

# Action Plan

## HRS4R

G1.027



## TEMPLATE 4: ACTION PLAN

**Case number:** 2023CZ82273

**Name Organisation under review:**

Institute of Biotechnology of the Czech Academy of Sciences

**Organisation's contact details:** Průmyslová 595, 252 50 Vestec, Czech Republic

**SUBMISSION DATE:** October 30, 2024

### 1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked \* are compulsory.

<b>STAFF &amp; STUDENTS</b>	<b>FTE</b>
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	126,59
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	57,8
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	0
Of whom are women	71,46
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	67,98
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	14,53
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	44,08
Total number of students (if relevant)	5,83
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	172,5
<b>RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)</b>	<b>€</b>
Total annual organisational budget	10 308 thousand
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	3 848 thousand
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	5 860 thousand
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	600 thousand
<b>ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)</b>	
<p>IBT is engaged in basic molecular biological research with an emphasis on processes that impact human health. The Institute publishes the results of its research, thus contributing to the advancement of knowledge and education.</p> <p>Since its establishment in 2008, the Institute has grown significantly. The number of employees has increased from 82 (44 FTE) in 2008 to 208 (172,5 FTE) as of 31/12/2023. The quality and quantity of scientific outputs are also increasing, which was reflected in the academic evaluation for 2015-2019, when IBT was evaluated as one of the best institutes of the Academy of Sciences.</p>	

## 2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE:

Please provide an overview of the organisation 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><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>The scientific focus of the Institute is determined primarily by the activities of the scientific laboratories, which can determine their own scientific themes and strategies within the Institute's mission. Principal Investigators have complete freedom of research; all freedom of research by other researchers is determined by the Principal Investigator. The research freedom of principal investigators who are not group leaders (grant holders) is not formally guaranteed within the group but are accountable to the funders for the proposed research. The framework principles of ethical behaviour in science are summarised in the Code of Ethics for Researchers of the CAS, which is binding for researchers.</p> <p><a href="https://www.avcr.cz/en/about-us/legal-regulations/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/</a></p> <p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>There is a lack of detailed information on the research freedom of those working at the lower levels of the scientific career. Researchers also lack specific know-how and perceive insufficient support for project preparation and writing (including complex international projects) and financial management. Weaknesses now are also the lack of rules for data archiving (laboratory notebooks + electronic data storage) and the institute's established information security process - data management, backup, and security. The intranet in Czech is less user-friendly and the one in English is completely missing, which can act as a barrier.</p>
Recruitment and selection	<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>When recruiting staff for scientific positions, we are governed by Act No. 283/1992 Coll. and the Statutes of the Academy of Sciences. According to the rules for the recruitment of university-educated staff, a selection procedure with the appointment of a selection committee is mandatory. Each selection procedure is documented by an official document - the minutes of the selection procedure. Gender balance is not a criterion for the composition of the committee; however, it is common practice for committees to be mixed. Candidates are informed about the selection process and the selection criteria before the selection procedure. Information about the open selection procedure and the selection criteria is publicly available on the Institute's website. The selection procedure shall consider the full range of experience of the candidates. Any mobility experience is considered a valuable contribution to the professional development of the researcher. We also advertise research positions via EURAXESS and more recently Nature Career, so many international applicants apply for vacancies.</p>

	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Recruitment processes related to the recruitment of researchers are governed by the Academy of Sciences Act and others, but the rules of Open, Transparent and Merit-based recruitment are not formalised now.</p> <p>There is also a lack of an established system of training for those staff who actively participate in the selection process on the employer's side. Certainly, the establishment of uniform basic criteria for the evaluation of job applicants would also help in fulfilling the OTM-R principles. At present, this is mainly the responsibility of managers and their experience.</p>
Working conditions	<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Working conditions are strictly governed by national legislation (Act No. 262/2006 Coll., the Labour Code) and additionally by internal regulations. Czech Republic provides from time perspective generous maternity and parental leave (up to 4 years) and the Institute allows part-time work for mothers/parents.</p> <p>The Institute allows part-time work, remote working and provides 5 weeks of vacation (1 weeks more than legal obligation), meal allowance, and now also a contribution to employee retirement savings products.</p> <p>The Institute strives to provide state-of-the-art peak equipment and resources necessary for its activities. It is part of several international infrastructures and promotes international cooperation. Modern equipment is often acquired thanks to EU projects and structural funds. The Institute is housed in the BIOCEV Centre, a state-of-the-art centre of excellence where individual partners and research teams can share cutting-edge equipment and collaborate with each other.</p> <p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>The Institute is stable employer providing employees with stable, long-term contract where possible. Due to the various sources of funding some contracts are for a fixed period – for the length of the project. Fixed-term contracts can create a sense of insecurity among researchers, especially at the beginning of their careers.</p> <p>Analysis of employee population statistics showed that more women than men work at IBT (61%: 39%). However, this representation is not reflected in management positions. Only 26% of the senior scientists are women.</p> <p>There is also a lack of an independent channel for the prevention and resolution of complaints of discrimination, which is why we are counting on the creation of an ombudsman and the selection of the most suitable candidate soon.</p>
Training and development	<p><b>STRENGTHS</b></p> <p>Continuing professional education is encouraged at the IBT. Support and training opportunities are mainly the responsibility of individual laboratories, with training opportunities largely decided by research group leaders. Staff are given the opportunity to participate in regular seminars, various courses, internships, conferences, etc., including abroad.</p>

	<p><b>WEAKNESSES</b></p> <p>Formal guidelines for training/mentoring are not developed and in place at the level of the whole institute so that it is clear at each career stage what career development opportunities exist.</p> <p>Related to this is the lack of an IBT career pathways policy that includes career development pathways.</p>
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### 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.ibt.cas.cz/en/about-the-institute/official-noticeboard/Human-Resources-Strategy-for-Researchers-HRS4R/>

<b><i>Proposed ACTIONS</i></b>	<b><i>GAP Principle(s)</i></b>	<b><i>Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)</i></b>	<b><i>Responsible Unit</i></b>	<b><i>Indicator(s) / Target(s)</i></b>
<p><b>1. IBT Code of Ethics</b></p> <p>1a) Developing IBT code of ethics to help ensure that IBT staff adhere to the ethical principles for the conduct of research as well as the general ethical principles of work conduct.</p> <p>1b) Publish the Code of Ethics of the CAS on the IBT website and make it more widely known to all employees.</p> <p>1c) Organization of training courses and seminars on scientific and general ethics.</p>	1., 2., 3., 4., 27.	1a) 4Q/2025 1b) 4Q/2025 1c) 2Q/2026	HR department Ombudsperson	<p>I - Established and published on the website IBT Code of Ethics.</p> <p>I - Code of Ethics of the CAS published on the IBT website.</p> <p>I – Include training in the Adaptation Process.</p> <p>I – Number of training workshops.</p> <p>T- At least 60% of trained employees.</p> <p>T - Both codes of ethics will be published on the IBT website under HRS4R.</p>
<p><b>2. Open Science &amp; IP</b></p> <p>2a) Establish mandatory rules for maintaining paper and electronic lab notebooks.</p> <p>2b) Include IP training in the adaptation process for newcomers.</p> <p>2c) Open Science + FAIR data workshop for employees in IBT laboratories.</p>	3., 5., 6., 7.	2a) 4Q/2024 2b) 4Q/2024 2c) 4Q/2025	TTO HR Department Institute Management Data Steward	<p>I - A directive developed and published to regulate the maintenance of paper and electronic laboratory notebooks, data management and data security.</p> <p>I - Number of training workshops on IP.</p> <p>I – Number of Open Science and FAIR data workshop.</p> <p>T – At least 60% of researchers will be demonstrably trained in IP.</p>

<p><b>3. Improving internal and external communication</b></p> <p>3a) Improve the structure of the intranet and create an English version.</p> <p>3b) Translation of all relevant documents into English</p> <p>3c) Introduce an updated regular newsletter with up-to-date information for all employees.</p> <p>3d) Introduce regularly recurring employee surveys to provide feedback on changes related to HRS4R implementation and to monitor employee satisfaction and loyalty and address any negative phenomena.</p>	<p>4., 5., 6., 8., 9., 10., 23., 24., 26., 27., 32., 36</p>	<p>3a) 1Q/2025 – partially achieved (GEP)</p> <p>3b) 4Q/2024 - partially achieved (GEP)</p> <p>3c) 1Q/2025 – achieved, but will be updated (GEP)</p> <p>3d) 1Q/2026</p>	<p>PR department HR department</p>	<p>I - The intranet is fully available in English and there will be no potential language barrier for foreign researchers.</p> <p>I – Number of relevant documents translated and published in English and all new documents made immediately available in both Czech and English.</p> <p>I – An updated monthly newsletter (in both Czech and English) sent to all employees.</p> <p>I - Achieve a minimum participation rate of 60% in each survey.</p> <p>I - Implement at least one improvement measure after each survey cycle based on the findings.</p> <p>T - Conduct an employee survey every two years to ensure regular feedback from employees on the implementation of HRS4R, improve the work environment, and enhance employee satisfaction and loyalty.</p>
<p><b>4. Non-discrimination &amp; Prevention and resolution of negative phenomena in the workplace</b></p> <p>4a) Establishing ombudsperson role to create an independent channel for preventing, reporting, and solving discrimination complaints.</p> <p>4b) Creation, monitoring, and regular evaluation of selected gender statistics.</p> <p>4c) Creation of an information campaign on equal opportunities using the resources available within the IBT.</p>	<p>2., 3., 4., 10., 24., 25., 27., 34., 35.</p>	<p>4a) 4Q/2024 - partially achieved (GEP)</p> <p>4b) 2Q/2025 - partially achieved (GEP)</p> <p>4c) 4Q/2026</p> <p>4d) 4Q/2026</p> <p>4e) 3Q/2026 - partially achieved (GEP)</p>	<p>HR department Institute Management</p>	<p>I – A suitable candidate will be selected for the post of ombudsperson.</p> <p>I - Clearly set out and published information on how and what can be brought to the attention of the Ombudsperson.</p> <p>I – Published video introducing the Ombudsperson to all employees.</p> <p>I - Number of equal opportunities workshop.</p> <p>I - At least 60% of employees trained during the first year after the introduction of the workshops.</p> <p>I – Published methodological document on maternity/parental leave management.</p> <p>I - Survey conducted among parents with a participation rate of at least 60%.</p>

<p>4d) Equal opportunities workshops and seminars.</p> <p>4e) Develop a maternity/parental leave management methodology that addresses departures, returns, and ongoing involvement in grants, teaching, research, as well as administrative and support activities.</p> <p>4f) Create motivational tools for potential female candidates for leadership positions, decision-making committees, and boards of the IBT</p>		4f) 4Q/2026		<p>T - All employees will be introduced to the position of the ombudsman as an independent channel for the prevention and resolution of complaints or negative phenomena in the workplace.</p> <p>T - Parents on maternity/parental leave will be surveyed to find out when and under what conditions they want to return to their profession.</p> <p>T - Based on the questionnaire survey, conditions will be created to facilitate parents' gradual reintegration back into working life.</p> <p>T - Higher number of female candidates leadership positions, decision-making committees, and boards of the IBT</p>
<p><b>5. Evaluation/Appraisal systems</b></p> <p>5a) Update the attestation system.</p> <p>5b) Evaluate the progress of the first round of SAB laboratory assessments and update the system as necessary.</p>	11.	<p>5a) 2Q/2026</p> <p>5b) 3Q/2025</p>	HR department, attestation committee, Institute Management, SAB	<p>I - The laboratory evaluation system will be updated based on the progress and results of the first round and published.</p> <p>I – Number of successful attestations using the updated system within the first year of its introduction.</p> <p>T - An updated attestation system will be published and introduced that is more in line with current requirements.</p> <p>T - All laboratories will have completed their first round of activity and performance evaluation.</p>
<p><b>6. Recruitment</b></p> <p>6a) Formalization of some basic processes including all OTM-R principles and their public declaration.</p> <p>6b) Update and actively implement a new employee onboarding system.</p>	13., 14., 15., 16., 17., 18., 19., 20., 27.	<p>6a) 2Q/2025 partilly achieved (GEP)</p> <p>6b) 4Q/2024 - partially achieved</p>	HR department Institute Management	<p>I - Create and publish IBT Work Rules</p> <p>I - Developed and implemented an OTM-R recruitment process (guidelines) for both external and internal recruitment, including guidelines.</p> <p>I – Created and published templates for external and international job postings.</p> <p>I – Created and published templates for candidate evaluation (interview feedback form) and communication.</p>



		(GEP)		<p>I – All relevant documents will be available in both Czech and English.</p> <p>I – Onboarding process is set up.</p> <p>I – Published adaptation manual.</p> <p>I – Number of trained employees.</p> <p>T - All new employees will go through an onboarding process and there will be a record of this.</p>
<p><b>7. Carrer development</b></p> <p>Clarify and systematize the situation regarding career growth and development by creating a career code.</p>	28., 29., 30., 37., 38., 39.	4Q/2026	HR department Institute Management	<p>I - Created and published IBT career code.</p> <p>I - Establish a system of vocational training.</p> <p>I – Number of trainings/ workshops realised for employees.</p> <p>T - Employees will be familiar with the training on offer and will make active use of it.</p>
<p><b>8. Research Freedom</b></p> <p>8a) Inclusion of Research Freedom Questions in Satisfaction Survey.</p> <p>8b) Grant department will organize information session for all research staff, highlighting available institutional resources and guidance on applying for external funding</p>	1.	8a) 1Q/2026 8b) 4Q/2025	HR department Grant department	<p>I - Questions on research freedom have been integrated into the staff satisfaction survey, with a response rate of at least 60%.</p> <p>I - At least 70% of eligible research staff attending the funding support information session.</p> <p>I - A document describing the implementation of best practices for improving project writing developed and published.</p> <p>T- An increase in the number of external funding applications submitted by junior researchers.</p>
<p><b>9. Visibility of IBT</b></p> <p>9a) Update and implement a new visual identity manual for IBT to ensure consistent, professional, and cohesive branding across all materials.</p> <p>9b) Setting up marketing strategy for promotion and dissemination and ensuring</p>	8., 9., 33.	9a) 2Q/2025 9b) 2Q/2026 9c) 1Q/2027	PR department	<p>I – Finalize and publish the updated visual identity manual.</p> <p>I – Published document Marketing Strategies for Promotion and Dissemination.</p> <p>I – Number of workshops for relevant employees.</p> <p>I - List of experts for specific areas published on the IBT website.</p>

that relevant employees are informed.  9c) Implementation of the created strategy to support popularization of results.				<p>T - To establish a clear and unified visual identity for IBT, enhancing brand recognition and professionalism in all internal and external communications.</p> <p>T - Demonstrably greater involvement of individual laboratories in the promotion of the institute (participation in events, presentation on social networks and IBT websites).</p>
<p><b>10. Working conditions</b></p> <p>10a) Creation of Welcome office</p> <p>10b) Update of the Internal Wage Regulation and the Catalogue of Positions</p>	24., 26.	<p>10a) 4Q/2025</p> <p>10b) 4Q/2025</p>	HR department	<p>I – Created and published document on working conditions at IBT and Czech Republic for foreigner employees.</p> <p>I – Welcome office is operational.</p> <p>I – Created and published document on wage regulation.</p>

The IBT currently has a document entitled " Employment Commencement – Manual". It provides guidance on what to do when a new employee is recruited and describes the processes involved in recruiting or taking on a new employee (mainly administrative and technical matters). Regarding selection procedures, the manual defines when and under what conditions a selection procedure should be announced, how many members the selection committee should have, what duties fall on the IBT as employer and what duties fall on the job applicant. The main room for improvement therefore lies in the formalization of some of the basic processes, their public announcement, and the ongoing training of managers.

However, we plan to make changes and integrate elements of the Open Recruitment Policy (OTM-R) into our existing procedures. This includes the development of a strategy that will be available in both English and Czech on the IBT website.

To ensure effective implementation of the OTM-R, we plan to conduct training sessions especially for HR staff, laboratory managers and members of selection committees. The training sessions will include familiarization with the new procedures and tools that will be introduced under the OTM-R.

The implementation of the OTM-R will include, among other things, the advertising and submission of job advertisements, where we will focus on setting a uniform template content style, minimizing the administrative burden, and maximizing the use of the Euraxess platform to attract employees from abroad. In addition, we will set up the evaluation and selection process in the selection procedures so that everything is in line with OTM-R principles.

As part of the implementation of the OTM-R policy, we also plan to create a transparent recruitment tool that will contain information about the organization, job positions, requirements, working conditions and professional development opportunities. This tool will also include links to the institution's equal opportunities policies and contact details. The OTM-R Toolkit will be complemented by a questionnaire that will be used to evaluate the success of the OTM-R implementation and to collect feedback from applicants.

## 4. IMPLEMENTATION

General overview of the expected implementation process:

The main objective of the implementation of HRS4R is to continue to adhere to all the principles set out in the Charter and the Code, as the IBT has committed to, but some of them need to be formalised and better anchored in day-to-day compliance. The GAP analysis described some of the gaps and how they could be addressed. Based on this analysis and the action plan, a timetable will therefore be developed for the implementation of activities that will lead to the creation of transparent, open, and competitive working conditions that will have a direct and positive impact not only on IBT researchers.

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

Checklist	*Detailed description and duly justification
How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?	The Committee will oversee the implementation of the Action Plan and monitor the achievement of the set indicators and targets. Meetings will be held at least twice a year, more frequently if necessary.
How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?	Researchers at all career stages will continue to be involved in the process. They will continue to be represented on a working group that will meet regularly to review progress on the strategy and propose changes where appropriate. They will also all be kept informed through a regular newsletter.
How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.	<p>The IBT's long-term strategy for 2023-2030 aims to build a top European research institution studying biomolecular mechanisms and to compete with top institutions in Europe, not only in the Czech Republic.</p> <p>An integral part of this strategy is the creation of a separate HR department, which will be tasked with designing and implementing procedures corresponding to modern HRS4R management. This includes recruitment and selection processes for research, technical and administrative positions, initial training and orientation of new employees, professional development, career management, evaluation and feedback, surveying employee satisfaction and needs, as well as</p>

	<p>streamlining administrative processes.</p> <p>An important task for HR is also the implementation of the Gender Equality Plan (GEP) and its agile adaptation to the current needs of the organisation.</p>
How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?	A timetable for the implementation of each activity will be established and the Committee will monitor compliance with the timetable. If some of the planned tasks cannot be completed within the given timeframe, corrective measures will be identified to remedy the difficulties and a postponed deadline will be set.
How will you monitor progress (timeline)?	Progress will be monitored using an established timeline, and any delays will be discussed with the Working Group and Steering Committee. Written reports will be kept on the completion of each activity.
How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?	One of the planned activities is employee surveys. Their results will be compared with the initial situation, i.e. with the results of the audit, based on which the GAP analysis was also carried out. The implementation of the timetable will also be monitored, and progress will be assessed by the working group at its meetings. Focus groups or other forms of discussion with employees will be used where appropriate.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process:

<p>The implementation of the timetable will continue to be overseen by a Working group and a Committee.</p> <p>The GAP analysis revealed several areas that need to be addressed as soon as possible to create even better working conditions for researchers. Thus, the implementation of some measures has already started (selection of an ombudsperson, translation of the intranet into English). Thus, the positive effects of the launch of the HRS4R process have already started to be felt and the HR award is a great motivation to create an excellent research centre with fair conditions for all employees.</p>
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