

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS (HRS4R)

INTERNAL REVIEW

ACTION PLAN 2024-2027



Updated version November 2024

Internal Review

Case number: 2020ES488097

Name of organisation under review: Institut Català de Nanociència i Nanotecnologia

Organisation's contact details: Campus UAB, Bellaterra (Barcelona), Bellaterra, None, 08193

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1. ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

The Institut Català de Nanociència i Nanotecnologia, with its official English translation Catalan Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology and acronym ICN2, is a non-profit international research institute located close to Barcelona (Catalonia, Spain). It is devoted to generating knowledge, materials and devices in ICT, health, energy and the environment.

The ICN2's expertise lies at the nanoscale, where new properties, interactions, and ways to exploit them in everyday life are being discovered. Among its goals is to bring together scientists from diverse backgrounds in the pursuit of better science, better training, and better outreach to society while also seeking out new ways to engage with local and global industry.

ICN2 was accredited in 2014 as a Severo Ochoa Centre of Excellence, a recognition renewed in 2018 and 2023 for another 4-year period. The Severo Ochoa Programme, sponsored by the Spanish Ministry of Science, Innovation and Universities, aims to identify and support Spanish research centres that are among the world's best in their specialty.

The trustees of the ICN2 are the Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalan Government), the Spanish National Research Council (CSIC) and the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB), where it is based. ICN2 is a CERCA Center and also one of the founding members of the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST) and the Graphene Flagship.

2. NARRATIVE

As a starting point for the HR strategy, the centre welcomed the European Commission recommendation of 11 March 2005 and committed itself to applying the stated principles in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

We were awarded the HR Excellence in Research logo in June 2015, which has provided a great incentive for consolidating a cultural change within the institute, inspired by European principles concerning the development of researchers' careers.

With this aim in mind, several actions were proposed in order to achieve these principles after the GAP analysis phase.

In May 2017, we passed the Interim Assessment phase with many of these actions completed. And, in November 2020, we described the status of all these actions and updating the action plan with new actions.

In October 2021 we surpassed the site visit.

On this document we are doing the internal mid review, analysing the status of the actions added in 2020 and incorporating new actions for the next 36 months period.

We have worked on five major areas over these years:

- ✓ Ethical and professional aspects
- ✓ Recruitment and Selection (OTM-R)
- ✓ Working conditions and social security
- ✓ Training and development

✓ Gender balance (and Diversity)

The new actions included in the action plan involve several institutional and transversal committees, which are working to define and monitor the plans for different institutional and Strategic Programmes. Therefore, these transversal actions are also included in these programmes as a way to continue with the Excellence in the research centre.

Severo Ochoa Programme 2023-2026 <https://icn2.cat/en/research/severo-ochoa-centre-of-excellence>

The ICN2 Severo Ochoa Programme is the means by which the most challenging and ambitious elements of our four-year institutional strategy will be achieved.

As a flagship N2 centre, our MISSION is to open and explore new frontiers of knowledge at the nanoscale and bring value to society in the form of new understanding, capabilities and innovation, while inspiring and providing broad training to the next generations of researchers. To deploy this mission, ICN2s strategy is built around three priorities:

INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC LEADERSHIP

STRENGTHEN THE IMPACT TO SOCIETY

RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP

The award has also allowed resources to be allocated to the implementation of international standards in recruitment and career development, leading to our being granted the European Commission's HR Excellence in Research logo.

SO3 Programme Committee members:

Prof. Pablo Ordejón: (CSIC Research Professor, Group Leader and Director)

Prof. Jose Antonio Garrido (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader and Vice Director)

Lluís Bellafont (ICN2 Manager)

Dr. Margarita Navia (Head of Strategy Development)

Prof. Monica Lira (CSIC Research Professor and Group Leader)

Dr. Klass Jan-Tielrooij (Group Leader)

Prof. Stephan Roche (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Aitor Mugarza (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Jordi Arbiol (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Kostas Kostarelos (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. María Escudero (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Dr. Neus Bastús (CSIC Researcher Scientist)

Dr. Inhar Imaz (CSIC Research Scientist)

Dr. Maria Carmen Estévez (CSIC Tenured Scientist)

Dr. Jose Hugo García (Senior Researcher)

ICN2 Strategic Plan (2021-2024)

One of the Strategic goals in our Strategic Plan is:

GOAL 2.- Delivering Enhanced Impact to Society

Priority 1: To nurture and support talent

In this Priority other actions are defined, which are also included in our updated actions for the HRS4R. This is important for englobing the actions from a strategic point of view.

Strategic Plan contributors:

Prof. Pablo Ordejón: (Distinguished Researcher, Group Leader and Director)

Prof. Jose Antonio Garrido (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader and Vice Director)

Lluís Bellafont (ICN2 Manager)

Margarita Navia (Head of Strategy Development)

Núria Benítez (Institutional Strategy Development)

Rachel Spencer (Research Development)

Àlex Argemí (Head of Marketing and Communication)

Pablo Pomposiello (Head of Business and Innovation)

Mireia Martí (Head of Competitive Funding)

Dr. Monica Lira (CSIC Research Scientist and Group Leader)

Prof. Daniel Maspoch (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Clivia Sotomayor (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Josep Nogués (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Pedro Gómez (CSIC Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Laura Lechuga (CSIC Research Professor and Group Leader)

Dr. Daniel Ruiz (CSIC Tenured Scientist and Group Leader)

Dr. Klass Jan-Tielrooij (Junior Group Leader)

Prof. Aitor Mugarza (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Kostas Kostarelos (Senior Group Leader)

Prof. Jordi Arbiol (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Victor Puntès (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Arben Merkoçi (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Gustau Catalan (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Sergio Valenzuela (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Prof. Stephan Roche (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Dr. Gustavo Ceballos (Head of Research Support Division - Instrumentation Unit)

Dr. Belen Ballesteros (Unit Leader)

Dr. Jose Santiso (CSIC Tenured Scientist and Unit Leader)

Nowadays, we are at the point to stablish the new Strategic Plan for the next 4 years (2025-2028).

Equal Opportunities Plan (2023-2026)

ICN2's Equality of Opportunities and Diversity Management Plan is therefore framed within the CERCA Institute network's equality policies. Thus, ICN2 has explicitly included a clear objective in its core Strategic Plan: "... Offer a hiring and professional promotion system based solely on merit and free from discrimination. To promote traditionally disadvantaged groups proactively to pursue professional promotion, the elimination or reduction of obstacles posed by working conditions, language, cultural norms or physical access. To operate with transparency and honesty, the application of international standards in matters of ethics, scientific process and management."

The Equal Opportunities Committee brings together the key agents in the process of developing, designing and implementing equal opportunities and diversity management policies. Likewise, in the act of its constitution, the principles that must govern it were determined. These actions are also included in the HRS4R new actions.

ICN2 Equality Committee

Dr. Neus Bastús (CSIC Scientific Researcher)

Julio Gómez (Head of Human Resources)

Anna Rovira (Head of Marketing and Communication)

Prof. Josep Nogués (ICREA Research Professor and Group Leader)

Dr. Inhar Imaz (CSIC Scientific Researcher)

Dr. Elena del Corro (Senior Researcher)

Dr. Pilar Sánchez (Postdoctoral Researcher)

Dr. Catalina Coll (Postdoctoral Researcher)

Fanny Amanda Karolina Baumann (PhD Student)

Patricia Aguilar (PhD Student)

Dr. Manuela Dietrich (Senior Laboratory Officer)

Nadia Vallvé (Labour Relations Coordinator)

Teresa Palau (HR Support Officer)

Berta Pejó (Equal Opportunities support officer)

Pau París (Maintenance specialist)

Dr. Mary Cano (Senior researcher)

HRS4R Plan

A specific and transversal (scientific and non-scientific members) HRS4R committee was created to be informed and receive feedback of the progress in the action plan. Members may be updated due some changes.

HRS4R Committee

Julio Gómez (Head of Human Resources)

Dr. Margarita Navia (Head of Strategy Development)

Dr. Pablo Pomposiello (Head of Business and Innovation)

Dr. Neus Bastús (Senior Researcher and Chair of Equal Opportunities)

Dr. Inhar Imaz (Senior Researcher)

Dr. Giulio Rosati (Postdoctoral Researcher)

Dr. Marta Delgà (PhD Student (first period)-Postdoctoral Researcher)

3. INTERNAL REVIEW HRS4R

A brief description of the degree of execution of actions in the 2021-2024 Plan is provided below. This review was prepared by the Human Resources department, which is leading the implementation of the actions described in the HRS4R.

Ethical and professional aspects

Following the European Charter for Researchers principles:

- **Evaluation/Appraisal System**

The appraisal system for Administration and Divisions has been operating since 2015. This is a consolidated process that is carried out every year. It allows for personal commitment in the achievement of important projects and a follow-up of the performance of each administration or division employee. Moreover, the institutional section of the objectives' template allows the employees understand what is of key importance for the institution each year. In 2022 the process was digitalized through a software programme called Valohra. Evaluators define, discuss and evaluate with their teams the annual objectives through the platform and are signed by both parties.

As we informed in the previous renewal, ICN2 implemented the procedure for the evaluation of research performance in 2021. It is done considering the whole group, not just de Group Leader and follow the metrics from COARA and DORA. This process will be repeated regularly.

- **Gender Balance, Non-Discrimination**

The Equal Opportunities and Diversity management committee was created in 2015 and continues to operate. In 2023 the third Equal Opportunities Plan was launched, and it is operating until 2026. The main challenges in the initiatives of Equal Opportunities are to provide visibility to the women in our community and improve the presence of women mainly in both Group Leader and Postdoctoral positions..

In 2024 we hired for one year an Equal Agent (through a public grant) who is helping us to develop actions linked to the diversity objective. Some examples are 1. menstrual points dispensers, 2. specific Pride Day communications, 3. relaunching of the Women Talent Programme which awards the best Thesis, paper, and trajectory of women at the ICN2, 4 Preparation of the Women Leadership seminars.

Moreover, during this last period, we launched the General Harassment Prevention Protocol and the LGTBIQ+ Harassment Prevention Protocol, updating the channel for claims through the whistleblowing channel.

The welcome brochure continues to be available and is regularly updated. In this document we have included all the social benefits available for ICN2 employees. We have implemented and regulated teleworking in our institute to promote attraction and also conciliation. The physical space is being a problem because our building is starting to be too small for our evolution, we are implementing some initiatives as for example the hot desk for research stays to take profit of the space.

- **Career Development, Access to Careers Service**

PhD Programme

The PhD programme defined and executed during this period has specific training in Career Development and monitoring conducted by internal experts who advise the members of this programme.

Mentoring Programme

The Mentoring Programme has also been operating since 2017, as a tool where all the ICN2 members, not only researchers, can contact a pool of internal volunteer mentors for help and to share experiences, which are useful for career development. Since 2021-2022 the BIST Mentoring programme started also to run, this is an improvement of our internal mentoring programme because allow to our community to be mentor or mentee of members from the other 7 research centres which are part of Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST). The programme is now in its 3rd edition with very good acceptance of the first two editions. As an area for improvement, we have detected a decrease in the participation in this last edition. Reinforce the programme dissemination may be important to increase the participation.

BIST Career Service

The BIST Career Service also started with ICN2 as one of its promoters, an initiative where Postdocs and PhD Students can contact experts in career guidance. Some of our ICN2 members have contacted these experts and used those resources. The proposal for the future includes this kind of support with a clear section on the ICN2 intranet, where a pool of external experts can help in this career service.

Exit Interviews

The exit interviews conducted by the Human Resources department allow us to identify our organisation's strengths and weaknesses. We are now able to use this information as part of a quantitative analysis, something that will be carried out in the next period.

Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct was first amended in June 2019 and then again in November 2019, including the CERCA (Research Centres of Catalonia) Code of Conduct principles. The document is available on the ICN2 intranet and delivered to the new incorporations at the institute, who sign it to show that they have received the document and are committed to respecting its content. The ICN2 Welcome Brochure also includes a section on the Code of Conduct. The Ethics committee is currently reviewing the Code of Conduct with the aim of updating it and incorporating new topics such as internal regulations on the use of Artificial Intelligence.

Ethics Committee

The Ethics Committee, represented by research and non-research profiles, schedules regular meetings to analyse different proposals for projects, or in the event of any claim regarding our code of conduct, establishing interviews to clarify the cases, offering a dictum and answering the

affected people. We are also supported by the CERCA Institute (Research Centres of Catalonia) through its ombudsperson, in case we decide to externalise specific cases.

Research Integrity training

The training activities are fundamental for the improvement of the Ethics and Research Integrity commitment. We have organized different seminars/workshops for PhD students and Postdocs. We have detected a low participation of the community in this kind of trainings, although we are trying to get more participation. The conclusion is that we have decided to include expressly mandatory this type of trainings for the PhDs during the first two years. Other options of mandatory trainings are being considered.

The reinforcement of the Code of Conduct knowledge for the ICN2 Community continues being important. Although all the new employees receive the information and there are courses regularly organized, we have a plan to develop an online course with the contents of the Code of Conduct for current employees and also as initial training for new incorporations.

- **Public Engagement**

The Marketing and Communication department has changed this last year, and it has been transformed to the Marketing, Communication & Fundraising department. The vision is to work to strengthen the ICN2 brand and promote it through social networks (among others) with an important growth in publications and followers in channels like LinkedIn. During this period, we have done a community engagement exercise to determine the ICN2 values, which has included an internal survey and individual interviews. As a result, the values of Transformation, Commitment and Collaboration have become the ICN2 values. These efforts also can help to gain feeling of belonging and the talent attraction.

Recruitment and Selection (OTM-R)

Following the European Charter for Researchers principles:

- **Recruitment, Selection**

During the current period with the HRS4R badge, new recruitment procedures have been designed and launched: one for General Recruitment and the another for the admission of the PhD student candidates to the PhD Programme. The recruitment procedures are available in the intranet and internet for all the employees. For each call, proper dissemination is carried out, at the very least on our website, but also in Euraxess and other detected recruitment sources. A panel is defined for the call and a final evaluation template is completed with the ranking of the candidates. Newcomers are welcome with a meeting with the People Development Officer that includes delivery of information on the institution, procedures, and policies, and a tour of the building. The OTM-R principles have been and continue to be an important cultural change, towards which there is total institutional commitment. Unfortunately, this transparency and dissemination have not facilitated a significant increase in the number of women in some of the research positions, and this is something we want to improve with specific measures to increase gender parity. We consider that OTM-R principles constantly need to be promoted and monitored. Also, we have detected difficulties to cover some specific and technical positions and detected a change in the expectations of the new generations, something that has not only been observed at ICN2 but that has been shared with other actors of the system.

- **Access to Careers Service, Career Development**

The exit interviews reveal the destination of the people who leave the centres. We created several technical procedures for keeping in touch with the people who leave the institute by forwarding e-mails. We have created a private group in LinkedIn for all the ICN2 Community, including former members. The idea is to have a way to keep in touch, to invite them to internal events, trainings, and celebrations, and inform the extensive ICN2 community on various topics. The difficulties here has been on engaging and having a real participation of the former members, and the effort of providing continuous content to this network.

- **Value of mobility**

Relations with national and international institutions are fundamental for Science. We are constantly promoting mobility with our students and researchers. The Severo Ochoa mobility programme is a funding programme where an internal panel examines mobility petitions and awards those that are interesting and strategic for researchers, the Severo Ochoa programme and/or the institute. Furthermore, an important number of agreements with other institutions and researchers are managed yearly, allowing for research stays, of both national and international students and researchers, at our facilities and laboratories.

We are also conscious of the difficulties for a foreign researcher to come from abroad with a family, therefore we have in our plans to analyse and understand how and to implement the dual careers initiative.

Working Conditions

Following the European Charter for Researchers principles:

- **Working conditions:**

The working conditions are available for all the employees as a transparency exercise. The institutional intranet contains the following information: the collective agreement with all the labour aspects, which was agreed upon with a group of employee representatives, teleworking policy, time recording system procedure, salary policy, flexible compensation plan. More materials and resources have been created to be disseminated and inform people about them: the Welcome Brochure, which includes a specific section on labour issues, and the Guide for Newcomers, specially designed for the new international members with information related to visas, mobility and relocation. With the same aim, HR meets each new ICN2 member to explain his/her contract and working conditions. Moreover, a trade union has started to work at ICN2 in 2023, and there are continuous conversations with them in all these topics.

In 2023 we launched the Psychological support programme, which allows our members to select a therapist/coach from a list in our intranet, and can use up to 5 sessions with a very competitive cost, of which 2 / 5 are paid by ICN2. The programme is designed respecting the confidentiality of the users and is being successful. Moreover, associated training (stress management, help for first aiders,...) are also being offered.

- **Contractual and legal obligations**

As mentioned in the previous point, each member is informed about his/her contractual and legal obligations once he/she joins the organisation. All the internal documents are in English, to ensure they are understood by all the employees. New updates are communicated to the Group Leaders and Heads of Administration via e-mail. In general cases, the information is shared with all the employees. Recently, there have been many changes in the labour conditions and public requirements. This has meant many changes in the documentation and procedures in order to follow the new legal obligations. Some of these new external legal and public obligations facilitate the labour relations and have been improvements, but others are very strict and have been increasing the research centre's paperwork. ICN2 has addressed it with the maximum commitment to continue developing its research with excellence. An external imposition that is difficult to with is the combination of project requirements on one hand and the Spanish labour contracts requirements on the other. We have been struggling to fulfil both (in combination), though we are finding viable approaches.

Professional attitude, Accountability

In order to facilitate funding opportunities for our researchers, we developed a Strategy office where, through different media (mail, intranet), researchers are informed about these opportunities. This office also identifies which of our ICN2 members are in the most eligible for each grant. The procedure is currently being improved so as to increase visibility and facilitate the communication of these opportunities.

In 2023 we opened a "Suggestions, complaints and congratulations" section on the ICN2 intranet, where ICN2 members can send their messages to the department or area they want to offer a suggestion, complaint and congratulation. Also, in 2023 we opened the whistleblowing channel and established a procedure that is available in the icn2 website, through which complaints can be done by both internal and external people.

During 2022,2023 and 2024 we developed, in PowerBI, a dashboard of our people management tool that allows us to have data in an easy and fast way, facilitating analysis, decision taking and reporting. The process has been slow due to many technical problems, but since October 2024 it is fully working.

Training and Development

Following the European Charter for Researchers principles:

- **Good practice in research, Continuing Professional Development, Access to research training and continuous development, Supervision:**

The Training Policy was written in 2015 and it is available for all Community on our intranet.

We started during the first award period the Welcome to our new members. Since 2023 we added an Institutional (in person) Welcome that takes place twice per year, where each area: Research, Research Support, Administration, and Equal Opportunities explain give an overview of their areas (organigram, groups, activities, objectives, services...) to all new members, and finally we enjoy a coffee with the new hires. In addition, to offer an initial training/welcome, the proposal is also to generate a feeling of community commitment since the beginning and offer a space where the new members from different groups and departments can meet among them.

The Training Policy was written in 2015 and is available for all the ICN2 community in our intranet. Furthermore, since 2016, an annual Training Plan is launched. It is based on the training needs expressed by the Group Leaders and the Heads of Administration and covers Languages, Scientific Knowledge, Organisational and Personal Skills and Job-Related Skills. The participation of the Group Leaders and Heads to detect training needs detection has not always smooth, so during the last three years we have developed a training software through which any ICN2 member can express directly their needs. It also promotes their commitment for self-development. This tool enables the training developed by our ICN2 Members to be registered correctly and provides a Certificate. Though after we implemented it detected some technical limitations, mainly in the administration user, we already are using the tool. Furthermore, we have a plan to improve it with a version 2.0., a project that will start 2025.

A specific training plan for PhD Students included in our PhD Programme has been running for several years now. This training covers topics such as scientific writing, soft skills, languages, and ethics for each year of the PhD. We continue with to have low attendance problems. Different strategies have been tried, but many students are last minute absent. This is a problem that we share with other research centres around us in what seems to be a common situation. So, all of them are offering quality training, some of them in collaboration between centers, but the attendance is low up to the point that some of them have been cancelled last minute. We are trying to draw conclusions and action points, wondering if maybe we have too many training activities, or if the information is not arriving with enough clarity or if basically there is no interest in them. In order to tackle this issue, we have some ideas for actions: the creation of a PhD Council where we can talk directly with a PhD representants and accompanied with the work that the work council can facilitate, we expect to get results in attendance. Also stablish some important trainings as mandatory for all this collective.

In 2021, in collaboration with a working group, we defined a Postdoctoral training programme. It is working since 2022 with activities for the Postdocs. Moreover, we are preparing a call for the creation of a Postdoc Council which will help in the enrichment and evolution of this training programme

4. ACTIONS REVIEW

This section describes the actions review intended for execution in the Action Plan for 2020-2023.

Title action	Status	Responsible Unit	Remarks	GAP Principles	Institutional Programme
1. Define and implement a researcher's competence framework highlighting soft skills, which will be collected in an ICN2 Dictionary of Competences.	Completed	HR Department	The competence framework was created through a working group for each stage in career research.	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems 28. Career development 38. Continuous	Severo Ochoa

				Professional Development	
				40. Supervision	
2. Design and implementation of ICN2's own HR software to enable the tracking of employees' professional development for the different collectives at ICN2	In progress	HR Department	The software was launched in 2023. This tool allows training needs detection, training registration and training evaluation. As well is possible to get a certification for the attendee and the administrator and the user is possible to have a compilation of the training accomplished by the user. We are interested updating the software with a version 2.0, giving more functionalities for the administrator user.	38. Continuous Professional Development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Severo Ochoa

<p>4. Who is Who programme: Implement regular presentations from the Administration Departments and Research Support area presenting the members and their roles to the entire ICN2 Community.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>HR department and the other Administration departments</p>	<p>This action was included in the ICN2 Community Programme with the goal is reinforce the Community feeling. The presentations were done and recorded in video. Those videos are currently available on the Intranet. The attendance to these presentations was low.</p>	<p>4. Professional attitude</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa</p>
<p>5. Starters and Leavers: Implement a section on our intranet where the new starters and leavers are informed.</p>	<p>Extended</p>	<p>HR department and IT department</p>	<p>This action was included in the ICN2 Community Programme with the goal is reinforce the Community feeling. The section is currently working, and all the community has access to it. As a point to develop in the next years is linking it with the weekly newsletter.</p>	<p>7. Good practice in research 40. Supervision</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa</p>

<p>6. Establish an ICN2 Day where different activities for the researchers and all the ICN2 community will be promoted.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>HR department and working group</p>	<p>We celebrate an ICN2 Day in October 2021. Due the pandemic we did with an online application-game sharing videos developed by the ICN2 members. In October 2024 we have the ICN2 Community Day, where ICN2 members and former members can join with family and see some the facilities and some basic experiments.</p>	<p>7. Good practice in research 9. Public engagement 23. Research environment 38. Continuous Professional Development 39. Access to research training and continuous development</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa</p>
<p>7. Write an adapted PhD welcome brochure</p>	<p>In progress</p>	<p>HR department</p>	<p>This is a not finished document. We have updated other documents with similar information and using external resources that are giving information to the students. We should finish the document in the next period.</p>	<p>3. Professional responsibility 5. Contractual and legal obligations 24. Working conditions</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa</p>

8. Create PhD retreats	Extended	HR department and PhD working group	We started the contact with the PhD community for the creation of a PhD retreat but there was not answer from the students for develop it. We hope that with the creation of the PhD council this kind of events could be possible.	9. Public engagement 38. Continuous Professional Development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Severo Ochoa
9. Fully define and roll out the Mentoring Programme	Completed	HR department	The BIST mentoring programme was developed, and it is its third edition. It allows that ICN2 mentees are in contact with mentors from other BIST institutions, while mentees from other institutions stay in contact with ICN2 Mentors.	28. Career development 30. Access to careers advice 38. Continuous Professional Development 40. Supervision	Severo Ochoa
10. Agree on and design one specific training path for Postdocs	Completed	HR department	It was designed and is working since 2022. Specific training for Postdoctoral researchers is being offered in each annual training calendar. This path has specific funding from the Severo Ochoa programme.	1. Define the training path 2. Incorporate the training into the training plan.	Severo Ochoa

<p>11. Relocation Assistance for international new members; regarding the management of Visa, Spanish ID number and Social Security number</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>HR department</p>	<p>The new provider in labour management is carrying this support to the new hires. HR assume a role of facilitator and contact within both parties. It offers a particular service to each researcher according with their situation.</p>	<p>5. Contractual and legal obligations 24. Working conditions</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa and Strategic Plan</p>
<p>12. Establish a Careers Service inside the ICN2 with the support of external experts.</p>	<p>Extended</p>	<p>HR department</p>	<p>Define a service that facilitates the transition to next careers steps by PhD and postdoctoral members reaching the end of their time at ICN2 by connecting them with external experts in a professional role or sector of their interest. This will require cultivation of a bank of contacts (together with other ICN2 actors, e.g. Business&Innovation), plus the clear definition of an internal contact and routes to access this service.</p>	<p>28. Career development 30. Access to career advice</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>
<p>13. Create the ICN2 PhD and</p>	<p>Extended</p>	<p>HR Department</p>	<p>The aim here is to provide a platform for these collectives</p>	<p>24. Working conditions</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>

<p>Postdoc councils</p>			<p>to engage in institute life and beyond. The members will serve as representatives to enable co-design and co-responsibility for career progression, training and other opportunities and experiences provided by the institute. They will also serve a platform from which PhD/postdoctoral researchers can create and launch initiatives of their own (social, professional). The campaign is ready, we expect to launch the call before the end of 2024.</p>	<p>28. Career development 39. Access to research, training and continuous development</p>	
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<p>14. Create an ICN2 Stay Programme for all profiles i.e. short-term placements at ICN2</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>HR Department</p>	<p>This is an ongoing programme. It is general the agreements with universities for Bachelor and Master students in research or research support. During this period, also several administration departments (IT, Safety, Communication, Public Tenders, Finance) has got students under agreements for short-term placement and some of them have could be contracted after this period as a tool for talent attraction. Moreover, we have taken profit of several funding fellowships for young talent during the period. In total 14 young people could start in novel positions such: Documentalist, Equal Agent, Data Steward, Sustainability, Social Media, among others. Some of them will be able to give continuity.</p>	<p>9. Public engagement 12. Recruitment 28. Career development</p>	<p>Strategic Plan</p>
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<p>15. Achievement of the commitments established in our Equal Opportunities plan related:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reinforce Recruitment and Career Development support - Protocols with Gender perspective - Visibility Women in Science - Database 	<p>Extended</p>	<p>Equal Opportunities Committee</p>	<p>The balance of the activities in the Equal Opportunities Plan 2019-2022 has been positive. The new Equal and Diversity Plan launched in 2023 after internal after received the internal feedback from a survey, has allowed to reinforce these principles. This is a continuously activity.</p>	<p>7. Good practice in research 9. Public engagement 10. Non-discrimination 12. Recruitment 27. Gender balance</p>	<p>Equal Opportunities Plan</p>
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5. NEW ACTIONS (2024-2027)

This section describes the new actions intended for execution in the Action Plan for 2024-2027

Title action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators	GAP Principles	Institutional Framework
<p>1. ICN2 Values (Commitment, Cooperation, Transformation) dissemination.</p> <p>Develop and disseminate materials for an appropriate knowledge and identification.</p>	<p>December 2025</p>	<p>Human Resources</p> <p>Marketing, Communication and Fundraising,</p> <p>Strategy</p>	<p>1. Use different materials to disseminate our values on the website.</p>	<p>3. Professional responsibility</p> <p>4. Professional attitude</p> <p>7. Good practice in research</p> <p>9. Public engagement</p> <p>23. Research environment</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa</p>

<p>2. Dual Careers: Analyze and create a procedure for dual careers practices for new international new hires at ICN2.</p>	<p>December 2026</p>	<p>Human Resources</p>	<p>1. Procedure established and related resources</p>	<p>1. Research Freedom 5. Contractual and legal obligations 10. Non discrimination 24. Working conditions 26. Value of mobility</p>	<p>Severo Ochoa</p>
<p>3. Antifraud Measure Plan (PMA) training and Whistleblowing channel procedure training.</p>	<p>December 2024</p>	<p>PMA Committee, Whistleblowing channel responsible and Human Resources.</p>	<p>1. Training executed before the end of December 2024</p>	<p>2. Ethical principles 3. Professional attitude 5. Contractual and legal obligations 7. Good practice in research 34. Complains/appeals</p>	<p>Legal</p>
<p>4. Rethink the departments evaluation survey: Design a new evaluation for the departments and facilities in the institute.</p>	<p>December 2025</p>	<p>Manager and Human Resources</p>	<p>1. Define and launch a new departments evaluation survey.</p>	<p>3. Professional responsibility 4. Professional attitude 7. Good practice in research 11. Evaluation/appraisal systems 35. Participation in decision-making bodies</p>	<p>General</p>

5. Offer training included in the Administration training path and Research Support Training Path.	December 2025	Human Resources	1. Annual basis: Do training defined in their correspond path to both collectives.	28. Career development 38. Continuing Professional Development 39. Access to research training and continuous development.	Severo Ochoa
6. Implement a salary policy for the “Ramon y Cajal” researchers	December 2024	Director Manager and Human Resources	1. Implemented new scales and policy	24. Working conditions 25. Stability and permanence of employment 26. Funding and salaries 38. Continuing Professional Development	Labour Relations
7. Publish on the intranet the ICN2 salary policy and salary scales.	December 2024	Director, Manager and Human Resources	1. Salary Policy and salary scales published on the intranet.	24. Working conditions 26. Funding and salaries	Labour Relations

6. OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT (OTM-R)

In December 2015, a selection procedure for Postdoctoral Researchers was distributed through the Institute and put into practice. This document was widespread for all the positions and is available on the ICN2 Intranet and also on the Careers website in the Recruitment Process section: <https://icn2.cat/en/careers/icn2-recruitment-process>

The main points which are included in this policy are:

- Definition of a job description for the open position, which includes the responsibilities, requirements, working conditions and details for the application.
- Each call is advertised through the ICN2 website and announced on other portals such as Euraxess, and those identified on a recruitment source list for our offers.
- Candidates are evaluated by a panel established for each open position. The candidate's evaluation is carried out following the criteria established in the call requirements with points being awarded for each criterion.

- Finally, the chosen candidate is contacted and informed of the Job offer. The other candidates are contacted regarding the status of their application (dismissal or other).

The People Development Coordinator and the People Development Officer, who are members of the HR Department, are monitoring the process and coordinating the steps for the correct implementation. Both positions are advisors to the Group Leaders, Division Leaders and Heads of the Department, in order to ensure these procedures are complied with.

The OTM-R checklist was discussed in a working session with the Group Leaders and senior researchers in March 2017. During this session they reviewed the OTM-R checklist point by point before completing it. Researchers are aware of the importance of an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process.

With the same aim, the recruitment processes for technical or administration positions follow a similar recruitment procedure. So, this process has been integrated and generalised for the rest of the calls. It means also that the recruitments without an open call and candidate analyses are 0, following the HRS4R principles but also considering the updated regulations for spanish public foundations.

Moreover, we launched a specific procedure for admission to the ICN2 PhD Programme. The detailed process and policy are explained on the ICN2 website: <https://icn2.cat/en/careers/phd-programme/who-when-how> This procedure is one of the main parts for the ICN2 PhD Programme, which is a programme launched in recent years in order to attract the best talent for PhD courses, adequate monitoring and associated training during their PhD studies.

Our vision is that the OTM-R principles and our own procedure constitute an on-going process that is hard to maintain and has to be monitored and improved continuously in order to get closer to its objective. This is our mission, and we have to include more gender aspects to promote the increasing numbers of women in science, as we also detected in our Equal Opportunities plan.

7. IMPLEMENTATION

The implementation of the HRS4R action plan has consolidated the actions and procedures described and they have been assimilated by the ICN2 Community. However, there has to be a continuous effort in order to consolidate this culture change and progress in this sense.

As we explained in the interim assessment, we also have different external stakeholders who have contributed to the necessary reinforcement of these policies.

On the one hand, the CERCA Institute (Research Centres of Catalonia) has their own audits, which control the policies and principles that promote the European Guidelines. We received the maximum recognition in the last audit; among other things stating that we are very focused on achieving these principles and policies (gender actions, non-discrimination, harassment protocols, the recruitment process). CERCA plays an important role in terms of cultural change for the research centre environment.

Another institution we are part of is the Barcelona Institute of Science and Technology (BIST). Under its umbrella and as part of its Talent working group, composed of the HR departments of the former centres, we have defined and executed different training and Career Development programmes, as

specific and consolidated training in transferable skills for PhD Students, Postdoc, Senior Researchers and also specific training in leadership skills for Group Leaders. Many other actions linked to Career Development have also been launched: Careers Service, Career days, Women in Science days... Researchers of the BIST centres (including ICN2) have been able to take advantage of these activities. Other new actions such as the Mentoring programme with the BIST centres are some of the initiatives that have been developed in this last period. Moreover, the Mental Health training has been included in the training plan for each year with an excellent acceptance.

At an ICN2 level, the HR department is leading the implementation of the main number of actions committed in HRS4R, working with the working groups defined for each action. The Head of Human Resources and the People Development Coordinator in the HR department oversees the working groups coordination. They design and launch actions, which are result of receive the needs from the community and the environment. Everything is supervised by the Head of Human Resources and with the approval of the Management for each new initiative.

Other institutional commitments that have been referred to in previous sections of this document and promoted by internal committees for the Strategic Plan, the Severo Ochoa Programme and Equal Opportunities Plan, include actions that are part of this HRS4R commitment. The actions and programmes proposed for the new period were discussed previously in those forums and the monitoring of the implementation is carried out by these institutional committees.

Following on this, a specific and transversal (scientific and non-scientific members) HRS4R committee was created to share the accomplishment and reinforce the monitoring of the progress in the action plan.

During the period has been carried some surveys for the Equal Opportunities and Diversity aspects and for the Psychosocial aspects, departments and research support evaluation survey, which help in the creation of the plans and HRS4R actions. Still pending a global survey for detect the general evaluation of the new actions in the HRS4R.

The impact and quality of the training activities is monitored through specific questionnaires for each training course. The HR software developed is helping in compile this information for each course.