



The Human Resources Strategy For Researchers

INTERNAL REVIEW 2026



1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

2025 Data

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, doctoral candidates either full-time or part-time involved in research *	60,27
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	26
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is the host organisation) *	15,10
Of whom are women *	28,67
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) *	15,27
Of whom are R2 = recognised researcher (e.g. postdoctoral researcher, junior researcher) *	13,99
Of whom are R1 = first stage researcher (e.g. doctoral candidate, research apprentice) *	12,65
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching, and research staff) *	87,29
RESEARCH FUNDING	€
Total annual organisational budget	5650835,57
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	2872625
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	2612240,11
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	165970,46

1.1. Organisational Profile

ICRA was created on October 26, 2006 by the government of the Generalitat de Catalunya as part of the Catalan Research Centers Program (CERCA). Research Institute attached to the University of Girona, according to the Decree of the Generalitat of Catalonia of July 6, 2018. Inaugurated on October 7, 2009. It has the impetus of its patrons: the Department of Research and Universities of the Generalitat of Catalonia (DREU), the Catalan Water Agency (ACA) and the University of Girona (UdG).

The Catalan Government has opted for ICRA as a multidisciplinary center for water research. It is an international reference that commits to the investigation of the integral water cycle, in terms of water resources, water quality, in the broadest sense of the word, (chemical, microbiological, ecological, etc...) and treatment and evaluation technologies and the transfer of this knowledge to society and the business and industrial fabric.

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE

2.1. Ethical and professional aspects

Strengths

The actions initially planned under the ethical and professional aspects pillar have already been completed. However, with the change in our Institute's directorship in 2024, some of these actions have been extended/reformulated.

Consequently, the action about scientific **career diagram** has been extended to reflect a **professional classification** for all staff inspired by the Sectoral Research Collective Agreement of Catalonia (currently under negotiation), the practices of CERCA centers, and the European Framework for Research Careers.

First, in 2025, an initial professional classification was established, distinguishing between Research Staff and Direct Research Support Staff. In 2026, following the preliminary agreement reached in the negotiation of the Sectoral Research Collective Agreement of Catalonia, our Institute has once again adapted this professional classification to the aforementioned agreement. Furthermore, objective criteria have been established for salary allocation across all professional categories, based on a percentage of compliance.

Other planned actions continue to evolve continuously. For example, within the **Green Charter**, options are being studied to introduce additional recommendations/practices regarding paper reduction.

The year 2024 has been a year of profound change and new horizons for ICRA, marked by the renewal of the management team and the start of an intense strategic reflection process that has set the center's course for the coming years. This process culminated in the approval of the **new Strategic Plan** and the co-development of the Action Plan, aimed at moving toward an ICRA 2.0 that is more open, connected with society, and focused on generating a tangible impact. In this regard and, to fulfill the action related to the Strategic Plan, to prepare for next year, and to ensure greater synergy between administration and research, every year in October–November a 3-day travel workshop is organized with executive management, administration heads, communication, and principal investigators.

On the other hand, the **ICRA Equality Plan** was renewed in July 2026. It was negotiated by a committee comprising representatives of both the company and the employees, agreeing on a total of 36 actions to be implemented by 2030.

The recruitment and selection procedure was adapted with a gender and diversity perspective.

Weaknesses

The staff has lack of interest in knowing the policies, rules, and regulations of the center.
Some of the most relevant information is not written in English.

Remarks

In addition to implementing a new professional classification, the Director of the center succeeded in securing Board of Trustees approval in 2026 for a **Scientific Career Development, Talent Attraction and Consolidation Plan**. This plan is configured as a structured set of mechanisms and criteria designed to guide the professional progression of research staff throughout their scientific career at the center. The regulation applies to all employed scientific staff at the Institute within the R3-R4 categories.

As a measure under the previous Equality Plan, a **Basic Guide to Inclusive Communication** was approved and disseminated in 2025. In fact, by the end of the previous plan's term, all planned actions were completed except for those related to conducting surveys (which were put on hold due to data protection concerns) and the adaptation of a lactation room (owing to budgetary issues with the maintenance company).

Moreover, the ICRA's commitment to defending human rights and the dignity of all people—specifically LGBTI individuals—was reflected in 2025 with the approval of the **ICRA's LGBTIQ+ Plan**. Negotiated with the legal representatives of the workforce, the plan includes 22 actions to be carried out through 2029.

Furthermore, in order to guarantee research ethics, the **Research Integrity Committee** was established in 2026 as an independent advisory body for all staff, responsible for promoting and ensuring the highest standards of scientific integrity at the Institute. The scope of the Committee covers all ethical aspects of research conducted under the auspices of our center, including, among others:

- Scientific publication and authorship practices
- Research data management, integrity, and ownership
- Responsible conduct in research
- Conflicts of interest
- Collaborative practices (internal and international)
- Supervision and mentoring

ICRA has been adhering since December 1, 2022, to the "Anti-Fraud Measures Plan in the Execution of Actions Funded by NextGenerationEU Funds in the Government of Catalonia", promoted by the Government of Catalonia, in 2026 it prioritized supplementing it with **its own Anti-Fraud and Conflict of Interest Management Plan**. This plan makes no distinction regarding the funding source, meaning that the principles, procedures, and control mechanisms established within it will apply uniformly and uniquely across all organizational activities.

We also updated our **Code of Conduct and Good Practices** and adhered to the **new CERCA Code of Ethics and Conduct**.

2.2. Recruitment and Selection

Strengths

ICRA has developed a strong onboarding procedure that facilitates the new staff integration into the Institute. Regarding staff recruitment and selection, we had three planned actions: a welcome manual, offering free legal advice on obtaining residence and work permits for researchers joining the Institute, and a welcome meeting with the Director. The current status of these actions is as follows:

- in 2026, the **welcome manual** was updated and made available not only on SharePoint but also on the website.
- The **offering of legal advice** has been expanded; thus, since 2025, legal support for obtaining immigration permits has been extended to both the researcher to be hired and their family.
- With the arrival of the new Director in 2024, the **Director's welcome meeting** underwent a complete 180-degree turn as other priorities were set. Instead of these formal meetings, on their first day, new hires are given an all-day practical orientation by a research support staff member: they welcome them, show them their workspace, the laboratories and how they operate, common areas, SharePoint, the different departments, and more. Meanwhile, the director holds periodic meetings with both predoctoral and postdoctoral staff to exchange views and feedback.

Weaknesses

Constant legislative changes for the recruitment of personnel.

Difficulty in finding the required profiles. Few candidates apply for the offer.

We do not have a collective bargaining agreement applicable to the research sector; however, this year a preliminary agreement has been reached.

Remarks

A Welcome Session for Newly Joined Researchers at ICRA is organized in November (last year) and in October 2026, featuring talks on various research projects being carried out at the Institute.

Emphasis has also been placed on keeping everyone informed of new developments; hence, the **Director's Newsletter** was launched, sent to all staff via email monthly.

Furthermore, fostering a more united center is a key priority. For this reason, it was decided to organize more activities for staff—both social, such as the **Town Halls**, and informative, to present the research developed at the center, known as **Flash Seminars**, all of which are upload to our Youtube channel ([La recerca a l'Institut Català de Recerca de l'Aigua \(ICRA-CERCA\)](#)).

There is also a strong drive to enhance the outreach of our research, leading to the consolidation of a new **Outreach Area**. This team has promoted open days at the Institute, GLH2OPS (Water-related activities for everyone, young and old), collaborated on activities with Bàsquet Girona, organized educational visits for children and youth, and even established the Frontier School, held every May (for early-career researchers).

In the same vein, and to foster better integration within our center and Catalan society, both face-to-face and virtual **Catalan language courses** are offered, thanks to a specific grant obtained for this purpose from the AGAUR (Agency for Management of University and Research Grants). It takes place in ICRA and includes the course, cultural visits and official certification included upon attendance and passing the exam.

Specifically, within the selection procedure, the interview guidance document has been adapted to the new Directive (EU) 2023/970 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 strengthening the application of the principle of equal pay for equal work or work of equal value between men and women through pay transparency and enforcement mechanisms.

2.3. Working conditions

Strengths

ICRA provides a favourable working environment for researchers and support staff. Flexible working hours are allowed for everyone, with the Director's newsletter reminding staff of the recommendation to schedule meetings between 9:30 AM and 1:30 PM to support work-life balance. Previous reviews highlighted good internal collaboration, interdisciplinary research, adequate infrastructures and positive synergies between research and administrative departments.

Regarding actions related to working conditions, it was necessary to update the working conditions document, approve the mobility policy, define a teleworking policy, and create a general information hub on SharePoint.

Concerning the first, with every legislative amendment regarding working conditions, such as leaves of absence, the Institute updates its own document called **Labor Relations and Conciliation Policy** accordingly, without prejudice to offering enhanced terms for certain leaves—not only compared to general legislation, namely the Workers' Statute, but also relative to the projections for the new Collective Agreement, for instance, regarding marriage leave, leave for the marriage of a family member, divorce, relocation, and personal leave of absence called “excedència”.

Annually, we update the document regulating the **selection and recruitment procedure** in accordance with the needs and gaps identified throughout the year, ensuring a smoother onboarding experience for incoming staff. For example, the last updated reinforces onboarding practices. It defines responsibilities for preparing the workplace, IT equipment and personal protective equipment required by the new hire, occupational risk prevention information, welcome actions, employment documentation, introduction to teams and information on internal systems.

Regarding the second, in June 2025, the **mobility policy** was updated and approved by the Board of Trustees.

In 2022, ICRA approved an **off-site working policy**. The purpose of this regulation is to advance towards a result-oriented work model, empowering staff autonomy and initiative in carrying out their duties, thereby offering greater flexibility in time management while ensuring an effective balance between work and family life.

Finally, ICRA created a **general information point** on SharePoint, as an action of the previous review, called Policies, where all these information -and more- can be found.

Weaknesses

Most internal documentation is not available in English. In accordance with the Guide for establishing criteria to manage multilingualism in research centers created by the Department of Research and Universities of the Generalitat de Catalunya, priority has been given to providing documentation in Catalan.

Sharepoint needs to be reorganised.

Researchers consider the excessive administration burden or research management.

And as exposed, many of them don't remember where to get basic informatic so are unfamiliar with ICRA regulations or procedures.

Remarks

ICRA goes beyond complying with the strategy's established actions; the Institute keeps identifying shortcomings and putting other measures in place to improve.

In 2024, our **internal reporting system policy** was approved. Its purpose is to protect individuals who, in a work or professional context, detect serious or very serious criminal or administrative offenses and report them through the designated channels. To guarantee the reporting person's confidentiality, the primary channel provided is the

Internal Whistleblowing Channel, available on the website. A User Guide for the Channel is available on both SharePoint and the website.

On October 21, 2025, a **new works council** was constituted, with representation on the negotiating committee for the equality plan and the health and safety committee.

2.4. Training and development

Strengths

Under the new management, cross-cutting projects have been promoted to strengthen knowledge transfer, communication, and governance, in line with the "Training and development" pillar of the European Charter for Researchers.

The 2022-2025 Action Plan also included annual conferences and workshops for doctoral and postdoctoral researchers, training for Principal Investigators, mentoring actions, communication activities and the development of a new ICRA website.

Regarding **training for doctoral and postdoctoral staff**, in addition to workshops, seminars are organized periodically, and an immersive Frontier School has been created—held every May—designed for early-stage researchers. Both the seminars schedule and the information regarding the Frontier School are published on the website.

Regarding **training for principal investigators**, thanks to the new Directorate for Governance, several training sessions were carried out in 2026, such as AI (which was also open to everyone), leadership coaching, time management, and the "Leadership and Management Skills Course for Group Leaders."

For its part, the new Research Sub-directorate has promoted a **mentoring plan**; however, it is necessary to wait for the document to be approved by the Board of Trustees this November. Nonetheless, the draft was presented to the research staff, but there was no active participation during this first call.

The **communication department has been renewed**, making ICRA much more active both on social media and in organizing activities for everyone. This, together with the new leadership vision—which has driven the creation of an outreach team—has made ICRA more visible than ever. Activities such as Pint of Science, European Researchers' Night, International Women's Day, ICRA's stands and activities at Bàsquet Girona matches, etc. were identified as examples of public engagement and science communication.

In addition, ICRA has promoted "GLH2OPS – Discover the water you drink," a scientific dissemination activity supported by an FCRI 2026 grant and in collaboration with the Darder Museum of Banyoles and the Banyoles City Council. The activity features a blind water tasting, followed by information on safety, treatment processes, and the environmental footprint or impact of each water type, among other topics. Finally, the project includes the development of an interactive platform and an autonomous water dispenser prototype

Not only **website** has been updated but also the logo. Website has received 18,000 visits in 2025.

Weaknesses

Although a mentoring plan is ready, it was not successful in the first call. The Research Sub-directorate is committed to encouraging research staff to participate when approved by the Board of Trustees.

Remarks

Creation of an outreach team.

Establishment of Deputy Director roles (Impact, Governance, and Research)

Regarding impact, in 2025, ICRA accumulated 25 citations in legislation, won 5 awards/recognitions, and participated in 11 expert committees. As for communication and outreach, ICRA gained 1,395 followers, participated in 46 dissemination events, and appeared 61 times in the national press.

Renewal of the communication department and approval of the 2025–2029 Communication Plan by the Board of Trustees:

- Renewal of the logo and institutional image.
- Creation of our YouTube channel (@icrawater), promotional video of our Institute, and a presentation deck detailing our activities for the current year.
- Enhancement of ICRA's social media presence (LinkedIn, Instagram, etc.)

2.5. Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium-term changed?

ICRA's current priorities are to comply with the renewed Strategic Plan through the co-development of the Action Plan together with administrative and research staff. This involves becoming a more open center, more connected to society, and at the same time fostering greater unity among staff by sharing common goals.

In line with ICRA's HRS4R Action Plan (2022–2025 period), the future strategy will focus on ensuring the continuity and/or expanding the scope of the planned actions, adapting them to the evolving needs of both the staff and the Institute. The circumstances influencing the implementation of the Action Plan do not require any shift in core priorities or principal strategy. This self-assessment report incorporates a revised action plan for the coming years, reflecting both the current status of ongoing actions (including agreed updates or expansions) and the new actions.

2.6. Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates changed and, as such, have had an impact on your strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers?

Although significant changes have occurred within our organization, they have positively impacted and reshaped our implementation strategy for the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Following the appointment of a new Director, our institute has embarked on an ambitious growth and continuous improvement initiative aimed at establishing the center as a leading benchmark in research excellence. While our core commitment to the European Charter remains unchanged, this strategic leadership shift has prompted a proactive evolution in how we implement and embed these principles into our day-to-day operations.

Specifically, the new directorate has driven key enhancements aligned with the Charter's recommendations on public engagement, transparency, and working conditions. Additionally, to support career growth and progression in science, a career promotion from R3 to R4 was secured, which is notoriously difficult to achieve in the public sector.

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

One of the Institute's main objectives is to achieve the highest level of fulfilment for the indicators set out in the Programme Contract approved by the Government of Catalonia, which serves as a multi-year planning and funding instrument. It is structured around five axes (organizational, administrative, and economic; internationalization; transfer; promotion and visibility; evaluation and impact), with indicators for each block that allow for an annual assessment of compliance. This will enable talent attraction and retention, enhance our impact, and increase our capacity to attract projects, among other benefits.

It should be noted that if the new collective agreement for the Catalan research sector is approved, we will need to adapt our regulations to align with it.

3. ACTION PLAN 2026 - 2029

The action plan is committed to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. The ICRA working group has defined the following action plan in accordance with the current implementation progress and feedback gathered from those in charge of developing and deploying each action.

Thus, the main strategic lines of actions are as follows:

- Enhancing Transparency, Accessibility, and Inclusivity by translating of all internal rules and regulations into English to ensure non-discrimination, foster an inclusive working environment, and lower integration barriers for international researchers and by restructuring and reorganizing the institutional SharePoint intranet to make internal policies, templates, and essential information easily navigable and accessible for all staff.
- Strengthening Onboarding and Welcome Processes to guarantee a uniform, high-quality, and useful welcoming experience for all newly recruited personnel from day one.
- Fostering Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practices.
- Continuously enhancing our societal presence / public engagement
- Continuously improving career development opportunities



ICRA¹⁴

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I. ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS							
ACTION Nr.	EURAXESS platform Nr.	C&C PRINCIPLE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME	INDICATOR	CURRENT STATUS
1	19	17. STABILITY AND PERMANENCE OF EMPLOYMENT 12 CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	Updating the diagram of Career Path	DIR + WGHR+ Board of Trustees	2022 Q2	Deliverable: Diagram of Career Path document Deliverable: Professional Classification	Extended
2	20	31. RECRUITMENT 34. TRANSPARENCY	Define the general HR policy	DIR + HR	2022 Q2	Deliverable: General HR policy document	Completed
3	21	4. PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE 13. RECOGNITION OF THE PROFESSION 15. RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT 16. WORKING CONDITIONS 17. STABILITY AND PERMANENCE OF EMPLOYMENT 20. CAREER DEVELOPMENT 22. ACCESS TO RESEARCH TRAINING AND CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT 28. EVALUATION/APPRaisal SYSTEMS	Updating Strategic Plan 2021-2030	DIR+ Board of Trustees	2020 Q3 2021 Q2 2022 Q2 2024 Q4 2026 Q4	Deliverable: Strategic Plan Document 2024 -2029	Completed and Updated
4	22	2. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES 14. NON- DISCRIMINATION 19. GENDER BALANCE 31. RECRUITMENT 33. SELECTION 34. TRANSPARENCY	Design an Equality Gender Plan 2022-2025	DIR + HR	2022 Q1 2026 Q4	Deliverable: Equality Gender Plan document 2026 -2030	Completed and Updated
5	23	3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 16. WORKING CONDITIONS	ICRA'S GREEN CHARTER	DIR+ GCC	2022 Q3	Deliverable: ICRA's GREEN CHARTER document	Completed
22	40	1. RESEARCH FREEDOM 2. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES 32. CO-AUTORSHIP 37. SUPERVISION AND MANAGERIAL DUTIES	Rollout, awareness, and implementation of the ICRA Research Integrity Committee	Research Integrity Committee	2027 Q4	1 annual workshop/seminar on Research Integrity and Good Scientific Practices organized	NEW

II. RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION							
Action Nr.	EURAXESS Nr.	C&C PRINCIPLE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME	INDICATOR	CURRENT STATUS
6	24	2. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES 3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 16. WORKING CONDITIONS	Develop a new Welcome Manual	WGHR + HR	2022 Q4	Deliverable: Welcome manual document	Completed and Updated
7	25	21. VALUE OF MOBILITY 31. RECRUITMENT 33. SELECTION	Giving guidance and administrative support in foreigner procedures for foreign researchers who join ICRA as employees and their immediate family. (Specialized external services)	DIR + HR	2022 Q1	Number of services provided per year	Extended
8	26	3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 16. WORKING CONDITIONS 34. TRANSPARENCY	Director's welcome meeting	DIR+HR	2022 Q4	Number of personnel recruited monthly Number of meetings held per month	Obsolete action Updated in actions no. 35 and 36
18	35	3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 16. WORKING CONDITIONS 34. TRANSPARENCY	Develop a checklist covering everything that needs to be shown/taught to new staff throughout their first day.	HR+PTS	2027 Q2	Deliverable: Onboarding Checklist	NEW
19	36	3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 16. WORKING CONDITIONS 34. TRANSPARENCY	Regular meetings between the Director and postdoctoral and predoctoral researchers for feedback	DIR	On going	Number of meetings held per year	NEW

III. WORKING CONDITIONS							
ACTION Nr. & EURAXESS platform Nr.		C&C PRINCIPLE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME	INDICATOR	CURRENT STATUS
9	27	5. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS	Update the employment conditions document	HR	2022 Q2	Deliverable: Instruction Document on Employment Conditions in the Spanish State	Completed
10	28	21. VALUE OF MOBILITY	Update the Mobility Policy	WGHR	2023 Q1	Deliverable: Mobility Policy Document	Completed and Updated
11	29	16. WORKING CONDITIONS	Define Off-site working policy	DIR + Board of Trustees	2022 Q2	Deliverable: Off-site working policy document	Completed
12	30	3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 34. TRANSPARENCY	Create a general information point on Sharepoint Portal + reorganized	DIR + HR+ IT+ GM + SCT + ECOFIN	2028 Q1	Deliverable: Staff Portal Updated and reorganized (Sharepoint)	Extended
20	38	10. NON DISCRIMINATION 15. TRANSPARENCY (CODE) 24. WORKING CONDITIONS	Translation of internal regulations, policies, and key HR/administrative documentation into English	DIR + HR+ IT+ GM + SCT + ECOFIN	2028 Q1	% of internal policies and regulations translated and published on the website/Sharepoint (Sharepoint)	NEW
21	39	2. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES 3. PROFESSIONAL RESPONSIBILITY 24. WORKING CONDITIONS	Consolidation of the project risk assessment system through an internal application	PI	On going	% of research projects with completed risk assessments in the internal app	NEW

IV. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT							
ACTION Nr. & EURAXESS platform Nr.		C&C PRINCIPLE	ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	TIME FRAME	INDICATOR	CURRENT STATUS
13	31	12. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 22. ACCESS TO RESEARCH TRAINING AND CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT 23. ACCESS TO CAREER ADVICE	Annual conferences and workshops for doctoral and postdoctoral students (Career in Science)	PI + RDI	Q2 & yearly	Agenda Number of conferences/workshops Number of attendees	Completed
14	32	12. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 20. CAREER DEVELOPMENT 22. ACCESS TO RESEARCH TRAINING AND CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT	Training for Principal Investigators	DIR + RH	Q4 & yearly	Agenda Number of attendees	Completed
15	33	12. CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT 20. CAREER DEVELOPMENT 23. ACCESS TO CAREER ADVICE	Update the mentoring program	DIR + RH + WGHR	2023 Q2 2027 Q1	Deliverable: Mentoring Plan Document	Work in Progress
16	34	8. DISSEMINATION, EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS 9. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT 20. CAREER DEVELOPMENT	Organise communication activities	DIR+ PI+Outreach	Q1 to Q4& yearly	Number of events Number of attendees	Completed
17	35	8. DISSEMINATION, EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS 9. PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT 20. CAREER DEVELOPMENT 34. TRANSPARENCY	Develop a new ICRA website and being more active on social media	DIR + Communication	2023 Q1	Deliverable: New ICRA website Number of website visits Number of social media followers	Extended



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Generalitat
de Catalunya

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CERCA
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de Catalunya

4. IMPLEMENTATION

General overview of the implementation process

During 2021, a new HRS4R working group was created specifically to monitor the Action Plan 2022-2025 and includes members from different research groups in order to share different points of view, opinions and involve the research community in the implementation.

They usually meet twice a year and ask the responsible department for updated data in order to compile it.

Currently, the HRS4R working group is composed of the following members:

PROFESSIONAL POSITION	RESEARCHERS CLASSIFICATION
Director	
Deputy Director for Governance	
General Manager	
Human Resources	
Principal Investigator – Senior Group Leader	R4
Principal Investigator – Senior Group Leader	R4
Principal Investigator – Senior Group Leader	R4
Investigator - Junior Group Leader	R3
Postdoctoral Researcher	R2
Predocctoral Researcher	R1
Predocctoral Researcher	R1
Executive Personal Assistant	
There is a total of 6 women and 6 men.	

How have you prepared the internal review?

ICRA has been carried out dynamic meetings twice a year with the working group where the members have been following the implementation of the plan and updated/modified several actions based on the organization's new needs. The working group are represented as follows: Director, Deputy Director for Governance, General Manager, Head of Human Resources, Researchers from R1 to R4. However, the renewal was set for the summer, and with holidays just around the corner, they decided to hold an extraordinary meeting in September to complete it together.

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

The research community is deeply involved in the constant implementation process, as well as high level representatives of the institution. By forming a working group from different categories and backgrounds has allowed to share opinions and suggestions to address the implementation of the actions in the best way. Moreover, nearly all departments are responsible for the execution of actions.

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

ICRA's Direction with the support of the HRS4R working group is the responsible of overseeing progress. The working group have met twice a year approximately to follow up the implementation process of the Action Plan.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HR Excellence in Research award process? For example, is the HR Excellence in Research award recognised in the organisation's research strategy or overarching HR policy?

ICRA strategies and policies are fully aligned with the HRS4R.

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

The action plan establishes that for each action is defined which department or individuals are responsible for its implementation. So, in the working group meetings they have evaluated the progress of the actions, determined the reason why the actions have not been implemented or developed, and discussed how to update the action to ensure it benefits both the organization and the staff.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?

The progress of the Action Plan is monitoring by the HRS4R working group using an excel file which is divided into four thematic areas such as: Ethical and Professional Aspects, Recruitment and Selection, Working Conditions and Training and Development. These areas include all the actions, timeframe (in quarters), department in charge, key performance indicators and status (new, work in progress, extended, completed). As the actions are implemented/updated, the status is updated.

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

The progress of the action plan is monitored by the HRS4R working group. Each action is measured with at least one indicator (deliverable document, agenda, number of events, number of attendees, etc). There is a HRS4R section on Sharepoint where the documents supporting the progress of the actions must be uploaded and saved. All these documents are available for all ICRA staff.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?

The working group meets annually, and tracking progress this way has worked very well. Therefore, we will continue with this approach.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process

ICRA has significantly improved communication between research and administrative staff. The director has been highly involved in promoting activities and sharing common goals that benefit everyone (such as the Programme Contract). The new deputy directorates also allow for more fluid communication. Furthermore, with the new communication plan, the restructuring of the communication department, and the creation of the outreach team, ICRA is more visible than ever.

The working group believes that—both as a center and as a monitoring group for the HR Excellence in Research award—we can continue to improve, but we are making good progress.



Case number: 2018ES349819

Name Organisation under review: Catalan Institute for Water Research (ICRA)

Organisation's contact details: Emili Grahit 101, H2O Building, Research and Innovation Park of the University of Girona, Girona, 17003

