



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

**Human Resources Strategy for
Researchers (HRS4R)
3rd Action Plan
2022 – 2024**

June 30, 2022

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BACKGROUND

- In 2014 the Centre de Recerca en Economia Internacional (CREI) endorsed the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.
- Following this commitment, CREI started the process to participate in the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) initiative to make CREI a more attractive workplace for researchers at all levels.
- On November 26, 2015, after submitting its first HRS4R Action Plan (for the period 2015 – 2019), CREI received the HRS4R award from the European Commission.
- The first HRS4R Action Plan (for the period 2015 – 2019) was produced after carrying out an internal gap analysis, with the active involvement of all CREI researchers. This first action plan identified a number of key areas for change and further development.
- In 2018 CREI submitted the interim assessment and the OTM-R checklist to the HRS4R external assessors. After their review, the external assessors concluded that “The organization 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”.
- Currently CREI is preparing the renewal of the HRS4R award. CREI also has prepared the 3rd HRS4R Action Plan to be approved by the CREI Governing Board in June 2022. In light of the result of this renewal process, this 3rd HRS4R Action Plan might be consequently modified.

1. METHODOLOGY

At present CREI personnel consists of:

- 9 CREI Senior Researchers (one of them is also the CREI Director)
- 3 CREI Junior Researchers
- 1 CREI Associate Researcher (part-time dedication)
- 7 Research Assistants (*)
- 1 Business Manager
- 1 Research Projects Manager
- 2 Administrative Support Staff

(*) Whose contracts are linked to research grants and who, for this reason, do not belong to what we understand as “CREI structure”.

Due to the small size of CREI, we have continued with the approach followed in previous years, holding periodic meetings with all researchers and the Business Manager to analyze the implementation of the 2nd HRS4R Action Plan. The 3rd HRS4R Action Plan (2022 – 2024) is the result of our reflections on the actions that should be extended, and new actions to undertake to continue improving in the implementation of the HRS4R. The small size of CREI is an important factor to deal with when we plan the next steps.

2. FOLLOW-UP OF THE 2nd HRS4R ACTION PLAN

This is the visual summary of the current status of the proposed actions included in the 2nd HRS4R Action Plan:

COMPLETED
IN PROGRESS
NOT STARTED

Title action
Make an effort to attract female candidates (10)
Finish the “Guide for New Researchers” (1) (5) (24)
Continue exploring new ways to help researchers’ spouses access the local labor market (24)
Finish the analysis of financial conditions offered by other European and US institutions (26)
Finish the “Researcher Handbook” (24) (29)
Develop the CREI OTM-R policy (13)
Code of Conduct (2) (3) (34)
Working conditions (24)

We have included more details of the status of the different actions in the following table.

Title action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Action to be taken	New timing
Make an effort to attract female candidates. Action completed but it needs periodic update (10)	2021	Director / Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find new ways to increase women's participation in CREI activities. - Record women's participation in our internal reports (CREI recruitment report, CREI activities report, etc.). - Design internal procedures to ensure a gender perspective is taken into account in all CREI activities. 	The action is basically completed although it is advisable to monitor the evolution of female candidates at the different stages of the recruitment process as well as women' participation in CREI activities. [Included in action 1, see "3. 3 rd HRS4R Action Plan" below].	
Finish the "Guide for New Researchers" (1), (5), (24)	May 2018	Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finish the document. - Design internal procedures to review and periodically update its content. 	The document has been finished. It will be updated at least once a year (around June-July) to be provided to new CREI researchers.	
Continue exploring new ways to help researchers' spouses access the local labor market (24)	2019	Business Manager		CREI is a member of the "Dual Careers Network in Barcelona" program, which supports the career development of the partners of researchers at the centers participating in the program.	

Title action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Action to be taken	New timing
Finish the analysis of financial conditions offered by other European and US institutions (26)	December 2019	Business Manager	- Finish the document.		
Finish the “Researcher Handbook” (24), (29)	December 2018	Business Manager	- Finish the document and publish it.	The CREI Researcher Handbook will be updated regularly and, at least, once a year.	
Develop the CREI OTM-R policy (13)	2021	Business Manager	- Approve the CREI OTM-R policy and make it public through the CREI website. - Design internal procedures to apply the CREI OTM-R policy.		
Code of Conduct (2), (3), (34)	2021	Business Manager	- Design a CREI Code of Conduct aligned with the principles of the C&C. - Formal approval of this Code of Conduct. - Implementation of the Code of Conduct along the CREI organization.	Action to be extended. Development and implementation of the CERCA Code of Conduct: creating a program of periodical internal reviews, formalizing and implementing the CREI Open Data Policy, etc.	06/2023

Title action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Action to be taken	New timing
Working conditions (24)	2021	Business Manager	- Improve researchers' working conditions to make CREI a more attractive employer and attract and retain researcher talent. Explore the implementation of a Flexible Remuneration Plan.	In December 2021 the CREI Governing Board approved the implementation of a Flexible Remuneration Plan. The implementation will have to be carried out in the following months.	09/2022

3. 3rd HRS4R ACTION PLAN

As shown in the table above, some actions from the 2nd Action Plan need to be extended to the 3rd Action Plan as their content has been expanded.

Having discussed the results of the 1st and 2nd HRS4R Action Plans, the actions to carry out during the 3rd HRS4R Action Plan consist of the extension of 2 actions from the 2nd Action Plan and 8 new actions:

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action
1	(10) (35)	<p>Monitor the implemented actions, establishing a periodical review and continuous improvement procedure</p> <p>Design and implementation of a KPI Scorecard. Monitor the evolution of female candidates at the different stages of the recruitment process as well as women’s participation in CREI activities. This KPI Scorecard shall be updated with the actions included in the subsequent HRS4R Action Plans.</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 06/2023</p>
2	(2), (3), (34)	<p>(Extended action from 2nd HRS4R Action Plan)</p> <p>Development and implementation of the CERCA Code of Conduct: creating a program of periodical internal reviews, formalizing and implementing the CREI Open Data Policy, etc.</p> <p>Documentation and KPI</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Director / Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 06/2023</p>
3	(3), (6), (9)	<p>Impact analysis: we aim to analyze the impact of our research, its effects on society and policy makers’ decisions, and to assess how we can improve our communication of these impacts to the wider public.</p> <p>Documentation and KPI</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 12/2023</p>

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action
4	(4)	<p>Improving internal communication of CREI goals, planning and achievement</p> <p>Documentation and KPI</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Director / Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 12/2022</p>
5	(12), (13), (14), (15), (16)	<p>Develop the quality control system of the CREI OTM-R Policy, designing regular review and continuous improvement procedures</p> <p>Documentation and KPI</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Recruitment Chair and Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 09/2022</p>
6	(24), (26)	<p>(Extended action from 2nd HRS4R Action Plan)</p> <p>Working conditions. Analyze new ways of improving working conditions for CREI researchers.</p> <p>Implementation of a Flexible Remuneration Plan. Exploration of other new ways of improving working conditions.</p> <p>Documentation and KPI</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Director / Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 09/2022</p>
7	(26)	<p>Systematize periodic reports on financial conditions offered by other European and US research institutions</p> <p>The aim of this action is to standardize these periodic reports to analyze periodically the evolution of their content.</p> <p>Internal report</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 09/2022</p>

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action
8	(35)	<p>Clarify and improve CREI's corporate governance, formalizing the areas and procedures of researchers' involvement in institutional decision-making, establishing the rules that regulate decisions, and the responsibilities of the different governance bodies (CREI Governing Board, CREI Director, CREI Business Manager, assembly of CREI researchers, etc.)</p> <p>Documentation</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Director and Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 06/2023</p>
9	(34), (35), (36), (37), (38), (39), (40)	<p>Feedback questionnaire gauging researchers' satisfaction with the HRS4R actions carried out up to now, including the Mentoring Program, and soliciting their suggestions for its improvement</p> <p>The aim of this questionnaire is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quantify researchers' satisfaction with the implementation of HRS4R. - Obtain feedback on concerns and aspects to take into consideration in the final document of the 3rd HRS4R Action Plan. <p>This survey has to be one of the first actions of the 3rd HRS4R Action Plan to implement.</p> <p>Questionnaire</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Director and Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 06/2022</p>
10	(35), (38), (39)	<p>Study of possibilities for extending the Training and Development Program to CREI researchers at all career stages. In particular, we will consider avenues for CREI to promote and support researchers' attendance at academic meetings and conferences where external researchers present their ongoing work, as well as exchange visits between CREI and leading international research institutions</p> <p>Internal report</p> <p>It will be necessary to analyze the budgetary impact of the proposed actions.</p> <p>Responsible Unit: Business Manager</p> <p>Timing: 06/2023</p>