



**BIOLOGICKÉ
CENTRUM**
AV ČR, v. v. i.

ACTION PLAN

HRS4R

JUNE 2024

TEMPLATE 4: ACTION PLAN

Case number: 2018CZ354528

Name Organisation under review: Biology Centre CAS

Organisation's contact details: renata.novotna@bc.cas.cz

SUBMISSION DATE: JANUARY 30, 2021

1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide a limited number of 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)	
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	588
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	29 912 639
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	11 001 011
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	13 144 591
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	546 006
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)	
<p>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 and Soil Biology and Biogeochemistry. There are 588 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.</p>	

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE:

Please provide an overview of the organization in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Thematic heading of the Charter and Code	STRENGTHS and WEAKNESSES
Ethical and professional aspects	<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the BC, the new Research Strategy for the years 2023 - 2027 has been approved and implemented. This Strategy follows the previous Plan of the Research Activity of the BC 2018 -2022. 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. The International Advisory Board (IAB) as director’s advisory body met every two years in 2019, 2021 and 2023. At the last meeting in 2023, the IAB made six recommendations to the BC management. A rotation of 20% of IAB members was also discussed in order to achieve future improvements. Next IAB meeting will take place in 2025. • The Commercialization Board, which has been active since 2015 as an advisory body for the commercialization of research results at BC with application potential in practice, underwent a change in the members at the beginning of 2024. The proportion of internal members was reduced at the expense of the proportion of external members in order to strengthen the independent perspective and critical assessment of the evaluated applied research results. • In September 2021 the new Directive on Contract Research in BC has entered into force. The Directive defines and delimits the terms related to contract research in accordance with the Communication from the European Commission - Framework for State Aid for Research, Development and Innovation (2014/C 198/01). • In November 2022, the Spin-Off Strategy and Rules came into effect, providing BC CAS researchers with a framework for establishing employee spin-off companies. • In May 2024 the Instruction of the BC Director concerning Plagiarism and Autoplagerism came into force providing employees of the BC with clear instructions and procedures regarding plagiarism and autoplagerism. • 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 researchers evaluation has been updated so that it takes place at the institution every year. • Two international scientific journals are published at the BC: The European Journal of Entomology (IF 1.3) and Folia Parasitologica (IF 1.6).

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The BC 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, which was updated in 2023. Moreover, both Ethics Committee of the BC and the Ethics |
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	<p>Committee for Research with Human Biological Material operate at the institution.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BC 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. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintenance of an internal reporting system for the purposes of submitting and assessing notifications within the meaning of the Act No. 171/2023 Coll., on the protection of whistleblowers and designation of a competent person (Directive on the Implementation of an Internal Whistleblowing system at BC came into force on 21st August 2023) • Gender Equality Plan approved since 2022 • Citizen Science: BC employees encourage the public to get involved in citizen science projects. Since 2021, the “Save the crucian carp” project has been successfully underway. From 2022 BC organizes the international City Nature Challenge in České Budějovice every year. Other citizen science projects concerning biodiversity and ecology are being prepared. • The Strategy of communication, marketing and popularization is valid for the period 2023 - 2026. <p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public engagement Guidelines are needed to encourage researchers to incorporate citizen science into their projects and to engage the public in science as much as possible. • The BC website should be revised in order to enhance the visibility of Public engagement projects run by the BC. • Absence of Institutional resilience management regarding the current geopolitical situation and regarding recommendation from the Czech Academy of Sciences. • A system of regular training aimed at preventing pathological phenomena and discrimination in the workplace. <p>Remarks: BC continues to promote the idea of green institution and principles of sustainability.</p>
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Recruitment and selection	<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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, which contains the rules for the selection process, is published on the BC website.
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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", flexible working hours and subsidized canteen meals. <p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No weaknesses were identified.
Working conditions	<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The BC is an institution where the number of part-time contracts is above standard. Employees have flexible working hours if the workload allows it. • The Children's Group "Motyl" helps young parents to return more quickly and easily to the research activities. <p>The research teams are offered the service of shared research management and administrative departments (Legal department, Technology Transfer Office, Project department, Human Resources department, Financial department, Operational department, IT department, Public Relations department, Library of BC)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The compound of the BC is accessible for handicapped employees and visitors. The BC employs 12,14 FTE of disabled employees. • For the strengthening of bilingualism at the institution, language classes are conducted for the employees. • 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 • The EURAXESS centers are an excellent source of information for all matters related to researchers' mobility and their family members. • HR department provides information and support (Welcome Service) for

	<p>current and potential foreign employees.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The welcome service is fully standardized and published on the BC CAS website GUIDE FOR EXPATS.• Guide for Expats contains practical advice concerning professional & daily life. The Guide for expats is regularly revised and updated.• All activities related to the Welcome Service are carried out by the HR department. HR department helps foreign employees and their family members to process residence permits/visas before their arrival in the Czech Republic so that they can legally stay and work in the Czech Republic (short or long term). We also assist foreign employees during their stay in the Czech Republic and when they leave to another country.• The Human Resources Department, in cooperation with the BC Institutes, also helps foreign employees in other situations related to daily life in the Czech Republic.
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- 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.
- New documents are prepared in the Czech and also English language version.
- The bilingual orientation system in the BC premises is completed.
- Implementation of management and economic information system - digitization and streamlining of workflows in HR, payroll and accounting to enable scientists more effective management activities in research.
- In November 2020, the Strategic Plan for the Infrastructure of the BC Revitalization began. The reconstruction of the complex is focused on the necessary revitalization of the indoor environment and reduction the energy consumption of buildings.
- Dissemination of scientific results to the general public is ensured through wide range of communication activities, e. g. through media communication, visibility on social networks, participation at fairs, exhibitions, science festivals and the “Mobile laboratory” scientific showroom, according to the Strategy of communication, marketing and popularization.

WEAKNESSES:

- 64 percent of the budgets of the BC 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 (corresponds to R1 – R2) 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 institution's internal communication needs to be reviewed and strengthened.
- The Strategy of using the unified visual identity of the BC needs to be updated.
- 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.
- Commercialization Board (CB) evaluates only TAČR GAMA projects. The CB's potential in the areas of business, law, research and economics could be more fully exploited for the benefit of BC researchers.
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	<p>Remarks:</p> <p>1. Ongoing development of onboarding and following processes.</p>
<p>Training and development</p>	<p>STRENGTHS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Grant Programme 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 contains training courses, workshops and English classes and Czech classes is available on BC website. • The BC is an active member of EUMENT-NET. • The scientific employees are regularly evaluated in accordance with the Researchers Evaluation Rules.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The mentoring programme 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. <p>WEAKNESSES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.
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2.1 Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed?

Recommendations for last IAB meeting in 2019 were reflected in the updated [Research Strategy for years 2023 to 2027](#). 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.

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

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.

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

There are not.

3. ACTIONS

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organisation's HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

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

Please fill in a sum up list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis:

Proposed ACTIONS	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
1_Bilingual institution				
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.	3, 10, 24	Q2 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	List of translated documents, forms and presentations
		COMPLETED		
2. 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.	10, 24	Q4 2018/Q4 2022/Q4 2026	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Running courses, attendance lists
		EXTENDED		
3. Creation of a bilingual orientation system: The orientation system shall serve to orient all visitors or new employees at the Biology Centre CAS.	10, 24	Q4 2019/Q4 2024	Operating Department, Working team IBERA	Outdoor and indoor orientation system
		COMPLETED		
4. Revision of websites of the Biology Centre CAS: On translated websites all of the documents in English shall be uploaded and updated continuously.	10, 24	Q2 2019	IT Department, Working team IBERA	Link for the translated websites
		COMPLETED		
2_OTM-R policy at the institution				
5. Creation of OTM-R	12, 15, 16	Q1 2019	HR & IT	OTM-R

<p>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.</p>			Department, Working team IBERA	webpage, app for online login and question sender
		COMPLETED		
<p>6. 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.</p>	12, 15, 16	Q1 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	A document
		COMPLETED		
<p>7. 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.</p>	12, 15, 16	Q4 2019	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Checklists
		COMPLETED		
3_ On-boarding and welcome service				
<p>8. Standardization of welcome service: Current support provided to new coming scientists shall be standardized, formalized and published on the OTM-R webpage.</p>	10	Q3 2019	HR Department, Working team IBERA	A manual ONBOARDING GUIDE FOR EXPATS BC EXPAT'S GUIDEBOOK
		COMPLETED		
<p>9. Setting of on-boarding system: The current individual training for new employees shall be replaced by a new standardized system.</p>	5, 10, 30	Q3 2019	Service Unit	A manual
		COMPLETED		
<p>10. Implementation of on-boarding system: Tuition of new employees shall be done on a regular basis and its content standardized.</p>	5, 10, 30	Q3 2020/Q1 2022	Service Unit	An implementation
		COMPLETED		
4_ Education and mentoring at the institution				
<p>11. Involvement of the BC in a mentoring programme EUMENT-NET: 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.</p>	38, 39	Q1 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Registration, attendance at EUMENT-NET meetings
		COMPLETED		

<p>12. 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.</p>	38, 39	Q2 2019	HR Department, Working team IBERA	A manual
		COMPLETED		
<p>13. Implementation of mentoring programme of the BC into the programme of EUMENT-NET.</p>	38, 39	Q3 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Active involvement in mentoring programme
		COMPLETED		
<p>14. 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.</p>	38, 39	Q1 2019	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Document, plan
		COMPLETED		
<p>15. 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.</p>	38, 39	Q2 2019/Q4 2022	HR Department, Working team IBERA	Implementation
		COMPLETED		
<p>16. 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.</p>	38, 39	Q1 2020	HR Department, Working team IBERA	A strategy document
		COMPLETED		
5_Popularization				
<p>17. 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.</p>	9, 12, 25	Q2 2020	HR & PR Department, Working team IBERA	A document
		COMPLETED		

<p>18. Involvement of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows in popularization activities:</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	9, 16, 25, 38, 39	Q3 2020 / Q4 2026	Working team IBERA	List of presentations conducted
		EXTENDED		
<p>19. Creation of strategy of communication, marketing and science popularization:</p> <p><i>In respect of popularization activities, a conception of communication was introduced. The conception briefly and generally describes methods the BCuses 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.</i></p>	9	Q4 2022	PR Department, Working team IBERA	A strategy document
		COMPLETED		
<p>6_ Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access</p>				
<p>20. Update of intellectual property rights protection regulation:</p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	3, 31	Q3 2019	Transfer Technology Department	A regulation document https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/intranet/internal-documents/directors-decree/year-2024/#anchor
		COMPLETED		
<p>21. Creation of conception of know-how sharing and guide for open access:</p> <p><i>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</i></p>	7	Q1 2019	Transfer Technology Department, Working team IBERA	A document of conception, a manual, an application

community at the BC 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.		COMPLETED		
<p>22. Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access / Plagiarism guidelines:</p> <p>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.</p>	31	Q4 2022	Transfer Technology Department, Working team IBERA	Guideline
		COMPLETED		
<p>Working conditions / Ethics:</p> <p>24. 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.)</p>		2024 – 2026 NEW	HR & PR Department	List of workshops
<p>23. Intellectual property rights protection, know-how and open access / Contract research guidelines:</p> <p>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..</p>	31	Q2 2022	Transfer Technology Department, Working team IBERA	Guideline
		COMPLETED		
<p>26. 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</p>	7, 31	Q4/2026 NEW	Technology Transfer Office / Project department/ Technical and administrative service	Guideline, workshops

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.				
27. 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.	24, 25	Q4/2025 NEW	<i>Technical and administrative service</i>	<i>A document of conception, a manual</i>
28. 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.	24, 30, 36	Q4/2026 NEW	<i>Technical and administrative service</i>	Establishment of working group; internal communication plan, intranet platform, meeting schedules and minutes, training materials
29. BC web optimization 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,	24	Q4/2026 NEW	<i>Technical and administrative service</i>	<i>Website optimization</i>

students, collaborators, and the general public.				
30. 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.	23	Q4/2026 NEW	PR department/ Project department/ Technology Transfer Office	Brand style guide, logo package, social media guidelines, marketing and communication materials, training and implementation workshops

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 *:
URL *:

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

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

3.1 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>. OTM-R policy sets out basic principles for recruitment in research and development and describes recruitment procedure of the BC for researchers.

In addition, the guideline contains the job advertisement template, the form for the list of candidates and other form for the interview report and signature sheet.

URL:

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

4. IMPLEMENTATION

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.

4.1 How have you prepared the internal review?

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

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

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.

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

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

4.4 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.

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.

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

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.

4.6 How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?

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.

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

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.

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

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:

IBERA project websites: <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/hrs4r-ibera/#anchor>
Websites of the Biology Centre CAS: <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/homepage>
OTMR <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/candidates/otm-r/#anchor>
Education <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/#anchor>
Mentoring <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/employees/employees/education/mentoring/#anchor>
Grant Programme <https://www.bc.cas.cz/en/about-us/grant-program-bc/#anchor>