

European HRS4R award

The human resources strategy
for researchers at Université Côte D'Azur



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> Presentation of Université Côte d'Azur

Université Côte d'Azur is a multidisciplinary institution that unites 17 major academic centers around the historic university core. The status of experimental university allows it to bridge the gaps between education, research, and innovation, and be more agile and pro-active by providing increased autonomy to its components and 17 members. Recognized as an Initiative of Excellence (Idex) by an international jury, Université Côte d'Azur now ranks among the top 10 research-intensive universities in France.

Université Côte d'Azur has 117 research units working in the fields of fundamental and applied sciences, life and health sciences, and human and social sciences. This represents more than 4,000 individuals involved in research, including 960 teaching and research staff (faculty).



INSTITUTION



Initiative of Excellence
(IDEX) since 2016



Interdisciplinary Institute
of Artificial Intelligence



European University

4.600
permanent staff

including 1,600 faculty,
1,200 administrative staff plus
around 1,800 lecturers and fellow
at CNRS, INSERM, OCA, INRIA,
INRAE, etc.

30 200
students

including 360 doctoral
students

19
campuses

spread over the departments
of the Alpes-Maritimes and the Var



> Our HR policy for HRS4R

To build the foundations of a university of excellence, human-centered and responsible, the president of Université Côte d'Azur elected in January 2020 decided to appoint three Vice-Presidents within the governance team to support the well-being of the entire staff: one for HR and organizational development, one for social policy, equality, and diversity, and one to supervise the disability policy. These three Vice-Presidents reflect Université Côte d'Azur's desire to place the personal development, inclusion and well-being of women and men at the heart of the institution's HR strategy.

The human resources policy has led to the implementation of several strategic projects (creation of a transformation and change management unit, reorganisation of the HR chain, digitalization of the recruitment process, deployment of teleworking, a comprehensive quality of work life (QWL) initiative, a gender equality action plan, and a disability master plan, agreement with FIPHP (Fund for the integration of disabled persons in the public service) adaption of specific individual needs) etc.

Université Côte d'Azur is striving to rethink and transform the HR function. Instead of an HR function exclusively focused on «personnel management» with the proven administrative expertise that is needed to make any organization function properly, it will expand its roles and missions to become a strategic partner, an agent of organizational transformation, committed to social action, that guarantees equal opportunities empowering work environment and is attentive to the interests of individuals by participating in the social dialogue.

Université Côte d'Azur initiative

to obtain the European HR Excellence in Research award

In June 2020, Université Côte d'Azur together with the Côte d'Azur Observatory decided to launch the European HRS4R "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers" process, which leads to the "HR Excellence in Research" award granted by the European Commission. Université Côte d'Azur is seeking to obtain this award as part of its quality improvement process because it considers that the award can be a major asset for the university and its community of researchers and for all those involved in research.

The process for applying for this award requires us to conduct an in-depth assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of our practices with respect to the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and to implement an action plan designed to strengthen HR excellence for research.

This process can only achieve its purpose if teaching and research staff members are involved at every stage, if we take ownership of the process and if we prepare and develop it gradually.

We have therefore chosen to engage a wide range of stakeholders at every step of the HRS4R process. First, a survey was carried out within the Université Côte d'Azur community to identify priority themes. The next step was to form 4 working groups composed of doctoral students, teaching and research staff, subject-matter experts, and members of governance. During the meetings they held, they discussed the strengths and weaknesses identified by the survey and proposed levers for improvement on the themes of ethics, recruitment and career development, working conditions, and doctoral supervision.

> What is to be gained?

The HRS4R award is a major achievement for all staff involved in research

- Continuous improvement of working conditions
- Competency and career development
- Attractiveness and visibility of the university
- European funding



Our strengths and weaknesses

Université Côte d'Azur has invested significant resources that go beyond what the law requires to provide support to researchers in dealing with the ethical aspects that govern their activity. UCA also has a structured intellectual property policy that governs issues relating to copyright, patent filing, software protection, technology maturation and transfer to society. Our efforts will now focus on disseminating the information and training researchers by creating adapted and innovative resources. As regards the recruitment and career development of research staff, we wish to provide better support to teaching & research staff, recognize their commitment in their different assignments and improve their working conditions on an ongoing basis. Finally, doctoral supervision and support for doctoral students is priority.

> Priority objectives for HRS4R

This allowed us to identify 9 priority objectives

- 1 Promote respect for research ethics and scientific integrity principles** by offering researchers support in their practices and awareness-raising tools.
- 2 Increase support for knowledge transfer and scientific outreach** by increasing the visibility and dissemination of scientific knowledge.
- 3 Improve our recruitment process** from the advertisement of job openings to better orientation programs for new staff.
- 4 Provide better support for professional development** by offering a wide range of services and encouraging researchers to improve their skills at all stages of their careers.
- 5 Emphasize our inclusive policy** by preventing discrimination and providing better access to support initiatives.
- 6 Improve the environment and working conditions of researchers** by developing a wider approach to quality of work life.
- 7 Prevent occupational risks** by creating counseling and support systems.
- 8 Improve the quality of doctoral supervision** by providing training and support.
- 9 Strengthen our training policy for doctoral students and researchers** by offering professional certifications to help them develop their skills.

> The action plan

The action plan presents 66 actions steered by the persons responsible for the priority objectives, with the support of the management departments. An indicator and a time frame have been defined for each action.

These actions supervised by governance are fully in line with the HR and research strategy of Université Côte d'Azur, which is currently being implemented in-house.

Actions shared with OCA were identified in the presentation of the action plan.

Actions		Concerned criteria	Provisional date start	Provisional date 1st deliverable	Indicator
1 - Promote respect for research ethics and scientific integrity principles					
1.1	Replace the current Ethics Committee for Non-Interventional Research (CERNI) by a Research Ethics Committee (CER) *	1,2	sept-21	jan-22	CER is created and its missions are communicated to the community
1.2	Create and lead a network of ethics committees with partners of Université Côte d'Azur, the network of universities (French or foreign) *	1,2	oct-21	jan-24	The network is created and meetings are organized at regular intervals
1.3	Create and update a website dedicated to ethical and professional conduct	1,2	jan-21	dec-22	The website is created and accessible to the community
1.4	Appoint an ethics/alert officer	10,23,24,1,2	nov-21	mar-22	The ethics/alert officer is appointed
1.5	Provide training on research ethics (tutorial videos) *	2,3,5,6	jan-22	dec-24	Tutorial videos are created and are accessible to the community
1.6	Organize "Let's talk about ethics" workshops within research units on themes such as intellectual property, ethical and professional conduct, data ownership, partnerships and research dissemination *	1,2,3,5,6,8	janv-22	jul-26	Workshops are offered and held in research units.
1.7	Create a guide presenting the principles of ethics, scientific integrity, and professional conduct and disseminate it *	2	jan-22	jun-23	A guide for ethics, scientific integrity, and professional conduct is developed and is accessible to the community
1.8	Join the federation of ethics committees	2	oct-21	oct-21	Membership in the federation is obtained
1.9	Draw up a charter that defines each discipline's criteria for contributing to a publication as an author	2,5,31,32,37	jan 22	jun-23	The charter is drafted and is accessible to the community
1.10	Recommend the MOOC on data protection (CNIL)	5,7,23	jan-22	jun-22	Information about MOOCs is communicated on the Internet and by Email

ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS

Actions		Concerned criteria	Provisional date start	Provisional date 1st deliverable	Indicator
2- Increase support for research transfer and scientific mediation					
2.1	Set up a network of coordinators in charge of knowledge transfer, innovation and partnership to assist researchers connected with CNRS. *	2,3,4, 5,6,8	oct-21	dec-22	A network of coordinators for the UCA community is created, their assignments are formally defined and communicated to the community
2.2	Benchmark platforms listing national and international calls for proposals ²	2,3, 4,5,	jan-22	dec-22	Assessment and analysis of the benchmark study
2.3	Create a platform that gives access to all the open calls for proposals and allows keyword searches (by discipline, date open and closed, funding provided, issuing organization, etc.) and sends alerts ^{*2}	2,3, 4,5,	jun-22	dec-25	The specifications are defined and the platform is created
2.4	Update information on the website regarding research and knowledge transfer by including the regulatory texts and contracts applicable to research projects	4, 5,6, 8,25	jan-22	dec-22	The website is updated
2.5	Schedule regular meetings for research units or Graduate Schools (EURs) with DRVI and/ or the research and innovation governance team	4,6	jan-22	dec-22	Annual meetings are scheduled
2.6	Encourage the use of online timesheets (cf. European projects) in Ohris	6	jan-22	dec-25	Teaching & research staff are encouraged to enter their timesheets on Ohris
2.7	Provide more visibility to the major advances in research and innovation (success stories) within UCA	5,9,8	jun-22	dec-23	Video clips presenting projects completed are accessible to the community
2.8	Simplify and secure access through the UCA website to tools that promote open science	8,9	apr-22	dec-24	The open science research page is created on the UCA website
2.9	Increase the dissemination of research work on the Internet	8,9	jan-25	jun-26	Number of articles published on research dissemination websites (HAL SHS, Revel, Cairn, etc.)
2.10	Develop calls for proposals to fund scientific outreach	9	jun-22	dec-24	Number of calls for proposals funded for scientific outreach projects
2.11	Develop participatory research projects	9,8	mar-22	jun-23	Number of participatory research projects submitted to UCA
2.12	Obtain the "Science with and for society" award (regional network that includes national research institutions)	9	mar-22	jun-22	The award is obtained

ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS

Actions	Concerned criteria	Provisional date start	1st deliverable	Indicator
2.13 Increase the visibility of actions coordinated by the scientific and technical culture unit	9	mar-22	dec-22	Communication actions are carried out to highlight the actions of the scientific and technical culture unit
2.14 Offer training in scientific outreach and public communication	38, 39	early 2024	sept-27	Training programs on scientific outreach and public communication are organized
2.15 Create a network of science and society coordinators from each laboratory in charge of outreach and communication	8,9	jun-22	dec-24	A network is formed with the science outreach coordinators of each laboratory (their assignments were formally defined and communicated to the community)

3- Improve the recruitment process				
3.1 Provide a recruitment toolkit that complies with OTMR criteria and is adapted to the different contracts covered by the Research Programming Law (junior professor chairs, fixed-term contracts for specific assignments, and postdoctoral contracts) *	12,13,14, 21, 15, 16,25, 26	jan-22	dec-24	A toolkit is created to help recruit researchers and is accessible to the community
3.2 Use ATS (Assistant Tracking System) recruitment software to improve compliance with OTMR criteria *	12,13, 14,15	jan-22	jun-23	The software is deployed
3.3 Disseminate the cofund BoostUrCareer recruitment kit (developed for doctoral students) within the community	13,14, 15,26, 29	jan-22	jun-22	The cofund recruitment kit is distributed and is accessible to the community
3.4 Advertise more teaching & research openings in English (on academic networks, social networks, Euraxess, INOMICS, etc.)	12,13, 14,15	jan-22	dec-25	A process is deployed for advertising teaching & research openings in English
3.5 Help recruitment committees implement OTMR criteria (open, transparent, merit-based recruitment) by updating the guide	12,14, 15,16	jun-22	dec-23	The recruitment guide is updated and is accessible to selection committees
3.6 Define new selection criteria other than bibliometric (teaching, supervision, administrative commitment, collaboration, participation in scientific outreach, mobility, etc.)	14,16, 17, 18, 19,20, 29	dec-22	dec-25	A list of criteria is proposed by the working groups
4- Provide better support for professional development				
4.1 Encourage the incoming and outgoing mobility of permanent researchers by clarifying and promoting the regulatory mobility possibilities offered	18,19 29	dec-22	dec-25	Web pages dedicated to mobility are created
4.2 Develop communication material on the possibilities of access to international mobility initiatives (Ulysseus, Pause program, etc.)	18,29	dec-22	dec-25	Communication material regarding international mobility initiatives is created

Actions		Concerned criteria	Provisional date start	1st deliverable	Indicator	
4- Provide better support for professional development						
RECRUITMENT AND CAREER	4.3	Consider setting up a system to provide advice and support at key moments of a researcher's career	11,19 20,28, 30	dec-22	dec-24	A career development scheme to be experimented is proposed
	4.4	Create a single HR department for mobility and career development in charge of organizing career counseling and orientation interviews	11,19, 28,30, 37,40	jan-22	dec-25	A mobility and career development service is created
	4.5	Offer mobility and career development support to researchers with specific needs	10, 28, 30, 37	jan-22	dec-25	A support system is created
	4.6	Define new criteria for professional advancement other than bibliometric that ensure gender equality (teaching, supervision, administrative commitment, collaboration, participation in scientific outreach, mobility, etc.)	9, 11, 19,20, 28,30, 31, 37, 40,22	dec-22	dec-25	A list of criteria is proposed by the working groups
	4.7	Create a mentoring program to improve the integration and career development of newly recruited teaching & research staff	11, 22 28,30 27,37	jun-22	dec-24	A mentoring program is created and is accessible
	4.8	Create an online guide to explain the pay system (public service pay scales, profit-sharing bonus, how seniority is calculated, how to combine compensations, etc.)	20,22, 25,26, 37	jun-23	dec-25	An online pay guide is published
	4.9	Create "career development" training programs in collaboration with departments, research units and former elected members of the Academic Council and the National Council of Universities	11,28, 30	jun-22	dec-22	Career development training programs are created
	4.10	Create a working group to discuss how to help teaching & research staff find a balance between their different assignments	22,28 30,33 37	jun-22	dec-24	Methods to balance assignments are proposed by the working group
	5- Emphasize our inclusive policy					
	WORKING CONDITIONS AND ENVIRONMENT	5.1	Deploy the actions of the gender equality action plan and have them steered by a monitoring committee	27,10	jun-21	dec-24
5.2		Educate recruitment committees (for doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, teaching & research staff, administrators and assistants, etc.) about methods of recruitment without discrimination and unconscious bias	10,12, 13,14, 22	jan-22	dec-22	Information is disseminated and meetings are held with recruitment committees
5.3		Provide people with disabilities with better access to support initiatives such as Mob4all (for outgoing and incoming international mobility)	10,24	jun-22	dec-24	Assessment of the number of mobility assignments

Actions		Concerned criteria	Provisional date start	Provisional date 1st deliverable	Indicator
5- Emphasize our inclusive policy					
5.4	Appoint a racism and discrimination officer	10, 23, 24	jan-22	dec-22	A racism officer is appointed
5.5	Provide people with disabilities with better access to support initiatives such as disability doctoral fellowships (national, regional or institutional)	10,24	jun-22	dec-24	Assessment of the number of scholarships
5.6	Adapt the process for recruiting researchers (doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, teaching & research staff, administrators and assistants, etc.) to applicants with disabilities	10,12, 13,14	jan-22	jun-23	The recruitment process is adapted to candidates with disabilities
6- Improve the environment and working conditions of researchers					
6.1	Make an inventory of the scientific equipment of the different platforms, create a database of equipment and associated skills, and keep it updated*	23	dec-21	dec-23	A database of equipment and associated skills is created
6.2	Systematically provide workstations that meet the specific needs of researchers in their institution or for remote work	23,24, 10	jan-22	jun-23	Assessment of the improvements made
6.3	Improve access to digital resources for researchers with visual or hearing impairments	11,28, 30	jan-23	dec-27	Tools to improve digital accessibility are deployed
6.4	Extend access to remote work to third places or coworking spaces *	23,24	jan-22	dec-24	An online reservation platform for coworking spaces is created
6.5	Create spaces where the researcher community can meet and share practices linked with their profession *	10, 28, 30, 37	jan-22	dec-23	Spaces are created for interaction between researchers on key topics
6.6	Disseminate more widely the provisions of the right-to-disconnect charter	24,7	dec-22	dec-23	Communication actions are carried out about the right-to-disconnect charter
6.7	Find ways to provide placement in daycare centers or schools for UCA staff and in particular for incoming mobility staff *	24,7, 29	jun-23	dec-24	An analysis of daycare center placement needs for UCA is carried out and the criteria for access are defined
6.8	Boost the university's quality of work life (QWL) initiative for researchers by issuing QWL calls for proposals	24	jun-23	dec-25	A call for QWL proposals is issued to fund innovative initiatives put forward by researchers to improve well-being at work

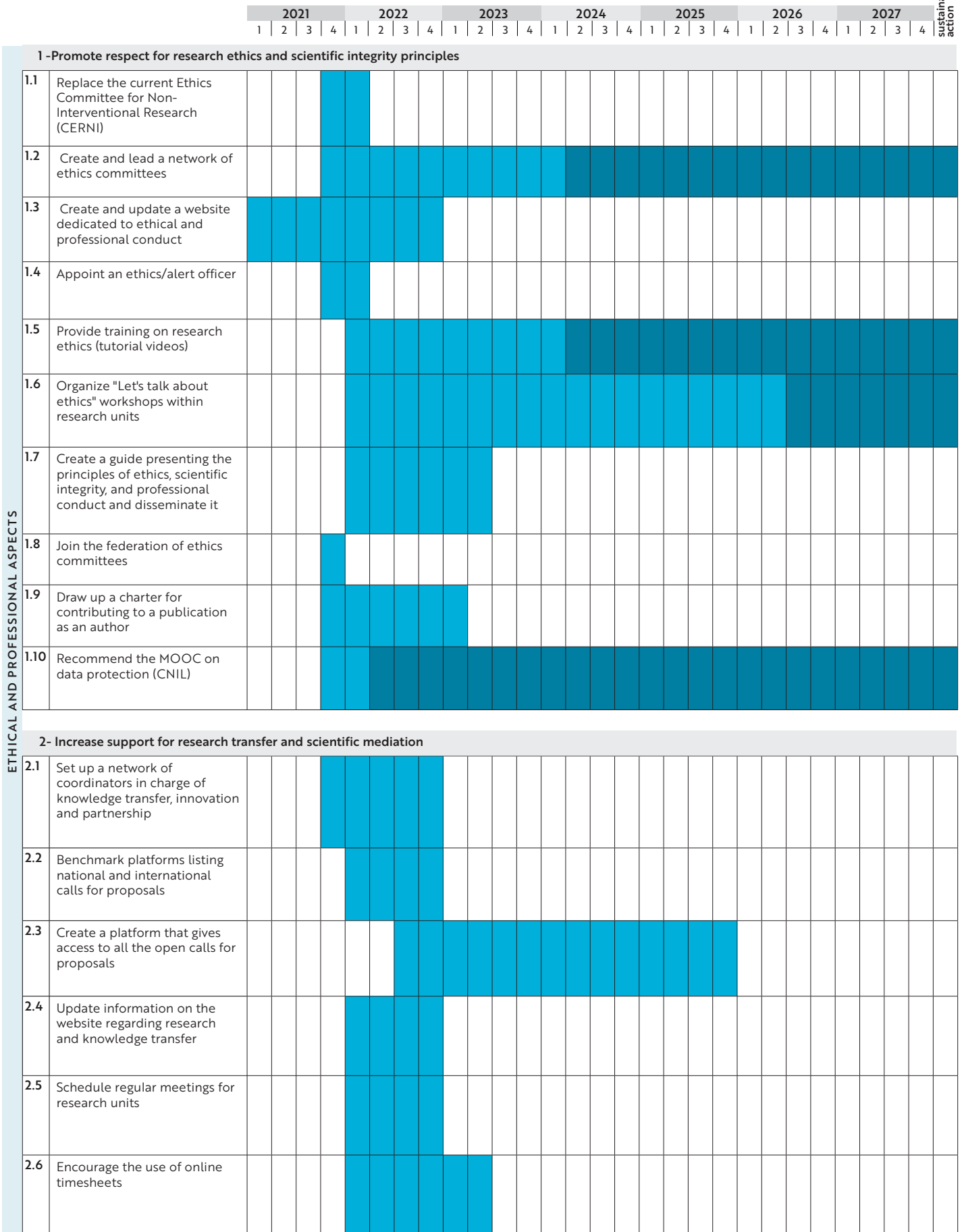
Actions	Concerned criteria	Provisional date start	Provisional date 1st deliverable	Indicator
7- Prevent occupational risks				
7.1 Acquire a unified digital system to improve the coordination of risk prevention actions and measures	7,23, 24	jun-22	dec-23	A digital tool is proposed by a working group
7.2 Find incentives for and means to support risk prevention and keep documents updated	7,23, 24	jun-22	dec-23	An action plan is produced by a working group
7.3 Create an occupational health and safety protection center for the university community in charge of harmonizing best practices and leading joint efforts *	23,7	jan-22	dec-22	An occupational health and safety center is created
7.4 Create a unit that provides counseling and support for individuals dealing with psychosocial risk/moral harassment and a unit in charge of preventing violence and discrimination, and of helping victims and witnesses *	7,34, 23,24	jan-22	dec-22	Units are created
7.5 Create a mediation center specialized in conflict management *	34,7, 24,36	jun-21	dec-24	A mediation center is created

8- Improve the quality of doctoral supervision				
8.1 Improve the training of doctoral supervisors (teaching & research staff recently promoted to supervise research (HDR), and doctoral co-supervisors with an exemption) *	36,37, 38,28	jan-23	dec-23	Assessment of the percentage of doctoral supervisors trained in doctoral supervision
8.2 Train doctoral supervisors in charge of doctoral students with disabilities *	10, 36, 37, 38	jun-22	dec-24	Assessment of the number of doctoral supervisors trained
8.3 Communicate more about the resources available to doctoral students, notably counseling and mentoring	36,37, 22,28	jun-22	jun-23	Communication actions are carried out about support systems available for doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows (mentoring, training programs, counseling, etc.)
9- Strengthen our training policy for doctoral students and researchers				
9.1 Organize a campaign to motivate researchers to acquire more training and develop their skills *	36,37, 38,28	jan-23	dec-23	A communication campaign is launched
9.2 Offer more academic and scientific training programs via current training programs or new professional certifications (BoostUrCareer) that increase employability and develop skills *	10, 36, 37, 38	jun-22	dec-24	Training courses are available
9.3 Offer more academic and scientific training programs via doctoral schools *	36,37, 22,28	jun-22	jun-23	Assessment of the number of training hours per doctoral school

* Action integrated by the OCA in its HRS4R action plan

² Subject to PIA4 funding

> Gantt chart



> Gantt chart

2021				2022				2023				2024				2025				2026				2027			
1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4

4- Provide better support for professional development	
4.1	Encourage the incoming and outgoing mobility of permanent researchers
4.2	Develop communication material on the possibilities of access to international mobility initiatives
4.3	Consider setting up a system to provide advice and support at key moments of a researcher's career
4.4	Create a single HR department for mobility and career development
4.5	Offer mobility and career development support to researchers with specific needs
4.6	Define new criteria for professional advancement other than bibliometric that ensure gender equality
4.7	Create a mentoring program career development of newly recruited teaching & research staff
4.8	Create an online guide to explain the pay system
4.9	Create "career development" training programs
4.10	Create a working group to discuss how to help teaching & research staff find a balance between their different assignments

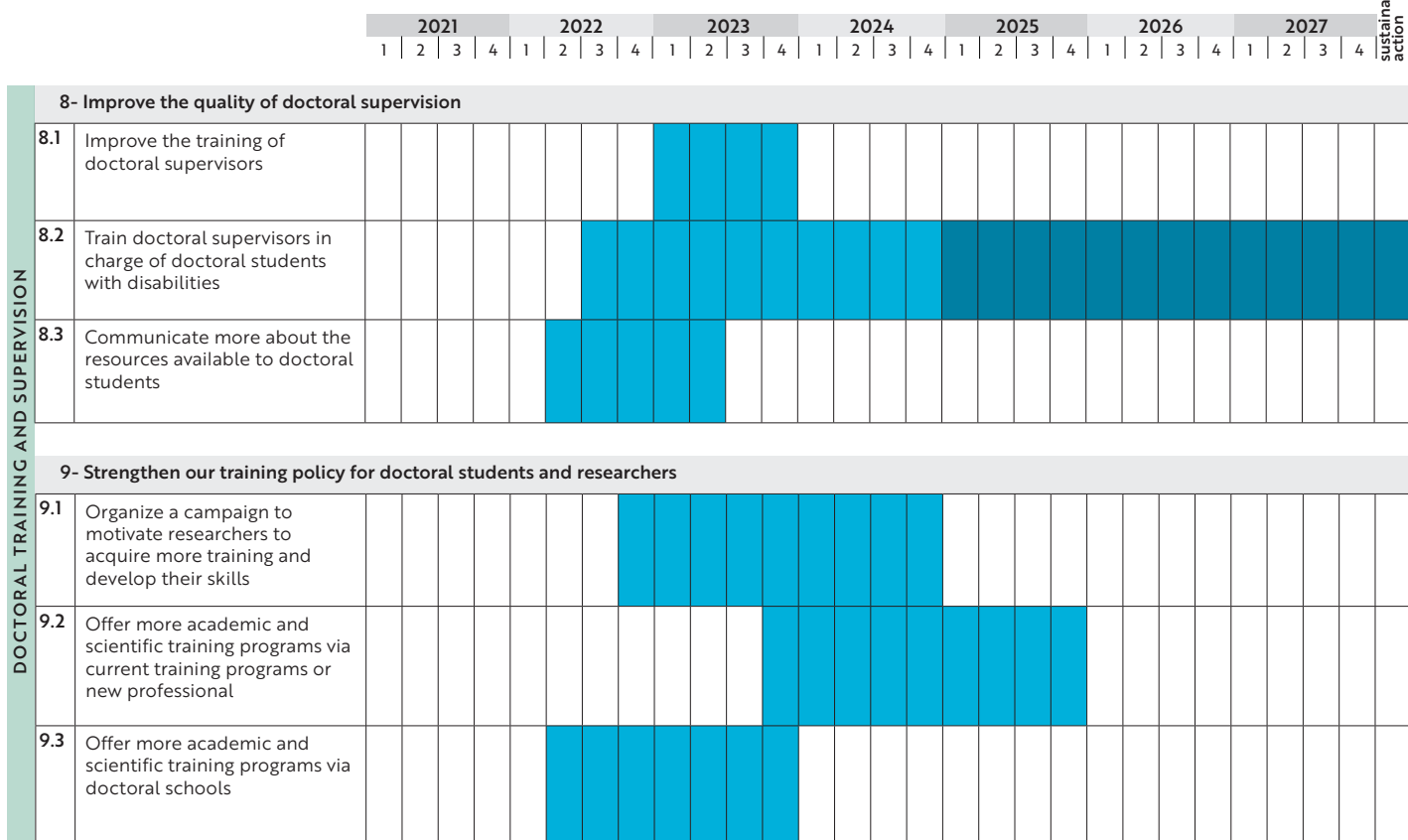
5- Emphasize our inclusive policy	
5.1	Deploy the actions of the gender equality action plan
5.2	Educate recruitment committees (for doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, teaching & research staff, administrators and assistants, etc.) about methods of recruitment without discrimination and unconscious bias
5.3	Provide people with disabilities with better access to support initiatives such as Mob4all (for outgoing and incoming international mobility)
5.4	Appoint a racism and discrimination officer
5.5	Provide people with disabilities with better access to support initiatives
5.6	Adapt the process for recruiting researchers

> Gantt chart

sustainable action

		2021				2022				2023				2024				2025				2026				2027			
		1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4
6- Improve the environment and working conditions of researchers																													
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> Gantt chart

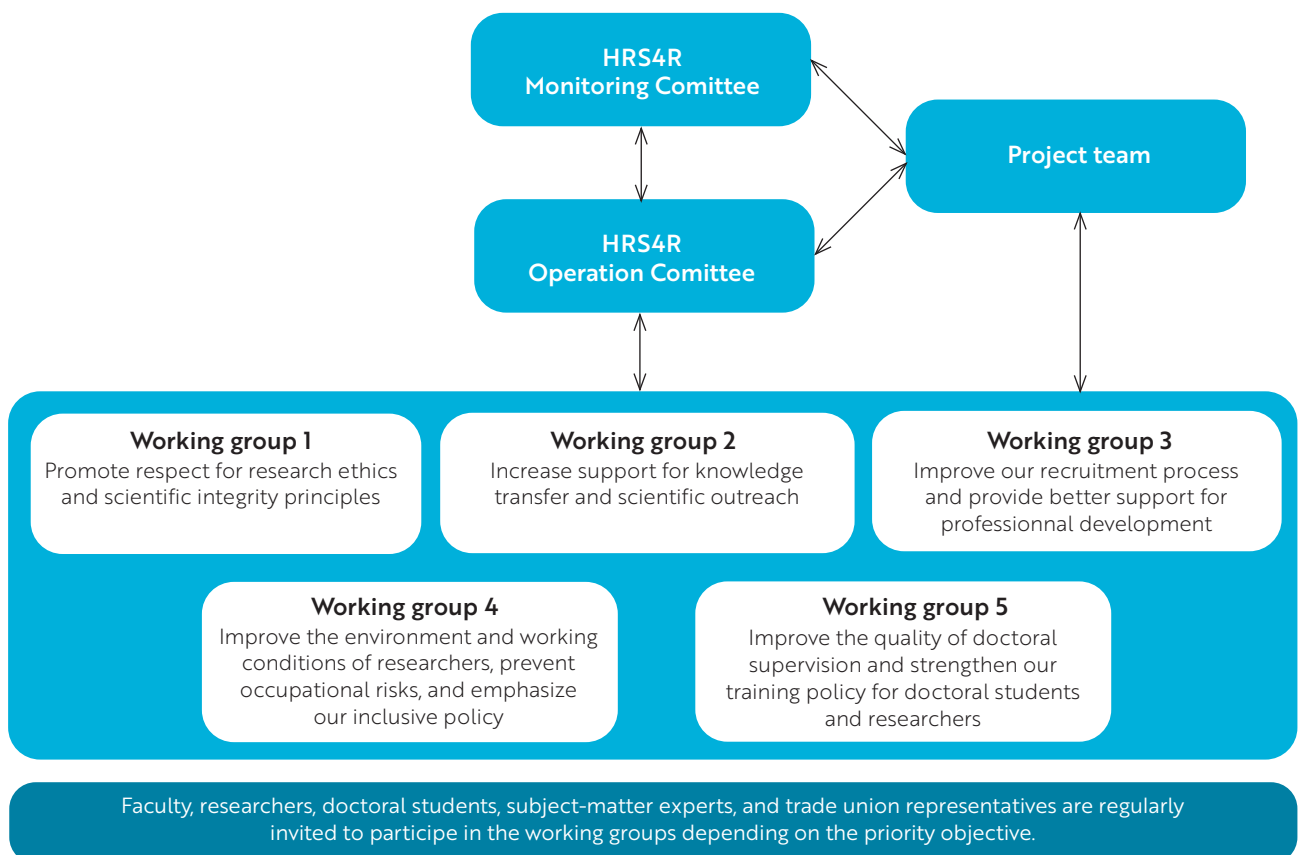


> Implementation and monitoring of the action plan

The action plan will be carried out in two main phases. The deadline for completing the first set of actions is set for the end of 2024. These actions are part of the strategies developed by the management departments, and they correspond to concrete measures implemented for researchers, which should motivate them to further engage in the process. Strategic actions that involve deeper changes to the system have been planned for after 2024.

Organization of the «implementation» phase

- A monitoring committee will oversee implementation.
- A project operational committee will be in charge of implementing the actions. It will include the members of the project team and the persons responsible for steering the 9 priority objectives.
- Working groups will be created to allow management departments, teachers-researchers, teaching & research staff and HRS4R officers from the national research organizations (EPST) to pool some of their actions.
- A project team will be responsible for supervising the organization of the project and helping with its implementation.
- An annual report will be presented to the academic council.



> Terms used

CNIL: French national data protection committee

CNU: National council of universities

DRH : Human Resources Department

DRVI: Research, valorization and innovation department

DU: Research Unit Director

EC: teaching & research staff

EPST: public scientific and technological institution

EUR: Graduate School

Galaxie : The ministry software for the management of teachers-researchers application

IDEX : «excellence initiative» national investment program

ITRF: Teaching & research administrators and assistants

LPR: research programming law

PIA: investment plan for the future

UMR: joint research unit attached to an EPST

GBV: sexual and gender-based violence

R1: first-level researcher (up to doctorate)

R2: recognized researcher (doctorate or equivalent not fully independent)

R3: senior researcher (independent researcher - leader, scientific coordinator of a project)

R4: principal investigator/lead researcher (eminent researcher in the field)



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