/02/2020

1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
<i>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research</i>	227.65
<i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>	62.35
<i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>	62.46
<i>Of whom are women</i>	90,15
<i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4¹ = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i>	82.85
<i>Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level</i>	100.50
<i>Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level</i>	44.30
<i>Total number of students (if relevant)</i>	0.00
<i>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</i>	300.93
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
<i>Total annual organisational budget</i>	16 637 476
<i>Annual organisational direct government funding (block funding, used for teaching, research, infrastructure,...)</i>	7 016 044
<i>Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)</i>	9 621 432
<i>Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research</i>	0

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_final.pdf

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

The Institute of Physical Chemistry (IPC or IChF), acting under the Polish Academy of Sciences umbrella, is a dynamic hub where interdisciplinary teams converge at the intersection of chemistry, physics and biology. IPC fosters the genesis of innovative concepts that span from foundational research to practical applications, including establishing several dynamic spin-offs. Ranked in Poland's top 5% for research excellence, IPC annually contributes over 200 publications in journals like Nature, Science, and JACS and 30 patent applications.

IPC is also invested in the academic growth of future researchers, providing a nurturing ground for an interdisciplinary doctoral school (Warsaw-4-PhD).

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE (NARRATIVE)

Ethical and professional aspects

General information on adopted methodology:

The main basis for strengths and weaknesses identification and selecting areas of intervention reflected in the Action Plan was an anonymous survey among researchers. The survey started on 13 Oct. 2023 and remained open for three consecutive weeks.

The questionnaire consisted of 40 statements resulting from 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The task of a respondent was to read them carefully and estimate to what extent they agreed with them. The following options were possible (scale: 1 to 5):

- 1 – I totally disagree
- 2 – I disagree
- 3 – neither agree nor disagree
- 4 – I rather agree
- 5 – I totally agree

As a result, we have collected 169 responses (54% response rate)². The discussions of the HRS4R Working Group and the Steering Committee over collected data followed the survey. The purpose of these discussions was to delve into the details of the collected data and pinpoint issues that should be tackled in the Action Plan (AP). Typically, we considered **areas with ratings of 4.3 or higher as strengths and those below 3.5 as weaknesses, with areas scoring below 3.7 being areas of concern.** In this evaluation, we recognised both the overall average score from all respondents and the separate average scores for each professional group (i.e., assistants/PhD students, adjuncts, associate professors, professors, specialists) and by gender (male/female).

The adopted methodology allows better identification of top priorities to be further addressed in the Action Plan (in line with the recommendations of the Experts from our 2020 Renewal Phase Assessment With Site Visit).

Survey results - Ethical and professional aspects:

The internal survey revealed that IPC and its employees' adherence to the principles of the Charter and the Code was most aligned in this specific thematic area. **The overall average score for this area stood at 4.5**, with no area receiving a rating lower than 4.0 on a scale of 1 to 5 (**the highest-rated category**). A similar observation was made when examining the data segmented by professional groups, including assistants/PhD students, adjunct/assistant professors, associate professors, professors, and specialists.

Strengths – the highest rated areas:

Average survey results from the survey, dated of:	2014	2019	2023
Ethical principles	5.0	4.8	4.8
Professional responsibility	4.5	4.8	4.8
Professional attitude	4.4	4.4	4.4
Accountability	4.8	4.7	4.6
Good practice in research	4.5	4.7	4.7
Dissemination, exploitation of results	4.6	4.6	4.6

² For more details see [here](#).

Public engagement	4.6	4.6	4.5
Non-discrimination	4.2	4.4	4.4

Ethical and professional aspects have always been highly rated at IPC. Notably, since 2014, significant improvements have been observed in the areas of Professional Responsibility and Non-Discrimination. This progress is attributed to **regular training sessions, discussions, and email communications** (e.g., a weekly newsletter with HRS4R info section) covering various professional facets of a researcher's role, including research ethics, research integrity, and grant management.

Within three years only in the newsletter, we have communicated content related to the eleven principles related to Ethical and professional aspects 66 times. **Courses on ethics, IP regulations, scientific writing, and grant writing and management** have been incorporated into the PhD programme (Warsaw-4-PhD Doctoral School co-organised by IPC and eight other research units).

Significant emphasis has also been placed on **research data management** and **open science**. We have established a robust framework for the utilization and reuse of data, providing researchers with guidance on managing research data and other outputs (via Library service and a Data Officer), and educating them about the advantages of sound data management practices.

Additionally, we have set **a number of ombudsmen to consult, monitor and manage inequalities** (two Commissionaires for Researchers' Rights, the Antidiscrimination Committee, the Career Development Advisors, the Anti-mobbing Committee, Gender Equality Working Group). We will persist in emphasizing their importance and acknowledgement within the IPC community by integrating them into the processes of local law formation and involving them in informational sessions and panel discussions tailored for employees and PhD students under various tasks constituting the Action Plan for 2024-2026.

Weaknesses - the lowest rated areas:

According to the presented methodology (weakness is an area that scored less than 3.5), **we haven't identified any particular weaknesses under this category**. Nonetheless, due to the slightly lower ratings for "Evaluation/Appraisal Systems" received from adjuncts and associate professors (3.8 and 3.7 respectively), which are connected to the principles of "Career Advice" and "Career Development" that received the lowest scoring, we have opted to focus on enhancing the "Evaluation/Appraisal Systems" in the Action Plan (AP). This will particularly involve clarifying the guidelines for forming new research groups.

Related actions in AP: 33, 34, 36.

Recruitment and selection

Survey results – Recruitment and selection:

The area **"Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment"** achieved an average score of **4.3 in the survey, marking it as the second highest-rated category**. All the variables within this category scored above 3.5. The "Recruitment" principle had the lowest score in the OTM-R group, approximately 4.0. Yet, this score still showed a significant improvement (an increase of 0.1 since the survey of 2019 and 0.47 since the survey of 2014).

Strengths - the highest rated areas (4.3 or more, scale: 1-5):

Average survey results from the survey, dated of:	2014	2019	2023
Transparency	N/A*	4.3	4.4
Judging merit	N/A*	4.5	4.6
Variations in the chronological order of CVs	N/A*	4.2	4.3

Recognition of mobility experience	N/A*	4.4	4.3
Recognition of qualifications	N/A*	4.3	4.3
Seniority	N/A*	4.6	4.5

* Not included in the survey. The former procedure (before strengthening) did not require collecting data for all principles underlying the Charter and the Code.

Internal analysis proved that OTM recruitment is our strong side. The most extensive progress in Recruitment and selection was made between 2014 and 2018 when we introduced major procedures and adjustments to the practices, in particular regarding the OTM-R policy (notably: obligation to promote vacancies in EURAXESS, feedback policy, acknowledgement of various experiences, mobilities, variations in the candidates' curricula, redress procedure). After 2018, we reinforced internal procedures and practices, notably, we provided **a revamped web service to promote and collect application documents, introduced training on various aspects related to recruitment and devoted six newsletters to recruiting**. Despite the moderate employee turnover the overall IChF performance regarding recruitment and selection remained stable. The COVID-19 pandemic did not affect this process much since we had already been using tools for remote interviewing.

In 2018, we implemented an additional **OTM-R tool designed to assess the effectiveness of our OTM-R policy** – a brief questionnaire completed after concluding each competition for a research position. We are continuously gathering data to ensure our practices align with IPC policies. This tool revealed that, particularly between 2021 and 2023, about 96% of competition organizers for research positions utilized EURAXESS, the same percentage provided feedback to candidates, 100% included evaluation criteria and the number of available positions in the announcements, and 80% also provided information about career prospects. Approximately 30% of the applicants were from underrepresented groups, and around 88% of the applications were submitted by international candidates.

Weaknesses - the lowest rated areas (below 3.5 - weakness, below 3.7 – the area of concern):

According to the presented methodology, we haven't identified any particular weaknesses or areas of concern under this category for any group of respondents. Nevertheless, we recognise that there is a definite need for **improvement in gender balance** among applicants and employees. Consequently, in the Action Plan, we intend to implement measures aimed at increasing the visibility of female researchers at IPC and in public communications, as well as initiatives focused on enhancing career prospects and providing career advice specifically for female researchers. We will also continue to monitor the effectiveness of our OTM-R policy using the abovementioned tool, particularly, to re-evaluate the attractiveness of our offer for female researchers.

Related actions in AP: 35, 36, 39, 43.

Working conditions

Survey results – Working conditions:

The average score for the category "Working Conditions and Social Security" stood at 3.9 and it was the lowest-rated area in the survey. Additionally, the alignment of IPC's performance with one principle – i.e., "Access to Career Advice" was rated below 3.5, specifically at 3.3, indicating a need to address this issue in the Action Plan. Our performance in relation to some other principles also falls into areas of concern.

Strengths - the highest rated areas (4.3 or more, scale: 1-5):

Average survey results from the survey, dated of:	2014	2019	2023
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Recognition of the profession	4.1	4.3	4.3
Working conditions	4.2	4.4	4.4
Teaching	3.3	4.4	4.3

In this thematic area, IPC's durable strengths (encompassing multiannual data) include its alignment with the principles of **"Working Conditions"** (4.4), **"Recognition of the Profession"** and **"Teaching"** (both rated at 4.3).

Flexibility is a regionally acknowledged characteristic of IPC. IPC's organizational structure is flat (32 research groups), allowing heads of research groups a high level of independence. They effectively operate like managers of small companies. Their management skills are primarily assessed every two years based on the effectiveness of their research groups. Researchers feel empowered and are fully aware of how their contributions significantly impact the overall rating of their research group. This approach also reinforces the conviction that researchers are professionals.

At IPC, teaching is not a mandatory duty and is therefore not seen as a burden. Researchers interested in didactic development are encouraged to conduct lectures and seminars for PhD students. This educational involvement is considered during their periodic evaluations.

Weaknesses – the lowest rated areas (below 3.5 - weakness, below 3.7 – the area of concern):

Average survey results from the survey, dated of:	2014	2019	2023
Access to career advice	2.7	3.4	3.3
Career development	4.0	3.7	3.6
Intellectual Property Rights	3.6	3.7	3.6

The most challenging principle is "Access to career advice" (average value – 3.3) – the area with the lowest value in the survey. The female researchers and almost all professional groups (except professors) gave ratings below 3.4. In recent years, we have **appointed three Career Development Advisors (CDA)**; among them is a former IPC director (Robert Hołyst), a head of PhD studies (Robert Kołos) and a chairwoman of the Gender Equality Group (Emilia Witkowska-Nery). We also hosted a two-day workshop focused on career path design. Additionally, we enhanced our Dream Chemistry Lecture series (11 events) by incorporating a segment on career planning. In this segment, guests share their career experiences and insights, guiding young scientists on career planning and managing their own research groups. One of our CDAs (Emilia Witkowska-Nery) also organised the "Discussion panel: Scientific Careers: Lab, Industry, and Popularization". However, this area seems to require further actions to satisfy the researchers' needs.

Looking deeper into survey results broken into professional groups and genders, IPC also underperformed under the principles: **"Stability and permanence of employment"** (specialists, adjuncts), **"Gender balance"** (adjuncts, associated professors and female researchers), **"Career development"** (adjuncts, associated professors) and **"Intellectual Property Rights"** (adjuncts). Additionally, "Value of mobility" (for specialists and adjuncts) and "Complaints/appeals" (for adjuncts and associate professors) fall into areas of concern.

Specialists and adjuncts primarily view their professional positions as unstable, largely due to their reliance on grant funding. They often experience temporary scarcity of funds during transitional periods. To mitigate this, IPC plans to set up mobility and development funds and adopt other measures in line with the recommendations originating from the HR strategy for specialists. In an effort to enhance gender balance and career opportunities, actions will be taken to boost the visibility of female researchers within IPC and in external communication. We will also provide targeted career guidance for adjuncts and associate professors. Furthermore, we aim to launch an informational campaign about Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and their management at IPC.

To improve performance under "Complaints/appeals" area we will develop a comprehensive

framework for opening new research groups at IPC (the lack of written rules causes confusion about their objectivity), organise hand-on-training “Research Group Opening Experience” and start regular competitions for new research group opening every two years. These competitions will be advertised within a timeframe that allows prospective researchers ample time for adequate preparation.

Related actions in AP: 6, 7, 8, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37,38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 44, 45.

Training and development

Survey results – Training and development:

The average value of the category “*Training and development*” was **4.2**. None question scored less than 3.5. All professional groups were entirely congruent in their assessment.

Strengths - the highest rated areas (4.3 or more, scale: 1-5):

Average survey results from the survey, dated of:	2014	2019	2023
Supervision and managerial duties	4.5	4.5	4.5
Supervision	3.8	4.2	4.3

Certainly, "Supervision and Managerial Duties" along with "Supervision" are enduring strengths at IPC. The organization's flat structure and well-defined supervisory roles foster a more egalitarian system, where all members are viewed as equals with the same rights and opportunities.

Weaknesses - the lowest rated areas (below 3.5 - weakness, below 3.7 – the area of concern):

Based on the methodology used, **we did not find any specific weaknesses or areas of concern within this category.** This observation applies to both the overall data and the data segmented by professional groups or genders.

Related actions in AP: -

Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed?

1) Clustering IPC research groups:

Currently, IPC houses 32 research groups that merge research at the crossroads of chemistry, physics, and biology. This diversity leads to a wide range of research topics, yet the concentration of expertise in any specific field is relatively small. Consequently, IPC is not widely recognized as a specialist in any particular research area. To address this, the IPC Board of Directors has prioritised the clustering of these research groups. This strategy aims to foster horizontal collaboration, create a substantial presence in specific research fields, and establish IPC's reputation as a domain expert. This strategy should also lead to creating better offers for external partners and entering research consortia, successfully applying for grant funding under the European Union’s framework programmes. This shift may impact the HR strategy in a way that research teams entering the specific cluster will have access to additional funding, mainly for travel and international collaboration.

2) Attracting PhD students from developed regions:

IPC is committed to enhancing its doctoral school offerings to attract more European researchers to its PhD programmes. This might involve reallocating a portion of the budget to boost the stipends of PhD candidates. Additionally, there should be an emphasis on providing improved training opportunities for PhD students, including cross-disciplinary training and career planning advice. Such initiatives could influence the HR strategy by enriching the offerings for PhD students while necessitating a more careful examination of other expenses.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy?

1) The COVID-19 pandemic:

The implementation of the AP 2020-2023 largely coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and its immediate aftermath, which undoubtedly affected certain actions. Specifically, various trainings were either conducted online or experienced delays when held in person. Additionally, the pandemic influenced mobility programmes and researchers' inclination to travel. IPC introduced hybrid and remote works and suspended programme funding mobilities. It was only in 2023 that mobility levels began to approach those of the pre-pandemic period. The IPC mobility programmes still await resumption, also due to budget constraints (see pt 2 for details).

Immediate impact on Actions from the AP 2021-2023 (mainly changing the way of delivering the objectives or their schedule) no.: 6, 7, 8, 14, 17, 19, 21.

2) Funding and budget constraints:

Poland suffered a lot from the price rise. The cumulated inflation in the years 2020-2023 will reach 30%. The public funding for IPC, including the competitive research funding, however, has not increased to cover the surplus. Simultaneously, the minimum wage in the economy saw a rapid increase (due to an automatic mechanism linked to the CPI), necessitating IPC to raise the salaries of some employees (some administration operations and infrastructure maintenance staff). This led IPC to scrutinise its expenditures more closely.

Immediate impact on Actions from the AP 2021-2023 (mainly causing delays) no.: 7, 8.

3) Employee expectations and satisfaction:

The salaries of researchers and the majority of administrative staff at IPC were not adjusted to account for changes in the CPI, a decision stemming from IPC's escalating budget constraints. If this trend persists, it could lead to higher staff turnover and will certainly affect employee satisfaction. Early indications of this issue are already evident in survey findings, as part of the gap analysis conducted in preparation for the Action Plan 2024-2026, and in discussions by the HRS4R Working Group. These discussions highlight concerns regarding IPC's adherence to principles such as "Stability and Permanence of Employment Contract" and "Funding and Salaries," along with a growing necessity for career advisory services.

Immediate impact on future HR strategy – actions from the AP 2024-2026 no.: 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 45.

4) Regulatory environment:

Poland's political climate has significantly influenced decision-making at IPC, also affecting our employees. Recurring announcements about a potential reform of Polish academia, particularly the Polish Academy of Sciences, along with the non-indexation of budgets for funding agencies and research institutions (leading to lower success rates), and unforeseen changes in the evaluation system just before evaluations, have created considerable uncertainty. This turmoil is reflected in our survey results, especially concerning the principles outlined in point 3 and the "Evaluation/Appraisal System" principle.

Immediate impact on future HR strategy – to cope with the regulatory uncertainty issue we have proposed a series of actions in the AP 2024-2026 no.: 37, 38, 39, 40, 42, 45.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

1) Reform of the Polish Academy of Sciences:

The Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education has long been considering a reform of the Polish Academy of Sciences. Institutes under the Academy, including ours, are independent legal entities. However, if such a situation occurs, the institutes could undergo significant legal, organisational, and managerial transformations. This reform could impact the Action Plan outlined in this document, potentially affecting the selection, timing, and nature of the actions, especially if some of our competencies are transferred to newly established entities.

We believe that following the recent general elections in Poland, reforms that might threaten our independence are unlikely, but we cannot entirely rule out such a possibility.

2) Technological advancements and induced management challenges:

With the fast-paced evolution and emergence of new technologies, there's an increasing demand for new skills and expertise. This trend is likely to necessitate significant modifications in recruitment strategies, training programmes, and the makeup of research teams, with a growing need for specialists in areas like AI, ML, data science, and other highly sought-after fields in the market. The limited availability of public funding poses a risk to attracting top researchers from overseas and could exacerbate the brain drain issue. Should this situation persist, we risk falling behind the ERA in aspects such as working conditions, opportunities for ongoing development, and maintaining research excellence. To counter this risk, prioritising adaptation to technological advancements and implementing the necessary changes must be a top focus for IPC's management at all levels. It also involves adapting the IPC HR strategy to follow this new challenge. This approach will undoubtedly be advantageous for the HR strategy, but it might necessitate modifying and postponing some of the planned actions. This is also behind the reason for delaying action no. 8 – the development of the human resources strategy for specialists.

3. ACTIONS

<i>Proposed actions</i>	<i>Gap Principle(s)</i>	<i>Timing</i>	<i>Responsible Unit</i>	<i>Indicator(s) / Target</i>	<i>Current status</i>
<p>Action 1) training and informing selection committees and persons engaged in recruitment on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - possible benefits for Departments/Research Teams and IPC resulting from profile differentiation of IPC employees, - candidate's engagement in different activities causing a break in his/her career or variations in the chronological order of his/her CV - IPC employment policy <p>+ inclusion of the junior research staff in the training programme.</p>	<p>12. Recruitment 16. Judging merit (Code) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) 20. Seniority (Code)</p>	<p>completed & will be continued till IV/2022</p>	<p>the chairperson of the Working Group</p>	<p>2-3 initiatives every 2 years</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Initiatives under the Action Plan 2018-2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Training: "Successful recruitment in the era of employee domination on labour market" (Ernst & Young, 09.19, 24 participants, average grade: 4.9/6) - Information campaign on IPC employment policy (posters, III-IV. quarter of 2019) - Speech of the chairperson of the Working Group at the IPC college meeting (11/2019, 36 participants - heads of research groups, administration units and the Board of Directors) - Introduction of e-tool to monitor use (by persons organizing recruitment) of OTM-R preceded by information campaign (II. quarter of 2018) - Introducing control of administration units (in particular: the Director of Scientific affairs, the Grants Dept. and the Dept. of large European projects and collaboration with business) to observe application of the IPC OTM-R policy (I. quarter of 2017) <p>Initiatives under the Action Plan 2021-2023:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - An informational campaign has been launched targeting the IPC community, specifically addressing members of the recruitment committees, and 					

<p>providing guidance on how to minimize unconscious bias in the recruitment process by recognizing inappropriate advocacy or unfounded judgments (2 notes in the internal newsletter in June 2022).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A Recruitment Toolkit with a ready-to-use competition scorecard has been developed to support IPC's recruiters. Their main objective is to support the Competition Committee members in selecting the most appropriate candidates using a recruitment process that ensures fairness, consistency, and equity. The toolkit contains valuable tips on maintaining objectivity, and impartiality and avoiding biases during interviews. Additionally, it offers insights into forming constructive feedback for candidates to build trust, and alignment and enhance both your and IPC's reputation. This toolkit has been placed on the intranet and promoted through a newsletter sent to the IPC community (August 2023). 					
<p>Action 2) improved website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - serving communication with employees, consisting of description of influence channels, list of Director's ordinances which searching machine, Director's office hours for stakeholder etc. - easing accessibility of information, in particular for the new IPC employees 	<p>35. Participation in decision-making bodies</p>	<p>11/2020</p>	<p>working group for new website (separate body)</p>	<p>new users-friendly IPC webpage with intranet, and IT tools easing accessibility of information for IPC employees and candidates to IPC</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>
<p>Remarks:</p> <p>In December 2020, a new and enhanced website with an intranet was launched, facilitating effective communication with employees. This website includes a description of communication channels, a list of Director's ordinances with a search engine, Director's office hours for stakeholders, etc., thus improving the accessibility of information, particularly for new IPC employees. The website is available in both Polish and English.</p>					
<p>Action 3) regular e-mails / information on the website referring to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - grant calls, scholarships, contests or job vacancies for researchers (i.e. euraxess) etc. - current affairs and possibility to join consulting and information groups 	<p>30. Access to career advice 35. Participation in decision-making bodies</p>	<p>completed & will be continued till IV/2022</p>	<p>the Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs, Grants Dept., Large European Projects and Business Cooperation Dept.</p>	<p>at least 24 communications per year</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>

Remarks:

All essential information regarding current grant calls, scholarships, and contests for researchers is compiled in a newsletter and sent weekly to IPC scientists. No. of newsletters in subsequent years:

- 2021 - 49 newsletters,
- 2022 - 50 newsletters,
- by the end of Nov. 2023 - 44 newsletters.

Additionally, occasional emails are sent with job announcements or collaboration opportunities in units with which we have established scientific cooperation. When forming consulting and information groups (e.g., working groups for the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan), the management informs about the possibility of joining such a group.

Action 4) before inauguration of new academic year – organizational meeting with PhD students (preferably opened for new employees) referring to internal affairs, procedures and policy of IPC and possibility to attend different consultation and information groups and meetings	35. Participation in decision-making bodies	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	Head of International Doctoral Studies/ Doctoral School	1 meeting per year	<i>completed</i>
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Remarks:

Meetings carried out under the Action Plan 2018-2020:

- 2017 - organisational meeting took place on 8.11.2017
- 2018 - organisational meeting took place on 7.11.2018
- 2019 - organisational meeting took place on 27.11.2019
- 2020 - organisational meeting took place on 7.10.2020

Meetings carried out under the Action Plan 2021-2023:

- 2021 - organisational meeting took place on 6.10.2021
- 2022 - organisational meetings took place on 23.02.2022 and 12.10.2022
- 2023 - organisational meetings took place on 1.03.2023 and 11.10.2023

The meetings have become an integral part of the inauguration event and as such will no longer be reported under HRS4R.					
Action 5) stressing mentoring role of team leaders – greater involvement in the personal development of team members	30. Access to career advice	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	the Deputy Director for scientific affairs	2 trainings/ similar events every 3 year	<i>completed</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i> This action focuses on training dedicated to supervisors and team leaders.</p> <p>Initiatives carried out under the Action Plan 2018-2020:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Panel discussion "Doctorate ... and what's next" (May 2018) 2) Training: "Mentoring – talent management" (AvenHansen, Oct. 2019) <p>Initiatives carried out under Action Plan 2020-2023:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) The workshop “Mentoring - How to Do It?”, Sept. 2023; 2) A series of press notes in the newsletter regarding the role of Principal Investigators (PI) and mentors, as well as the benefits of participating in the career development of junior employees. This series included thematic sections such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What is mentoring - showing various aspects of mentoring, providing valuable insights, practical strategies, and inspiring stories from individuals who have experienced the transformative power of mentoring; – Why you should be a mentor - to understand better the value of mentoring; – How to be a good mentor - focused on the skills and strategies needed to incorporate to become a good mentor; – Preparing for your first mentoring meeting - What topics should be discussed in the first mentoring session? Are there any 'rules' that both mentor and mentee should follow? How does the mentoring relationship progress over time? What are the mentee’s responsibilities? 					
Action 6) training for group/department leaders and young employees how to manage career in science & cycle of lectures on the subject of combining science, career and science management - open lectures at IPC informing about possible ways of career development	30. Access to career advice	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	Dept. for large European projects and collaboration with business	3 per year	<i>in progress</i>

Remarks:

Action completed. However, it will be continued in the subsequent years due to the increasing interest of the IPC community in career advice. For this reason, it was marked "in progress".

Training implemented under the Action Plan 2021-2023:

- 1) 2-Day workshop on designing a career path, delivered by Career Design company, July 2022
- 2) Dream Chemistry Lecture series which includes a dedicated section after each lecture where speakers share insights and experiences from their own career paths, offering valuable advice to young scientists on career planning and managing their own research groups:
 - ✓ "Characterising the Effects of Sulfate, Aerosol Phase State, and Aging on Secondary Organic Aerosol Formation from the Multiphase Chemistry of Isoprene Epoxydiols", Prof. Jason D. Surratt, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, March 2021
 - ✓ "Bond Activation with Zwitterions and Photochemistry with Biradicals", Prof. Dr Dominik Munz, Saarland University, Germany, September 2021
 - ✓ "Pathways towards next-generation stationary energy storage", Prof. Pekka Peljo*, University of Turku, Finland, October 2021
 - ✓ "Electrochemical 3D Printing – Advanced Nanoscale Manufacturing of the Future", Dr Dmitry Momotenko, Carl von Ossietzky Universität Oldenburg, Germany, October 2021
 - ✓ „Engineering Biology: Towards understanding and mitigating context-dependence”, prof. Domitilla Del Vecchio, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA, February 2022
 - ✓ „Chemistry in the World of Physics. How to Unify the Knowledge and Get Efficient OLEDs”, prof. Przemysław Data, Silesian University of Technology, Poland, May 2022
 - ✓ „Proteases as medical target in bioimaging and drug development”, prof. dr hab. Marcin Drąg, Wrocław University of Science and Technology, Poland, July 2022
 - ✓ „Chirality transfer across length scales”, dr Serena Arnaboldi, University of Milan, Italy, October 2022
 - ✓ „Can photons generate magnetization in non-magnetic materials? - design and synthesis of molecular photomagnets”, dr hab. Dawid Pinkowicz, Jagiellonian University, Poland, December 2022
 - ✓ "Metal amides and imides as a new family of energy storage materials", Dr. Joshua Makepeace, University of Birmingham, UK, January 2023
 - ✓ „Light-driven molecular reactivity in complex scenarios –in cells, at surfaces, in complex electron transfer cascades”, Prof. Benjamin Dietzek-Ivanšić, Leibniz Institute of Photonic Technology, Germany, March 2023
- 3) Discussion panel: Scientific Careers: Lab, Industry, and Popularization (October 2023)

Action 7) continuation of the programme for young scientists encouraging mobility and	25. Stability and permanence of employment	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	Representative for ERASMUS+ project, the HR	at least 400 days of study visits per year (average - in	<i>extended</i>
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providing researchers with adequate funding during their stay abroad			department	3-years period) - mobilities of young researchers	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Mobilities under Action Plan 2018-2020:</p> <p>2017 - 2019, each year, a new mobility programme for young scientists was announced (financed from own funds of IPC). 30 young researchers went for study visits for at least one month (900 days of study visits total)</p> <p>2017 - 2019 travels from ERASMUS+, 46 young researchers from IPC (PhD students + researchers below the age of 35) attended training and internships (725 days of visits total)</p> <p>These statistics only acknowledge mobilities from ERASMUS+ and IPC's funds. Total mobility days at IPC reach 3 000.</p> <p>Generally, the action was completed in 2020. However, we decided to continue the programme under the following Action Plan.</p> <p>Mobilities under Action Plan 2021-2023:</p> <p>Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of business trips/mobilities at the Institute has decreased compared to the previous reporting period. IPC has implemented measures to prioritise remote collaboration and limit travel for the safety and well-being of its staff. Moreover, the programme funding mobilities of young researchers was restrained and never revoked again. We will work to reinstate a new programme funding mobilities available for researchers (see action 45 for details).</p> <p>Statistics: 2020 - 2023 travels from ERASMUS+, 43 researchers from IPC attended training and internships (465 days of visits total) - statistics cover only the ERASMUS+ programme and exclude international mobilities funded from external sources that in the period of reference equalled 8 200 days.</p>					
<p>Action 8)</p> <p>development of the human resources strategy for specialists, in particular, aimed at: - specification of the role of specialists at IPC, - elaboration of the appraisal & rewarding system of specialists, - securing funds or funding sources for trainings, conferences, workshops etc. of specialists</p>	<p>11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems</p> <p>25. Stability and permanence of employment</p> <p>26. Funding and salaries</p> <p>29. Value of mobility</p>	IV/2022	Board of Directors	rules of appraisal & rewarding for specialists	<i>in progress</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>This Action has not been fully implemented and it will be continued in the next years. For this reason, it was marked "in progress".</p> <p>The HRS4R Working Group, analysing the results of the previous survey, decided that a separate strategy of appraisal and awarding of this group of</p>					

employees is needed to improve the situation of scientists included in the professional group of specialists. The specialists have been treated like any other group of researchers at IPC. They have had access to IPC-wide events organised at IPC on equal terms with other researchers. However, this group of employees is not homogeneous, and in fact, consists of researchers and other types of employees. Specialists are not included in the system of evaluation of individual researchers. Additionally, not all specialists are eligible to apply for external funding independently and thus - may have deteriorated access to additional funds for research and training. Despite our efforts, till this moment, we have not managed to elaborate on the strategy of catching the heterogeneity of this professional group and developing measures to satisfy their needs. We will continue our work under the next AP.

Action 9) new amendment imposing obligation that share of each gender in the Selection Committee will be at least at the level of 1/3	27. Gender balance	I/2019	the Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs	amended IPC OTM-R policy	<i>completed</i>
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Remarks:
 amended General Rules Governing Competitions for Research Posts at the Institute of Physical Chemistry of the Polish Academy of Sciences in Warsaw (http://IPC.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf)

Action 10) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - preparation of Career development paths at the IPC, serving as a roadmap for IPC researchers and presenting various choices that scientists may have in their careers. - development of strategy of educating researchers for industry, - gathering & distribution of information on conferences/ workshops dedicated to career development of researchers 	28. Career development 30. Access to career advice	III/2020	the Deputy Director for scientific affairs	document "Paths of professional career for researchers"; - 3 invitations in the period of 3 years for the events devoted to career development	<i>completed</i>
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Remarks:
Events organised under the Action Plan 2020-2023:

- 1) Elaborating and uploading to the IPC webpage the document "Paths of Professional Career for Researchers", serving as a roadmap for navigating the career path at IPC and presenting various choices that researchers have within IPC. The document describes four career paths: scientific, technical, administrative, and business;

<p>2) Conducting a campaign in the IPC newsletter focused on educating researchers for industrial careers, where links to webinars on career path planning were shared, such as "Navigating Your Research Career Path" and "Strategies for Career Planning".</p> <p>3) Organising a series of lectures "From Research to Business" for IPC researchers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - "Founding and running Fluence, a successful deep tech company" Dr Michał Nejbauer, CEO and Co-Founder at Fluence Sp. z o.o [January 2023] - "Sale of Curiosity Diagnostics by Scope Fluidics - business case of one of the largest transactions on the MedTech market in Poland" Szymon Ruta, Board Member (SVP) & CFO in Scope Fluidics Group [January 2023] - Cell-IN reagent as a method for macromolecules delivery into mammalian cells" Aneta Karpińska, COO & dr Karina Kwapiszewska, Co-founder and CTO in Cell-IN company [April 2023]; <p>4) To encourage career planning, a discussion panel titled 'Scientific Careers: Lab, Industry, and Popularization' was organized in October 2023. The panel showcased various paths in scientific careers. This event provided a valuable opportunity for young PhD students completing their doctorate and for more experienced researchers who may be seeking new directions in their scientific career development. Different career paths were presented by: (i) a full professor, (ii) the CEO of a company, and (iii) the Director of the Science Popularization Centre. The event was open to the entire IPC community and was promoted through emails, newsletters, Twitter, the IPC webpage, and posters displayed at IPC.</p> <p>5) A two-day (2x8h) training session titled "Workshop on Designing a Career Path" was organized in July 2022. During the course, participants had the opportunity to develop an individual career path in accordance with the original CareerDesign Model (www.careerdesign.pl/), regardless of whether it is a scientific, teaching, managerial, or entrepreneurial path. The training was dedicated to researchers at a mid-level stage of their career, specifically those who have obtained a PhD degree and have a maximum of 7 years of research experience post-PhD</p>					
<p>Action 11) promotion of Erasmus+ programme (IPC as beneficiary) and other programmes (e.g. lab visits under CREATE project) available for all IPC employees - specialists</p>	<p>29. Value of mobility</p>	<p>completed & will be continued till IV/2022</p>	<p>the Representative for ERASMUS + project, the Department of large European projects and business collaboration</p>	<p>6 information campaigns (average 2 per year)</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Initiatives undertaken under the Action Plan 2018-2020:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 e-mail campaigns in 2018, and 2019 (07, 10-12/2018, 01, 03-04/2019) <p>Initiatives undertaken under the Action Plan 2020-2023:</p>					

- One campaign managed by the Erasmus+ Programme Coordinator at IPC with a reminder and encouragement to apply for training, workshops, and internships under the Erasmus+ programme (April 2021)
- The "Erasmus " section has been added to the newly revamped IPC website, providing information about the programme and the required application documents. The information is available in two languages: Polish and English.
- In the newly created guide for doctoral candidates, a section titled 'MOBILITY UNDER ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME' has been added. This section describes the opportunities for 7-day trips abroad (training, workshops, courses, internships), a 2-month mobility option for an internship/apprenticeship, and a 3-month mobility option for studying at another foreign research institution under the Erasmus+ programme.
- In the updated guide for the new employees, a section titled 'MOBILITY UNDER ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME' has been added. This section describes the opportunities for 7-day trips abroad (training, workshops, courses, internships), a 2-month mobility option for an internship/apprenticeship, and a 3-month mobility option for studying at another foreign research institution under the Erasmus+ programme
- 5 informative emails from the Erasmus+ Program Coordinator at IPC with invitations to events organized by the Erasmus+ Team for Partnerships and Projects in Higher Education (July 2020, March 2021, March 2022, April 2022, May 2022)

Action 12) increasing frequency of issuing a newsletter	30. Access to career advice	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	the Deputy Director for scientific affairs	at least 12 newsletter with information on grants, scholarships, job opportunities and current affairs per year	<i>completed</i>
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Remarks:

The weekly newsletter started to be issued Jan. 2020. The number of newsletters for each year is presented below:

- 48 newsletters in 2020;
- 49 newsletters in 2021;
- 50 newsletters in 2022;
- 44 newsletters till November 2023;

This initiative is managed by the Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs. However, information is delivered to the Deputy Director by all IPC employees (R1-R4 researchers and administration employees).

Action 13)	30. Access to career advice	IV/2022	Career	- Career	<i>completed</i>
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development of the supervision system at IPC (separate from formal supervisors and employees' direct superiors) to mentor younger research staff and providing support in case of job search			Development Advisers	Development Advisers appointed - 2 initiatives in each period of 3 years promoting Career Development Advisers	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>In the previous report, it was indicated that two Career Development Advisers (CDA) were appointed, namely:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ prof. Robert Hołyst (head of a research group and department, former director of IPC and the most experienced person at IPC in doctorate promotion), ✓ prof. Robert Kołos (head of the research group, head of International Doctoral Studies / IPC coordinator of Doctoral School "Warsaw-4-PhD", school established by 8 research entities). <p>During the reporting period, in April 2023, an additional person was appointed to the position of Career Development Adviser:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Dr inż. Emilia Witkowska-Nery (head of the research group, chairwoman of the Working group for implementation of the Gender Equality Plan). <p>Promotional campaigns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - a campaign in the newsletter promoting these individuals and encouraging contact with CDAs; - to facilitate career advisory sessions, we have created a dedicated section on the intranet where contacts for Career Development Advisers are listed. Additionally, we have introduced Career Development Forms which serve as valuable tools during consultations. These forms assist in evaluating individual needs, setting goals, and monitoring progress. All employees can easily access these forms through the IPC Intranet; - placement of Career Development Advisers contacts in the updated guide for new employees and in the newly created guide for doctoral candidates. 					
Action 14) strengthening the role of the head of doctoral studies (a mentor during doctoral studies and shortly afterwards – when a graduate has to make a decision about further career)	30. Access to career advice	IV/2019	chairperson of the Working Group, the IPC Director	head of Doctoral School appointed as Career Development Adviser	<i>completed</i>

<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>- Appointment of the head of International Doctoral Studies/ Doctoral School for the position of Career Development Adviser to support doctoral students and other scientific employees, and research and technical employees in making decisions concerning their future careers, including advising in the process of applying for a job and in the selection of postdoctoral internships (10.2019)</p>					
<p>Action 15) to change the question regarding this issue in the next survey if a respondent searches/ needs career advice at all.</p>	30. Access to career advice	IV/2019	the chairperson of the Working Group	improved question in a survey 2019 on necessity of taking measures aimed at better access to career advice	<i>completed</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Original wording of the question referring to the principle " Access to career advice" in the survey was: "I have access to career counselling and support in case of job search." The Working Group decided that collected responses do not research if such a need exists. For this reason it was recommended to change the wording of this question. Initial wording was replaced by "I have adequate (i.e. corresponding to my needs) access to career counselling and support in case of job search.". Collected responses confirmed that additional actions are required.</p>					
<p>Action 16) preparation of a short guide for newcomers on IPR at IPC to clarify a complicated internal rules on IPR (resultant from the Polish legal system).</p>	31. Intellectual Property Rights	III/2019	chairperson of the Working Group	1 - Guide to the Regulations on the Management of Copyright and Related Rights, Industrial Property Rights and the Principles of Commercialization of the Results of Research and Development (2 language versions - Polish & English) published at IPC webpage	<i>completed</i>

<p><i>Remarks:</i> Recommendation of the ERA Chair holder under the CREATE project (H2020). Documents were uploaded to the IPC intranet. Designated team: ERA Chair holder (CREATE project), Representative for Intellectual Property, the Working Group</p>					
<p>Action 17) promotion of the position of the Commissioner for Researcher's Rights – the body authorized to mediate between conflicted parties, in particular – between tutors and early stage researchers.</p>	34. Complains/ appeals	IV/2022	chairperson of the Working Group	3 promotional initiatives	<i>completed</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – In April 2022, the second Commissioner for Researcher's Rights was appointed to ensure the concurrent presence of two Commissioners of both genders. Simultaneously, the Director sent an email to the entire IPC community, informing them of the appointed Commissioners to these positions and outlining their areas of competence. – An informational campaign in the newsletter highlighting the current Commissioner for Researcher's Rights. – The inclusion of contact information for the Commissioner for Researcher's Rights and the scope of their competencies is in the 'Important Contacts' section on the IPC intranet. – The contact details for the Commissioner for Researcher's Rights were incorporated into the updated guide for new employees and the newly created guide for doctoral candidates. 					
<p>Action 18) continuation of distribution of information packages for new employees (handed upon concluding employment contract), and widening its spread</p>	35. Participation in decision-making bodies	IV/2022	the HR department	80% of new IPC employees receive welcome package	<i>completed</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i> The guide for new employees was updated and distributed to newly hired individuals. Additionally, this guide was made available on the intranet</p>					
<p>Action 19) introduction of obligatory courses for PhD students such as courses on ethics in</p>	39. Access to research training and continuous development	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	the Head of the International Doctoral Studies	1 package of courses/trainings on: - ethics in	<i>completed</i>

<p>science, intellectual property rights, successful grant application, and publications writing (one of the actions aimed at improvement of the quality of lectures offered for the whole IPC society, and increase of attendance)</p>			/ Doctoral School	<p>science, - intellectual property rights, - grant application, and publications writing every 4 years (1 doctoral studies cycle)</p>	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>In the previous PhD studies cycle the following courses were carried out:</p> <p>a) ethics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Law and ethics in research" (dr Jan Paczesny, January 2022) ✓ "Law and ethics in research" (dr Jan Paczesny, April 2022) <p>b) scientific writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Getting Published Webinars from the Nature Research Academies" - effective academic writing, publication ethics, submission strategies, navigating peer review (Dr. Jeffrey Robens, Editorial Development Manager at Springer Nature, October 2021) <p>c) IPR:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Intellectual property rights and patenting practice" (Łukasz Zielinski, Polish & European Patent Attorney, May 2020) ✓ "Intellectual property rights and patenting practice" (Łukasz Zielinski, Polish & European Patent Attorney, June 2022) ✓ "Copyright, industrial property rights, know-how, and commercialisation of scientific research" (delivered by the law firm Lawsome Kulesza i Wspólnicy sp.k, May 2023) <p>d) successful grant application:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ "Grant application writing" (prof. R. Hołyst, April 2020); <p>These courses have been incorporated into the PhD programme and will be organized on a cyclical basis.</p>					
<p>Action 20) introduction of a system of lecturers' evaluation or approval prior the event (one</p>	<p>39. Access to research training and continuous development</p>	<p>IV/2021</p>	<p>the Deputy Director for scientific affairs,</p>	<p>- implemented coherent system of evaluating events</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>

<p>of the actions aimed at improvement of the quality of lectures offered for the whole IPC society, and increase of attendance)</p>			<p>the chairperson of the Working Group, organizer of the event (researcher)</p>	<p>at IPC, - 4 information campaigns on benefits of receiving feedback information from participants, - all trainings organized under "HR Excellence in Research" initiative (under auspices of the Working Group & the Steering committee members) evaluated - information wide-spread among IPC employees</p>	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Under the Action Plan 2020-2023 we have introduced a coherent tool for events quality assessment. A separate system was elaborated for training evaluation and other types of event evaluation.</p> <p>All events organised under HRS4R were assessed using the designated tool, namely: 3 trainings held under the "HR Excellence in Research" initiative evaluated and information wide-spread, i.e. "Mentoring - How to Do It?" (September 2023), "Nature Research Academies workshop" (October 2021), "2-Day Workshop on designing a career path" (July 2022)</p> <p>Additionally, we have conducted a promotional campaign in the newsletter that emphasises the importance of training evaluation. This campaign aimed to underscore the role of evaluation in identifying areas that may require additional training, assessing the overall effectiveness of training sessions, and determining whether they achieve the desired outcomes. Furthermore, the evaluation process is crucial for enhancing the quality of future training</p>					

initiatives. Quality monitoring tools were made available on the intranet, and details about them were disseminated via the IPC newsletter.					
Action 21) introduction of the evaluation system of lectures delivered under the IPC International Doctoral School (by collecting from PhD students feedback information on the quality of the lectures/ lecturers)	39. Access to research training and continuous development	completed & will be continued till IV/2022	39. Access to research training and continuous development	39. Access to research training and continuous development	<i>completed</i>
<p>Remarks:</p> <p>Actions taken under the Action Plan 2018-2020: Two evaluations took place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 06/2017 covering lectures held in the academic year 2016/2017 - 11/2019 covering lectures held in the academic year 2017/2018 and 2018-2019. <p>Actions taken under the Action Plan 2021-2023: During the COVID-19 pandemic the evaluation was restrained. Additionally, due to the expressed concerns of the PhD Students' Self-government about its effectiveness in delivering on its goals, in 2023, we have amended the evaluation system. The previous evaluation was centrally planned and organized and the conclusions elaborated on the evaluation did not always serve as a tool for improvement. The new evaluation system of lectures and lecturers within the Doctoral School was prepared by the Doctoral Student Council and the Head of Doctoral Studies at IPC. The system started to operate in October 2023.</p>					
Action 22) promotion PI's and mentor's role as an advisors who should support career development of their subordinates	30. Access to career advice	IV/2022	the Director for scientific affairs	1 campaign per year	<i>completed</i>
<p>Remarks:</p> <p>We have conducted 5 initiatives devoted to the promotion of PIs and mentors as advisors:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) A series of press notes in the newsletter regarding the role of Principal Investigators (PI) and mentors, as well as the benefits of participating in the career development of junior employees. 4 press releases were created as part of this series. 2) Training for mentors to increase their awareness of their role as advisors who support the career development of their subordinates (workshop "Mentoring - How to Do It?", September 2023) 					
Action 23)	30. Access to career advice	III/2022	the Career	1 initiative in the	<i>completed</i>

Initiative encouraging to set and consult own career development plan by IPC researchers			Development Adviser (prof. Robert Hołyst)	period of 3 years	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Undertaken initiatives entail in particular:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Development of career planning tools, specifically three forms: (i) initial mentoring questionnaire, (ii) simplified career development plan, and (iii) career advancement annual review form. These forms are designed to support Career Development Advisors and researchers during career development counselling sessions. They have been developed to assist in discovering professional goals based on interests and recognized values. This allows a focus on areas that hold the greatest significance for researchers during career development planning. By gathering essential information from the forms, the Advisor can better understand the needs and goals of the researcher, facilitating more targeted and personalized assistance. The use of these forms is not mandatory. The decision to utilize the forms and choose the form is made collaboratively between the Advisor and the individual participating in the counselling session. The tools have been placed on the intranet and promoted through the newsletter. 2) To encourage career planning, a discussion panel titled 'Scientific Careers: Lab, Industry, and Popularization' was organized in October 2023. The panel showcased various paths in scientific careers. This event provided a valuable opportunity for young PhD students completing their doctorate and for more experienced researchers who may be seeking new directions in their scientific career development. Different career paths were presented by: (i) a full professor, (ii) the CEO of a company, and (iii) the Director of the Science Popularization Centre. The event was open to the entire IPC community and was promoted through emails, newsletters, Twitter, the IPC webpage, and posters displayed at IPC. 					
Action 24) Change in the system of evaluation of individual researchers	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	IV/2022	Board of Directors	amended rules	<i>completed</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>We have developed a new system for providing individual feedback to researchers following their three-year performance evaluation. The previous system was based on the binary scale: satisfactory/unsatisfactory which was not well received by the researchers. From now on, the evaluated researchers will receive more detailed information about their rank compared to their colleagues. This includes the number of points obtained by the researcher, the point thresholds for the three-level rating scale, and the quartile in which the researcher's assessment is located. The new assessment system was introduced in 2022 and will be used to evaluate IPC Researchers for the years 2022-2025.</p>					
Action 25) - Reminders of the rules for the recruitment	27. Gender balance	IV/2022	the chairperson of the Working	1-2 events per year	<i>completed</i>

of researchers at IPC - Courses/ workshops on recruitment principles and process.			Group		
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Undertaken actions are as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) An informational campaign has been launched targeting the IPC community, specifically addressing members of the recruitment committees, providing guidance on how to minimize unconscious bias in the recruitment process by recognizing inappropriate advocacy or unfounded judgments (2 notes in the internal newsletter in June 2022). 2) A Recruitment Toolkit with a ready-to-use competition scorecard has been developed to support IPC's recruiters. Their main objective is to support the Competition Committee members in selecting the most appropriate candidates using a recruitment process that ensures fairness, consistency, and equity. The toolkit contains valuable tips on maintaining objectivity, and impartiality and avoiding biases during interviews. Additionally, it offers insights into forming constructive feedback for candidates to build trust, and alignment and enhance both your and IPC's reputation. This toolkit has been placed on the intranet and promoted through a newsletter sent to the IPC community (August 2023). 					
Action 26) Establishment of the „Scientific exchange programme for women”	29. Value of mobility	IV/2024	the Career Development Adviser (prof. Robert Hołyst)	1 established programme	extended
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>The program was initially designed to cater specifically to women, aiming to facilitate postdoctoral fellowships within Poland. This was partly in response to the perception that IPC mandates its PhD researchers to undertake postdoctoral training abroad. To address this, the Working Group proposed an agreement with a local Warsaw research unit, such as the Faculty of Chemistry at the University of Warsaw, enabling women to complete their postdocs there. This initiative was particularly geared towards supporting women who, due to family commitments, prefer not to leave Warsaw. It was intended to help them continue their research and potentially lead their own research teams.</p> <p>However, reaching a consensus on this matter proved challenging. The broad scope of interdisciplinary research and the variety of topics pursued by IPC researchers made it difficult to pinpoint specific faculties or research groups at other institutions for this agreement. Consequently, only an informal understanding has been achieved so far.</p> <p>In a positive shift, the IPC's Board of Directors has begun to recognize the value of domestic postdoctoral appointments, opening doors for prospective principal investigators (PIs). Given this development, our focus now is to formalize these guidelines and actively promote the framework for such postdoctoral fellowships for women. This initiative will aim to not only support their career progression but also to enrich the research landscape with</p>					

diverse perspectives.					
Action 27) Inclusion of representatives of the PhD students in the IPC college meetings.	34. Complains/ appeals 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	I/2020	the Director	representatives of PhD students invited to join IPC college	<i>completed</i>
Remarks: In April 2022, the PhD Students Self-government chairperson was added to the list of invitees for the IPC College meetings.					
Action 28) Promotion of IPC Trade Union ("Solidarność"), as a group established to represent and defend the rights, professional and social interests of employees.	34. Complains/ appeals 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	IV/2020	head of IPC trade union	1 initiative per year	<i>completed</i>
Remarks: Included in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - an updated guide for new employees uploaded on the IPC webpage and handed to the new IPC employees, - a new guide for new doctoral students uploaded on the IPC webpage, - promotion - mailing campaign October 2023. 					
Action 29) Possibility, for all employees, to submit (to any member of the Working Group or Steering Committee) their own ideas on how to improve coherence of IPC performance with the principles underlying the Charter & the Code	34. Complains/ appeals 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	IV/2020	the chairperson of the Working Group	2 information campaigns	<i>completed</i>
Remarks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Creating a mail account to wide-spread information on the issues referring to the "HR Excellence in Research" award (hrs4r@ichf.edu.pl) and promotion of this e-mail in the IPC newsletter as a communication channel to report ideas on improving working conditions and culture at IPC to 					

<p>facilitate research work.</p> <p>✓ Creating a new HRS4R communication platform, specifically an anonymous reporting form, to gather suggestions for enhancing the working environment and culture at IPC, thereby improving research efficiency. Also, actively advertising this form in the IPC newsletter.</p>					
<p>Action 30) Better promotion of the Corps of Engineers</p>	<p>25. Stability and permanence of employment</p>	<p>IV/2022</p>	<p>the head of the Corps of Engineers (specialist)</p>	<p>5 initiatives</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>We made efforts not only to promote but also to develop and re-integrate the Corps of Engineers with the IPC community. Particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - we prepared and distributed (handed to new employees by the HR dept. and uploaded on the internet) an updated guide for new employees, containing, i.a., a description of the Corps of Engineers along with a list of laboratories and contact information for the respective laboratory managers; - we prepared and distributed (handed to new employees by the HR dept. and uploaded on the internet) an updated guide for new doctoral students, containing, i.a., a description of the Corps of Engineers along with a list of laboratories and contact information for the respective laboratory managers, was distributed personally by the Secretariat of Doctoral Studies and through the intranet; - we incorporated the Corps of Engineers into the training programme for PhD students and postdocs. PhD students and postdoctoral fellows had the opportunity to complete laboratory internships in laboratories of their choice, led by the Corps of Engineers and under their supervision; - through the “IPC for the Companies” initiative, which encourages external entities to perform measurement services or analyze materials/samples in laboratories operating within the Corps of Engineers. The “IPC for Companies” initiative also encouraged members of the Corps of Engineers to prepare responses to inquiries for bids from external entities and supported them in this regard; - the representative of the Corps of Engineers was included in the HRS4R Working Group. 					
<p>Action 31) appointment of at least one specialist to become a member of the Working Group or the Steering Committee</p>	<p>34. Complains/ appeals 35. Participation in decision-making bodies</p>	<p>IV/2020</p>	<p>the chairperson of the Working Group</p>	<p>1 specialist among the members of the Working Group or the Steering Committee</p>	<p><i>completed</i></p>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>By ordinance No. 53.2021 of the Director of the Institute of Physical Chemistry PAS dated 30.07.2021, a representative of specialists was appointed as a</p>					

member of the Working Group.					
Action 32) appointment of the Anti-Discrimination Committee at IPC	2. Ethical principles 10. Non discrimination 27. Gender balance	II/2021	the IPC Director	1 Committee appointed	<i>completed</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>The Anti-Discrimination Committee was appointed by Regulation No. 40.2023 of the Director of the Institute of Physical Chemistry PAS (IPC) dated 19.05.2023. The Committee aims to clarify discrimination cases and carry out activities to ensure equal treatment of all of the Institute's employees and doctoral students. The Committee is composed of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Patrycja Nitoń, grants specialist, chairwoman of the Committee ✓ Dr MEng. Karina Kwapiszewska, Adjunct at Soft Condensed Matter Group, deputy chairwoman of the Committee ✓ Dr MEng. Wojciech Juszczyk, Specialist at Dynamics of nanocrystal structure induced by surface chemistry Group, member of the Committee. 					
Action 33) Setting a comprehensive framework for opening new Research groups at IPC	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems 28. Career development 30. Access to career advice	III/2025	the IPC Director, the Board of Directors	Announced and published on the IPC webpage: 1) IPC policy on opening new research groups; 2) Guidelines on research groups opening with Basic Criteria for Applicants. + at least two informational sessions about a new framework	<i>new</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>The data collected under gap analysis showed that some researchers are not familiar with the rules for opening new research groups and may consider such decisions of the IPC Director and the Research Council as arbitrary. For this reason, we aim to create a comprehensive framework outlining the IPC policy, essential criteria and conditions required for the formation and establishment of new research teams. Particularly, this involves writing down IPC policy which highlights the specific research fields eligible for the formation of new groups and details how these groups would differ or stand out from existing ones, and identifying key factors such as the candidate's qualifications, infrastructure needs, and operational guidelines that are crucial for setting up</p>					

effective and sustainable research groups. The focus is on ensuring that these teams are equipped with the necessary resources, expertise, and organizational support and capable of undertaking innovative and impactful research projects.					
Action 34) Competition for the establishment of a new research team	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	IV/2026	the IPC Director, the Research Council	one competition involving written proposals and individual applicants' presentations before the Research Council	<i>new</i>
<i>Remarks:</i> To assist researchers in applying for the establishment of new research groups and to effectively convey the written regulations, we plan to start regular competitions every two years (starting 2025, next 2027 – outside of the time limits of this Action Plan). These competitions will be advertised within a timeframe that allows prospective researchers ample time for adequate preparation.					
Action 35) Improving women's visibility and diversity at IPC	27. Gender balance 28. Career development	IV/2025	Dr Emilia Witkowska-Nery, HRS4R & Gender Equality Working group and Prof. Robert Hołyst, HRS4R Working Group	1) Changes on the website to highlight women in leadership/management/representative positions at IPC + at least 1/3 of photos with the involvement of female researchers 2) At least two events presenting our female colleagues' profiles and promoting diversity (e.g., poster session, newsletter, press notes)	<i>new</i>
<i>Remarks:</i> The number of women in leadership, management, and representative roles at IPC is on the rise. Despite this, the visibility of women working at IPC is not sufficiently highlighted. This lack of recognition within the IPC community hinders the acknowledgement of their contributions. Consequently, we miss the opportunity to present them as role models to other employees at IPC, especially to junior and female researchers. For this reason, we decided to establish a promotional campaign and permanent changes to IPC popularisation practices to increase women's visibility and diversity at IPC .					

Action 36) Research Group Opening Experience	27. Gender balance 28. Career development 30. Access to career advice	II/2025	Robert Holyst, member of HRS4R Working group, HRS4R Working Group	1 event devoted to Research Group Opening + 2 talks on how to run a research group and/or manage your career in academia	<i>new</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>This action involves the organisation of an exercise to help PhD fellows prepare future applications for research group openings. We will set a mock panel revising proposals consisting of PIs of our Institute, adequately gender balanced. IPC female researchers will be strongly encouraged to be part of this initiative. The panel will analyse the applications of candidates for future PI positions and give them feedback on how to use their strong sides and develop areas for improvement to set up a research group within a few years.</p>					
Action 37) Programme of Career guidance for young researchers at IPC	28. Career development 30. Access to career advice	IV/2024	IPC Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs, head of PhD Doctoral School	1 fully operational programme set with clearly assigned roles and responsibilities, ready for the rollout; At least 3 events/schemes for junior researchers originating in the Career guidance programme	<i>new</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>In actions no. 33, 34, 36, 42, and 45, we will undertake tasks focused on career development, while actions no. 38, 39, and 40 will centre around a career advice programme for the entire IPC community. Action no. 37 is specifically designed for junior researchers, particularly PhD students. We recognise that over half of the PhD student community will possibly pursue careers outside academia. These alternative career trajectories need comprehensive consideration. We opted for a distinct programme acknowledging that many PhD students are making career choices for the first time and often lack reliable information about what to expect. The IPC Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs and the head of the PhD Doctoral School will spearhead this initiative.</p>					
Action 38) Event organisation – “Scientific careers: lab,	28. Career development 30. Access to career advice	IV/2025	Dr Emilia Witkowska-	1 discussion session with the presence of the	<i>new</i>

industry, science popularisation”	31. Intellectual property rights		Nery, HRS4R & Gender Equality Working group	representatives of academia and business sectors	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Continuation of cyclic events (started in 2023, every two years, one event within the timeframe of the Action Plan) for junior researchers and postdoctoral researchers delving into diverse career trajectory options available after graduation from PhD studies.</p>					
<p>Action 39) Event organisation – Speed dating with career advisors</p>	<p>27. Gender balance 28. Career development 30. Access to career advice</p>	III/2025	Prof. Robert Hołyst & Agnieszka Tadrzak, HRS4R Working Group + PhD students’ representatives	1 event	<i>new</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Integration event and career counselling in a speed dating format - mentees have a few minutes to ask quick questions about the career options and career paths of prominent individuals. We will make sure to have proper diversity among mentors and mentees in terms of gender, nationality, background and experience in academia/business.</p> <p>We have noticed that despite various programmes available at IPC devoted to mentoring and career development, the researchers rather avoid joining these initiatives due to various reasons (lack of time, timidity, lack of custom of talking about career paths). This event aims to get researchers used to discussing career opportunities, exploring various career options and asking questions about individual career paths in a funny and safe format.</p>					
<p>Action 40) Further development of the supervision system at IPC</p>	<p>28. Career development 30. Access to career advice</p>	IV/2026	Career Development Advisors, Chief Manager for Organizational and Economic Affairs	<p>1) 3 events promoting Career Development Advisors (CDA)</p> <p>2) 2 integrational events with the presence of CDAs</p>	<i>new</i>

Remarks:

The connections and acquaintance of PhD students with individuals at IPC are somewhat restricted. Additionally, some students are hesitant to differentiate their PhD supervisors from mentors, concerned about potential conflicts of loyalty. For this reason, we decided to develop a programme to promote three Career Advisors in place among PhDs. This may involve, e.g., presentations of Advisors, campaigns in a newsletter, posters or similar. To reinforce the new mentoring programme's effectiveness and integration of new fellows, we also aim to organise at least 2 integration events for the IPC community with the participation of CDAs.

Action 41) Improvement of the information flow at IPC	28. Career development 29. Value of mobility 30. Access to career advice 34. Complaints/appeals 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	II/2024	Agnieszka Tadrzak, HRS4R chairperson & IT Dept.	1) Setting e-mail groups to better manage the recipient lists and their promotion among IPC community members 2) Streamlining communication flow from IPC College meetings – minutes or informational releases 4 times a year	<i>new</i>
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Remarks:

A range of actions aiming to:

- reduce the number of unwanted and useless information upcoming in professional mailboxes related to various events, training options, networking possibilities and similar
- optimize communication within the IPC community to concentrate on key events, understand the Director's directives, and explore opportunities to participate in decision-making entities, among other things.

The overflow of information hinders effective communication due to cognitive overload, difficulty in identifying key information, reduced attention span and impaired quality of interaction. As a result, some important information is skipped and others overwhelm us. That is also a possible reason why despite conducting multichannel informational sessions some information is missed. For this reason, the HRS4R Working Group decided to add this supplementary measure to reinforce communication about three principles.

Action 42) Establishing funds for researchers' vocational	26. Funding and salaries 29. Value of mobility	IV/2026	the IPC Director &	1) establishing widely accessible training funds for	<i>new</i>
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training and their promotion			HRS4R Working Group	researchers 2) 2 e-mails/ releases about the accessibility of funds for vocational training or funding statistics (one per year)	
<p><i>Remarks:</i> IPC's performance in providing training funds is undervalued by specialists and adjuncts, as we consider, mainly due to insufficient information flow about available funds for training and dispersed funding sources. For this reason, we will set a training funding programme and promote its use.</p>					
<p>Action 43) Streamlining the employment procedures and practices of the institute</p>	12. Recruitment	III/2024	the Research Council, the Board of Directors	<p>1) change of practice (for promotions, the requirement for a competition will be eliminated)</p> <p>2) one informational release about the change in current practices</p>	<i>new</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i> Some associate professors believe that certain admission processes for researchers at our institution are unclear and involve excessive bureaucratic procedures. This includes conducting competitions for higher positions, which are, in reality, evaluations for appraisals and promotions. Following an in-depth review of our internal and national regulations, we plan to modify our procedures to reduce paperwork and simplify the process of researchers' promotion.</p>					
<p>Action 44) Informational campaign about IPR and their handling at IPC</p>	31. Intellectual property rights	IV/2026	Representative for IP & Agnieszka Tadrzak, chairperson of	3 events/releases devoted to IPR and how researchers may benefit from IP use	<i>new</i>

			the HRSR Working group		
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>We acknowledge a lower rate (mean value: 3.6) in the survey question referring to the familiarity with contractual and legal provisions governing the implementation of research projects, including provisions on IPR. For this reason, we will organise three events (lectures, talks at cyclical meetings of women from IChF or similar) devoted to IPR.</p>					
<p>Action 45)</p> <p>Setting a mobility programme with a separate budget to fund training and mobilities of researchers including specialists</p>	<p>25. Stability and permanence of employment</p> <p>26. Funding and salaries</p> <p>28. Career development</p> <p>29. Value of mobility</p>	IV/2026	HR Dept., Board of Directors	<p>1) Established mobility programme with a separate budget to fund training and mobilities of researchers including specialists</p> <p>2) At least 250 mobility days per year covered by the fund</p>	<i>new</i>
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>As explained in the remarks under Action No. 7, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the number of business trips/mobilities at the Institute has decreased compared to the previous reporting period. IPC has implemented measures to prioritise remote collaboration and limit travel for the safety and well-being of its staff. Moreover, in the meantime, the programme funding Mobilities of Young Researchers was restrained and never revoked again. We want to reinstate a new programme funding mobilities available for researchers. The programme should also target specialists and adjuncts, improving the stability of their employment conditions, funding and salaries. These groups of researchers often rely on grant funding and experience decreased overall satisfaction when grant funding is unavailable. We believe that the programme will ensure the continuous development of these researchers, significantly since the success rate at national funding agencies has dramatically decreased (reaching 10%). The programme will be funded by IPC or a third party, provided that it is widely accessible for researchers.</p> <p>The mobility programme should be established till III/2024, and we will record statistics (to reach the target value) until IV/2026.</p>					
<p>Action 46)</p> <p>Reinforcing powers entrusted to Commissionaires for Researchers' Rights (CRR), Career Development Advisors (CDA) and chairpersons of the Anti-discrimination</p>	<p>10. Non-discrimination</p> <p>27. Gender balance</p> <p>34. Complaints/appeals</p> <p>35. Participation in decision-</p>	IV/2026	IPC Director, CRRs, CDAs, chairpersons of AdC, GEP and	<p>1) establishing an internal protocol to review significant local regulations in consultation with</p>	<i>new</i>

Committee (AdC), Gender Equality (GEP group) and HRS4R Working Groups (HRS4R group)	making bodies		HRS4R groups	appropriate ombudsmen 2) at least three events tailored for employees and PhD students with the participation of ombudsmen or other bodies involved in reinforcing equality at IPC 3) one revision of regulations appointing CRRs	
<p><i>Remarks:</i></p> <p>Under the previous Action Plan, we have set a number of ombudsmen to consult, monitor and manage inequalities (two Commissionaires for Researchers' Rights, the Antidiscrimination Committee, the Career Development Advisors, the Anti-mobbing Committee, Gender Equality Working Group). This action aims to emphasize their importance and acknowledgement within the IPC community by integrating them into the processes of local law formation and involving them in informational sessions and panel discussions tailored for employees and PhD students under various tasks constituting the Action Plan for 2024-2026.</p>					

Please provide the link to the dedicated webpage(s) on your organisation's website *: [http://ichf.edu.pl/IPC-HR Excellence in Research.html](http://ichf.edu.pl/IPC-HR_Excellence_in_Research.html)

If your organisation has already filled in the OTM-R checklist in the Initial Phase, please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above in the action plan (as emerged from the Gap Analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress of the implementation versus the initial phase.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles

The OTM-R policy is implemented in the following acts of local law at IPC:

- General Rules Governing Competitions for Research Posts at IPC
- Employment Policy,
- Rules for research team evaluation,
- Rules for the individual assessment of academic staff.

The quality assurance system is in place - an [e-tool](#) obligatory filled in by a person responsible for recruitment organization (head of a research group, project manager) at the end of each competition proceedings. The recruitment policy electronic tool indicates that IPC's internal procedures adhere to regulations, are straightforward, and ensure that the recruitment process is transparent, open, and based on merit (see: remarks under the section "2. *Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice – Recruitment and selection*" for more details). While IPC's ability to attract underrepresented groups, including female researchers, requires ongoing improvement, we recognize that this issue is more systemic. It involves the limited visibility of female managers and researchers at IPC and the need for more specific support to advance their careers. We aim to tackle this through action no. 35, 36, and 39. Additionally, gender equality is a key focus of the separate Gender Equality Working Group, which among other activities, organizes training series dedicated to promoting gender equality and preventing bias in recruitment processes.

The other major problem is the attractiveness of the financial offer for the candidates. Poland suffered a lot from the price rise (2020-2023 – 30%). The public funding for IPC, including the competitive research funding, has not increased to cover the surplus. This led IPC to scrutinise its expenditures more closely. Currently, the issue appears unresolved until Polish academia receives increased funding from the central government.

Until now the following organizational units and bodies have been involved in the implementation process and overseeing the effectiveness of the IPC OTM-R policy:

- the Working Group,
- the Steering Committee (formally established 10/2019 – change from 2023: Steering Committee's role has been taken over by the Board of Directors – recommendation of the HRS4R Manager to avoid overlapping competencies with the HRS4R Working Group)
(both composed of R1-R4 researchers and administration employees, the Steering Committee - also by the IPC Director and the Director for scientific affairs),
- the IPC Director,
- the Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs,
- the Head of Doctoral Studies,
- the Commissioners for Researchers Rights (2 prs.)
- the Grants Dept.,
- the Department of Large European Grants and Business Collaboration,
- the HR Dept.,
- Career Development Advisors (3 prs.),

- The Antidiscrimination Committee,
- PhD Students' Self-Government,
- IPC College,
- Research Council.

Template 1 – Annex: Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Check-list³

OTM-R checklist for organisations

	Open	Trans- parent	Merit- based	Answer: ++ Yes, <i>completely</i> +/- Yes, <i>substantially</i> -/+ Yes, <i>partially</i> -- No	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system					
1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	++	1) General Rules Governing Competitions: English: http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf ; Polish: https://ichf.edu.pl/theme/ichf/pliki/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_PL.pdf ; 2) HRS4R: https://ichf.edu.pl/en/hrcsr
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	++	1) General Rules Governing Competitions – last update 15/04/2019, available for all IPC community and stakeholders on the IPC website (http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf): 2) Employment policy: https://ichf.edu.pl/files/intranet/ichf-procedures-eng-2023-10-16-sig.pdf
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	++	To maximise knowledge about OTM-R policies among people involved in the process, the following actions were taken during the period 2021-2023: 1) An informational campaign has been launched targeting the IChF community, specifically addressing members of the recruitment committees, and providing guidance on how to minimize unconscious bias in the recruitment process by

³ <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/services/researchPolicies>

					<p>recognizing inappropriate advocacy or unfounded judgments (a series of releases in the internal newsletter in June 2022).</p> <p>2) A Recruitment Toolkit with a ready-to-use competition scorecard has been developed to support IPC's recruiters. Their main objective is to support the Competition Committee members in selecting the most appropriate candidates using a recruitment process that ensures fairness, consistency, and equity. The toolkit contains valuable tips on maintaining objectivity, and impartiality and avoiding biases during interviews. Additionally, it offers insights into forming constructive feedback for candidates to build trust, and alignment and enhance both your and IPC's reputation. This toolkit has been placed on the intranet and promoted through a newsletter sent to the IPC community (August 2023).</p>
4. Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools? [Web-based tool for (all) the stages in the recruitment process]	x	x		++	<p>Advertisements are published on EURAXESS, the IPC website, Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education website; other documents (rules governing competition) are published on the Internet. The application documents are submitted using dedicated e-platforms of collaborating service providers or via e-mail (rekrutacja@ichf.edu.pl).</p>
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	++	<p>1) e-tool: A designated e-tool has been introduced – to be obligatory filled in by a person responsible for recruitment organization (head of a research group, project manager) at the end of each competition proceedings.</p> <p>2) administration control: Compatibility of the recruitment process with the provisions of the Charter and the Code is observed at 3 different stages:</p>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Grants Dept. or the Dept. for large European projects or Grants Dept. check coherence of the documents with the IPC OTM-R policy, - request to open the call is approved by the Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs, - the IPC Director approves successful candidate(s) – approval depends, among others, on using OTM-R e-tool (questionnaire filled by the recruitment organizer).
6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 - The no. of applicants from outside the organisation varies across years, with 7.1/5.2/7.6 external candidates for each recruitment average (almost all applications come from external candidates).
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 - Results indicate a no. satisfactory of applicants from abroad, with an average of 6.2/4.2/6.7 persons per recruitment (the vast majority of applications come from candidates from abroad).
8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	x	x	x	+-	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 - The no. of applicants among underrepresented groups varies across years, with 2.5/2.0/2.1 persons for each recruitment average (ca. 20-25%). We have been working to attract more female researchers (see “Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles “ for details).
9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	+-	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 1) The no. of applicants from outside the organisation varies across years, with 7.1/5.2/7.6 external candidates for each recruitment average. 2) self-assessment by the recruitment organizer i.e. "How attractive working conditions were offered under the competition?" (stable value: 4.0/4.2/3.9 (scale: 1-5))

					The financial offer for researchers needs special attention (see “Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles “ for details).
10. Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 - self-assessment by the recruitment organizer i.e. "How suitable for the position were the candidates who answered the call?" (a stable value: 3.6/3.2/3.2 (scale:1-5))
Advertising and application phase					
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	x	x		++	1) Guidelines (General Rules Governing Competitions: English: http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf) 2) an advertisement template included in the General Rules Governing Competitions (annex 1).
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit? [see Chapter 4.4.1 a) of the OTM-R expert report ⁴]	x	x		++	1) General Rules Governing Competitions - (annex 1 - template of the advertisement) i.e.: http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf 2) Source: e-tool/ data from 2018 and 2019 "Did the announcement of the competition contain information such as" (in brackets share of positive answers): - contact details - 100%, - a reference to the Institute's employment policy - 90%, - a reference to the Institutes rules governing competitions for research positions - 91%, - the application procedure and deadline - 100%, - career development prospects - 79%,

⁴ <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/services/researchPolicies>

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - working conditions, workplace, entitlements (salary, other benefits, etc.), type of contract - 100%, - number of available positions - 100%, - selection criteria, including knowledge and professional experience - 100%, - researcher career profiles (R1-R4) with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' competencies - 100%, - job title, specifications and starting date - 100%, - organisation and recruiting unit - 100%.
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 - share of recruitment proceedings announced at EURAXESS portal (83%/ 100%/100%)
14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		++	Other tools - Source: e-tool/ data from 2021-2023: www.pracuj.pl , IPC & lab websites, ICTER and Dioscuri Centre websites, BIP, NCN, MNiSW, FNP, FB, X, OCT news, PostdocJobs, FindAPostdoc, mailing lists; private communication; leaflet, posters; etc.
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate? [see Chapter 4.4.1 b) ⁴⁵]	x			++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023 - self-assessment by the recruitment organizer i.e. "Were the candidates asked only for documents which were necessary to assess their applications?" (variable but satisfactory values: 92%/100%/ 89%)
Selection and evaluation phase					
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees? [see Chapter 4.4.2 a) ⁴⁵]		x	x	++	Act of local law defining rules governing the appointment of the selection committee - guidelines for the selection committees: § 3 of General Rules Governing Competitions. The selection committee is appointed by the ordinance of the Director. Possibility to involve external experts, the obligation to involve persons of both genders (at least 1/3), and persons with differentiated experience in business and academia.

					English: http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf .
17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?		x	x	++	1) Act of local law defining rules governing the composition of the selection committee - i.e. § 3 of the General Rules Governing Competitions: English: http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf ; 2) Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023: Share of persons with the following characteristics among the members of the selection committees: - persons with differentiated experience (100%/95%/100%), - international experts (33%/45%/26%), - jointly persons from business and academia (4%/0%/11%), - external (national) experts (4%/0%/11%)
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?		x	x	++	1) General Rules Governing Competitions (§ 3 pt. 3) - the obligation of representation of each gender at the level of 1/3 - i.e. : English: http://ichf.edu.pl/Regulamin_konkursu_stanowsko-naukowe_EN.pdf ; 2) Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023: the ratio of women to men in your selection committee (41%/48%/35%)
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?			x	++	1) Employment policy: http://ichf.edu.pl/IPC_procedures.pdf ; 2) Advertisement template - annex 1. to the General Rules Governing Competitions proposes selection criteria (all of them are merit-based).
Appointment phase					

20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?		x		++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023: self-assessment by the recruitment organizer i.e. "Were all applicants informed about the end of the recruitment process?" (90%/ 100%/94%)
21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?		x		++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023: self-assessment by the recruitment organizer i.e. "Did you provide adequate feedback to interviewees?" (93%/100%/ 100%)
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		++	1) General Rules Governing Competitions - i.e.: https://ichf.edu.pl/files/csr/general-rules-governing-competitions.pdf : - annex 1 - template of the advertisement informs candidates about the possibility of lodging a complaint, - § 2 pt. 13 - obligation for recruitment organizers to allow for lodging appeals 2) Source: e-tool/ data from 2021/2022/2023: share of candidates who filed a complaint?" (0%/4.8%/0%).
Overall assessment					
23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?				++	Source: e-tool/ data from 2021-2023 - "Do the rules governing competitions for research positions at the Institute need any improvements to serve their objective?" - The majority of respondents positively evaluate the OTM-R policy. The remarks of the competition organisers are carefully observed but till now no prevailing remarks have been collected.

4. IMPLEMENTATION (MAX. 1 PAGE)

General overview of the implementation process: (max. 1000 words).

We do not anticipate significant modifications to the processes for overseeing implementation as established under the Action Plan 2021-2023, with the exception of transferring steering responsibilities to a new entity.

The Action Plan for 2024-2026 (section 3) details the leader for each action in the "Responsible Unit" field (at the first place) and the assigned implementation team. Action leaders, being esteemed members of IPC, possess the capacity to implement changes/initiatives, and acquire necessary resources (such as external lecturers/trainers, consultants, etc.). The designated teams, led by these action leaders, may vary as needed and include individuals beyond the formal members of the Working Group or Steering Committee. These individuals will have direct responsibility for executing specific actions.

To ensure the timely completion of tasks and address potential issues, the chairperson of the Working Group (the HRS4R Manager) will organise working meetings of these teams. Furthermore, the entire Working Group will convene 2-3 times annually. Progress will also be monitored by representatives from the Board of Directors, acting as the Steering Committee, which meets 1-2 times a year. The HRS4R Manager (the chairperson of the Working Group) acts as the intermediary between the implementing and steering groups.

Electronic communication tools will facilitate information sharing among the working and steering groups members. We will also employ a Gantt chart within Microsoft Forms for task allocation, monitoring their completion status, and tracking the achievement of objectives.

Key aspects of HRS4R implementation will be discussed with the IPC community through:

- The IPC College, comprising more than 50 IPC employee members and functioning as the Institute's advisory and opinion-forming body, appointed by the IPC Director.
- The dedicated email account hrs4r@ichf.edu.pl.
- The HRS4R communication platform, including an anonymous form for proposing improvements to IPC's working environment and culture.

These methods of consultation with the IPC community have been effectively used in the past.

Should there be substantial changes in the legal or operational environment of IPC, a joint meeting of the working and steering groups will be convened to adapt the Action Plan to new circumstances. The IPC community will be encouraged to participate in this process through various informational and promotional campaigns outlined in the Action Plan. Additionally, the involvement of the wider IPC community is anticipated through focus and consultative groups, aiding in the development of frameworks for more complex or broad actions (like Action no. 37 - "Programme of Career Guidance for Young Researchers at IChF").

- How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?

The Working Group, led by Agnieszka Tadrzak, is responsible for executing the tasks outlined in the Action Plan. This group will meet 2-3 times annually to delegate specific responsibilities and evaluate the progress of implementation. Digital communication tools may be utilized to facilitate the timely completion of tasks and to discuss potential adjustments in response to evolving circumstances. Furthermore, the Working Group's chairperson will hold meetings with selected members and other contributors to the HRS4R implementation, providing support and motivation for the timely

execution of their tasks. These meetings can also be convened at the request of any Working Group member or a collective group.

Members of the Working Group assigned to particular actions might engage additional IPC employees, especially those with prior experience in HRS4R implementation, including:

- Commissioners for Researchers' Rights,
- The Representative for Intellectual Property,
- Career Development Advisors,
- The PhD Students' Self-Government.

Moreover, involving stakeholders such as business and authority representatives, external companies, and IPC spin-offs/out companies is standard practice at IPC.

In 2023, following a suggestion from the HRS4R Manager, the Steering Committee was substituted by representatives of the Board of Directors (IPC Director and Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs). The composition of the Steering Committee was too similar to that of the Working Group, leading to a duplication of competencies between the two groups. **The Board of Directors representatives, serving as the Steering Committee**, will meet with the HRS4R Manager (chairperson of the Working Group) 1-2 times a year to monitor the implementation process. The HRS4R Manager will act as a liaison between the working and steering groups.

In the event of significant alterations in IPC's legal or operational framework, a combined session of the working and steering groups will be organized to revise the Action Plan according to these new conditions.

- How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process? *

The IPC community has played a significant role in the the development and implementation of HRS4R. How IPC community was involved in the Gap analysis and the new AP development – see “2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice – Ethical and professional aspects”.

Over 30 individuals, representing more than 10% of IPC's total workforce, have consistently engaged in the activities outlined in the Action Plan. Up to this point, the following bodies and individuals have been instrumental in supporting this process on a daily basis:

a) the HRS4R Working Group (current composition):

1. M.Sc. Agnieszka Tadrzak (chairperson, head of the Dept. of large European projects and business collaboratio) (F)
2. Prof Robert Hołyst (IPC former director, Career Development Advisor) (R4, M)
3. Prof Joanna Niedziółka-Jönsson (PI) (R4, F)
4. Dr Emilia Witkowska-Nery (PI, head of Gender Equality Working Group; Career Development Advisor) (R3, F)
5. Dr Patrycja Nitoń (member of the Dept. of large European projects, head of Anti-discrimination Committee) (F)
6. Dr Roman Luboradzki (a specialist, Corps of Engineers) (R2, M)
7. M. Sc. Katarzyna Pawlak, PhD student (R1, F)

b) the Steering Committee (current composition):

1. Dr habil Adam Kubas, Professor of IPC (current IPC director) (R4, M)
2. Dr Jan Paczesny (Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs) (R3, M)
3. M.Sc. Agnieszka Tadrzak (chairperson of the HRS4R Working Group) (F).

c) others:

1. Prof Robert Kołos (head of Doctoral School, Career Development Advisor) (R4, M)
2. Secretariat for Doctoral School (3 prs., F)
3. Dr habil Zbigniew Kaszukur, IPC Professor (Commissioner for Researchers' Rights) (R3, M)
4. Dr Oksana Danylyuk (Commissioner for Researchers' Rights) (R3, F)
5. Grant Dep. (4 prs, F)
6. HR Dept. (3 prs., F)
7. Health and Safety Inspectors (2 prs., F)
8. Piotr Cwalina (Representative for IP) (M)
9. Dr Martin Jönsson-Niedziółka (PI, Data Officer) (R3, M).

Additionally, other advisory and support groups at IPC (such as the Gender Equality Working Group, the Anti-discrimination Committee, and Trade Unions) have contributed to the implementation process. The Grant Department, which manages about 100 externally funded research projects simultaneously, has played and will remain to play a crucial role. It monitors the alignment of individual researchers' performance with the established OTM-R policy, leading to an increase in the number of informed actors applying the OTM-R principles (as evidenced by data from the e-tool assessing the effectiveness of the OTM-R policy at IPC).

During 2024-2026, the aforementioned individuals will continue their active involvement in the ongoing implementation of HRS4R and as such have been incorporated into the Action Plan.

The broader IPC community, including those not part of consultative and support bodies, is encouraged to participate directly in implementing the Action Plan. We plan to facilitate the formation of additional focus and/or working groups to aid in executing more complex or general actions (such as Action no. 37 - "Programme of Career Guidance for Young Researchers at IChF"). Moreover, researchers can influence the implementation process by voicing their concerns through any established communication channels from the AP 2021-2023, such as the designated email (hrs4r@ichf.edu.pl) or the HRS4R communication platform.

- How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.

The Board of Directors is highly cognisant and dedicated to IPC's HRS4R objectives. Securing the renewal of the "HR Excellence in Research" award is a primary goal for the new IPC Director, dr. habil Adam Kubas (appointed in 2023), as highlighted in his presentation to the Competition Committee during the director selection process.

The HRS4R remains a focal point in IPC's science management, with the Directors and the HRS4R Manager diligently ensuring that IPC strategies and local legal actions align with the principles of the Charter and the Code. This not only pertains to documents governing recruitment but extends to all areas addressed by the Charter and the Code, such as the composition of consultative bodies, work organization systems, and dispute resolution mechanisms. Typically, local legal acts are also reviewed in consultation with the head of the Trade Union "Solidarność," HR Dept. and/or staff from the Grant Department (if relevant for the new regulation). In the AP 2024-2026, this oversight will be further reinforced and expanded through the participation of the Commissioners for Researchers' Rights, Career Development Advisors, and chairpersons of the Anti-discrimination Committee and Gender Equality Working Group in the law-making process.

To date, **all relevant local legal acts** (i.e., IPC Director's ordinances) **necessary for the effective**

implementation of HRS4R at IPC have been revised to align with IPC's HRS4R framework. This includes updates to:

- General Rules Governing Competitions for Research Posts at IPC,
- Rules for research team evaluation,
- Rules for the individual assessment of academic staff,
- Rules governing International PhD Studies and Warsaw-4-PhD Doctoral School.

To implement HRS4R **we have also established new regulations**, i.a.:

- Procedure for appointing and operating the Commissioner for Researchers' Rights at IPC,
- Procedure for appointing Career Development Advisors.

Moreover, certain procedures not formalised as local legal acts but crucial for implementing the Action Plan's specified actions have also been suitably adjusted. This particularly involves:

- IPC's employment policy, and
- guidelines for recruiting researchers for externally funded research projects.

At IPC, individual researchers, mainly the heads of research groups, are responsible for managing the majority of research position competitions and the organization of work within their groups.

Therefore, it's crucial for them to be thoroughly acquainted with IPC's recruitment and work regulations and to undergo consistent monitoring. The recruitment process is particularly sensitive and is evaluated for compliance with the Charter and the Code at three stages:

- The Grant Department or the Department for large European projects verifies the coherence of documents with IPC's OTM-R policy.
- The Deputy Director for Scientific Affairs approves the call for vacancies.
- The IPC Director endorses the selected candidate(s), with approval contingent on various factors, including filling in a questionnaire (OTM-R tool) by the recruitment organiser (to collect data on the recruitment process effectiveness).

Other management processes at IPC are also subject to objective assessments based on pre-established procedures following the IPC's HRS4R.

- How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented? *

In the Action Plan, **we have assigned a leader to each action and suggested a team to support them** (subject to modifications if needed). These leaders are esteemed IPC employees and collaborators with the Board of Directors, well-equipped to implement the necessary changes. **The AP 2024-2026 has received approval from the Board of Directors, ensuring the availability of necessary resources including funding.**

Every action has a clearly defined objective outlined in the "Remarks" section. Should changes be needed, they will be comprehensively reviewed by the Working Group, or both the Working Group and the Steering Committee for more significant alterations. If consultations are required, they will take the form of focus/consultative groups or involve the IPC college.

The proposed actions are designed to be flexible and align with the goals identified through the IPC researchers' survey. They are intended to be adaptable to the dynamic and especially the legal environment. To mitigate the risk of governmental funding shortages, these actions are structured to be compatible with various funding mechanisms.

The implementation progress of the action plan will be continually monitored by the HRS4R Manager and the Steering Committee. The action leaders and their teams report the progress to the HRS4R Manager individually or during the meetings of the HRS4R Working Group. To facilitate information sharing among the working and steering groups members, the HRS4R Manager will

employ a Gantt chart within Microsoft Forms for task allocation, monitoring their completion status, and tracking the achievement of objectives. The responsibility for some actions is held by the IPC Director. The HRS4R Manager will work with the Director to make sure that he receives all necessary support to develop the action. The overall progress will be tracked by the Steering Committee.

- How will you monitor progress (timeline)? *

The Steering Committee is the primary entity responsible for tracking the progress of the Action Plan from the top level. This includes monitoring the completion of tasks and their alignment with the scheduled timeline, a topic that will be addressed 1-2 times annually during Steering Committee meetings. Additionally, the Working Group will formally review progress during its 2-3 yearly meetings. In these sessions, each Action leader will update on current progress and outline plans for the upcoming months. This will be reflected in the Gantt chart for further overview and evidence.

These meetings are also intended to motivate the team involved in the implementation process and provide a platform for members to suggest new ideas and solutions in response to any unexpected challenges.

Both the Steering and Working Committees for HRS4R are well-established and have been actively functioning. The frequency and format of these meetings have proven effective in the past. The Steering Committee members are also directly involved in implementing the Action Plan. This involvement ensures a continuous flow of information from the Working Group to the Steering Committee, not just limited to the updates provided by the HRS4R Manager.

- How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment? *

Every action under the 2024-2026 Action Plan is defined by **clear and measurable indicators**, facilitating the tracking of implementation progress. For activities like training, lectures, and workshops, we will also assess the quality of these events by collecting feedback from participants (deliverable of Action no. 20 under the AP 2021-2023). The responsibility for gathering this feedback falls to the event organiser. The Department of Large European Projects, skilled in comprehensive project management, will compile and store this cumulative data. An additional measure of progress is the use of the statistics collected by the HR and Grant Depts. and an e-tool to monitor adherence to the OTM-R policy at IPC. This tool involves a mandatory questionnaire completed by each recruitment process organizer after its conclusion. The IPC Director finalises the recruitment process and confirms the selected candidate based on the organiser's statement regarding the use of this e-tool.

Both the Working Group and the Steering Committee will monitor these indicators. They will use the feedback gathered to inform and guide further actions within the implementation process.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words):

Below we present how the recommendations of the Experts involved in our 2020 Renewal Phase Assessment With Site Visit have been addressed under the AP 2021-2023 and 2024-2026:

1) In 2023, the HRS4R Manager approached the PhD Students' Self-government to nominate a representative for permanent membership in the HRS4R Working Group. Consequently, M.Sc.

Katarzyna Pawlak was officially appointed by the IPC Director's ordinance to the Working Group. She actively contributed to the Gap Analysis and the development of the new Action Plan. Her involvement will continue through the implementation phase of AP 2024-2026. PhD students' participation is essential, particularly in actions focused on Career Advice and Career Development (actions no. 35-38, and especially no. 39). In the previous Action Plan, PhD students were engaged and were major target groups in numerous actions (e.g., 7, 11, 13, 14 and 19). Additionally, the PhD students' Self-government had primary responsibility for action no. 20, which entailed introducing a system for evaluating lecturers to enhance the quality of lectures for the IPC community and boost attendance.

Under the AP 2021-2023 we have increased the participation of auxiliary bodies serving researchers (such as the Ombudsman for Researchers' Rights or Career Development Advisors) and also single-person positions from the operation (administration) services (e.g., the Representatives for IP and Erasmus+ programme). The HR Dept. has been indirectly involved in delivering mobility advice and services and collecting statistics crucial for IPC HRS4R implementation. Under the new AP, we also plan to reinforce the HR Dept. involvement in the new mobility programmes establishing the Programme of Career Guidance for young researchers at IChF.

2) To enhance communication, the previous Action Plan led to the launch of a new web service within the intranet specifically for researchers. This service includes key procedures and template documents readily accessible to them. Additionally, an ERP system was developed and implemented to minimise paperwork and facilitate the electronic circulation of essential documents. We plan to integrate additional processes into this system, aiming to further alleviate the administrative workload for researchers.

3) To boost the self-confidence of PhD students facing their 1-year evaluation, the head of the PhD school initiated sessions that discuss the evaluation process and provide practical advice on preparing effective presentations. Furthermore, a representative from the PhD students' self-government now observes each evaluation, offering the opportunity to address concerns and support the student as necessary.

4) To better and more often communicate the HRS4R benefits and actions to different levels of stakeholders, we have increased the frequency of the internal newsletter and introduced a section entirely dedicated to the IPC HRS4R. The section will be continued under the next AP.

5) New communication methods have been set up to gather suggestions for enhancing IPC's work environment and culture, including an email account and an anonymous submission form. Additionally, we have implemented a unified system for evaluating the quality of events, with distinct metrics for training sessions and other event types. In the upcoming Action Plan, we plan to collaborate with the IT Department to streamline the flow of information at IPC. This initiative aims to reduce the influx of irrelevant or unhelpful emails concerning events, training opportunities, networking prospects, and similar topics. Our goal is to optimise internal communication within the IChF community, focusing on crucial events and important issues.

Please note that the revised HR strategy and Action Plan must also be published upon completion of the internal assessment.