



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

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

October 10, 2023

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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 the 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”.
- On June 30, 2022, the CREI Governing Board approved the 3<sup>rd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan.
- This plan has been improved in light of the recommendations from the assessors involved in the HRS4R renewal process, carried out from June to October 2023.

## **1. METHODOLOGY**

At present, CREI personnel consists of:

- 10 CREI Senior Researchers (one of them is also the CREI Director)
- 3 CREI Junior Researchers
- 7 Research Assistants
- 1 Business Manager
- 1 Research Project Manager
- 2 Administrative Support Staff

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 2<sup>nd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan. The 3<sup>rd</sup> 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 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 2<sup>nd</sup> HRS4R ACTION PLAN

This is the visual summary of the current status of the proposed actions included in the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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.

Action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Actions to be taken	New timing
<b>Make an effort to attract female candidates. Action completed but it needs periodic update (10)</b>	2021	Director / Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Find new ways to increase women's participation in CREI activities.</li> <li>- Record women's participation in our internal reports (CREI recruitment report, CREI activities report, etc.).</li> <li>- Design internal procedures to ensure a gender perspective is taken into account in all CREI activities.</li> </ul>	<p>- A special committee was created to develop actions to increase the participation of women in CREI activities.</p> <p>One of the most successful actions was to identify women candidates who were excellent researchers and in the early stages of their careers. These women researchers were invited to give a seminar at CREI and participate in the annual recruitment process.</p> <p>Following the recommendations from the special committee, female candidates are interviewed by women scholars in affiliated institutions (UPF, Barcelona School of Economics), promoting the visibility of women in the CREI community when we carry out the annual recruitment process. The aim is that female candidates get to know women researchers who belong to the CREI community.</p> <p>As a result of this set of actions, we have hired two women researchers since 2018.</p> <p>- We consider gender in recruitment statistics so we can identify any deviation due to this variable. Following the trend of previous years, in the last recruitment campaign only 26% of the applications were from women researchers. Nevertheless, we increased the proportion of women invited to give a seminar at CREI to 33%, 50% of the final job offers were for women researchers (see Appendix 1).</p>	Continuous action

Action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Actions to be taken	New timing
				<p>- In 2022 CREI started recording women’s participation in its conferences and seminars (see Appendix 2). Although the percentage of women has increased, we have to keep on working to improve this ratio.</p> <p>- In May 2023 all CREI employees attended a training session entitled “Sexual Harassment in Academia: Prevention and Resolution”.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continue the work of the special committee to identify female candidates and female researchers to be invited to CREI activities.</li> <li>- Continue recording the gender statistics on recruitment and CREI activities and report this information to the CREI community so they are committed to improving these ratios.</li> <li>- Continue to participate in actions to raise awareness of gender bias and prevent harassment.</li> </ul>	

Action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Actions to be taken	New timing
Finish the “Guide for New Researchers” (1), (5), (24)	May 2018	Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Finish the document.</li> <li>- Design internal procedures to review and periodically update its content.</li> </ul>	<p>The document has been finished. It will be updated yearly to be provided to new CREI researchers.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update the “Guide for New Researchers” at least once a year.</li> </ul>	Continuous action
Continue exploring new ways to help researchers’ spouses access the local labor market (24)	2019	Business Manager		<p>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. By now, none of our researchers has used this service.</p> <p>Additionally, CREI offers Spanish and Catalan lessons to improve their integration in our country. Nowadays five researchers and two spouses are taking these lessons.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Inform CREI researchers about the "Dual Careers Network in Barcelona" program periodically.</li> <li>- Inform CREI researchers about Spanish and Catalan lessons for them and their spouses.</li> </ul>	Continuous action

Action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Actions 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.	<p>In 2019 we analyzed a limited sample of salaries offered by other research institutions in Economics and communicated the results of this analysis to the CREI Governing Board.</p> <p>In 2022 we analyzed the content of the Annual Salary Report issued by Inomics (a specialized journal for Economics Institutions).</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The recruitment chair will analyze the Annual Salary Report issued by Inomics to identify the variables of the annual reports that should be followed by CREI from now on and compared them to salaries offered by CREI. (Act. 14, 3<sup>rd</sup> Action Plan)</li> </ul>	Q3 2024
Finish the “Researcher Handbook” (24), (29)	December 2018	Business Manager	- Finish the document and publish it.	<p>The CREI “Researcher Handbook” will be updated regularly and, at least, once a year.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Update the “Researcher Handbook” at least once a year.</li> </ul>	Continuous action



Action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Actions to be taken	New timing
<b>Develop the CREI OTM-R policy (13)</b>	2021	Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Approve the CREI OTM-R policy and make it public through the CREI website.</li> <li>- Design internal procedures to apply the CREI OTM-R policy.</li> </ul>	<p>The CREI OTM-R policy was approved by the CREI Governing Board in June 2022 and has been published on our website.</p> <p>The OTM-R Checklist is used to ensure that the CREI OTM-R policy is applied.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include the OTM-R checklist as a part of the regular procedures of the OTM-R policy. (Act. 11, 3<sup>rd</sup> Action Plan)</li> </ul>	Q3 2024
<b>Code of Conduct (2), (3), (34)</b>	2021	Business Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design a CREI Code of Conduct aligned with the principles of the C&amp;C.</li> <li>- Formal approval of this Code of Conduct.</li> <li>- Implementation of the Code of Conduct along the CREI organization.</li> </ul>	<p>In September 2019, the CREI Governing Board endorsed the CERCA Code of Conduct. This Code of Conduct is aligned with the principles of the C&amp;C.</p> <p>CREI researchers and employees receive information on the CERCA Code of Conduct and its implications regularly. This Code of Conduct has also been explained to all CREI employees in an internal meeting.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Develop and implement the CERCA Code of Conduct: Creating a program of periodical internal reviews, formalizing and implementing the CREI Open Data Policy, etc. (Act. 1 to 6, 3<sup>rd</sup> Action Plan)</li> </ul>	Q3 2023 – Q4 2024

Action	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Description of the action	Current status / Actions to be taken	New timing
<b>Working conditions (24)</b>	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.	<p>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.</p> <p><b><u>Actions to be taken:</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow-up on the satisfaction of CREI employees of the FRP. (Act. 13, 3<sup>rd</sup> Action Plan)</li> </ul>	Q3 2023

### 3. 3<sup>rd</sup> HRS4R ACTION PLAN

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

Having discussed the results of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> HRS4R Action Plans, and the comments after the Renewal Phase Assessment with the site visit, CREI has improved the 3<sup>rd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan. This improved plan consists of the extension of 4 actions from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Action Plan and 14 new actions:

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action	Responsible	Timing	Indicator
<b>I. Ethical and professional aspects</b>					
1.	(2), (3), (34)	(Extended action from 2 <sup>nd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan) <b>Ensure the implementation of the CERCA Code of Conduct</b>  Create a program of periodical internal reviews: Checklist, calendar, and responsible.	Business Manager	Q3 2023	- Number of internal reviews performed
2.	(8), (9), (39)	<b>Encourage participation in Open Science – Open data</b>  Training with Open Data experts to start publishing data in open repositories such as the CORA repository (promoted by the Catalan Government).	Director	Q3 2023	- Number of training hours - Number of participants
3.	(8), (9), (39)	<b>Development and implementation of the CREI Open Science Policy</b>  Produce a document that establishes the criteria of CREI to comply with the Open Science requirements.  Ensure that all new papers follow the guidelines established in this document.	Director / Business Manager	Q2 2024	- CREI Open Science Policy - Number of new papers that follow the CREI Open Science Policy
4.	(3), (9)	<b>Appointment of a Research Impact Coordinator</b>  The Research Impact Coordinator will receive specific training to develop this role and be responsible for implementing research impact procedures at CREI.	CREI Director	Q2 2023	- Research Impact Coordinator appointment

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action	Responsible	Timing	Indicator
5.	(3), (9)	<p><b>Participate in training sessions on how to measure and increase Research Impact</b></p> <p>Training with experts about how to improve and measure 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>	Research Impact Coordinator	Q2 2023	- Number of training hours - Number of participants
6.	(3), (7), (8), (9)	<p><b>Development and implementation of the CREI Research Impact procedures</b></p> <p>Produce a document with guidelines on how to assess, record, and communicate the research impact of CREI research.</p> <p>Development of a set of indicators of CREI research impact.</p> <p>Ensure that the impact of all new papers is assessed, recorded, and communicated following the guidelines established in this document.</p>	Research Impact Coordinator	Q3 2024	- CREI Research Impact Procedures - Number of new papers that have been assessed
7.	(10), (27)	<p><b>Update the current Gender Equality Plan</b></p> <p>Include the actions carried out by the special committee created to develop actions to increase the participation of women in CREI activities.</p>	Director / Business Manager	Q3 2024	- Updated Gender Equality Plan
8.	(10), (27)	<p><b>Implement a Woman Mentoring Program</b></p> <p>Create a Women mentoring program led by the woman researcher recently promoted to Senior. This program would be open to junior researchers and research assistants.</p> <p>Include this action in the updated Gender Equality Plan.</p>	Director / Business Manager	Q3 2024	- Updated Gender Equality Plan - Number of women participating in the Women Mentoring Program

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action	Responsible	Timing	Indicator
9.	(10), (27)	<p><b>Periodically review indicators related to Gender Balance at CREI:</b></p> <p>These indicators will include, at least, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training hours on gender bias in research</li> <li>- Number of women candidates</li> <li>- Number of interviewed women candidates</li> <li>- Number of women speakers and discussants in conferences organized by CREI</li> </ul>	Director / Business Manager	Q3 2024	- Number of indicators collected
10.	(4), (7), (8)	<p><b>Improve internal communication of CREI goals, planning, and achievement</b></p> <p>We plan to have at least an annual meeting to share, with all CREI members, the results of the period, the goals for the next period, and the planning of tasks that could come out. This annual meeting also will include regular updates on CREI policies and procedures regarding safe working practices, cybersecurity, personal data protection, and confidentiality.</p>	Director	Q2 2024	- Number of participants in the Annual Meeting - Agenda of the Annual Meeting
<b>II. Recruitment and Selection</b>					
11.	(12), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (18), (19), (20), (21), (22)	<p>(Extended action from 2<sup>nd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan)</p> <p><b>Update the quality control system of the CREI OTM-R Policy</b>, designing regular review and continuous improvement procedures</p> <p>Update the OTM-R Policy and procedures to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- OTM-R Checklist completed yearly to identify improvement actions for the next year.</li> <li>- OTM-R Checklist attached in the annual recruitment report.</li> <li>- Revision of the previous year's recruitment report as the first step of the recruitment process.</li> </ul>	Recruitment Chair	Q3 2024	- Updated OTM-R Policy - Number of new actions produced as a result of the periodical review of the OTM-R Checklist

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action	Responsible	Timing	Indicator
12.	(12), (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (18), (20), (22)	<b>Implement OTM-R procedures for the recruitment of Research assistants</b>  Update the OTR-M Policy to include other positions like research assistants and administrative positions.	Director / Business Manager / Recruitment Chair	Q3 2024	- Updated OTM-R Policy
<b>III. Working Conditions and Social</b>					
13.	(24), (25), (26)	(Extended action from 2 <sup>nd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan) <b>Analyze new ways of improving working conditions for CREI researchers</b>  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Follow-up on the satisfaction of CREI employees of the implemented FRP.</li> <li>- Exploration of additional ways of improving working conditions.</li> </ul>	Director / Business Manager	Q3 2023	- Number of employees participating in the FRP  -Employee survey
14.	(26)	(Extended action from 2 <sup>nd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan) <b>Systematize periodic reports on financial conditions offered by other European and US research institutions</b>  The recruitment chair will analyze the Annual Salary Report issued by Inomics to identify the variables of the annual reports that should be followed by CREI from now on and compared them to salaries offered by CREI.	Business Manager	Q3 2024	-Internal report
15.	(35)	<b>Clarify and improve CREI's corporate governance.</b>  Summarize in one single document the different roles of researchers in institutional decision-making.	Director /Business Manager	Q3 2024	-Internal document and procedure

No	C&C Princ.	Proposed action	Responsible	Timing	Indicator
<b>IV. Training and Development</b>					
16.	(30), (34), (35), (36), (37), (38), (39), (40)	<p><b>Creation of a 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</b></p> <p>The aim of this questionnaire is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Quantify researchers' satisfaction with the implementation of HRS4R.</li> <li>- Obtain feedback on concerns and aspects to take into consideration in the final document of the 3<sup>rd</sup> HRS4R Action Plan.</li> </ul>	Director and Business Manager	Q2 2023	- Questionnaire results
17.	(30), (31), (32), (33), (35), (38), (39)	<p><b>Development and implementation of a Training and Development Program for researchers at all career stages.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communication of Training and Development Program to CREI researchers and other research employees.</li> </ul>	Business Manager	Q3 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training and Development Program</li> <li>-Number of research staff participating in the Training and Development Program</li> <li>- Number of training actions carried out</li> </ul>
18.	(10) (35)	<p><b>Monitor the implemented actions, establishing a periodical review and continuous improvement procedure</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Design and implementation of a KPI Scorecard.</li> <li>- This KPI Scorecard shall be updated with the actions included in the subsequent HRS4R Action Plans.</li> </ul>	Business Manager	Q3 2024	-KPI Scorecard completed at least once a year

Campaign	Recruitment phase	Men	Women	TOTAL	% Men	% Women
2022/2023	Applications	207	71	278	74%	26%
	Interviewed	25	7	32	78%	22%
	Seminar at CREI	10	5	15	67%	33%
	Job offer	2	2	4	50%	50%
2021/2022	Applications	253	89	342	74%	26%
	Interviewed	19	9	28	68%	32%
	Seminar at CREI	10	5	15	67%	33%
	Job offer	3	2	5	60%	40%
2020/2021	Applications	242	88	330	73%	27%
	Interviewed	19	7	26	73%	27%
	Seminar at CREI	6	7	13	46%	54%
	Job offer	0	1	1	0%	100%
2019/2020	Applications	294	91	385	76%	24%
	Interviewed	21	4	25	84%	16%
	Seminar at CREI	5	2	7	71%	29%
	Job offer	0	0	0	--	--



CREI Activity	Year	Number of speakers / discussants			% Men	% Women
		Men	Women	TOTAL		
<b>CREI SEMINAR</b>				0		
	2019	16	5	21	76%	24%
	2020	7	3	10	70%	30%
	2021	13	10	23	57%	43%
	2022	21	7	28	75%	25%
	2023	15	9	24	63%	38%
	2024	7	6	13	54%	46%
<b>CREI CONFERENCES</b>						
Number of conf.:						
8	2022	91	25	116	78%	22%
6	2023	69	25	94	73%	27%

Estimated according to the present planification of the CREI seminar until June 2024.