

## EURAXESS

### Implementation Phase Interim Assessment - EC Consensus Report

**Case number**

2020CZ480208

**Name Organisation under assessment**

Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics of the Czech Academy of Sciences

**Organisation's contact details**

Rumburska 89, Libechov, Czech Republic, 27721, Czech Republic

**Submission date of the Interim Assessment Internal Review**

12/05/2023

**Submission date to the European Commission**

23/05/2023

#### Quality assessment

The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended by the organisation. If any statements have prompted a "no" or "partly" in the evaluation, please provide recommendations:

|                                                                                                                                              | YES / NO / PARTLY | Recommendations |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented?              | Yes               |                 |
| Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation's priorities in HR-management for researchers? | Yes               |                 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | YES / NO / PARTLY | Recommendations |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions' current status, additions and/or modifications?                                                                             | Yes               |                 |
| Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan sufficiently embedded within the organisation's management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) so as to guarantee a solid implementation? | Yes               |                 |
| Has the organisation developed an OTM-R policy?                                                                                                                                                                                  | Yes               |                 |

### Strengths and weaknesses

On the basis of the information submitted and taking into account the organisation's national research context, how would you as an assessor judge the HR Strategy's **strengths and weaknesses**? (maximum 1000 words)

**Strenghts**

- Specialist intellectual property training conducted.
- Introduction of a mediator position to attend to the process of receiving complaints regarding unequal treatment and interpersonal conflicts
- Open positions advertised on Institute Twitter.
- Internal Grant Competition - training junior researchers to deal with all administration associated with project preparation and administratio
- Mentoring programme

**Weaknesses**

- The key weakness is a lack of ambition. Most of the actions refer to making procedural changes instead of actual impact towards main stakeholders - researchers. Some other actions seem to be with a very little effort, like Translation tool on the IAPG intranet, Trainings available published on HRS4R page, List of Supervisors, Keeping the employee list up-to-date in the Outlook system, etc. IAPG says that it "does not consider the HR AWARD simply as a formality, but rather as a procedural incentive for continuous improvement." However, this was not demonstrated in the action plan. Not only that the ambition is missing, but also commitment to the process quality.
- In the strengths/weaknesses analysis, IAPG identifies several weaknesses that are not addressed at all by the newly introduced actions in the action plan. Those weaknesses are: Lack of knowledge of younger researchers on IPR, Insufficient availability fo auxiliary materials for development of researchers, More engaging form of induction activities is needed and 'Continuing attempts of certain managerial researchers to undermine the requirement to recruit researchers in accordance with the OTM-R principles'.
- Some of the activities are very generic without a clear definition of the expected outcome, for example Action 8, audit of regulations governing training and working conditions - why only those two areas? What motivated you to do the audit? What is expected? Other examples are Action 19, Indicators do not help, as they are often vague, qualitative; they may help measuring the progress of the action, but certainly not its impact.
- The level of detail in demonstrating the results and impact of the completed activities is insufficient to actually understand the effort made.
- Approach to setting up indicators need to be revised. Currently, milestones are entered (for example, 'protocols available', 'existence proven', 'acknowledgement issued', 'sw system implementation' etc.) rather than indicators of progress or even impact. Organisation is invited to introduced quantitative indicators, where applicable and for each indicator, to introduce a target, demonstrating its ambition towards some goal.
- Many of the new actions refer to resolving the gender issues. However, there are no indications that such issues exist at all. Are those actions actually coming from the recently adopted Gender Equality Plan?
- Action 21 'Human Resources Developmental Strategy' is confusing. Isn't the HRS4R process creating this strategy already?
- IAPG highlights that there is "no primary demand for soft skills training amongst the managerial employees engaged in research". It is not clear how this was assessed. Comitment to the professional development goes far beyond individual aspirations or goals and it is institutional responsibility. This is partially addressed with Action 25. Regular survey on training topics of interest, but that's only data collection. Its not IAPG responsibility to increase data collection, but to increase awareness on the value of such training.
- Organisation publishes open position on Twitter which is a good practice. However, the impact of this approach is very low without substantial effort in promoting its social media. Twitter account is followed by only 120-ish people and it is not frequently attended/few posts only.
- The aspect of engagement with researchers is not clear enough and no evidence has been provided. Some interaction has been done in survey conducted during the preparation of the Gender Equality Plan, but this is different process. Seems like no interactions at all with early stage researchers.
- IAPG highlights that more engaging form of induction activities is needed. It is not clear why it is the case? What was wrong with Induction Programme? No new action to address this issue.

If relevant, please provide suggestions for modifications or revisions to the (updated) HR strategy: (maximum 2000 words)

In the future, revise the approach to structuring action plan by: 1) better specifying the scope of the action and expected outcome and 2) grouping simple and low effort actions (e.g. publishing something on web) to achieve a better balance of the effort across actions.

Clarify what "Continuing attempts of certain managerial researchers to undermine the requirement to recruit researchers in accordance with the OTM-R principles" means.

Update the action plan to address the weaknesses found in the Internal review (see above)

Revise the approach to choosing the indicators instead of milestones. Introduce quantitative indicators as much as possible (see above). Introduce impact indicators next to action progress indicators. Introduce targets to demonstrate the ambition.

Regarding the identified weakness related to employees quitting the job during probationary period: it is addressed with Action 31. Newcomer guide, but this is not sufficient. IAPG should commit to carefully investigate what are reasons for quitting the job, and then formulate a clear and direct measure addressing the source of this problem. Newcomer guide sounds like ad-hoc measure.

**During the transition period special conditions apply:**

Institutions having started the HRS4R implementation prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015) may not have prioritised actions implementing the OTM-R principles yet. In this case, they should not be penalised but strong recommendations should be made to address these principles appropriately.

**At this point of the INTERIM assessment, the institution does not jeopardise maintaining the HR award.** Nevertheless, the institution is advised to take into account the comments and recommendations of the assessors to meet all assessment criteria at the next assessment (in 36 months).

## Recommendations

Which of the below situations describes the organisation's progress most accurately? Tick the right situation and add comments/general recommendations accordingly.

**HRS4R embedded**

**HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed**

**HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed**

**Additional comments \***

No additional comments

**Explanation**

- **HRS4R embedded:** The organisation is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. **There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**
- **HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed:** The organisation is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. **There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**
- **HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed:** The organisation is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. **There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**