


HR Excellence in Research

Internal Review

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Internal Review

Case number

2018CZ354528

Name Organisation under review

Biology Centre CAS

Organisation's contact details

Branišovská 31, České Budějovice, 37005, Czech Republic

Submission date to the European Commission

06/06/2024

1. Organisational Information

*Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.*

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	362
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	141
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	156
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	171
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	53
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	84
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	588

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	29912639
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	11001011
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	13144591
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	546006

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

The Biology Centre CAS (BC) is a public research institution established in 2006 by the Czech Academy of Sciences. BC unites five scientific institutes of Entomology, Hydrobiology, Parasitology, Plant Molecular Biology, Soil Biology and Biogeochemistry and Technical and Administrative Service. There are 770 employees. The budget of the institution is almost 30 million €. The BC is the largest institution of the Czech Academy of Sciences outside of Prague. The researchers of the BC publish over 500 scientific articles in IF journals annually. The BC belongs among the significant European institutions focusing on evolutionary biology and ecology.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please review the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code, as provided by your organisation in the initial assessment phase. When doing so, you should do not only look back, but also consider new priorities, strategic decisions, etc. which may further influence the action plan. Please also provide a brief commentary in the "Remarks" column if major changes have occurred versus the initial plan.

Note: Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter & Code to open the editor and provide your answers in the Internal Review for Interim Assessment dedicated section.

Ethical and professional aspects*

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)****STRENGTHS:**

At the Biology Centre CAS, the Strategy for Research Activities 2018-2020 is approved and implemented. This Strategy follows the previous Plan of the Research Activity of the Biology Centre CAS 2012-2017. The main part of the Strategy is the mid-term plan of the research activity—including the main goals for the particular period of time.

In 2018 the International Advisory Board was established. The International Advisory Board consists of 11 members from the excellent research staff, members from the private sector and politics, and it was established as the advisory body of the Biology Centre CAS to increase its international prestige. The strategic development documents and the future orientation of the institution shall be consulted with the International Advisory Board.

In respect of the strategic planning, the Project Strategic Plan for the Infrastructure of the Biology Centre CAS Revitalization has been created. The plan is focused on the necessary revitalization of the infrastructure, and it is divided into two phases: 1st phase (2021-2024) and 2nd phase for the next 10-12 years.

At the Biology Centre CAS the Commercialization Council for assessing significant investments in the protection of R&D registered designs has been active since 2015. The Commercialization Council also assesses the potential of the use of the R&D registered designs in the industry.

The Researchers Evaluation Rules have been implemented at the institution since 2018. The rules define career development and promotion, as well as the procedures for the evaluation of scientific results.

There are 2 international scientific journals published at the Biology Centre CAS: The European Journal of Entomology (IF 1.017) and Folia Parasitologica (IF 1.505).

The Biology Centre CAS runs in accordance with two Codes of Ethics: the Code of Ethics for Researchers of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and the Code of Ethics of the Biology Centre CAS. Moreover, the Ethics Committee of the Biology Centre CAS and the Ethics Committee of ELBP work at the institution.

WEAKNESSES:

The standardized on-boarding process, during which all the employees would be trained in the functioning of the institution at all procedure levels including effective legislation, is missing.

There is no mechanism for motivating the researchers to participate in activities in order to popularize the institution. Although many events related to popularization are conducted at the Biology Centre CAS, the researchers' participation in them is completely voluntary and unsystematically assessed within the annual evaluations.

The popularization of the research becomes the more important part of the scientific work at the Biology Centre CAS. Despite conducting many popularizing events, there is no particular strategy for the popularization and communication to the public.

There are 171 foreign employees out of 706 working at the Biology Centre CAS. In spite of this fact, most of the available information within the institution is in Czech only. The English translation of the fundamental documentation in English is done unsystematically and ad hoc. The websites of the Biology Centre CAS and the compound orientation system shall be updated to become bilingual.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

STRENGTHS

At the Biology Centre CAS, the Strategy for Research Activities 2018-2020 has been approved and implemented. This Strategy follows the previous Plan of the Research Activity of the Biology Centre CAS 2012-2017. The main part of the Strategy is the mid-term plan of the research activity—including the main goals for the particular period of time.

In 2018 the International Advisory Board (IAB) was established. In 2019 the IAB meeting was held, and as an outcome, the IAB Report was prepared. The IAB Report provides feedback on the functioning and direction of the institution on an international scale and summarizes recommendations for further development. The next IAB meeting will take place in 2021.

In November 2020, the Strategic Plan for the Infrastructure of the Biology Centre CAS Revitalization began. The reconstruction of the complex is focused on the necessary revitalization of the infrastructure.

At the Biology Centre CAS, the Commercialization Council for assessing significant investments in the protection of R&D registered designs has been active since 2015. The Commercialization Council also assesses the potential of the R&D registered designs use in the industry.

The Researchers Evaluation Rules have been implemented at the institution since 2018. The rules define career development and promotion prospects, as well as the procedures for the evaluation of scientific results. Currently, the institutional methodology of the researcher's evaluation has been updated so that it takes popularization activities into consideration. Researchers Evaluation takes place at the institution every year.

Two international scientific journals are published at the Biology Centre CAS: The European Journal of Entomology (IF 1.051) and Folia Parasitologica (IF 1.648).

The Biology Centre CAS follows two codes of ethics: the Code of Ethics for Researchers of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and the Code of Ethics of the Biology Centre CAS. Moreover, both Ethics Committee of the Biology Centre CAS and the Ethics Committee of ELBP operate at the institution.

The Biology Centre CAS abides by the following documents: The Strategy of professional development and mentoring, Open access strategy, Open access manual, On-boarding manual and the Strategy of International Cooperation. The research at the institution is subject to the Intellectual property management directive.

WEAKNESSES:

The Strategy of communication, marketing and popularization is valid for the period 2019 - 2022, therefore it is necessary to update it for the following period.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

STRENGTHS:

- The new Research Strategy (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>) for 2023 - 2027 has been approved and implemented, following the previous Plan of the Research Activity for 2018-2022. The Strategy includes a mid-term plan of research activities and main goals. The International Advisory Board (IAB) as director's advisory body meets every two years and made six recommendations in 2023 to the BC management. The next meeting is in 2025, including a 20% rotation of members.
- The Commercialization Board, active since 2015, underwent a change in members in 2024 to strengthen independent assessment by increasing the proportion of external members.
- In September 2021 the new Directive on Contract Research (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>) came into force, aligning with the European Commission's Framework for State Aid for Research, Development, and Innovation.
- The Spin-Off Strategy and Rules (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>) were established in November 2022, providing a framework for employee spin-off companies.
- The Instruction of the BC Director concerning Plagiarism and Autoplagerism (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/directors-decree/year-2024/#anchor>) was issued in May 2024, providing clear procedures for BC employees.
- The Researchers Evaluation Rules (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>) implemented since 2018, define career development, promotion prospects, and scientific evaluation procedures, with annual evaluations.
- Two international scientific journals are published at the BC: The European Journal of Entomology (IF 1.3) and Folia Parasitologica (IF 1.6).


- The BC follows two codes of ethics: the Code of Ethics for Researchers of the Czech Academy of Sciences (<https://www.avcr.cz/en/about-us/legal-regulations/code-of-ethics-for-researchers-of-the-czech-academy-of-sciences/>), and the Code of Ethics (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>) of the Biology Centre CAS, updated in 2023, and operates Ethics Committees for general research and research involving human biological material.
- The BC adheres to various strategic documents, including The Strategy of professional development and mentoring, Open access strategy, Open access manual, On-boarding manual and the Strategy of International Cooperation. The research is subjected to the Intellectual property management directive.
- An internal reporting system for whistleblowing was established in August 2023 in accordance with Act No. 171/2023 Coll. (Directive on the Implementation of an Internal Whistleblowing system (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>)).
- Gender Equality Plan (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>) approved since 2022
- BC employees promote public involvement in citizen science projects, such as "Save the crucian carp" since 2021 and the City Nature Challenge since 2022. Other projects on biodiversity and ecology are in preparation.
- The Strategy of communication, marketing and popularization (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/#anchor>) is valid for 2023 - 2026.

WEAKNESSES:

- Public engagement guidelines are needed to encourage researchers to involve the public in their projects.
- The BC website needs revision to enhance the visibility of public engagement projects and beyond.
- There is no institutional resilience management regarding the current geopolitical situation and recommendations from the Czech Academy of Sciences.
- A system of regular training to prevent pathological phenomena and discrimination in the workplace is absent.

Remarks (max 500 words)

BC continues to promote green institution principles and sustainability.

Recruitment and selection* **Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)****STRENGTHS:**

4 advertising websites focused on scientific positions are used during the recruitment of the new employees at the Biology Centre CAS. Moreover, the advertisements are published on websites of the institution, on the websites of the Czech Academy of Sciences and on social networks (e.g. Facebook).

The published advertisements for scientific positions (R1 – R4) are made in accordance with the current unified template.

The potential employees are not discriminated by age, gender, belief and religion, social or national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion and social or economic condition.

A career break has no influence on an applicant's evaluation. The applicants' qualities are assessed in a comprehensive way including his or her professional history and merits.

The emphasis is also put on the value of the mobility of the applicants. Mobility is considered a significant contribution to their scientific career, and experience from abroad may strengthen the international competitiveness of the research groups (laboratory, department or the Biology Centre CAS at large).

The recruitment committee consists of 3 members. Each member of the committee has clearly defined responsibility for evaluation criteria. The members of the committee are trained and acquainted with the checklists, which are filled in during the recruitment process. The committee is gender balanced, thereby ensuring a balanced attitude during the applicants' selection process.

The recruitment process is two-round, transparent and indiscriminating. During the tender the records are made. After the second round of the tender, all the applicants are informed of the results and reasons for the final decision.

The new employees are offered part-time contracts, the possibility of the use of the Children's Group "Motyl", flexible working hours and subsidized canteen meals.

WEAKNESSES:

During the recruitment process the recruitment committee fills in the checklists about every single applicant. Currently, there are no objective qualitative records about the applicants' personality traits in the checklists.

In the current checklists there are no qualitative records allowing for the popularising activities of the applicants.

The Biology Centre CAS has the OTM-R webpage, where all the job vacancies are advertised. However, this webpage is difficult to be found by potential applicants. Also, it does not meet the requirements of the C&C and OTM-R rules.

The Recruitment Guideline is currently under the process of revision. The Recruitment Guideline shall be published on the OTM-R webpage and contain the way of the appointment of the members of the recruitment committee, the schedule of the tender and the system of checks.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

STRENGTHS:

4 advertising websites focused on scientific positions are used during the recruitment of the new employees at the Biology Centre CAS. Moreover, the advertisements are published on the website of the institution, on the website of the Czech Academy of Sciences and on social networks (e.g. Facebook).

The published advertisements for scientific positions (R1 – R4) are made in accordance with the current unified template.

The potential employees are not discriminated by age, gender, belief and religion, social or national origin, ethnicity, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion and social or economic condition.

A career break has no influence on an applicant's evaluation. The applicants' qualities are assessed in a comprehensive way including his or her professional history and merits.

The emphasis is also put on the value of the mobility of the applicants. Mobility is considered a significant contribution to their scientific career, and experience from abroad may strengthen the international competitiveness of the research groups (laboratory, department or the Biology Centre CAS at large).

The Biology Centre CAS has the OTM-R webpage, where all the job vacancies are advertised.

The Recruitment Guideline is currently included in Human Resources Strategy for Researchers, which is published on the OTM-R webpage.

The recruitment committee consists of at least 3 members; always odd number. The committee is gender balanced, thereby ensuring a balanced attitude during the applicants' selection process. Each member of the committee has clearly defined responsibility for evaluation criteria. The members of the committee are trained and acquainted with the checklists, which are filled in during the recruitment process about every single applicant. Checklist contains applicants' personality traits and involvement in popularisation and other specific activities.

The recruitment process is two-round, transparent and indiscriminating. After the second round of the tender, all the applicants are informed of the results and reasons for the final decision.

The new employees are offered part-time contracts, the possibility of the use of the Children's Group "Motyl", flexible working hours and subsidized canteen meals.

WEAKNESSES:

No weaknesses were indentified.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

STRENGTHS:

- BC regularly uses two websites, Euraxess and Researchjobs, to advertise scientific positions. In addition, advertisements are published on the institution's website, on the website of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and on social networks (e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn).
- The published advertisements for scientific positions (R1 – R4) are made in accordance with the current unified template.
- The potential employees are not discriminated by any measure by any level. All applicants are treated as equal.
- The emphasis is also put on the value of the mobility of the applicants. Mobility is considered a significant contribution to their scientific career, and experience from abroad may strengthen the international competitiveness of the research groups (laboratory, department or the BC at large).
- The BC has the job vacancies webpage, where all the job possibilities are advertised.
- The OTM-R document (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor>), which contains the rules for the selection process, is published on the BC website.
- The recruitment committee consists of at least 3 members; always an odd number. Men and women are represented in the committee, which ensures a balanced approach during the selection process of applicants. Each committee member has a clearly defined responsibility for the evaluation criteria. The members of the committee are familiar with the rules for the selection process.
- The recruitment process is two-round, transparent and non-discriminating. After the second round of the tender, all the applicants are informed of the results and reasons for the final decision.
- The selection of the successful candidate is made during at least two rounds.
- The new employees are informed about possibility of part-time contracts, the use of the Children's Group "Motyl" (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-services/the-nursery-motyl-butterfly/#anchor>), flexible working hours and subsidized canteen meals.

WEAKNESSES:

No weaknesses were identified.

Remarks (max 500 words)

Working conditions*

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)****STRENGTHS:**

The Biology Centre CAS is an institution where the number of part-time contracts is above standard; enabling the harmonization of professional and private life (704 employees, 231 out of them have a contract below the 100 per cent workload). At the Biology Centre CAS the part-time contracts are offered to all new employees.

The employees are able to have flexible working hours if their contracts allow it. This measure helps to harmonize the professional and the private life (especially in young families).

In 2014, the Children's Group "Motyl" was established at the Biology Centre CAS. The Children's Group has 12 positions and enables young parents to return more quickly and easily to the science and research.

Above and beyond ordinary administration and support, the research teams are offered the service of the following shared departments:

The Legal department in the field of preparation and implementation of trade agreements, tenders and consultancies of the legislation in force;

The Transfer Technology department in the field of intellectual property rights and R&D registered designs protection;

The Project department that provides wide support throughout the projects and helps to search for calls. It also provides consultancies of the grant rules and conducts seminars or consultancies related to the grant submissions.

The compound of the Biology Centre CAS is fully accessible for disabled employees. The employment of the disabled employees is equal to the 16.45 of FTE.

The canteen meals are subsidized for all employees.

Many cultural and sports events are organised for the employees and their families within the Biology Centre CAS (e.g. Children's Day, Earth Day, Happy Hours, volleyball tournaments, bicycle trips or orientation runs).

For the strengthening of bilingualism at the institution, language classes are conducted for the employees. There are Czech classes for foreign employees and English classes for Czech employees. There are 7 Czech classes and 13 English classes.

A welcome service for foreign employees and their family members is provided before their arrival in the Czech Republic. Subsequently, the employees are looked after during their entire stay at the Biology Centre CAS. Before arrival: Support and consultancy is provided during the difficult process of getting a VISA. All the documents needed for the VISA are ensured (not only for the employees but also

for their family members). The Biology Centre CAS intensively communicates with the Embassies, as well as with the Department for Asylum and Migration Policy of the Ministry of Interior or Alien and Border Police. The foreign employees are also accompanied to the above-mentioned offices. Comprehensive administrative support related to their stay in the Czech Republic is provided (also for the family members). The Biology Centre CAS HR department also helps the foreign employees in other various situations related to their stay (the birth of a child, a start at school, opening a bank account, communication with insurance companies, and communication with a doctor). Czech classes are also offered, as well as cooperation with the Centre for the support of the integration of foreigners.

The Biology Centre CAS participated in the process of the foundation of the University of South Bohemia and there remains a close cooperation between these two institutions. The cooperation is ensured mainly in the field of securing tertiary education and educational programmes, especially at the Faculty of Science, Faculty of Agriculture and Faculty of Fisheries and Protection of Waters. The researchers of the Biology Centre CAS also teach at the University of South Bohemia; thus they may deepen and improve their pedagogical skills.

WEAKNESSES:

60 per cent of the budgets of the Biology Centre CAS come from national as well as international grants. This fact is caused by the established system of the science funding in the Czech Republic. The scientific contracts in V1 – V3 grades are dependent on the financial means obtained from the grants, therefore there is quite a large share of fixed-term contracts among them at the Biology Centre CAS.

At the institution, there is no standardized on-boarding process for the new employees, during which they would be trained in the functioning of the institution and all the related procedures (including the current legislative in effect).

Although there is a fine welcome service for foreign employees at the institution, it shall be standardized and published on the public websites of the Biology Centre CAS.

The environment throughout the Biology Centre CAS compound is not completely bilingual. In respect of that, language courses are conducted at the institution, and the orientation system is being prepared to be bilingual as well. Moreover, the operational as well as the official documentation of the Biology Centre CAS shall be translated into English with the subsequent revision of the websites of the Biology Centre CAS.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

STRENGTHS:

The Biology Centre CAS (BC) is an institution where the number of part-time contracts is above standard. The employees are able to have flexible working hours if their contracts allow it.

The Children's Group helps young parents to return more quickly and easily to the research activities.

The research teams are offered the service of many shared departments, i.e. the Legal department, the Transfer Technology department, the Project department.

The compound of the BC is fully accessible for disabled employees (11 FTE).

For the strengthening of bilingualism at the institution, language classes are conducted for the employees.

A welcome service is fully standardized and published on BC website. It serves to foreign employees and their family members in helping with all the administration before their arrival in the Czech Republic. The HR department helps foreign employees in other situations related to their everyday life stay.

All new employees undergo a standardized on-boarding procedure. For foreign employees, all steps and related documents are provided in English in accordance with bilingual institution standards. During the on-boarding process, employees are acquainted with basic processes and policies of the institution, and are trained in new necessary skills.

The BC cooperates closely with the University of South Bohemia, mainly in the field of securing tertiary education and educational programmes.

WEAKNESSES:

60 per cent of the budget of the BC come from national as well as international grants, in accordance with the established system of science funding in the Czech Republic. The scientific contracts in V1 – V3 grades are dependent on the financial means obtained from the grants, therefore there is quite a large share of fixed-term contracts among them at the BC.

The standardized on-boarding process is in the implementation phase.

The environment at the BC compound is not completely bilingual. Despite the courses of English for Czech employees, staff turnover at some departments (Financial, HR, Legal) might cause language inadequacy in communication with foreign employees.

New documents are prepared in the Czech language and are translated according to their priority.

Proper plagiarism guidelines are not systematically set up at the BC. There is a need to prepare a guideline for BC researchers, in extension of internal IP protection guidelines. Guidelines shall describe how to avoid plagiarism, what steps to take when BC employees find out that plagiarism of their work occurred due to copying or collusion and how the BC employees should properly credit BC in their publications and papers.

Contract research is currently handled individually and not systematically at the BC. There is a need to prepare a guideline for BC researchers how to properly process companies requests for the provision of highly professional scientific services with due diligence.

In November 2020, an extensive reconstruction of the entire BC compound was launched as part of the Strategic Plan for the Infrastructure of the BC Revitalization. Therefore, the bilingual orientation system of the compound will be implemented partially during the reconstruction and subsequently revised and completed after the reconstruction is finished.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

STRENGTHS:

- The BC has a high number of part-time contracts and offers flexible working hours if workload permits.
- The Children's Group "Motýl" (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-services/the-nursery-motyl-butterfly/#anchor>) enables easier return to research for young parents.
- Research teams benefit from shared services, including the Legal department, Technology Transfer Office, Project department, Human Resources department, Financial department, Operational department, IT department, Public Relations department, and Library of BC.
- BC facilities are accessible for handicapped employees and visitors, employing 12.14 FTE disabled employees.
- Language classes are provided to strengthen bilingualism at the institution.
- Since 2020, the Biology Centre has been part of the Euraxess Czech Republic network (Declaration of commitment) <https://www.euraxess.cz/czech-republic/euraxess-czech-republic> (<https://www.euraxess.cz/czech-republic/euraxess-czech-republic>)
- The EURAXESS centers offer valuable information on researchers' mobility and their family members.
- HR department provides information and support (Welcome Service) for current and potential foreign employees.
- The welcome service is standardized and published on the BC CAS website GUIDE FOR EXPATS (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/#anchor>), containing practical advice concerning professional & daily life, and is regularly updated.
- The HR department handles all Welcome Service activities, helping foreign employees and their families with residence permits/visas, and assisting during their stay in the Czech Republic and upon leaving.
- The HR Department, in cooperation with the BC Institutes, also assists foreign employees with daily life in the Czech Republic.
- New employees undergo a standardized on-boarding procedure, with all steps and documents for foreign employees provided in English in accordance with bilingual institution standards. Employees are acquainted with basic processes, institution policies and skills necessary for their position.
- The BC closely cooperates with the University of South Bohemia, mainly in securing tertiary education and educational programmes.
- New documents are prepared in both Czech and English.
- The bilingual orientation system within the BC premises is completed.

- Implementation of management and economic information system - digitization and streamlining of workflows in HR, payroll and accounting enabling researchers more effective management.
- In November 2020, the Strategic Plan for the Infrastructure of the BC Revitalization began, focusing on indoor environment revitalization and reducing building energy consumption.
- Communication of scientific results to the public is ensured through various communication activities, including media, social networks, fairs, exhibitions, science festivals, and the “Mobile laboratory” scientific showroom, according to the Strategy of communication, marketing, and popularization.

WEAKNESSES:

- Because of the system of the science funding in the Czech Republic, 64% of BC budget comes from national and international grants resulting in a high number of fixed-term contracts, particularly for scientific positions in V1 – V3 (R1 – R2) grades.
- Internal communication within the institution needs review and strengthening.
- The Strategy of using the unified visual identity of the BC requires updating.
- According to the IAB report, clear strategic plans for individual institutes should align with the overall BC strategic plan for further development should be put in place.
- Commercialization Board (CB) evaluates only TAČR GAMA projects. Its potential in business, law, research and economics could be better utilized for the benefit of BC researchers.

Remarks (max 500 words)

Ongoing development of onboarding and following processes.

Training and development*

**Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)****STRENGTHS:**

The Grant Programme for commencing scientist mobility (internships, conferences) has been in effect since 2018. 7 internships and 18 conferences were supported in 2018.

The Czech and English language classes are conducted in a blanket manner for all interested employees. In total, there are 7 Czech classes for foreigners and 13 English classes for Czechs.

An individual position called “education specialist” was established in 2018. It is a full-time position (1 FTE). The education specialist participates in the preparation and the implementation of the professional development and life-long education at the Biology Centre CAS.

The education specialist is also responsible for ensuring the implementation of the mentoring programmes, and they suggest the conception of the education for commencing and managerial employees (both in research and in administration). The education is divided into professional education and tuition, language skills - English, soft skills and their training and the personal development of the executives.

The scientific employees are evaluated annually in accordance with the Researchers Evaluation Rules. The administrative staff is evaluated through assessment interviews, which take place between the individual employee and their immediate superior. From this interview the written record is made. The professional and personal goals discussed during the interview are binding for the employee in the following period.

WEAKNESSES:

Only the internal mentoring system currently works at the institution. This system includes the cooperation with the University of South Bohemia.

In 2018 the education was provided by randomly conducted courses and seminars. From 2019 the educational system shall be revised. It shall work on the basis of the standardized plan of tuition of commencing and senior scientific employees as well as administrative ones. The education specialist shall be responsible for the implementation of this coming system.

The scientists lack appropriate presentation skills and practice for a science popularization through the TV or radio broadcasts. The communication to the public requires higher intelligibility during the presentation of the results.

The participation of the researchers in the popularization of the science is not considered within the evaluation system. This results in a low motivation of the researchers to take part in the popularization at all.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

STRENGTHS:

The Grant Programme for commencing scientist mobility (internships, conferences) has been in effect since 2018. Each year new call is announced for both internships and conferences. The Grant Programme also serves as a training and practise of grant application for early career researchers and Ph.D. students.

The Czech and English language classes are conducted in a blanket manner for all employees interested. There are Czech classes for foreign employees and English classes for Czech employees. There are 7 Czech classes and 13 English classes running since 2018. The number of employees attending the classes is increasing consistently.

An individual position called “education specialist” was established in 2018. It is a full-time position (1 FTE). The education specialist participates in the preparation and implementation of the professional development and life-long education at the BC.

The education specialist is also responsible for the preparation of annual education plan, organising trainings and workshops. The conception of the education involves researchers and administrative staff. The education is divided into professional education and soft skills. Another part of education is the improvement of language skills – English classes and Czech classes.

Annual education plan was neither suspended nor curtailed in 2020. Planned trainings and language courses have been running in an online format.

The BC is an associated member of EUMENT-NET.

The scientific employees are evaluated annually in accordance with the Researchers Evaluation Rules. The administrative staff is evaluated through assessment interviews, which take place between the individual employee and their immediate superior. From this interview, a written record is made. The professional and personal goals discussed during the interview are binding for the employee in the following period.

WEAKNESSES:

The mentoring program is at the beginning, which is caused by the covid situation and restricted direct social contact.

Early career researchers and Ph.D. students have limited opportunities to practice their presentation skills in popularization of science. The communication to the public requires higher intelligibility during the presentation of the results.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) ***STRENGTHS:**

- The Grant Programme (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/grant-program-bc/#anchor>) for early career researchers mobility (internships, conferences) has been in effect since 2018. Regularly, new call is announced for both internships and conferences. The Grant Programme also serves as a training and practice of grant writing.
- The Czech and English language classes are conducted in a blanket manner for all interested employees. There are currently 7 Czech classes and 10 English classes running. 25 people passed FCE and CAE.
- The Annual education plan (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/>) contains training courses, workshops and English classes and Czech classes is available on BC website.
- The BC is an active member of EUMENT-NET (<https://www.eument-net.eu/>).
- The scientific employees are regularly evaluated in accordance with the Researchers Evaluation Rules (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/#anchor>).
- The mentoring programme (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/mentoring/#anchor>) is fully implemented since 2021 – there is possibility of internal or external mentors and mentees are supported to visit their mentor in-person (if mentors are external).
- Early career researchers and Ph.D. students can practice their presentation skills in science popularization at various types of fairs, exhibitions, science festivals, school programs, seminars for public, workshops and courses that BC organizes and participates in.
- BC provides systematic monitoring and distribution of information of available financial sources (fellowships etc.) to be used for international mobility mostly for R1/R2 researchers to allow them to have international experience and training to acquire knowledge on new methods or approaches.

WEAKNESSES:

- With respect IAB report there should be clear strategic plans for individual institutes and these should be aligned with the overall BC strategic plan for further development.
- The need to put in place a long-term and sustainable leadership development plan.
- The expertise of the BCs internal specialists in the technology and knowledge area, project management area should be exploited more often on regular basis. It could be implemented in onboarding process in the form of video manuals or electronic manuals.

Remarks (max 500 words)

Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed? (max 500 words)

Recommendations for last IAB meeting in 2019 were reflected in the updated Research Strategy for years 2023 to 2027 (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/#anchor>). In 2023, the IAB met to define recommendations for the further direction of the institution in the broader context of European research institutions. Following this meeting we will focus on incorporating the IAB recommendations during the next period into the BC management processes and decisions.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? (max 500 words)

The role of IAB has been embedded in the Organisational Rules of BC and the Rules are to be approved in a very short time. IAB assesses the development of the institution from an international point of view. The IAB provides recommendations and feedback to the statutory representative and to the Board of Directors, comments on and makes suggestions for further short-term and long-term development.

Due to the geopolitical situation in Europe, the conditions for employment of foreigners from endangered countries have changed and have also been implemented in BC's recruitment process. Rules have been adopted for the recruitment of new employees from countries on the EU sanctions list.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan? (max 500 words)

There are not.

3. Actions

Please consult the list of all actions you have submitted as part of your HR strategy. Please add to the overview the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators. If any actions have been altered or omitted, please provide a commentary for each action. You can also add new objectives.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their ratings.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
1. Bilingual institution / Translation of documents: It shall ensure the availability of official documents to all employees of the Biology Centre CAS. In respect of the international character of the institution, it is necessary for foreign employees to be able to obtain basic information from published documents and to have access to fundamental forms in English. This applies also for presentations.	(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility	Q2 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	List of translated documents, forms and presentations
	(+/-) 10. Non discrimination			
	(+/-) 24. Working conditions			
Current Status	Remarks			
COMPLETED	1. Translation of documents: It shall ensure the availability of official documents to all employees of the Biology Centre CAS. In respect of the international character of the institution, it is necessary for foreign employees to be able to obtain basic information from published documents and to have access to fundamental forms in English. This applies also for presentations.			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2

1. Bilingual institution / Language courses: The language courses are for Czech as well as foreign employees. It serves to break limitations within communication. In respect of the international character of the institution, it is necessary that all employees be able to use English as their secondary language at work.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Q4 2022	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Running courses, attendance lists
(+/-) 24. Working conditions			

Current Status

Remarks

EXTENDED

The language courses are for Czech as well as foreign employees. It serves to break limitations within communication. In respect of the international character of the institution, it is necessary that all employees be able to use English as their secondary language at work.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

1. Bilingual institution / Creation of a bilingual orientation system: The orientation system shall serve to orient all visitors or new employees at the Biology Centre CAS.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Q4 2024	Operating Department, Working team IBERA	Outdoor and indoor orientation system
(+/-) 24. Working conditions			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	The orientation system shall serve to orient all visitors or new employees at the Biology Centre CAS.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4

1. Bilingual institution / Revision of websites of the Biology Centre CAS: On translated websites all of the documents in English shall be uploaded and updated continuously.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Q2 2019	IT Department, Working team IBERA	Link for the translated websites
(+/-) 24. Working conditions			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	On translated websites all of the documents in English shall be uploaded and updated continuously.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

2. OTM-R policy at the institution / Creation of OTM-R webpage: To enhance the recruitment process, a webpage with all relevant information related to OTM-R Toolkit elements shall be created. There shall be an application for online login to a tender and for sending questions to published results of the tender.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 12. Recruitment	Q1 2019	HR & IT Department, Working team IBERA	OTM-R webpage, app for online login and question sender
(+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)			
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

To enhance the recruitment process, a webpage with all relevant information related to OTM-R Toolkit elements shall be created. There shall be an application for online login to a tender and for sending questions to published results of the tender.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

2. OTM-R policy at the institution / Standardization of rules of recruitment: Current rules shall be revised by C&C criteria and rules that shall improve transparency and enhance the system to provide better feedback to applicants.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 12. Recruitment			
(+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)	Q1 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	A document
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

Current rules shall be revised by C&C criteria and rules that shall improve transparency and enhance the system to provide better feedback to applicants.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

2. OTM-R policy at the institution / Revision of checklists for 1st and 2nd round of a tender: Current checklists shall be improved by an assessment of the applicant's personality traits and the extent of his or her involvement in popularization activities.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 12. Recruitment			
(+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)	Q4 2019	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Checklists
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

Current checklists shall be improved by an assessment of the applicant's personality traits and the extent of his or her involvement in popularization activities.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8

3. On-boarding and welcome service / Standardization of welcome service: Current support provided to new coming scientists shall be standardized, formalized and published on the OTM-R webpage.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Q3 2019	HR Department, Working team IBERA	A manual
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Current support provided to new coming scientists shall be standardized, formalized and published on the OTM-R webpage. ONBOARDING GUIDE FOR EXPATS BC EXPAT'S GUIDEBOOK https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/#anchor		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

3. On-boarding and welcome service / Setting of on-boarding system: The current individual training for new employees shall be replaced by a new standardized system.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations			
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Q3 2019	Service Unit	A manual
(+/-) 30. Access to career advice			

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

The current individual training for new employees shall be replaced by a new standardized system.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 10

3. On-boarding and welcome service / Implementation of on-boarding system: Tuition of new employees shall be done on a regular basis and its content standardized.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations			
(+/-) 10. Non discrimination	Q1 2022	Service Unit	An implementation
(+/-) 30. Access to career advice			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Tuition of new employees shall be done on a regular basis and its content standardized.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11

4. Education and mentoring at the institution / Involvement of the Biology Centre CAS in a mentoring programme EUMENT-NET: The Biology Centre CAS shall be registered as a member of a mentoring programme and start to gain information about experience with mentoring from other European institutions.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development	Q1 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Registration, attendance at EUMENT-NET meetings
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	The BC shall be registered as a member of a mentoring programme and start to gain information about experience with mentoring from other European institutions		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 12

4. Education and mentoring at the institution / Creation of mentoring programme: Based on the received experience from EUMENT-NET, a new guide for the mentoring programme shall be prepared at the Biology Centre CAS.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development		HR Department, Working team IBERA	
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q2 2019		A manual
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Based on the received experience from EUMENT-NET, a new guide for the mentoring programme shall be prepared at the Biology Centre CAS.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13

4. Education and mentoring at the institution /
Implementation of mentoring programme of the Biology
Centre CAS into the programme of EUMENT-NET.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development		HR Department,	Active involvement in
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q1 2022	Working team IBERA	mentoring programme

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

Implementation of mentoring programme of the BC into
the programme of EUMENT-NET.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 14

4. Education and mentoring at the institution / Creation of a plan of professional development: A plan shall define an annual cycle of educational courses for scientific and administrative staff in the field of soft-skills and professional development.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development		HR	
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q1 2019	Department, Working team IBERA	Document, plan

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

A plan shall define an annual cycle of educational courses for scientific and administrative staff in the field of soft-skills and professional development.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 15

4. Education and mentoring at the institution / Commencement of a system of education: A system of education shall apply to commencing or executive researchers and administrative staff. Courses shall be conducted in accordance with a created plan. These courses shall cover all requested fields of education at the Biology Centre CAS. The plan shall be published with one-year validity. The plan shall be updated on the basis of interest from individual institutes.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development	Q4 2022	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Implementation
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

A system of education shall apply to commencing or executive researchers and administrative staff. Courses shall be conducted in accordance with a created plan. These courses shall cover all requested fields of education at the Biology Centre CAS. The plan shall be published with one-year validity. The plan shall be updated on the basis of interest from individual institutes

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 16

4. Education and mentoring at the institution / Preparation of a strategy of professional development and mentoring: A strategy shall cover all individual educational activities at the institution, for example language courses, mentoring programme, internal grant system for mobility support, expert education, soft skills.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development		HR	
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q1 2020	Department, Working team IBERA	A strategy document

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

A strategy shall cover all individual educational activities at the institution, for example language courses, mentoring programme, internal grant system for mobility support, expert education, soft skills.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 17

5. Popularization / Allow popularization activities for an assessment of researchers: In accordance with a newly introduced methodology on the national level, the current institutional methodology of researchers' evaluation shall be improved by a bullet-point considering popularization activities.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 9. Public engagement			
(+/-) 12. Recruitment	Q2 2020	HR & PR Department, Working team IBERA	A document
(+/-) 25. Stability and permanence of employment			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	In accordance with a newly introduced methodology on the national level, the current institutional methodology of researchers' evaluation shall be improved by a bullet-point considering popularization activities.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 18

5. Popularization / Involvement of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in popularization activities: A new platform shall be introduced to enhance the presentation skills of students and commencing scientists through practise—including public presentation of the results of their current research. Upon the presenters' request, feedback with recommendations shall be provided.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 9. Public engagement			
(+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code)			
(+/-) 25. Stability and permanence of employment	Q4 2022	Working team IBERA	List of presentations conducted
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development			
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			

Current Status

Remarks

EXTENDED

Involvement of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in popularization activities: A new platform shall be introduced to enhance the presentation skills of students and commencing scientists through practise—including public presentation of the results of their current research. Upon the presenters' request, feedback with recommendations shall be provided.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 19

5. Popularization / Creation of strategy of communication, marketing and science popularization: In respect of popularization activities, a conception of communication was introduced. The conception briefly and generally describes methods the Biology Centre CAS uses to communicate with the public. A strategy for wider management of communication is missing in this document. Moreover, a strategy of marketing activities and strategy of popularization are also missing.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 9. Public engagement	Q4 2022	PR Department, Working team IBERA	A strategy document
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	In respect of popularization activities, a conception of communication was introduced. The conception briefly and generally describes methods the BC uses to communicate with the public. A strategy for wider management of communication is missing in this document. Moreover, a strategy of marketing activities and strategy of popularization are also missing.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 20

6. Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access / Update of intellectual property rights protection regulation: The current regulation shall be revised and updated to fully correspond to present legislative changes. An updated regulation shall be translated into English to be available to all foreign employees of the Biology Centre CAS.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility	Q3 2019	Transfer Technology Department	A regulation document
(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	The current regulation shall be revised and updated to fully correspond to present legislative changes. An updated regulation shall be translated into English to be available to all foreign employees of the Biology Centre CAS.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 21

6. Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access / Creation of conception of know-how sharing and guide for open access: An activity shall synergistically continue the work of the Transfer Technology Department within a strategy of open access and know-how sharing preparation. The strategy shall deal with the issue of the sharing of know-how among administrative staff, the scientific community at the Biology Centre CAS and the public. The strategy shall set a way for how the results of creative work and copyrights shall be introduced to the world. Part of the strategy is focused on the implementation and use of the Creative Common Licence.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 7. Good practice in research	Q1 2019	Transfer Technology Department, Working team IBERA	A document of conception, a manual, an application
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	An activity shall synergistically continue the work of the Transfer Technology Department within a strategy of open access and know-how sharing preparation. The strategy shall deal with the issue of the sharing of know-how among administrative staff, the scientific community at the BCand the public. The strategy shall set a way for how the results of creative work and copyrights shall be introduced to the world. Part of the strategy is focused on the implementation and use of the Creative Common Licence.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 22

6. Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access / Plagiarism guidelines: A proper plagiarism guidelines are not systematically set up at the Biology Centre CAS. New guideline will describe how to avoid plagiarism, what steps to take when BC employees find out that plagiarism of their work occurred due to copying or collusion and how the BC employees should properly credit BC in their publications and papers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights	Q4 2022	Transfer Technology Department, Working team IBERA	Guideline
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	A proper plagiarism guidelines are not systematically set up at the Biology Centre CAS. New guideline will describe how to avoid plagiarism, what steps to take when BC employees find out that plagiarism of their work occurred due to copying or collusion and how the BC employees should properly credit BC in their publications and papers.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 23

6. Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access / Contract research guidelines: Contract research is currently handled individually and not systematically at the Biology Centre CAS. New guideline shall describe how to properly process companies requests for the provision of highly professional scientific services with due diligence.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights	Q2 2022	Transfer Technology Department, Working team IBERA	Guideline
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Contract research is currently handled individually and not systematically at the Biology Centre CAS. New guideline shall describe how to properly process companies requests for the provision of highly professional scientific services with due diligence.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 24

Working conditions / Ethics: Regular training against bossing and other types of harassment and inappropriate behaviour for all workers on leading positions (directors, group leaders, head of laboratories etc.)

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 34. Complains/ appeals			
(-/+) 38. Continuing Professional Development	2024-2026	HR, PR Department	List of workshops
(-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development			

Current Status

Remarks

NEW

Regular training against bossing and other types of harassment and inappropriate behaviour for all workers on leading positions (directors, group leaders, head of laboratories etc.)

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 25

25. Open Science To advance our open science activity, we will revise an open-access repository for all research outputs, including publications, data sets, and software, ensuring compliance with FAIR principles. Additionally, we will prepare a training program for researchers on best practices in open science, including data management, sharing, reproducibility, and intellectual property considerations. Furthermore, we will foster collaborations with international open science networks and platforms to align our practices with global standards and increase the visibility and impact of our research.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(-/+) 7. Good practice in research	Q4/2026	Technology Transfer Office / Project department/ Technical and administrative service	Guideline, workshops
(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW	To advance our open science activity, we will revise an open-access repository for all research outputs, including publications, data sets, and software, ensuring compliance with FAIR principles. Additionally, we will prepare a training program for researchers on best practices in open science, including data management, sharing, reproducibility, and intellectual property considerations. Furthermore, we will foster collaborations with international open science networks and platforms to align our practices with global standards and increase the visibility and impact of our research.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 26

Institutional resilience To develop and implement strategies that strengthen the resilience of the Public Research Institute, ensuring its ability to adapt to and recover from disruptions, maintain continuity of operations, and sustain research excellence in the face of challenges such as financial constraints, natural disasters, geopolitical situation, cyber threats, and other crises.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 24. Working conditions	Q4/2025	Technical and administrative service	A document of conception, a manual
(+/-) 25. Stability and permanence of employment			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW	To develop and implement strategies that strengthen the resilience of the Public Research Institute, ensuring its ability to adapt to and recover from disruptions, maintain continuity of operations, and sustain research excellence in the face of challenges such as financial constraints, natural disasters, geopolitical situation, cyber threats, and other crises.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 27

Institutional internal communication To improve internal communication within the BC, fostering a culture of transparency, collaboration, and engagement among staff, researchers, and administration. To streamline internal communication processes, ensuring that all members of the institution are well-informed, engaged, and able to collaborate effectively.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 24. Working conditions	Q4/2026	Technical and administrative service	Establishment of working group; internal communication plan, intranet platform, meeting schedules and minutes, training materials
(+/-) 30. Access to career advice			
(++) 36. Relation with supervisors			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 28

28. BC web optimalization redesign and restructure the BC website to enhance user experience, accessibility, and functionality, ensuring it reflects a modern design and effectively communicates the institute's research, activities, and achievements to various stakeholders. This activity focuses on creating a user-friendly, visually appealing, and content-rich website that serves as a comprehensive information hub for researchers, students, collaborators, and the general public.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(+/-) 24. Working conditions	Q4/2026	Technical and administrative service	Website optimization
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 29

Unified BC brand style creating a comprehensive and consistent brand identity that reflects the organization's mission, values, and image across all platforms and materials. This not only includes the visual aspects but also the tone, messaging, and overall presentation of the brand.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
(++) 23. Research environment	Q4/2026	PR department/Project department/Technology Transfer Office	Brand style guide, logo package, social media guidelines, marketing and communication materials, training and implementation workshops

Current Status Remarks

NEW

Unselected principles:

(++)1. Research freedom (++)2. Ethical principles (++)4. Professional attitude (++)6. Accountability

(++)8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++)11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems (++)13. Recruitment (Code) (++)14. Selection (Code)

(++)17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (++)18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

(++)19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (++)20. Seniority (Code) (++)21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

- (++)22. Recognition of the profession (++)26. Funding and salaries (++)27. Gender balance (++)28. Career development
- (++)29. Value of mobility (++)32. Co-authorship (++)33. Teaching (++)35. Participation in decision-making bodies
- (++)37. Supervision and managerial duties (++)40. Supervision

The extended version of the reviewed HR Strategy for your organisation for the next 3 years, including the OTM-R policy must be published on your organisation's website.

Please provide the link to the dedicated webpage(s) on your organisation's web site, multiple links must be comma separated *:

URL *:

<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/hrs4r-ibera/#anchor> (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/hrs4r-ibera/#anchor>)

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.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Initial Phase)

For recruiting new employees the three-member recruitment committees have been established at the Biology Centre CAS. The committees are gender balanced. All members of the committee are trained by the HR department. The tender is two-round, transparent and indiscriminating. All the applicants are informed of the results of the tender. Feedback is provided to those applicants who passed into the second round. All job vacancies are advertised via several websites with scientific advertisements. Social networks are used as well. The advertisements are prepared in accordance with the standardized templates.

The OTM-R policy is not published online and it is not implemented to a sufficient extent. The OTM-R webpage shall be available from the main websites of the Biology Centre CAS, and besides the Recruitment Guideline it shall contain all the required information to attract researchers from abroad, as well as sufficient information for all employees (OTM-R principles 1, 2, 7, 9, 12, 14, 22).

The Recruitment Guideline shall be fine-tuned. The guideline shall contain the method of the appointment of the recruitment committee, its training, the comprehensive system of checks, the description of the process of the recruitment, the way the position is advertised, the way feedback is provided and the procedure of the complaint file.

The current checklists shall be extended by applicants' personal traits and popularizing activities (OTM-R principle 10). The checklist serves for the checking of the transparency and objectivity of the tender.

The current templates of the advertisements shall also be revised and adjusted for all the types of positions at the institution (OTM-R principle 12, 14).

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Interim Assessment)

OTMR principles

The OTM-R policy is published online and it is implemented on BC website <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor> (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor>). The OTM-R webpage is available from the main website of the BC. Apart from the Recruitment Guideline, it contains all the information required to attract researchers from abroad. It also contains all the information necessary for BC employees (OTM-R principles 1, 2, 7, 9, 12, 14, 22).

The Recruitment Guideline has been prepared, approved and published. The guideline contains how the recruitment committee is appointed and trained, as well as the comprehensive system of checks, the description of the recruitment process, how the position is advertised, the way feedback is provided and the procedure of filing a complaint.

The current checklists were extended with applicants' personal traits and popularizing activities (OTM-R principle 10). The checklist serves to check the transparency and objectivity of the tender.

The current templates of the advertisements are adjusted for all types of positions at the institution (OTM-R principle 12, 14).

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Award Renewal)

The OTM-R policy is published online and it is implemented on BC website <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor>. (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor>) OTM-R policy sets out basic principles for recruitment in research and development and describes recruitment procedure of the BC for researchers.

OTM-R policy is embedded into the institutional HR strategy and the document is published on BC website <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/> (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/>)

Please be aware that your OTM-R policy should be 'embedded' into the institutional HR strategy at the award renewal phase. The extended version of the reviewed HR strategy including the OTM-R policy and actions should be published on your organisation's website.

4. Implementation process

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

In accordance with the European Charter, the GAP analysis and following the IAB recommendations, BC focused on the following 6 key areas during implementation:

- 1) clear strategic plans for individual institutes aligned with the overall BC strategic plan
- 2) development of a set of indicators connected with the overall mission and vision of the BC
- 3) reinforced involvement of early-career researchers (R1-R2) in the decision-making process and in inter-institutional cooperation in respect to gender balance
- 4) a higher level of sharing and centralizing administrative and economic agendas to achieve more efficiency
- 5) prioritize the reconstruction of facilities to create a modern, attractive space that revitalizes the indoor environment, reduces energy consumption, and attracts global cooperation and highly motivated researchers
- 6) a policy of a uniform brand style representing the BC

Good communication and cooperation with the stakeholders are essential for good understanding of the HRS4R principles and fulfilling the goals.

Former working team established to implement HRS4R continued irregular joint communication and revision of individual aspects for implementation. At the end of the monitored period, it was agreed to establish focus groups (R1 - R4) for further cooperation on implementation and ensure long-term sustainable communication and obtaining bilateral feedback. 4 focus groups connected by communication with the managerial and administrative part including specialists for HR, professional development and mobility, project management, strategic management, science management, ethics, communication, marketing and popularization, life-long education and mentoring, law, open access and intellectual property rights, etc. thus in essence form a working/implementation team which fulfills the activity plan of the past period and sets the activity plan for the following period.

The HR Coordinator took over the duties and responsibilities of the Steering Committee, which was operational until 2022. This change was made in view of the completion of the IBERA project.

Defined goals and suggestions on how to implement them are consulted with the Board of Directors by the HR coordinator. The Board of Directors is an advisory and coordinating body subordinated to the director of the BC. The Board of Directors consists of the BC Director, the chairman of BC Board and 5 directors of the individual institutes (R4) . The Board of Directors consults on the individual measures suggested and adopts obligatory attitudes influencing the whole institution. HR Award aspects are regularly put into the debate of the Board.

Another body, to which the suggested goals and their implementation are presented, is the BC Board. Members of the BC Board are appointed and removed by the general assembly. The number of members of the BC Board and the procedure of their appointment/removal are protected by the APRI and institutional statutes. Any details are to be found in the Electoral Rules of the BC Board.

The BC Board consists of a chairman, deputy chairman and other members. The chairman and his or her deputy are elected and removed by the Board.

Suggested goals and steps are approved in accordance with the Organizational Rules of the BC.

The main goals defined in the Action Plan to maintain an HR Award and to harmonize the functioning of the institution with C&C principles were identified as follows:

1. To achieve the goal of creating clear strategic plans for individual institutes that align with the overall BC strategic plan, thorough analysis of each institute's current state will be conducted, clear and measurable goals will be set, detailed strategic plans with regular updates and coordination mechanisms will be developed. This process involves active involvement of employees, prioritization of key research areas, and the use of modern technologies for effective project management and decision-making.
2. To achieve the development of a set of indicators connected with the overall mission and vision of the BC, key stakeholders in the process to ensure relevance and comprehensiveness will be engaged. The indicators will be aligned with the BC's mission and vision, adhering to SMART criteria, and organized into categories such as Research Excellence, Innovation, Collaboration, Education and Training, and Societal Impact, using both quantitative and qualitative measures.
3. To achieve the reinforced involvement of early-career researchers (R1-R2) in the decision-making process and in inter-institutional cooperation with respect to gender balance, we will establish dedicated committees inclusive of early-career researchers, ensure gender-balanced representation, and provide training and mentorship programs to support their effective participation.
4. To achieve more efficiency through a higher level of sharing and centralizing administrative and economic agendas, we will streamline processes by creating a centralized administrative hub and implement integrated management systems to enhance coordination and resource allocation.
5. To prioritize the reconstruction of facilities, we will invest in modernizing spaces to create an attractive, energy-efficient environment that revitalizes the indoor atmosphere, thereby attracting global cooperation and highly motivated researchers.
6. To establish a uniform brand style representing the BC, we will develop and implement comprehensive branding guidelines to ensure consistency across all communications and materials, reinforcing our identity and enhancing brand awareness internally and BC public image as well.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist, which you will need to describe in detail:

Note: Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How have you prepared the internal review?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

December 2023 – IAB meeting followed by the meeting of the Board of Directors in January 2024.

January 2024 – HR coordinator presented the implementation process and future steps of the HR activities on the meeting of the Board of Directors

February 2024 - Focus groups containing R1-R4 researchers were designated as a successor of past working team of IBERA and ABERA projects to ensure long-term sustainable communication and to provide scientific feedback on HRS4R implementation in all fields of the activity plan.

March to April 2024 - collection of feedback (recommendations), focus group meetings

May 2024 - regular meetings of the working group and finalisation of the revision of the Action Plan

June 2024 - familiarisation of the BC Director with the revised Action Plan

How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The research community is involved in the implementation through the institution bodies, that is, the Board of Directors and BC Board. . The conclusions of the Board of Directors are publicly available to all BC employees via intranet and are in English. All bodies are involved in the proposal of individual steps and their implementation. The BC Board is composed of BC researchers and researchers from other research institutions stakeholders. To address properly certain issues substantial for HR award principles, Ethical Committee Commercialization Board were rearranged. Those bodies always contain employees both from scientific and administrative community. Additionally, new opportunities to open new themes on the informal level were created (BC Happy hours, Coffee with BC director).


For the evaluation and revision of the HRS4R activities, special focus groups have been created to provide the feedback necessary. The members of the focus groups have been chosen with regard on both career level (researchers at all career levels (R1 – R4) are represented) and gender balance to support as wide a representation as possible.

Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Since 2023, due to organizational changes, the duties of the Steering Committee have been assumed by the HR Activities Coordinator who is responsible for the implementation of the action plan and regularly/annually /monthly presents the development of the activities to the management of BC and the Board of Directors. These asses the possible risks and obstacles and take appropriate measures to tackle them. The Steering Committee used to operate at the institution within finished projects IBERA and ABERA. The meetings were regularly convened by HR Award PI at least once a year. All partial project outputs were presented to the Board of Directors. As there is functional Board of Directors which oversees various processes and progress of the institution.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's * research strategy, overarching HR policy 

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

HR Policy of the Biology Centre CAS is reflected in the HR Strategy.

The HR strategy of the Biology Centre is one of the fundamental pillars and sticks to the general strategy of the BC in order to ensure an accordance with aims and mission of the research institution. It defines way of selection of suitable candidates for employment, their adaptation to the employer's conditions, plan and manner of employees' education and development, mentoring activities, plan of work performance evaluation and career advancement options. The strategy includes creation of proper conditions for all employees, manner of their remuneration and care of them. Part of the HR strategy focuses on researchers from abroad as well, so they may integrate in the Czech Republic as easy as possible.

How has your organisation ensured that the proposed actions would be also implemented?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Due to the end of the IBERA and ABERA projects, the HR Coordinator monitors if the implementation goes according to the Action Plan since 2023. All the documents presented are, after being discussed by the Board of Directors, binding for the entire institution.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

A timeline and a Gantt chart were prepared for the entire Action Plan in, and the consistency of the timeline and the goals achieved are monitored. The Gantt chart has been adapted for the next period and control mechanisms have been set up to implement the activities and minimise risks. The control mechanisms are monitored by the working group and reported to the HR coordinator in case of deviation from the plan. The HR Coordinator presents the findings and proposes corrective actions to the BC management, which decides on the next course of action.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

A timeline and a Gantt chart have been prepared for the new Action Plan. The HR Activities Coordinator assesses the achievement of set goals at regular meetings. Progress in implementing the Action Plan as well as deviations are presented to the institution's management. The statutory representative, together with the Board of Directors, decide on the appropriate corrective measures and assign tasks to the specific directors as necessary.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

We keep working on and fulfilling the goals set in the Action Plan, all the important documents are kept separately in a special folder.

We cooperate and seek to share experiences and examples of good practice from other Czech institutions within the Academy of Sciences that have already undergone the evaluation process. We believe that by learning from their experiences, we can set up our own processes even better. On 07.03.2024, the HR Coordinator participated in a workshop on HR Award Renewal organized by CZARMA and Euraxess.

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

HRS4R BC websites: <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/hrs4r-ibera/#anchor> (<http://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/hrs4r-ibera/#anchor>)

Websites of the Biology Centre CAS: <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/homepage> (<http://www.bc.cas.cz/en/homepage>)

OTMR <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor> (<http://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor>)

Education <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/#anchor>

(<http://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/#anchor>)

Mentoring <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/mentoring/#anchor>

(<http://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/mentoring/#anchor>)

Grant Programme <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/grant-program-bc/#anchor> (<http://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/grant-program-bc/#anchor>)

ONBOARDING (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/onboarding/#anchor>)

GUIDE FOR EXPATS (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/#anchor>)

Organisation's internal website:

BC Internal regulations and directives (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/regulations-and-directives/#anchor>)

Director's decree (<https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/directors-decree/#anchor>)