Action Plan

Case number: 2025CZ354620
Name of organisation under review: Institute of Plasma Physics of the CAS
Contact details: U Slovanky 2525/1a, 182 00 Prague 8, Czech Republic

1. Organisational Information

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

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, doctoral candidates either full-time or part-time involved in research *	174.19
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	44.35
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0.35
Of whom are women *	24.7
Of whom are R3 or R4 = established or leading researchers with a large degree of autonomy (e.g. holding the status of principal investigator or professor) *	57.40
Of whom are R2 = recognised researcher (e.g. postdoctoral researcher, junior researcher) *	51.10
Of whom are R1 = first stage researcher (e.g. doctoral candidate, research apprentice) *	65.69
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching, and research staff) *	254.64

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for the most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	**33107431.68 EUR**
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	**15766696.27 EUR**
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	**16389224.89 EUR**
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	**951510.52 EUR**

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)
The Institute of Plasma Physics of the Czech Academy of Sciences (IPP) is a public research institution conducting basic and applied research in controlled thermonuclear fusion, laser and low-temperature plasma, plasma chemistry, materials engineering, optical diagnostics, special optics and optoelectronics. IPP operates two large research infrastructures, including the COMPASS tokamak and the PALS laser facility, collaborates extensively with Czech and international partners, supports doctoral education with universities, and transfers research results to industry and society. Its research is organised in four scientific divisions in Prague and Turnov.

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 European Charter for Researchers at your organisation.

Ethics, integrity, gender, and open science*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths: IPP has a clear public-research mission, and researchers generally have substantial freedom to define research questions and publish results. IPP operates within the ethical framework of the Czech Academy of Sciences and has its own rules covering research conduct, publication, collegial behaviour, and evaluation. A procedure for resolving ethical disputes and a directive on reporting suspected unlawful conduct are in place, including a designated contact point and safeguards for confidentiality (available for IPP employees). A Gender Equality Plan, an Equal Opportunities Working Group, flexible working arrangements and established occupational-safety processes are in place **at** IPP. Open Science is supported through transformative publishing agreements, an electronic publication-release process and access to advice from our library / scientific-information specialist. IPP staff participate in EOSC CZ activities, disseminate relevant information internally, and promote FAIR principles while protecting sensitive data. Research infrastructures such as COMPASS and PALS have established systems for secure data collection, storage, sharing and reuse.

Weaknesses: The principal weakness is fragmentation and uneven implementation across the Institute. Although IPP operates within the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS) ethical framework, the recently updated ethics and conduct standards have not yet been consolidated into a single bilingual institutional framework. Staff must navigate separate routes for research-integrity concerns, interpersonal misconduct, whistleblowing and ombudsperson support, without one source clearly explaining their scope, contacts, response steps, confidentiality and protection from retaliation. Expectations for supervisors and conflict-resolution pathways for doctoral candidates are also not formally documented.

Open Science remains decentralised. IPP does not yet have institutional Open Science policy. In this regard, the extent of Open Science training sessions designated for all researchers across the institution has been rather limited. Several processes related to research data management still differ from team to team, as no appropriate institutional electronic system designated for data review, storage or publishing has been created yet. Relevant training is not systematically embedded in the institutional offer. Cybersecurity, backup responsibilities, and institutional-resilience measures also require more consistent documentation, communication, and implementation.

Equality and diversity measures lack uniform institute-wide implementation. While IPP has a Gender Equality Plan and flexible-working arrangements, bilingual equal-opportunity and anti-discrimination guidances are not consolidated. Anti-harassment training, inclusive-leadership development, and training for selection committees are not systematic. Scientific staff remain strongly male-dominated, and the recruitment of division and department heads requires greater transparency. Key policies, administrative guidance, and internal communication are not consistently available both in Czech and English, creating barriers for international employees. Onboarding varies between units and does not yet provide a consistent bilingual route into the organisation.

Researchers assessment, recruitment, and progression*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths: IPP has established scientific qualification and formal researcher-evaluation arrangements and has recently revised its evaluation rules. The new structured mandatory evaluation system has been aligned with the rules of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the European Charter for Researchers. Researchers are evaluated regularly and before promotion. The process uses institutional data on publications, citations, grants, teaching, research activities, service to the scientific and industrial community, and technology transfer. Assessments are conducted by a director-appointed committee that includes external experts and is chaired externally. The committee considers both recommended achievement levels and qualitative criteria, issues a written assessment and may recommend promotion.

Competitive recruitment is already used in practice, including international advertising through institutional networks and channels such as LinkedIn and ResearchGate. Job advertisements contain information about job duties, requirements, and necessary qualifications, as well as details regarding remuneration and benefits. The applications are reviewed by ad-hoc selection committees, which recommend the best candidates for appointment to the director. Development-oriented feedback is already used in some departments and provides a useful basis for an institute-wide approach.

Weaknesses: The current formal assessment and competitive recruitment practices are not yet sufficiently transparent, standardised or consistently understood. Development-oriented feedback takes place in some departments, but there is no common methodology, documentation template, or mechanism for identifying and following aggregate development needs outside mandatory evaluation. Assessment and reward processes are not yet communicated consistently and clearly enough.

IPP has not yet codified its practice in an institution-wide Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment policy. Vacancy notices, HR involvement, selection methods, interview principles, recruitment records, candidate communication, and post-process compliance checks vary between recruitments. Common rules are lacking structured assessment, interviews, and documentation of decisions. Committee members are not systematically briefed on impartiality, conflicts of interest, equal opportunities and unconscious bias, while notification and feedback to unsuccessful candidates depend on the unit or person leading the process. Recruitment of research division and department heads lacks a dedicated transparent framework.
Onboarding varies by unit and does not consistently cover pre-arrival, first-day, first-month, safety, administrative and role-specific requirements. The relationship between assessment criteria, qualification grades and career advancement is not sufficiently clear, and career guidance depends heavily on individual supervisors and departmental practice. IPP also lacks common written principles for doctoral admission and thesis-defense committees, including the review of research topics, supervisor pairings and academic expectations.

Working conditions and practices*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths: IPP has well-established support units covering HR, accounting, payroll, facilities, project administration, IT and mechanical services. Their reorganisation a few years ago strengthened service quality, while the introduction of Scientific Divisions created a more balanced management structure and reduced the concentration of administrative duties.

Researchers participate in national and international projects and mobility, and specialist capacity for funding and mobility support is available. The dedicated Project Support Unit assists researchers throughout the project lifecycle, including call monitoring, proposal preparation, budgeting, partner coordination, reporting, compliance, consultations and training. Environmental and resource-management practices and an established internal regulatory framework are also in place.
IPP provides attractive, competitive salary, semi-flexible working time, part-time arrangements, home-office options, and occupational health and safety support. IPP also offers a range of employee benefits that go beyond legal requirements, aiming to create a stimulating research environment, and enhance its appeal as an employer. Existing scientific, technical, and administrative support units provide a strong institutional foundation for research activities. In addition to the services provided by these units, employees have access to the scientific library, regular institutional seminars held every two months, an annual institute-wide meeting and team-building event, informal Christmas gatherings, and the Institute's mountain recreational facility.
Working conditions include flexible working hours, part-time employment, home-office arrangements, employee benefits, and occupational health and safety support. IPP also supports maternity and parental leave through communication, reintegration planning, and access to development opportunities. All employees taking maternity or parental leave have returned to IPP during the last decade, and childcare is available on or near the campus. Management has also maintained competitive remuneration and introduced work-life balance measures.
Weaknesses: Researchers and research leaders carry unevenly distributed administrative and operational duties alongside their scientific work, including order specification, travel logistics, project administration, IT issues, and routine technical tasks. The boundaries between researchers and support services are not always clear, and employees may be uncertain, which service owns a problem or whom to contact. For some heads of departments, delegable management tasks and arrangements for temporary substitution are not clear or set out in a coherent manner. These gaps in some cases reduce the time available for research, leadership and supervision.
Work intensity and fragmented responsibilities can make the long-term pace of work difficult to sustain. IPP has not yet assessed the legal, financial, and operational feasibility of sabbatical-like research-focus leave.
Although rules governing intellectual property rights have recently been introduced, guidance on their practical application, the joint ownership of research data, and the reuse or dissemination of research outputs is not yet consistently available or easily accessible across the Institute.
Family-friendly eligibility and approval arrangements for remote work also require clearer and more consistent rules. Communication about salary determination and variable remuneration is inconsistent.
The internal regulatory framework is extensive but difficult to locate and interpret, particularly for international staff. Contractual, legal, administrative, research-integrity, information-security and backup obligations are not presented consistently through onboarding or a searchable bilingual policy source. Guidance on cooperation with sanctioned countries or entities also requires more systematic communication. Fixed-term and project-based funding is largely an external constraint, but communication about contract decisions, career planning and available development routes can be improved.

Research careers and talent development*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths: IPP maintains close cooperation with Czech and international universities through teaching, thesis supervision and early contact with students, supporting a continuing inflow of talented young researchers. International recruitment, conference participation and research stays in leading foreign laboratories provide strong mobility and networking opportunities, particularly for doctoral candidates and early-career researchers. The Institute also organises practical summer and winter schools in which students work directly on experiments, simulations, and research data.
Career progression is supported by formal qualification grades and regular mandatory evaluations linked to promotion and remuneration. Professional development includes IPP and CAS courses, regular institutional scientific seminars, project-support workshops, management training, and targeted seminars on intellectual property and technology transfer. The researchers are allowed to attend language courses during work hours.

Weaknesses: The Institute does not yet have a common framework for voluntary annual development discussions, systematic identification of development needs or institution-wide scientific mentoring. Career development at IPP remains decentralised and dependent on individual supervisors and departmental practice. Career pathways and qualification

expectations are not communicated with sufficient clarity. Diverse contributions, including teamwork, infrastructure development, supervision, mentoring, etc., are not perceived as visible in evaluation and reward processes.

IPP and CAS offer professional-development opportunities, and employees can also access them through projects and seminars, but awareness varies across employee groups. There is no systematic process for translating identified needs into a balanced training offer covering scientific, transferable and leadership skills. Open Science and research-data-management trainings are not integrated consistently, while learning materials, recordings and presentations are not maintained in a governed shared repository.

Information on grants, mobility, and other career opportunities is fragmented across several channels. This particularly limits the ability of early-career researchers to plan their development, compare available routes and make timely use of internal, CAS, EURAXESS and external opportunities.

IPP lacks common guidelines on supervisory expectations, annual meetings, progress review, feedback, and conflict resolution. Common principles for doctoral admission and thesis-defense committees are not yet documented, and a voluntary mentoring programme remains at a preparatory stage without agreed roles, matching principles or organisational arrangements. Administrative overload among research leaders further restricts time for supervision and mentoring. Finally, IPP has not yet assessed whether sabbatical-like research-focus leave could provide a feasible instrument for career development, retention and burnout prevention.

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HR Excellence in Research strategy must be published in an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link(s) to the organisation's action plan / strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. Multiple links must be comma-separated.

Link to HR Strategy: https://www.ipp.cas.cz/o-ufp/HR_Strategie/index.html

	Proposed ACTIONS	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	- Indicator(s) / Target(s)
A1	Establish the Research Ethics and Integrity Reporting Framework	1. Ethics and Research Integrity; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries	Q4 2026-Q2 2027	WG 1; Director's Office; HR support	I1.1: Updated internal ethics and reporting guidance approved and published on the intranet in Czech and English. I1.2: At least three reporting routes established and clearly described: Research Integrity Committee of the Czech Academy of Sciences (for research ethics), Ombudsperson of the Czech Academy of Sciences (for reporting interpersonal misconduct), institutional whistleblowing contact (for reporting financial misconduct).
A2	Establish the Open Science Support Framework and Shared Repository	3. Open Science; 5. Embracing Diversity; 15. Contractual and Legal Obligations; 16. Dissemination and Exploitation of Results 19. Continuous Professional Development	Q4 2026-Q4 2028	WG 1 + WG 4 + Scientific and Technical Information Officer	I2.1: Institutional Open Science framework and dedicated guidance page established on the intranet, with defined procedures for regular updates. I2.2: Open Data Officer / Data Steward appointed with clearly defined responsibilities, and their appointment communicated to staff. I2.3: Open Science and data management training integrated into the institutional training offer. I2.4: Shared research materials repository launched and populated with initial outputs, with clear governance rules (uploading, access, and regular review) published on the intranet.
A3	Foster an Inclusive Culture and Equality	4. Gender Equality; 5. Embracing Diversity; 11. Selection, 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries	Q4 2026-Q4 2027; survey Q3 2028	GEP WG + HR Specialist	I3.1: Equal opportunities and anti-discrimination guidelines approved and published on the intranet in both Czech and English. I3.2: Anti-harassment and equal opportunities e-learning module launched for all staff. I3.3: At least two training sessions for management and selection committees conducted. I3.4: Workplace culture feedback collected through institutional surveys every two years.
A4	Establish Bilingual Communication Standards	5. Embracing Diversity; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries;	Q4 2026-Q3 2027	WG 1; Director's Office; HR	I4.1: Bilingual communication standard-defining rules for emails and listing key institutional documents requiring translation—approved and published. I4.2: Central register of internal directives and policies available on the intranet in both Czech and English.
A5	Adopt an OTM-R Policy	4. Gender Equality; 10. Recruitment; 11. Selection; 12. Career Progression	Q4 2026-Q4 2027; apply from Q4 2027	HR Specialist + WG 2 + GEP WG	I5.1: OTM-R policy covering vacancy advertising, HR alignment, selection methods, interview principles, documentation, candidate communication, and a dedicated framework for the transparent recruitment and selection of research division and department heads developed, formally approved by management, and published on the intranet and the institutional website.

					I5.2: Standardized OTM-R templates prepared: vacancy notice, selection record, interview structure, and candidate communication. I5.3: Mandatory OTM-R/impartiality briefing protocol established for all selection committees. I5.4: OTM-R compliance checklist developed and implemented as a tool to document and verify every completed recruitment process
A6	Establish a Structured Onboarding Framework	5. Embracing Diversity; 10. Recruitment; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries, 15. Contractual and Legal Obligations	Q4 2026-Q3 2028; monitor thereafter	HR Specialist + WG 2	I6.1: Onboarding methodology developed and formally approved, defining institutional, process, and scientific-level responsibilities. I6.2: Institutional onboarding guide published (including a comprehensive cultural/relocation guide in English, research integrity reporting routes, and EURAXESS contacts). I6.3**:** Standardized onboarding checklists (pre-arrival, first-day, first-month) deployed into active use across HR and research departments.
A7	Improve Guidance and Communication on the Mandatory Formal Evaluation Process	9. Researchers' Assessment; 12. Career Progression; 17. Valuing Diverse Research Careers	Q4 2026-Q2 2027; annually thereafter, survey follow-up 2028	WG 2 + Scientific and Technical Information Officer	I7.1: Guidance document and intranet section on the mandatory formal researcher evaluation process published. I7.2: Evaluation form updated to include embedded step-by-step instructions. I7.3: Annual information sessions conducted for all relevant research staff prior to the evaluation cycle. I7.4: User comprehension of the process verified via regular employee surveys
A8	Implement Annual Feedback Discussions	9. Researchers' Assessment; 12. Career Progression; 18. Career Development and Advice	Q3 2027-Q3 2028	WG 2; HR; division/department heads	I8.1: Annual feedback methodology and templates developed and published. I8.2: Methodological guidance and briefings on conducting structured feedback sessions delivered to managers. I8.3: System for voluntary annual feedback discussions launched institution-wide, with aggregate development needs and participation data monitored.
A9	Promote Sustainable Research Practices	8. Sustainability of Research	Q1-Q4 2027	WG 3 + Facility Management / Operations	I9.1: Institutional guidelines aligned with the MSCA Green Charter to foster an environmentally conscious research environment developed and published on the intranet, optimizing digital workflows and commuting practices. I9.2: A "Green Research Checklist" or informational leaflet published on the intranet.
A10	Improve Communication of the Remuneration Principles	9. Researchers' Assessment; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries; 17. Valuing Diverse Research Careers	Q4 2026-Q2 2027; survey follow-up 2028	WG 3; HR; management	I10.1: Guidance document on variable salary components prepared and published on the intranet. I10.2: Methodological recommendations for managers on explaining bonus decisions formulated and distributed. I10.3: Employee awareness and understanding of remuneration principles tracked and analyzed through regular staff surveys.
A11	Enhance Remote Work Rules to Support Work-Life Balance	4. Gender Equality; 8. Sustainability of Research; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries	Q1-Q3 2027	WG 3 + GEP WG, HR	I11.1: Selected group of employees and eligibility criteria for remote work defined. I11.2: Updated internal remote work rules including family-friendly provisions approved and published. I11.3: Employees and supervisors informed about the new rules and approval procedures.
A12	Reduce the Administrative Burden for Researchers and Research Leaders	6. The Researcher; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries; 20. Supervision and Mentoring	Q4 2026-Q4 2027; outcome check Q3 2028	WG 3; management; heads of all units	I12.1: Internal mapping of researchers' administrative tasks completed, and a clear support services catalogue published on the intranet to shift operational workloads to administrative staff. I12.2: A consultation mechanism for heads and their deputies established and communicated. Uptake of the new consultation mechanism will be monitored. I12.3: Training in time management and effective delegation provided to researchers, research leaders and other relevant staff. I12.4: The perceived administrative and management burden, together with staff awareness and use of the newly introduced support measures, evaluated through a subsequent institutional staff survey.
A13	Strengthen Information Security and Institutional Resilience	2. Freedom of Scientific Research; 3. Open Science 15. Contractual and Legal Obligations;	Q4 2026-Q3 2028	WG 3 + IT dept.	I13.1: Information security and institutional resilience policies formally documented and approved. I13.2: Cybersecurity guidelines and data backup training modules delivered to institutional employees. I13.3: Required technical tools, and environment hardening measures deployed in accordance with the institutional plan.

A14	Establish a Funding and Mobility Information Hub	7. Free Circulation of Researchers; 18. Career Development and Advice;	Q4 2026-Q2 2027; annual review	WG 4 + International Grant Specialist	I14.1: Funding and Mobility Hub officially launched on the institution's intranet, featuring centralized information about internal/external calls, eligibility criteria, and deadlines. I14.2: Dedicated contact person or support unit formally designated and publicly listed on the hub. I14.3: Internal update mechanism established, and annual platform traffic reports reviewed to evaluate researcher engagement.
A15	Develop the Framework for a Voluntary Scientific Mentoring Programme	12. Career Progression; 18. Career Development and Advice; 20. Supervision and Mentoring	Q2 2027-Q4 2028	WG 4; HR; researcher representatives	I15.1: The mentoring needs and expectations of potential mentors and mentees identified through consultation with relevant employee groups. I15.2: A draft framework for the voluntary scientific mentoring programme developed, covering its objectives, scope, target groups, mentor and mentee roles, matching principles and basic organisational arrangements. I15.3: The draft framework discussed with relevant stakeholders and recommendations, including a proposed approach and timeline for a future pilot phase, submitted to IPP management.
A16	Introduce Institutional Supervision Guidelines	1. Ethics and Research Integrity; 13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries; 20. Supervision and Mentoring;	Q4 2026-Q3 2027	WG 1 + WG 4; supervisors	I16.1: Institutional supervision guidelines and the annual meeting template officially published on the intranet. I16.2: Designation of contact persons and pathways for conflict resolution integrated within the guidelines. I16.3: Annual best-practice sharing meeting for supervisors organized and formally documented.
A17	Formalize Doctoral Committee Rules	10. Recruitment; 12. Career Progression; 18. Career Development and Advice; 20. Supervision and Mentoring	Q1-Q3 2027	WG 4; representatives of supervisors and students	I17.1: Procedural guidelines for doctoral admission and thesis committees formally documented and approved. I17.2: Approved committee principles published and formally distributed to all research departments.
A18	Establish a Framework for a Sabbatical-like Leave	13. Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries; 17. Valuing Diverse Research Careers; 18. Career Development	Q2 2027-Q2 2028	WG 3 + WG 4; management; HR	I18.1: Comprehensive feasibility study prepared, evaluating institutional impacts, legal options, and best practices from other public research institutes. I18.2: Draft institutional rules governing eligibility, approval processes, and operational conditions for research-focus leave formulated. I18.3: Executive decision regarding the implementation and funding model of the framework documented by management.

*The establishment of an open recruitment policy is a key element in the strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the OTM-R toolkit and how you intend to implement / are implementing the principles of OTM-R. It is helpful to include a brief commentary demonstrating this implementation even if there is some overlap with the actions listed above. If this is the case, please link the OTM-R checklist with the overall action plan (max. 1000 words).**

IPP considers OTM-R a priority for the consistent development of its existing competitive recruitment practice. Action 5 (Adopt an OTM-R Policy) is the principal measure and is supported by Action 3 (inclusive culture and equality), A6 (structured onboarding) and A17 (doctoral committee rules). The current development need is to codify institute-wide standards, tools, responsibilities and evidence of application.

From Q4 2026 to Q2 2027, IPP will develop, consult, approve and publish a bilingual OTM-R policy, with application from Q4 2027. The policy will cover vacancy advertising, HR involvement, selection methods, interview principles, recruitment documentation and candidate communication. It will also include a dedicated framework for the transparent recruitment and selection of research division and department heads. Existing international advertising, inclusive vacancy wording and attention to committee gender balance will be retained and incorporated into the common framework.

Standard templates will be prepared for vacancy notices, selection records, interview structures and candidate communication. All selection committees will receive an OTM-R and impartiality briefing, supported by equality and inclusive-selection learning under Action 3. An OTM-R compliance checklist will be used to document and verify each completed recruitment process. The European Commission OTM-R toolkit and the completed OTM-R checklist will guide policy design, implementation and review and will be cross-referenced to Action 5. The policy, checklist and related HRS4R materials will be published in an accessible location. Implementation evidence will include the approved policy, templates, briefing protocol and completed compliance checks.

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan (max. 1000 words).

Implementation will follow the responsibilities, timelines and indicators set out in the action plan. The HRS4R Steering Committee will provide strategic oversight, the HR Specialist and HRS4R coordinator will consolidate progress information and evidence, and the working groups and responsible units named for each action will prepare and implement the agreed outputs. To maintain consistency with the HRS4R framework, each new internal policy, procedure and methodology will undergo a structured review for compliance with applicable Czech legislation governing public research institutions, relevant Czech Academy of Sciences regulations and European standards. IPP management will approve institutional policies and decisions within its competence and address cross-unit dependencies or resource issues.

Each action will be managed against its stated timing, deliverables and indicators. Monitoring will distinguish between preparation, formal approval, communication and practical use so that completion is supported by evidence. Where appropriate, draft outputs will be consulted with the groups directly affected and implementation will be supported by guidance, training or practical tools. Researchers, doctoral candidates, supervisors, research leaders, international employees and support staff will be involved through targeted consultations, pilots, briefings etc.

The implementation period runs from Q4 2026 to Q4 2028. Actions on ethics, Open Science, equality, bilingual communication, OTM-R, onboarding, evaluation guidance, remuneration, administrative burden, information security, funding and mobility, and supervision begin in Q4 2026. Further measures on sustainable research, remote work and doctoral committee rules begin in Q1 2027; mentoring and research-focus leave in Q2 2027; and voluntary annual feedback discussions in Q3 2027. Recurring activities and monitoring will continue after the initial deliverables are introduced. Before the next HRS4R assessment, IPP will review implementation evidence, survey findings and any remaining development needs and will update the plan where justified.

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

The HRS4R Steering Committee will review progress at least quarterly and whenever a significant dependency, delay or management decision requires attention. The review will cover the timing and status of each action, achievement of the stated indicators, supporting evidence, risks, dependencies and resource needs. The HR Specialist and HRS4R coordinator will prepare the consolidated overview and record agreed follow-up. Leads from the responsible working groups and operational units will report on their actions. IPP management will resolve cross-unit matters and approve any material change in scope, timing, responsibility or targets. Review will continue after an output is approved or published where the action includes training, recurring activity, monitored use or a survey-based outcome.

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

IPP will involve the research community through representation in the working groups, and targeted consultation on individual actions. For example, dedicated meetings of heads of research and administrative units will identify activities that could appropriately be transferred to support services under Action 12, Reduce the Administrative Burden for Researchers and Research Leaders. A workshop involving doctoral supervisors will help shape the implementation of Action 17, Formalise Doctoral Committee Rules, while a separate session bringing together supervisors and doctoral candidates will inform the development of institutional supervision guidelines under Action 16, Introduce Institutional Supervision Guidelines. Members of the Researcher Evaluation Committee will also be actively involved in implementing Action 7, Improve Guidance and Communication on the Mandatory Formal Evaluation Process. The Equal Opportunities Working Group (GEP WG) and employee representatives will be involved where relevant, for example in Actions 3, 5 and 11.

Information and invitations will be communicated in Czech and English through appropriate internal channels. Consultation results will be documented and considered by the responsible units and the Steering Committee. The 2026 employee survey provides a baseline, and subsequent pulse checks or institutional surveys will assess awareness, understanding and the perceived usefulness of implemented measures.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HR Excellence in Research award process? Make sure it is recognised in the organisation's research strategy as the overarching HR policy.*

IPP management will formally recognise HRS4R as the overarching framework for the continuous development of HR policies affecting researchers and will connect it to institutional research and people planning. Following the award's conferral, the HR Excellence in Research visual identity will be incorporated into IPP's website, intranet and official documentation connected to HRS4R, such as regulations, tools, templates, forms, employee presentations etc. New and revised policies within the Action Plan will be checked against the relevant

European Charter for Researchers principles and, where applicable, OTM-R requirements before approval. Implementation will be coordinated with the Gender Equality Plan, CAS ethical and employment rules, Open Science, information security and related institutional development activities. The bilingual communication standards and central policy register under Action 4 will make approved policies easier to locate and maintain. The Steering Committee will review alignment as part of its regular oversight and will propose updates where changes in legislation, CAS requirements, institutional strategy or implementation evidence make them necessary.

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

To ensure the effective and timely delivery of the Action Plan, each action is assigned to one or more clearly identified owners, including designated individuals, departments or working groups within the implementation structure. Action owners are responsible for coordinating implementation. HR Specialist/Coordinator, action owner and thematic working groups will meet regularly, with the frequency adapted to the stage and complexity of each action. They will assign tasks and deadlines, review progress against milestones and indicators, and address bottlenecks and necessary corrective steps. Key decisions and changes will be documented, while unresolved issues will be escalated to the action owner, HR Specialist/Coordinator or Steering Committee, as appropriate.
The HR Specialist /Coordinator will provide central coordination, methodological and administrative support, consolidate progress information and facilitate cooperation with the Institute's relevant support departments. Any substantive modification will be discussed and approved by the Steering Committee to ensure transparency, accountability and continued alignment with the European Charter for Researchers and the overall objectives of the HRS4R process.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*

The integrated schedule runs from Q4 2026 to Q4 2028. Actions 1-7, 10, 12-14 and 16 begin in Q4 2026. Actions 9, 11 and 17 begin in Q1 2027; actions 15 and 18 begin in Q2 2027; and action 8 begins in Q3 2027.
The HR Specialist/Coordinator will maintain the consolidated timeline, and the Steering Committee will review progress at least quarterly. Action-specific tasks and deadlines, progress against indicators will be tracked separately. If an action cannot be implemented as planned because of legal, financial, operational or external constraints, the action owner will propose a revised scope or timetable. Any substantial change will be reviewed and approved by the Steering Committee to ensure continued alignment with the Action Plan and the European Charter for Researchers. Where necessary, the timetable will be updated in response to changing institutional needs, external developments or any unpredictable changes.
The achievement of relevant measurable indicators will be assessed through a follow-up employee survey conducted at the end of the monitoring period (planned for Q3 2028).

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

Progress will be assessed against the indicators and targets assigned to each action. Evidence will include approved and published policies, bilingual guidance, named roles and contacts, standard templates and checklists, training and briefing records, consultation records, intranet or repository availability and usage information, documented management decisions and survey findings. Process coverage will be monitored where the Action Plan requires consistent application, for example through the OTM-R compliance checklist for completed recruitment processes and the active use of standard onboarding checklists. The implementation team and Steering Committee will continuously monitor these indicators against their respective timelines, utilizing the gathered documentation, completed policy deliverables, and staff feedback as the direct, evidence-based foundation for our upcoming self-assessment report and future HRS4R evaluation.
Survey-based indicators will be compared with the 2026 baseline where applicable. The follow-up survey will cover employee understanding of formal evaluation and remuneration principles, perceived administrative burden, workplace culture and the use or perceived usefulness of new support arrangements. The Steering Committee will review the completeness and relevance of evidence at least annually and before the next assessment. Results may be analysed by career stage, gender, language group or other relevant categories where the data are lawful, sufficiently robust and compatible with confidentiality.

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

The action plan is a two-year institutional improvement program and will be managed with the utmost seriousness and responsibility. External constraints, including project-based funding, legislation and CAS-wide rules, will be recorded, while IPP will remain responsible for the measures within its competence. Above all, the Action Plan is intended to help IPP continue improving as a research institution and to create an environment in which researchers at all career stages can work effectively, develop professionally and feel supported.

Its implementation will be based on open discussion and practical cooperation among researchers, managers and support staff. We will regularly review what is working, listen to employee feedback and adjust individual steps where necessary. The Action Plan is not intended as a formal exercise, but as a practical framework for gradually improving everyday working conditions, institutional support and the overall research environment in line with the European Charter for Researchers.