

ACTION PLAN

1. Organisational Information

STAFF & STUDENTS

Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	146,975
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	63,7
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	70,625
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	75,8
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	24,55
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	29,05
Total number of students (if relevant) *	29,05
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	222,1

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)

Total annual organisational budget	374.000.000 CZK
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	231.000.000 CZK
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	2.700.000 CZK
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	0 CZK

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Note: Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code to open the editor and provide your answer.

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Ethical and professional aspects *

Strengths

IMC builds on strong historical foundations. The institute emerged from the scientific legacy of prof. Otto Wichterle, whose discoveries — such as contact lenses and silon (nylon 6) fibres — significantly shaped the field of polymer science. Thanks to this heritage, IMC became an internationally recognised centre attracting leading polymer researchers from around the world, even during the

restrictive conditions of the communist era. Today, IMC continues to uphold this legacy and maintain its prominent position on the global stage.

Research centres have clearly defined scientific focus areas, and their strategic goals are well understood. The research portfolio reflects current societal needs, from health-related topics to sustainability and energy storage.

The institute is characterised by an internationally diverse workforce, with approximately one third of employees coming from abroad. Diversity is generally well accepted.

The institute benefits from a solid ethical and professional framework based on the Code of Ethics of the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS), which employees view as a respected standard of conduct. Academic freedom is consistently high, contributing to a stable and intellectually stimulating research environment. Employees have access to an independent ombudsperson of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, who provides a confidential and impartial channel for addressing workplace conflicts or other professional concerns if needed.

IMC actively applies open science principles through participation in international networks and projects. Researcher mobility is strongly supported, complemented by the institute's own long-standing international course in polymer chemistry, which significantly contributes to the development of young scientists.

Weaknesses

The institute does not yet have its own workplace-specific Code of Ethics and formal mechanism for submitting and resolving workplace concerns. Although a trade union operates at the institute, employees generally do not turn to it for assistance in resolving workplace concerns, indicating the need to establish an alternative, clearly defined and accessible platform for support.

IMC also lacks a long-term institutional strategy with clearly defined research and development objectives (apart of the strategies of individual centres as mentioned in the strengths). The absence of such a framework reduces the institute's ability to articulate a shared vision and collective direction.

Although IMC provides several family-friendly measures for employees returning from maternity or parental leave—such as flexible working hours, a children's group, and holiday camps—women remain underrepresented in leadership roles. At the same time, the institute does not yet systematically assess the specific needs of returning parents or monitor how their career progression continues after a career break. Although IMC implements several environmentally responsible measures, sustainability is not yet coordinated through a dedicated institutional role.

In the area of open science, IMC lacks a unified institutional framework and does not have a designated data steward, which complicates consistent data management and sharing.

Recruitment and selection *

Strengths

Many of the OTM-R policy principles are already naturally applied in practice at IMC, although the policy has not yet been formally adopted. A unified template is used for advertising job positions,

ensuring clear and transparent communication of the criteria relevant for candidate selection. Selection committees typically consist of three or more members and, in most cases, are gender-balanced. Applicants are not burdened with excessive administrative requirements, and all candidates receive notification of the outcome of the selection process.

A further strength is the attestation procedure, which represents a well-established and respected mechanism for career progression within the Czech Academy of Sciences. This structured framework provides researchers with clear guidance on the performance and qualification expectations associated with their professional growth.

Weaknesses

The annual evaluation of research departments is not supported by a unified methodology or clearly defined assessment criteria, which employees perceive as non-transparent.

While selection committees follow existing internal regulations, there is no unified methodology nor systematic training on OTM-R principles. This limits the ability to monitor the fairness, consistency, and overall quality of the recruitment process.

There is also no accessible mechanism for applicants to submit complaints if they believe the selection procedure has not been conducted fairly. This gap reduces transparency and may affect candidates' trust in the recruitment process.

Despite the availability of a high-quality HR service, where the HR officer communicates fluently in both Czech and English and is easily accessible to employees, there is currently no structured guide or comprehensive onboarding brochure for newly recruited staff. This makes it more difficult for newcomers to navigate institutional procedures, services, and practical arrangements, particularly in relation to employee benefits as well as their rights and obligations.

Working conditions *

Strengths

IMC offers a range of flexible working arrangements, including part-time contracts and flexible working hours with a core presence only between 9:00 and 14:00. These measures significantly support employees in balancing work and personal life, which is reflected in their high level of satisfaction regarding working conditions.

Employment stability is perceived as strong; researchers do not express concerns about losing their positions. Researchers at levels R2–R4 are formally involved in institutional governance through the Assembly of Researchers, and R4 researchers commonly advance into leadership roles. Researchers also participate in various advisory and managerial bodies across the institute.

The HR department is regarded as highly accessible and supportive, encouraging employees to seek guidance on administrative and employment-related questions. The institute is well equipped, and researchers report a high level of satisfaction with the available infrastructure.

With an in-house legal department, researchers have access to advice on intellectual property matters. IMC actively participates in initiatives promoting open science and public engagement,

including events organised by the Czech Academy of Sciences and Europe-wide activities such as the European Researchers' Night.

Weaknesses

A significant barrier for international employees is the limited use of English in internal communication. Meetings of the Assembly of Researchers are typically conducted in Czech with English written slides most internal regulations are still available exclusively in Czech, despite ongoing efforts to produce bilingual versions.

Several internal directives, particularly those related to IT and safety, require updating to meet current legal, technical, and cybersecurity standards.

The institute currently lacks a formal complaints-handling mechanism limiting the ability to resolve workplace or interpersonal issues in a transparent and structured manner.

There is no systematic support mechanism for R2 researchers or for employees returning from parental leave, including career counselling and structured reintegration into research after an extended absence.

While intellectual property rights are addressed across multiple internal directives, researchers lack a unified and easily accessible overview of the applicable rules. The absence of a coherent institutional strategy for intellectual property and technology transfer may make it more difficult for researchers to navigate related processes efficiently.

Training and development *

Strengths

IMC maintains a longstanding commitment to ensuring that doctoral researchers (R1) can focus mostly on developing their own research projects and are not diverted into routine tasks unrelated to their dissertation work.

Doctoral researchers are further encouraged—both administratively and financially—to undertake international research stays, either within established institutional collaborations or at institutions of their own choice. Students have provided predominantly positive feedback on the quality of supervision and professional support they receive.

The institute also covers training required for working with instrumentation and for maintaining up-to-date methodological expertise. Additional professional development opportunities are available through training programmes offered by the Czech Academy of Sciences and through monthly scientific colloquia where researchers share current findings. These elements together create an environment supportive of continuous development across all research stages.

Weaknesses

Researchers at the R2 level lack access to structured career counselling or a coherent framework for career development, and generally do not have a clear overview of available opportunities. Although a range of training activities is available, they are not embedded within a systematic strategy.

Supervisors are not systematically trained in mentoring or student supervision, and the supervisor–student relationship lacks a clear institutional framework, which limits the ability to resolve issues effectively.

A regular system of annual performance and development interviews is not yet in place. While such a system would provide a foundation for structured feedback, career planning, and targeted researcher development, it must be preceded by appropriate managerial training so that team leaders are equipped to conduct these conversations effectively.

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HR Excellence in Research strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HR Excellence in Research to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the GAP Analysis with their ratings.

Action 1

An IMC Code of Ethics

(Policy and Process Consolidation Package)

Development and formal adoption of an IMC Code of Ethics, establishing clear standards of conduct and ethical principles for all staff and researchers. The Code and related procedures will be made fully accessible to all employees (intranet, web pages).

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

1Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- Legal Department
- Director's Board

Indicators/ Targets

- Document adopted and published
- Introduction of a dedicated intranet and web pages containing the Code
- Internal communication campaign completed

Principles:

- () 1. ETHICS AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY
- () 5. EMBRACING DIVERSITY
- () 6. THE RESEARCHER
- () 13. WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES

Action 2

Creation of a complaint submission and handling system + Manual for Employees about how to submit a complaint.

(Policy and Process Consolidation Package)

Design and formal implementation of a transparent, accessible system for submitting and handling complaints, including ethical concerns. An Employee Manual will provide practical guidance on how to submit a complaint and what to expect from the procedure.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- HR Department
- Director's Board

Indicators/ Targets

- Formal incorporation of the process into internal regulations
- Publication of the complaint procedure and contact points on the intranet and website.
- Employee Manual in electronic form available on the intranet
- Completion of an internal communication campaign introducing the mechanism

Principles:

- () 1. ETHICS AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY
- () 4. GENDER EQUALITY
- () 5. EMBRACING DIVERSITY
- () 13. WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES

Action 3

A Strategy for Management and Sustainable Development of IMC

(Policy and Process Consolidation Package)

Development of an institutional Strategy for Management and Sustainable Development, setting long-term research and organizational priorities, strengthening internal communication of strategic goals, and establishing a clear framework for career development, including defined researcher competencies and a multi-year training plan with a focus on early-career researchers.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

4Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- Director's Board
- HR Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Strategy formally approved by the Director and communicated to all employees.
- Strategy published and accessible.
- Designation of responsible units for implementation and monitoring within the Strategy.
- Definition of key researcher competencies completed and published as an annex.
- Multi-year training plan for researcher development developed and released.

Principles:

- () 6. THE RESEARCHER
- () 12. CAREER PROGRESSION
- () 14. STABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT
- () 19. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Action 4

Revision of the directives and internal norms
(Policy and Process Consolidation Package):

Directive No. 1 – Recruitment of New Employees (OTM-R Package)

Internal regulations on occupational health and safety (OSH)

Internal regulations on fire prevention

Directive No. 15 – Use of Computers and Computer Network

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

3Q/2027, continuously

Responsible Unit

- Legal Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Updated directives drafted, legally reviewed, and approved by the Director.
- CZ and EN versions published on the intranet.
- Communication to employees about changes completed.

Principles:

() 10. RECRUITMENT

() 15. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Action 5

Strategy for Intellectual Property Rights Protection and Technology Transfer
(Policy and Process Consolidation Package)

Development of an institutional Strategy for Intellectual Property Rights Protection and Technology Transfer, complemented by an employee-friendly brochure summarising key rules, responsibilities, and procedures related to IP management.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

4Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- Designated Technology Transfer Officer

Indicators/ Targets

- Strategy drafted, legally reviewed, approved, and published.
- Brochure prepared and published on the intranet.
- IP procedures clearly communicated to researchers via an intranet announcement or staff session.
- Integration of the brochure into onboarding materials for new researchers.

Principles:

() 16. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

Action 6

Environmental Officer (Policy and Process Consolidation Package):

Creation of a dedicated Environmental Officer position to coordinate environmental initiatives, support compliance with sustainability standards, and promote environmentally responsible practices at the institute.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- Director's Board
- HR Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Position formally created and included in the organisational structure.

Principles:

() 8. SUSTAINABILITY OF RESEARCH

Action 7

Evaluation system for research departments
(Policy and Process Consolidation Package):

Revision and formalisation of the annual evaluation system for research departments, including clear processes, transparent criteria, and consistent follow-up measures to support quality management and strategic planning.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

3Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- Director's Board

Indicators/ Targets

- Methodology formally approved and published on the intranet.
- Transparent description of processes, criteria, responsibilities, and timelines included in the document.
- Briefing for heads of departments delivered.

Principles:

() 9. RESEARCHERS' ASSESSMENT

Action 8

Institutional open-access policy: Open Access Policy Declaration + Creation of a data steward position at the institute.
(Policy and Process Consolidation Package)

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

4Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- Library

Indicators/ Targets

- Internal document available on the intranet
- Data steward position established, definition of their responsibilities
- Completion of an internal communication campaign

Principles:

() 3. OPEN SCIENCE

Action 9

Social events and working environment
(Researcher Well-Being Package):

- Informal culture and cuisine days (once a year).
- Annual round-table discussions between R1 researchers and institute leadership (once a year).
- Garden Party (once a year).
- “Breakfast with Director” (twice a year)
- A relaxation zone (continuously)

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

Recurring, continuously

Responsible Unit

- Director’s Office

Indicators/ Targets

- Invitations, intranet announcements
- Photographs
- Existence of the relaxation zone/café

Principles:

() 5. EMBRACING DIVERSITY

() 13. WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES

Action 10

Translation of all key internal documents into English
(International Researcher Support Package)

Systematic translation, quality assurance of all key internal documents into English, guaranteeing consistent access to essential institutional information for international staff.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

3Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- Director's Office
- Legal Department

Indicators/ Targets

- List of documents selected for translation approved by the responsible units.
- All identified documents translated and published on the intranet.
- Notification to employees about the availability of English versions communicated via intranet

Principles:

() 7. FREE CIRCULATION OF RESEARCHERS

() 15. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Action 11

An information brochure for the adaptation of newly recruited staff
(International Researcher Support Package)

Preparation of a clear and comprehensive onboarding brochure for newly recruited staff, providing essential information on institutional procedures, services, and practical steps to support smooth adaptation (Czech and English versions).

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

4Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- HR Department
- Legal Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Brochure developed, approved, and published on the intranet.
- Version in English available for international employees.
- Integration of the brochure into the formal onboarding process (HR checklists, welcome emails).

Principles:

() 7. FREE CIRCULATION OF RESEARCHERS

Action 12

Live transcription of employee information sessions into English
(International Researcher Support Package)

Implementation of a reliable technical solution for live English transcription during employee information sessions to ensure equal access to institutional updates for international staff.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2026, continuously

Responsible Unit

- Director's Office
- IT Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Technical solution installed, tested, and functional.
- Transcription available at all major staff information sessions.

Principles:

() 7. FREE CIRCULATION OF RESEARCHERS

() 13. WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES

Action 13

Creation of the HRS4R institutional web page
(OTM-R Compliance Package):

Creation of a dedicated HRS4R webpage providing transparent, accessible information on institutional policies, OTM-R procedures, recruitment-related complaint channels, and GDPR guidance, available in both Czech and English.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- Director's Office

Indicators/ Targets

- HRS4R webpage created and publicly accessible.
- Policy on transparent and non-discriminatory recruitment published (CZ/EN).
- All OTM-R-related documents uploaded in both languages.
- Contact information for submitting recruitment-related complaints clearly displayed.
- IMC GDPR approach published on the webpage.

Principles:

- () 10. RECRUITMENT
- () 11. SELECTION
- () 15. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Action 14

OTM-R manual and e-learning
(OTM-R Compliance Package)

Development of a practical methodological manual and an e-learning course to ensure that selection committee members and HR staff apply OTM-R principles consistently, transparently, and in compliance with institutional and legal requirements.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- HR Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Manual completed, approved, and published on the intranet.
- E-learning module implemented, accessible to all committee members.
- Completion of training tracked.

Principles:

- () 10. RECRUITMENT

Action 15

EURAXESS platform
(International Researcher Support Package)

Systematic use of the EURAXESS platform for advertising research vacancies to ensure open, transparent, and internationally accessible recruitment. Awareness raising about the activities of the EURAXES platform and social media, both internally (foreign internships for our employees) and externally (recruitment).

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- HR Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Job advertisements published on EURAXESS
- HR workflow updated to include EURAXESS posting
- Awareness campaign among employees about the EURAXESS platform and social media (fliers, article on the intranet)

Principles:

() 10. RECRUITMENT

Action 16

Electronic tool for monitoring and evaluating recruitment processes
(OTM-R Compliance Package)

Development of an electronic tool (form and evidence system) to systematically record, monitor, and evaluate each stage of the recruitment process in line with OTM-R principles.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

4Q/2026

Responsible Unit

- HR Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Electronic form/tool created and accessible to HR and selection committees.
- Recruitment process records maintained for all research positions.
- Tool integrated into the standard recruitment workflow.
- Annual overview or summary of monitored data.

Principles:

() 10. RECRUITMENT

() 11. SELECTION

Action 17

Practical guide for postdoctoral researchers
(Career Growth & Appraisal Package)

Preparation of a practical guide for postdoctoral researchers summarising opportunities for short-term research stays, available training and workshops, and internal/external funding options to support their professional development.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

2Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- Director's Board

Indicators/ Targets

- Guide prepared, approved, and published on the intranet.
- Annual update mechanism established to keep information current.
- Guide integrated into onboarding materials for new postdocs.

Principles:

() 17. VALUING DIVERSE RESEARCH CAREERS

Action 18

Internal directive for Doctoral Supervision: Rights, Duties, and Competencies + Methodological Manual for Supervisors
(Career Growth & Appraisal Package)

Development of a binding internal directive that defines the legal and procedural framework for doctoral supervision, clearly outlining the rights, duties, and competencies of supervisors and doctoral candidates. The directive will establish transparent expectations for cooperation and performance. A methodological manual will complement the directive by providing practical guidance for supervisors.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

4Q/2027

Responsible Unit

- Director's Board
- HR Department
- Legal Department

Indicators/ Targets

- Directive drafted, legally reviewed, approved by the Director, and published on the intranet.
- Methodological manual for supervisors prepared and available on the intranet.
- Presentation of the new framework to supervisors and doctoral candidates (e.g., briefing or intranet announcement).
- Integration of the directive into onboarding processes.

Principles:

() 18. CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVICE

() 20. SUPERVISION AND MENTORING

Action 19

Trainings:

Training on diversity and gender equality (all employees, Researcher Well-Being Package).

Training in cybersecurity (all employees, Policy and Process Consolidation Package).

Training for managers, supervisors and senior staff in human resources management, career counselling, mentoring, and professional development (Career Growth & Appraisal Package).

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

Continuously

Responsible Unit

- Director's Office

Indicators/ Targets

- Attendance lists
- Invitation fliers

Principles:

- () 4. GENDER EQUALITY
- () 9. RESEARCHERS' ASSESSMENT
- () 12. CAREER PROGRESSION
- () 15. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS
- () 17. VALUING DIVERSE RESEARCH CAREERS
- () 18. CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVICE
- () 20. SUPERVISION AND MENTORING

Action 20

Targeted survey among employees returning from parental leave to identify their specific needs and inform future support measures.

Timing (at least by years quarter/semester)

Q2/2027

Responsible Unit

- Director's Office

Indicators/ Targets

- Survey outcomes

Principles:

() 4. GENDER EQUALITY

() 9. RESEARCHERS' ASSESSMENT

() 12. CAREER PROGRESSION

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HR Excellence in Research strategy.

*Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) **

The OTM-R Checklist confirmed that while many good practices exist, they are not yet implemented systematically, and areas for further development have been clearly identified.

The OTM-R Toolkit will serve as the main reference framework throughout the implementation process. It will guide the key revision of Directive No. 1 on employee recruitment, the creation of methodological manuals for selection committees, the development of new recruitment workflows and templates, and the design of the compulsory OTM-R training for staff involved in selection procedures.

Implementation processes

Implementation will be led by the **HR Department**, which will design practical procedures, templates, and documentation systems to ensure consistency and transparency. The **Legal Department** will verify compliance with national labour law, GDPR, and internal CAS regulations, and will be responsible for updating all relevant directives, drafting new procedures, and revising internal documents necessary for the implementation of OTM-R principles. The **Director and the Director's Board** will supervise the process strategically, adopt updated regulations, and ensure that OTM-R principles support IMC's long-term development.

Key Focus Areas

The findings of the OTM-R checklist directly informed the Action Plan, ensuring that identified gaps are systematically addressed:

OTM-R Compliance Package

- Formal adoption of the OTM-R policy and publication on a dedicated HRS4R webpage (*Action 13*).
- Revision of recruitment directive No. 1 – Recruitment of New Employees to align with OTM-R principles (*Action 4*).
- Development of a methodological manual for selection committee members and HR staff (*Action 14*).
- Creation of an OTM-R e-learning module for committee training (*Action 14*).

- Consistent publication of job offers through EURAXESS (*Action 15*)
- Establishment of a recruitment-related complaint submission channel, with clear contact points published online (*Action 13*).
- Implementation of an electronic recruitment monitoring tool ensuring traceability and documentation (*Action 16*).

International Researcher Support Package

- Systematic translation of key internal documents into English (*Action 10*).
- Onboarding and adaptation brochure for newly recruited staff (*Action 11*).
- Live transcription of institute-wide staff meetings into English (*Action 12*).

Training and capacity building of selection committees

Recruitment quality will be strengthened through a structured training framework. A compulsory OTM-R e-learning module will be introduced for all members of selection committees. Training in diversity and gender equality (all), as well as training in human resources management, career counselling, mentoring, and professional development (managers, supervisors and senior staff) will further foster an inclusive and supportive culture at the institute.

Monitoring and continuous improvement

Recruitment processes will be documented and archived systematically, enabling annual reviews of their effectiveness, international outreach, gender representation, and compliance with internal rules.

Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

The Action Plan is based on findings from the GAP Analysis and the institute-wide employee survey, ensuring that all measures reflect real needs identified by staff. The relevance of each action was subsequently confirmed by both the Working Group and the Steering Committee (of the Initial phase), demonstrating broad institutional consensus.

Each action assigns clear responsibilities, deadlines, and expected outputs. The first-listed unit (of each action) is responsible for implementation, while additional units contribute in a consultative or expert role. The Working Group will meet monthly to monitor progress and solve emerging issues; the Steering Committee will provide strategic oversight on a bimonthly basis.

IMC will use its widely accessed intranet as the primary communication channel. All new procedures and tools will be published there. Where training or familiarisation is required, employees will be invited to information sessions to ensure consistent understanding and provide space for questions and feedback.

Implementation governance

At the operational level, the newly formed Working Group will coordinate implementation and ensure coherence across actions. At the strategic level, the Steering Committee will oversee progress and approve final outcomes.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress? *

Working Group (operational level)

A newly formed Working Group will include representatives from all units responsible for individual actions (HR, Legal, Director's Office, library, IT, technology transfer, OSH, etc.). The group will meet monthly, together with the HR Award Administrator, to report on progress, discuss emerging issues, coordinate timelines, and ensure coherence between related actions.

Steering Committee (strategic level)

The existing Steering Committee will continue to operate in the implementation phase. It will meet bi-monthly (or quarterly during holiday periods) to review the progress reports submitted by the Working Group, validating completed documents, and approving all strategic outputs before implementation. The Steering Committee will ensure alignment with institutional priorities and oversee decision-making at the management level.

A shared digital workspace will serve as the central platform for both groups. All draft documents, templates, and procedures will be stored here, and designated folders will allow Steering Committee members to comment on materials and track revisions transparently.

How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process? *

IMC will systematically involve researchers in the implementation through several established and newly introduced channels:

- Assembly of Researchers – a platform where institute leadership communicates major institutional developments and strategic topics, with space for researchers to ask questions, respond, and provide feedback.
- Consultations with early-career researchers – annual round-table meetings with R1/R2 researchers to capture their specific needs and perspectives.
- “Breakfast with Director” sessions – an open forum enabling employees to raise current questions, concerns, and suggestions directly to leadership, ensuring a two-way dialogue.
- Working Group members will consult draft proposals with relevant researchers through direct discussions or focused group meetings.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy. *

Alignment with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers is ensured through the systematic revision of all relevant internal regulations, processes, and institutional practices.

- Legal Department reviews and updates directives and related documents to ensure compliance with national legislation, CAS rules, and Charter principles.
- HR Department revises processes such as recruitment, onboarding, career development, training, internal evaluation, and complaint submission mechanisms in line with HRS4R requirements.

- Director's Board approves all updated policies and ensures that the HRS4R framework is embedded into institutional strategy and long-term development.

How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented? *

Implementation will be secured through clearly defined responsibilities, regular progress monitoring, and timely validation of outputs. Each action has an appointed responsible unit and measurable indicators, and progress will be reviewed at fixed intervals. The HR Award Administrator will coordinate the overall process and ensure that deadlines are met, while strategic oversight and approval of completed outputs will be provided at the management level. All actions will be communicated to the employees via the channels mentioned above.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)? *

Progress will be monitored through a structured, regularly updated system coordinated by the HR Award Administrator.

Key elements include:

- a master timeline outlining all milestones, deadlines, and responsible units;
- monthly progress updates from all responsible units to the Working Group;
- bi-monthly Steering Committee reviews of progress and risks;
- use of the shared digital workspace as the single source of truth, enabling transparent tracking of updated versions and completed deliverables.

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

Progress will be measured through the indicators defined directly in the Action Plan. Across all actions, these indicators include:

- adoption and publication of new or updated internal regulations;
- establishment of procedures, manuals, and methodological tools;
- creation of institutional structures;
- publication of documents on the intranet or website;
- creation of support tools;
- availability of training programmes and completion of modules;
- documentation of implementation activities (invitations, attendance lists, intranet announcements, annual events, consultations).

The HR Award Administrator will maintain a consolidated overview of these indicators and provide periodic summaries to the Steering Committee to prepare for the next internal review.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

Websites of the Institute of macromolecular chemistry CAS: <https://www.imc.cas.cz/en/>