

**HUMAN RESOURCES  
STRATEGY FOR  
RESEARCHERS  
HRS4R**

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**ACTION PLAN  
2026-2028**

# Action Plan 2026-2028

## Introduction

This document presents the second HRS4R Action Plan of the Barcelonaβeta Brain Research Center (BBRC), building upon the achievements, lessons learned and areas for improvement identified during the previous implementation cycle. The Plan reflects BBRC's sustained commitment to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, while also aligning with the Centre's broader Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and its long-term institutional vision.

The Strategic Plan 2022–2026 defined four key axes — Impact Research; Management, Organisation and Processes; Talent Attraction and Personal Development; and Communication — which guide the Centre's development and organisational transformation. The present HRS4R Action Plan is fully aligned with these strategic priorities, ensuring coherence between research excellence, governance structures, talent development and institutional culture.

## Method

The development of this second Action Plan has been grounded in a structured and participatory diagnostic process. As part of a broader institutional transformation initiative, BBRC engaged the external consultancy Mendips Talent Development to conduct an independent organisational diagnostic of the Centre's research culture, governance practices and organisational dynamics.

This process included in-depth conversations with the Direction Committee and the facilitation of focus groups across different professional profiles, including Group Leaders and Core Facility Heads, predoctoral researchers, postdoctoral researchers and other staff categories. These sessions provided a safe and participatory space to discuss working culture, strengths, challenges and improvement opportunities.

The main findings were subsequently shared and discussed during the 2nd BBRC Scientific Retreat, which brought together researchers across all career stages (R1–R4), support teams, key stakeholders and the Direction to facilitate open dialogue on research priorities, institutional transformation and mid-term vision. Dedicated sessions addressed research culture, strategic alignment and collaborative development, reinforcing transparency and shared ownership of the Centre's future direction.

The actions included in this second HRS4R Action Plan directly derive from this multi-layered consultation and evaluation process. They respond to identified needs in areas such as communication, leadership development, career progression, research evaluation practices, equality and diversity, recruitment transparency, training visibility and working conditions. The Plan also integrates BBRC's

commitment to responsible research assessment in line with DORA and CoARA principles, ensuring that recruitment, appraisal and career progression systems evolve towards more holistic, qualitative and context-sensitive approaches.

Overall, this second HRS4R Action Plan represents both continuity and consolidation. It strengthens alignment between the BBRC Strategic Plan and European research policy frameworks, reinforcing a culture of continuous improvement, institutional accountability and responsible research governance.

## **Structure of the Action Plan and Alignment with the Revised HRS4R Framework**

The BBRC 2nd HRS4R Action Plan has been structured around the four core pillars of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers, ensuring continuity with the established framework while integrating the recent evolution of the European Commission's model.

Given the transition from the original 40 principles of the European Charter & Code to the revised framework of 20 consolidated principles, this Action Plan reflects both structures. For coherence and traceability, each action has been mapped against the original [Charter & Code principles \(40\)](#) and the [updated HRS4R principles \(20\)](#). This dual alignment ensures transparency in the transition phase and facilitates monitoring against both legacy and revised criteria.

The actions have been organised under four main pillars:

- Ethical & Professional Aspects/Ethics & Research integrity: covering ethics, research integrity, gender equality, leadership and institutional culture.
- Recruitment & Selection/Researchers's Assessment, Recruitment and Progression: addressing Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R), candidate communication, onboarding and recruitment governance.
- Working Conditions/Working Conditions & Practices: focusing on research environment, wellbeing, conflict mediation, institutional planning and equality measures.
- Training & Career Development/Research Careers & Talent Development: encompassing career frameworks, leadership development, responsible research assessment, training systems and professional growth mechanisms.

This structure allows the Centre to respond coherently to European policy developments, including the revised HRS4R framework and the increasing emphasis on responsible research assessment,, while maintaining consistency with the institutional Strategic Plan.

## Ethical & Professional Aspects - Ethics, Integrity, Gender & Open Science

ACTIONS	Principles (40/20)	KPIs	Status	Responsible	Time
<p><b>AP1.13. Improve communication from the direction towards all BBRC employees with ad-hoc email communications:</b> This action, initiated in the previous Action Plan, continues to be implemented as part of BBRC's commitment to transparent and structured internal communication.</p>	<p>23, 24, 27, 37</p>	<p>Annual two-day institutional research retreat organised</p> <p>Participation rate across R1–R4 career stages</p> <p># of institutional communications issued</p> <p>Structured communication calendar established</p> <p>Staff perception of internal communication (survey results)</p>	<p><i>In progress</i></p>	<p><i>Comm. Management People</i></p>	<p>3Q-2028</p>
<p><b>AP1.18. Guidelines to correctly inform postdocs candidates about policies etc.:</b> This action remains in progress. Improvements have been introduced to enhance transparency and access to institutional information, including reinforced Welcome Sessions, centralised publication of policies and</p>	<p>14, 15, 16, 25</p>	<p>Welcome Sessions implemented for all newcomers</p> <p>% of new staff attending Welcome Sessions</p>	<p><i>In progress</i></p>	<p><i>People SCRS</i></p>	<p>3Q-2026</p>

improved accessibility of key HR procedures and internal regulations.	6, 7, 9, 11	<p>Institutional policies centralised and accessible on shared drives</p> <p>Standardised information package for postdoctoral candidates developed</p> <p>Coordination mechanism between HR and hiring teams established</p> <p>Alignment of onboarding communication with AP2.10</p>			
<b>AP1.22. Promote women in scientific responsibility positions:</b> This action is currently in progress. The Centre recognises the need to strengthen female representation in scientific leadership and responsibility positions, particularly considering the current gender distribution in senior roles.	10, 27, 23	Gender distribution in scientific leadership positions monitored annually	<i>In progress</i>	<i>People Comm. Management</i>	3Q-2027
	8, 10	<p>% of women in Group Leader and senior responsibility positions</p> <p>Number of visibility and outreach actions promoting women scientists per year</p>			
<b>AP2.1. Develop the 2nd Equality &amp; Diversity Plan (2027-2030):</b> Design and implementation of the second Equality & Diversity Plan to reinforce institutional commitment to inclusion, equity and non-discrimination across all employment stages	10, 27, 23	E&D Plan 2027–2030 approved	<i>New</i>	<i>People ED Commission</i>	2Q-2027
	8,10	Updated E&D diagnosis completed & % actions with KPIs defined			

<b>AP2.2. Create and implement an Authorship policy:</b> Establishment and implementation of a transparent authorship policy defining criteria, responsibilities and good practices in line with international research integrity standards.	32, 2, 3	Authorship policy approved	New	SCRS Management	2Q-2026
	4, 5	Policy aligned with international research integrity standards % research staff informed/trained # of dissemination actions Authorship disputes monitored and reported			
<b>AP2.3. BBRC Open Science and Scholarly Publishing Policy:</b> Development of an institutional policy promoting Open Science practices, responsible scholarly publishing and compliance with funders' and international standards.	8, 31, 6	Open Science & Scholarly Publishing policy approved	New	SCRS Management	3Q-2026
	3, 5	Alignment with funders' and international standards # of dissemination actions % research outputs complying with Open Access requirements Open Science practices monitored			
<b>AP2.4. Predoctoral Researcher Committee:</b> Consolidation of the Predoctoral Researcher Committee as a formal participation and dialogue body to represent early-stage researchers and address ethical, professional and working-condition matters	35, 23, 28	Establishment of a formal committee representing predoctoral researchers, fostering participation and dialogue	New	People SCRS	4Q-2026
	8, 11, 14	# of meetings and participants			

<b>AP2.5. Code of Conduct Revision &amp; Integration:</b> Revision and integration of the Code of Conduct to ensure alignment with ethical standards, professional behaviour expectations and institutional values.	2, 3, 4	Update and integrate the Code of Conduct with sections on Open Science, Responsible Research Assessment, data protection, and well-being. # of dissemination actions	New	SCRS Management	2Q-2027
	4, 5				
<b>AP2.6. AI &amp; Data Ethics Guidelines:</b> Development of guidelines on the ethical use of artificial intelligence and research data, ensuring compliance with legal, ethical and responsible research principles.	2, 5, 6	Development of guidelines for the responsible use of AI and data in research and administrative processes # of dissemination actions	New	SCRS IT	1Q-2028
	4, 5				
<b>AP2.7. Authorship conflict resolution policy:</b> Definition of a specific procedure to prevent, address and resolve authorship-related conflicts in a fair, transparent and timely manner.	32, 34, 15	Conflicts related to authorship need a separate resolution procedure and only more complicated cases will be proceed through the procedure for conflict mediation # of dissemination actions	New	SCRS Legal	4Q-2026
	5, 7, 12				

## Recruitment - Researchers' Assessment, Recruitment & Progression

<i>ACTIONS</i>	<i>Principles (40/20)</i>	<i>KPIS</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Responsible</i>	<i>Time</i>
<b>AP1.17. Guidelines to correctly inform candidates:</b> BBRC is committed to transparency and fairness throughout the recruitment process.	12, 15, 25	Candidate Communication Guidelines approved  Standard communication templates implemented	<i>In progress</i>	<i>People</i>	3Q-2026
	6, 7, 9	100% of candidates informed of recruitment outcome  % of shortlisted candidates receiving structured feedback  Communication standards included in OTM-R training  Annual monitoring of compliance			
<b>AP2.8. ATS system in place for recruitment:</b> to support transparent, efficient and traceable recruitment processes, enabling the systematic collection of recruitment data and KPIs to monitor compliance with OTM-R principles, equal opportunity and continuous improvement.	15, 16, 11	ATS implemented and operational  100% of vacancies managed through ATS	<i>New</i>	<i>People IT</i>	2Q-2027
	7, 13	% of recruitment processes with complete documentation and traceability			

		Recruitment KPIs (time-to-hire, gender distribution, shortlist composition) monitored annually			
<b>AP2.9. Recruitment Guidelines and Selection Panel Training:</b> Development and implementation of practical recruitment guidelines to operationalise the existing OTM-R policy, providing clear and consistent guidance to hiring managers and selection panels across all recruitment stages.	12, 15, 16	Approval and publication of Recruitment Guidelines by Q3 2026	New	People SCRS	2Q-2027
	6, 7	% of recruitment processes applying standardised evaluation templates (target ≥70% first year)  Monitoring of gender balance and diversity indicators in applicant pools and shortlisted candidates through ATS reporting  Annual review of recruitment documentation compliance and alignment with OTM-R standards			
<b>AP2.10. Standardised Onboarding Package:</b> Development and implementation of a standardised onboarding package to ensure a consistent, transparent and supportive integration of new staff and collaborators, providing clear information on rights, duties, institutional policies and available support services.	24, 25, 27	Standardised Onboarding Package developed and implemented	New	People Comm.	3Q-2026
	9, 10	% of new joiners receiving onboarding package  Onboarding session delivered within first month of arrival  Onboarding satisfaction score (survey-based)			

		Annual review and update of onboarding materials			
<b>AP2.11. Reinforce the International Welcome Guide:</b> Improve the International Welcome Guide to support the integration of international staff, providing clear information on administrative procedures, living and working in Barcelona, institutional services and practical support.	24, 23, 27	Updated International Welcome Guide published	New	People Comm.	3Q-2026
	9, 8, 10	% of international staff receiving the Guide before arrival Satisfaction rate of international newcomers (followup interview) Reduction in administrative incidents during onboarding Annual review and update of the Guide			

## Working Conditions - Working Conditions & Practices

ACTIONS	Principles (40/20)	KPIs	Status	Responsible	Time
<p><b>AP1.12. Elaboration of a procedure for Conflict Mediation and a communication plan:</b> This action has been extended to formalise and consolidate existing mechanisms related to conflict prevention and ethical concerns. The next phase will focus on defining a structured mediation pathway and developing a clear communication plan to ensure accessibility, awareness and trust across all staff categories.</p>	23, 24, 27, 34	<p>Conflict mediation procedure formally defined and approved by governing bodies</p>	In progress	Legal People Comm.	4Q-2026
	8, 9, 10, 12	<p>Communication plan on mediation and reporting mechanisms implemented</p> <p>Whistleblowing channel operational and communicated</p> <p>Clear mediation pathway published and accessible to staff</p> <p>Number of cases managed through formal mediation channels</p> <p>Annual review of conflict management mechanisms</p>			
<p><b>AP2.12. BBRC scientific career framework &amp; Itineraris:</b> Development and consolidation of a transparent scientific career framework and career itineraries, clarifying roles, expectations and progression pathways across research profiles in line with responsible research assessment principles.</p>	28, 11, 30	<p>Scientific Career Framework formally approved and published</p>	New	People SCRS	3Q-2026
	11, 13	<p>Defined career itineraries for scientific, technical and medical profiles</p>			

		<p>% of staff mapped to career stages</p> <p>Transparent promotion criteria published</p> <p>% of appraisal processes aligned with the new framework</p> <p>Career advice sessions implemented</p>			
<p><b>AP2.13. Conference policy/Grant:</b> Establishment of a conference policy defining institutional support for participation in two key Alzheimer’s disease conferences per researcher, including dedicated budget allocation and clear criteria to ensure fair, transparent and equitable access.</p>	28, 26, 15	<p>Conference Policy formally approved and published</p>	New	SCRS Management	2Q-2026
	11, 7, 10	<p>Annual budget allocated to conference support</p> <p>% of researchers supported per year</p> <p>Gender balance in conference grants awarded</p> <p>Transparent eligibility and selection criteria published</p> <p>Annual report on conference funding distribution</p>			
<p><b>AP2.14. Fellowship/calls calendar or flyer:</b> Development of a regularly updated fellowship and funding calls calendar or flyer to improve visibility, accessibility and timely dissemination of funding opportunities across career stages.</p>	28, 30	<p>Fellowship and funding calls calendar published and accessible</p> <p>Frequency of updates per year</p>	New	GI Comm.	1Q-2027

	11	<p>% of research staff receiving dissemination communications</p> <p>Number of career advice sessions linked to funding calls &amp; projects</p> <p>Increase in number of applications submitted</p> <p>Annual review of dissemination effectiveness</p>			
<p><b>AP2.15. 2nd BBRC Strategic Plan:</b> This new action aims to design and adopt the institutional Action Plan 2027–2032, ensuring continuity of the Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and reinforcing the Centre’s long-term commitment to excellence, sustainability and responsible research practices.</p>	23, 24, 36	<p>Action Plan 2027–2032 drafting process formally launched</p> <p>Internal stakeholder consultation process conducted</p>	New	Management SCRS	4Q-2026
	8, 9, 13	<p>Action Plan 2027–2032 formally approved by governing bodies</p> <p>Integration of HRS4R principles across strategic axes</p> <p>Alignment with institutional CoARA commitments documented</p> <p>Strategic objectives defined with measurable indicators</p>			

		Annual monitoring report on implementation published			
<b>AP2.16. Coverage of PhD enrolment fees for doctoral researchers:</b> Institutional coverage of PhD enrolment fees for doctoral researchers to ensure equal access to doctoral training and remove financial barriers during the PhD period.	24, 26, 27	Institutional decision on coverage of PhD enrolment fees approved	New	SCRS People	1Q-2026
	9, 10	% of doctoral researchers with enrolment fees covered Annual budget allocated to enrolment fee coverage Gender balance among beneficiaries Annual review of implementation			
<b>AP2.17. Psychosocial Risk Assessment:</b> Implementation of a psychosocial risk assessment to analyse working conditions, workplace wellbeing and key psychosocial factors, with the aim of defining preventive measures and continuous improvement actions.	24, 23	Psychosocial survey implemented % of staff participation rate	New	H&S CSS	2Q-2027
	9, 8	Survey results analysed and reported Preventive action plan developed based on results % of identified actions implemented Follow-up survey conducted within defined timeframe			

## Training & Professional Development - Research Careers & Talent Development

ACTIONS	Principles (40/20)	New Principles	Status	Responsible	Time
<p><b>AP1.17. Update the “Training Plan” with Annual Budget Allocation and taking into account business related priorities:</b> The Training Plan is in place with an allocated annual budget and alignment with institutional priorities, ensuring coordinated identification of training needs across units. This action will be reinforced through the implementation of a centralised training management and communication system to improve visibility, monitoring and strategic alignment.</p>	38, 39, 26	<p>Annual Training Plan approved with allocated budget</p> <p>Training budget execution rate monitored annually</p> <p>% of staff participating in training activities</p> <p>Training priorities aligned with institutional strategy</p>	In progress	People SCRS	Continuous
	15, 9	<p>Centralised training management system implemented (AP2.21)</p> <p>Training opportunities communicated through structured channels</p> <p>Annual training participation and impact report published</p>			

<p><b>AP1.19. Performance evaluation of mentors, supervisors and functional heads:</b> A development evaluation process is in place, including assessment of functional heads and supervisors by senior management. However, a structured upward or 360° feedback mechanism from team members has not yet been formalised and will be explored to strengthen transparency, accountability and leadership development.</p>	11, 37	% supervisors evaluated annually	In progress	People Management	4Q-2027
	13, 14	% teams participating in structured 360° feedback % supervisors with development plan derived from evaluation Year-on-year improvement in leadership score			
<p><b>AP1.20. Provide Training on OTM-R to all those who are involved in the recruitment process:</b> Provision of targeted training on OTM-R principles to all staff involved in recruitment and selection processes, ensuring consistent, fair and transparent application of open and merit-based recruitment practices.</p>	12, 15, 37	% recruitment panel members trained in OTM-R	In progress	People Management	2Q-2028
	6, 7, 14	Number of OTM-R training sessions delivered Participant satisfaction score of OTM-R training			
<p><b>AP1.23. Design a career development plan addressed to pre-docs and post-docs including training options:</b> This action aimed to develop a structured career development plan for predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers, including training and professional development pathways; although not formally implemented, several support measures were progressively introduced.</p>	28, 30 38	Career development framework for predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers integrated into the Academic Office	In progress	People ATO*	3Q-2027
	11, 15	Defined career guidance pathways for predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers			

		<p>% of predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers receiving career guidance annually</p> <p>Structured training options mapped and communicated</p> <p>Annual monitoring report on researcher career development support</p>			
<p><b>AP2.18. Reform of Research Evaluation Practices in line with DORA and CoARA:</b> Progressive reform of research evaluation practices following the institutional commitment to DORA and CoARA, moving towards more holistic, qualitative and responsible assessment approaches that recognise diverse research contributions beyond traditional metrics.</p>	11, 16	CoARA Action Plan developed and formally adopted	New	SCRS People	1Q-2027 to 4Q-2028
	13	<p>Revised research evaluation framework approved</p> <p>Evaluation criteria aligned with DORA and CoARA principles</p> <p>% of appraisal and promotion processes applying revised criteria</p> <p>Training sessions delivered on responsible research assessment</p> <p>Annual monitoring report on implementation of responsible evaluation practices link the the HRS4R</p>			

<p><b>AP2.19. Micro-Learning Modules (10–15 min):</b> Development of short micro-learning modules (10–15 minutes) to provide flexible, accessible and targeted training on key institutional policies, ethical standards and professional practices.</p>	38, 39	Number of micro-learning modules developed	New	People Comm.	1Q-2028
	11, 15	% of staff completing mandatory modules Completion rate per module Staff satisfaction rate Integration of modules into onboarding process Annual review and update of content			
<p><b>AP2.20. Creation of Academic Office:</b> Establishment of an Academic Office to support predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers, strengthening career development, research evaluation and governance processes in alignment with institutional and European frameworks.</p>	28, 30, 23	Academic Office formally established	New	Management People	3Q-2026
	11	Roles and responsibilities defined and published % of predoctoral and postdoctoral researchers supported annually Number of career guidance sessions provided Integration of Academic Office into appraisal and evaluation processes			

		Annual activity report			
<b>AP2.21. Implementation of a Centralised Training Management and Communication System:</b> To improve visibility, accessibility, monitoring and strategic alignment of training and development opportunities through the implementation of a structured and digitalised training management and communication system.	38, 39	Centralised training management system implemented % of training activities registered in the system	New	People Comm.	3Q-2027
	15, 11	% of staff with recorded training participation Automated training communication launched Annual training participation rate Training data used for strategic workforce planning Annual evaluation of system effectiveness			

Comm.	Communication
SCRS	Scientific Coordination & Research Support
IT	IT Systems & Organization
ATO	Academic & Talent Office
CSS	Health & Safety Committee
EDC	Equality & Diversity Commission
GI	Grants & Innovation
TC	Transformation & Culture