

HR Excellence in Research

Internal Review

Internal Review

Case number

2020ES493584

Name Organisation under review

Fundación IIS Aragón

Organisation's contact details

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1. Organisational Information

Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	1376
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	15/138
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	138
Of whom are women *	872
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	214
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	865
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	248
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	215
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	15955987
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	2370191
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	10589331
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	2996465

ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)

IIS Aragón is a health research institute accredited by the Ministry of Science and Innovation. Health research institutes are mixed centers composed of hospitals and universities, to which their professionals (professors and specialist doctors) are attached for the purpose of conducting health research. All research by associated researchers is directly managed by the IIS Aragón Foundation. The number of affiliated researchers is 1,238, while the number of researchers directly employed by IIS Aragón is 138.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please review the strengths and weaknesses under the 4 thematic areas of the Charter and Code, as provided by your organisation in the initial assessment phase. When doing so, you should do not only look back, but also consider new priorities, strategic decisions, etc. which may further influence the action plan. Please also provide a brief commentary in the "Remarks" column if major changes have occurred versus the initial plan.

Note:Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter & Code to open the editor and provide your answers in the Internal Review for Interim Assessment dedicated section.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

The Strategic Plan 2018-2022 of IISA was revised in 2019. In this revision the institute detected the necessity to establish an ethical code of behaviour for researchers and workers of the IISA. For that purpose, a **Guidelines on Good Scientific Practices** was created to set the procedures to avoid conflicts, not incur unfair practices or falsify the results and that guarantees respect for the authorship of publications and ownership of research results. IISA guarantees the availability of this guide to all the staff promoting awareness in this regard through a proper dissemination and training.

The main values and principles of research are defined and summarised in the next aspect:

- Honesty and respect: researchers will comply with the deontological guidelines accepted and recognised by the scientific community.
- Responsibility and integrity: Researchers must guarantee that the research is carried out in compliance with the ethical, legal and security requirements in accordance with the terms and conditions defined in the calls, in the research protocols and in the agreements between the IISA and the funding agencies.
- Rigour and reliability: Researchers must carry out a rigorous process of obtaining and interpreting the data, which requires a detailed review of the results obtained before publishing them. In case errors are detected after publication, a public correction will be made as soon as possible. All actions carried out within the scope of the IISA should aim for the highest possible levels of quality and excellence.

IISA embraces the recommendations and requirements contained in the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA)**, being of application to all professionals of the institution.

Any procedure of research involving human beings, animals and/or genetically modified organisms shall comply with the current legislation. In this regard, IISA counts on the assessment of the Clinical Research Ethics Committee of Aragón (CEICA) and the Advisory Ethics Commission for Animal Testing (CEAEA).

The Research Commission of IISA carries out an evaluation and monitoring of this Guidelines annually, reviewing its contents and proposing all the modifications detect to adapt the document to the reality of the Institute or to the new existing regulatory framework.

The Ethical and professional aspect of IISA is also supported by the **Cooperative Scientific Project** document (2018 -2022). This document defines the research priorities to reach a quality, translational and competitive research.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

The principles included in this section affect both associated and contracted researchers, as both manage their research lines and projects through IIS Aragón.

Strengths:

- Existence of a Code of Good Practices in research with a mechanism for addressing conflicts. It embraces the recommendations and requirements contained in the **European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (ALLEA)**, being of application to all professionals of the institution.
- There is a regional Research Ethics Committee for clinical research, in which members of IIS Aragón participate.
- Existence of an Animal Experimentation Ethics Committee, in which members of IIS Aragón participate.
- Annual scientific report that includes all contributions from IIS Aragón researchers.
- Quality process for project management and for the transfer of results.
- Support for researchers in the presentation of projects and development of their research lines.
- Availability of an Innovation unit that supports in the exploitation of results.
- Research lines aligned with the objectives of the institute.
- Existence of an External Scientific Committee that advises on the scientific quality of IIS Aragón.
- Internal management rules that include citation in journals.
- Research laboratories integrated into hospitals, facilitating professional contact with clinical researchers and resources, like patient samples.
- Research programmes defined in a Cooperative Scientific Plan that includes all research groups integrated in the institute

Weaknesses:

- Limited information on legislation, including that related to intellectual property. Researchers think that although inquiries are resolved, no continuous training is conducted.
- Researchers demand more information about assessment methodologies for individuals
- Researchers have little knowledge about the roles of staff management, and who can be addressed for specific questions

Remarks (max 500 words)

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Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

STRENGTHS: The Recruitment and Selection Procedure for a job offer of IISA is aligned with the OTM criteria for open, transparent and merit-based recruitment, in accordance with the European HRS4R initiative.

This procedure is published on the web page of IISA and it is based on the followed principles:

- Provide information in a transparent manner on the procedure, including, among other aspects, the selection criteria, as well as the timetable for its resolution.
- Include clear and concise information about the positions offered, including the skills required, the merits required, the competencies of the positions, the working conditions, the opportunities for training and career development, as well as issues related to the implementation of the Institute's equality policies.
- Alignment of the requirements in competencies and qualifications demanded with the positions offered.
- Minimize the administrative burden of the selection processes, with the aim of facilitating the participation of candidates.
- Take into account linguistic issues, avoiding the entry barrier for potential candidates for selection processes.

According to those principles, IISA has a **public procedure** to carry out the selection processes of its personnel. All job offers are published on the IISA website, without prejudice to the fact that they may be published in other ways. Especially in the case of offers for researchers, these offers will be published on the EURAXESS website.

The Selection Committee will set a meeting date to review the candidates' CVs and a second meeting date to assess personal skills through a personal interview. A record will be drawn up containing the internal criteria established for evaluating each criterion and will be signed by all the members of the Selection Committee.

Once the process is finished and no later than a month later, all candidates receive an email with the information of the completion of the process and thanking them for their participation.

WEAKNESSES:

- The criterion of mobility should be included in most of the positions as an assessable requirement, which although it is taken into account in some specific case, must be systematised in the procedure.
- The documentation is presented online, which is a strength due to the agility that this provides, although the space on this page must be reviewed to verify that it is possible to upload all the merits contributed by the candidates.
- Although publicity is part of the entire procedure, to give even more transparency the results of each of the evaluation stages could be published, although this would lengthen the processing and contracting times.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

Strengths

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- Alignment of the requirements in competencies and qualifications demanded with the positions offered.
- Minimize the administrative burden of the selection processes, with the aim of facilitating the participation of candidates.
- Take into account linguistic issues, avoiding the entry barrier for potential candidates for selection processes.
- Involvement of responsible researchers in the selection processes.

- Recognition of previous positions in public employment calls.
- All researchers are hired with an employment contract.

Weaknesses:

- Limited feedback to candidates who are not selected.
- The dissemination of job offers should be improved in order to ensure that most suitable candidates apply. Additional means to the webpage and EURAXESS should be used.
- Regular recognition of completing placements in other countries should be established on a regular basis.

Remarks (max 500 words)

Among the activities that have been completed in this area is the definition and publication of a recruitment policy aligned with OTM-r principles that is reviewed periodically. Concurrently, the hiring procedure is publicly available, contributing to transparency in the process, and providing useful information for candidates. The visibility of the job openings has been increased, as, in addition to the website, it is also used Euraxess. However, we understand that society evolves, and we are looking towards new methods to disseminate research positions.

Working conditions*



Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

IISA provides working conditions and a favourable environment for the development of the scientific and academic career of research staff, in addition to training actions, infrastructures and services for the effective execution of their professional activities. Our institution recognises the professional activity of the staff and the academic and training merits at any stage of their scientific career.

The institute governs its operation under a strict legal framework, fundamentally marked by the Spanish Law of Science, Technology and Innovation (14/2011, June 1) and the Law of Research and Innovation of Aragon (17/2018, December 4). IISA is continuously updating and incorporating the new legislation in force in terms of research, thus it has recently incorporated the new guidelines of the new Statute for predoctoral research staff in training (EPIF) (RD103/2019, March 1).

The working conditions of all research staff are regulated by different labour laws and collective labour agreements, regardless of their level, nationality and duration of the contract. In this aspect, one of the **weak points** that should be worked on is the union representation of the workers. To fill this gap, a suggestion/complaint box has been set up on the IISA website, where the worker can send their comments and/or complaints about the operation of IISA. These will be evaluated, answered and solved as far as possible by the Internal Commission of IISA, being treated at all times with strict confidentiality. An Equality Plan for IISA is currently being developed and defined to achieve equal treatment and opportunities between women and men and to eliminate sex-based discrimination.

The researchers are represented in all the governing bodies of the IISA, so that they can actively participate in the decision-making of the IISA. Gender equality has been introduced in the composition of the different committees of the governing bodies of IISA.

One of the **strengths** of our institution is the ease and efficiency of incorporating staff into the dynamics and philosophy of the organisation, thanks to welcome guides or manuals, which provide information and a regulatory framework for the work environment. In addition, the Human Resources Unit conducts individualised welcome sessions for new recruits, explaining in detail all the organisation and dynamics of IISA. In April 2019, the new IISA website was launched, providing the necessary information to workers. However, although the action plans are available on said website, the possibility of preparing a complete guide of procedures for procedures to be distributed among the research staff that favours the daily activity of the staff is considered. One of the critical points is promoting actions for the reconciliation of personal and professional life within the IISA, with the possibility of elaborating a Work Life Reconciliation Plan. Likewise, the indicators of these plans collected from consultation processes for IISA staff should be adapted, together with the

conciliation measures, continuing training and protection against workplace harassment and gender violence of the staff, and develop a program for the normalisation of working life at the institution for research staff with functional diversity.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

Working conditions related to salary, schedule, and job position apply only to hired researchers. Associated researchers are organizationally dependent on another entity, which applies its specific conditions.

Strengths:

- Spanish labour legislation promotes work-life balance.
- Predoctoral researchers has a specific regulation stating that they have to be hired under an specific laboral contract
- Employee inquiries are resolved on a regular basis
- The resources of research groups allow the development of research for predoctoral researchers' thesis.
- Occupational safety and health prevention measures are in place.
- Salary scales are publicly available through the transparency section of the website.
- The salary tables include different categories for predoctoral researchers, postdoctoral researchers, and various levels for senior researchers.
- Publicly funded researchers who obtain the R3 certificate are stabilized with a staff contract.

Weaknesses:

- There is no procedure for resolving inquiries about labor conditions or conflicts with supervisors, although inquiries are addressed through the HR department.
- Lack of professional development advice focused on achieving a scientific career and improving skills.
- The criteria for advancing from one level to another within the senior researcher category are not objectively defined.
- Researchers with emerging groups feel the need for support in incorporating postdoctoral researchers to consolidate their positions.

Remarks (max 500 words)

One of the two main actions to highlight in this area is the stabilization of R3 researchers who obtain public funding. National calls for

research contracts are highly competitive, demonstrating the high quality of researchers who secure them. At IIS Aragón, all researchers who pass the R3 evaluation are stabilized with a permanent contract. The other is the creation and publication of the entity's Equality Plan, which has gathered information from various groups.

Training and development*



Strengths and Weaknesses (Initial Phase)

Strengths and Weaknesses (Interim Assessment)

IISA counts with a **Training Plan** for researchers pursues to develop a research of excellence in the biomedical field. The institute provides necessary tools to increase the researcher and professional capabilities of all our members. A variety of formative actions such as seminars, conferences, workshops and courses contribute to a continuous information exchange not only among basic researchers but also involving physicians and patients. The formative program launched annually by the institute tries to cover the formative needs of all IISA members based on specific surveys asking for their satisfaction level of previous activities and for future formative suggestions. The programme designed is performed with the advice of Scientific Committee and the Training Action Commission composed by representants of each researcher category and institutions. Despite the efforts made to fill the formative gaps, the multiple academic and research profiles that conform to the research groups of the institute make this a very challenging task. This is partially overcome by the complementation with other formative offers from the 4 annexed organisations (University of Zaragoza, 2 Hospitals (HUMS and HCLB) and Aragon Health Science Institute).

As commented before, there is a latent underlying problem in the evolution and development of the scientific career of our researchers more qualified, which involves researchers from all stages from R1 to R4. One of the objectives of IISA for the coming years is to develop a program of courses, seminars, conferences, as well as to design a comprehensive plan of advice and support for postdoctoral research staff.

In light of the evolving formation needs, our close future goal is to establish the **Open Science** “modus operandies” in our researchers, encouraging them to perform more collaborative and accessible work. This new necessity has been detected in the revision of the Strategic Plan and has been included in it. Therefore, most of the formative actions are focused on this direction such as training on new techniques to disseminate knowledge or oral communication skills and with a special interest in training emerging researchers at the Institute. For that purpose, an **Open Science Policy** has been described and it is available on the website of IISA for all the researchers.

Strengths and Weaknesses (Award Renewal, max 500 words) *

The principles included in this section affect both associated and contracted researchers, as both manage their research lines and

projects through IIS Aragón. Although associated researchers may have access to specific training through the institution that hires them, as associated researchers they are entitled to access the research training plan under the same conditions as contracted researchers. In fact, when the training needs survey is conducted, no distinction is made between the type of researcher it is aimed at

Strengths:

- Promotion of skills improvement through workshops, conferences, and webinars.
- Existence of doctorates conducted in conjunction with industry.
- A defined procedure for technology transfer.
- Encouragement of recognizing co-authorship of all participants in publications and inventions.
- Evaluation of the development and satisfaction of training activities that are course-based.
- Existence of a procedure to manage complaints and suggestions.
- Participation of the institute's researchers in the Internal Scientific Committee.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of a comprehensive strategy for the development, support, and advice of research at all career stages.
- Lack of promotion of communication between research personnel and supervisors.
- Lack of advice on potential career opportunities in the private industry after completing a doctorate
- Training activities should include cross-cutting competences

Remarks (max 500 words)

The range of training opportunities has increased over the last few years. In addition to training courses, seminars are organized with the participation of researchers from various groups. This activities are planned taking into account the needs of the groups, which are consulted annually, through a survey and the Internal Scientific Committee.

Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed? (max 500 words)

The established priorities remain, and no changes are anticipated in the short and medium term. However, the IIS Aragón is an institute accredited by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, which implies that there are certain requirements to be met to maintain the certification. These requirements are outlined in the Technical Accreditation Guide, which the ministry has the authority to review. The last significant revision was in 2019, and although five years have passed, it is not expected that the criteria will be modified in the short term. Should there be a situation where changes occur, the priorities would need to be adjusted to the new regulations, and therefore, the various actions to be developed would need to be reviewed.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates, changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? (max 500 words)

Several circumstances have affected the development of the planned actions. The main one is the current regional government's push to establish a research career path with common criteria among the main entities that depend on it. This is a positive development, as it allows alignment with a regional strategy that provides long-term stability to the career model, although it means that implementation must be coordinated among all entities.

At the present, contacts are being initiated with the other affected entities to establish a common working basis.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan? (max 500 words)

The Strategic Plan of IIS Aragón was approved in 2023 and has a validity of 5 years. Although the plan is evaluated and reviewed annually during this period, the strategic lines are the result of an internal and external analysis that addresses the needs of the institution and are established for the entire duration of the plan. This allows them to be considered when establishing the various actions that form part of the HRS4R strategy.

3. Actions

Please consult the list of all actions you have submitted as part of your HR strategy. Please add to the overview the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators. If any actions have been altered or omitted, please provide a commentary for each action. You can also add new objectives.

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

Proposed ACTIONS

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1

To make a “welcome pack” to unify documentation.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year’s quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
1. Research freedom			
2. Ethical principles			
3. Professional responsibility			
4. Professional attitude			
5. Contractual and legal obligations			
6. Accountability			
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	Q1 2017	Projects Unit / Human resources Unit	Intranet and survey to newcomers
9. Public engagement			
31. Intellectual Property Rights			
32. Co-authorship			
37. Supervision and managerial duties			
40. Supervision			

Proposed ACTIONS

Current Status **Remarks**

COMPLETED

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2

To define and publish the hiring procedure to ensure the transparency in the process.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
13. Recruitment (Code)			
14. Selection (Code)			
15. Transparency (Code)			
16. Judging merit (Code)			IIS statutes and publication in Web Site. Periodic self- assessment.
17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)	Q1 2017	Human resources Unit	
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)			
19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)			
20. Seniority (Code)			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

To define and use mobility as a condition in the hiring procedure.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	Q1 2017	Human resources Unit	N° of mobility researchers hired
Current Status	Remarks		
EXTENDED	New time planning: Q2 2020 Mobility is taken into account in the hiring procedures, when it is required or positive for the offered positions. A new human resources recruitment procedure is being defined to be approved in Q4 2019 and implemented in 2020. Among other issues it will reinforce the recognition of merits related to mobility.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4

To define training work-plan 2017-2020

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
28. Career development			
33. Teaching			
36. Relation with supervisors			
37. Supervision and managerial duties	Q3 2017	Projects Units / Training section	N° of organised courses - N° of planned courses
38. Continuing Professional Development			
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Training Plan approved in 2018 and revised in 2019 to adapt its content to the new Guide for Accreditation.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

Systematising the complaints and claims processes

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
34. Complains/ appeals	Q4 2017	Labour Risk Prevention and Data protection Unit	Nº of collected enquiries / Nº of managed enquiries
	Current Status	Remarks	
	COMPLETED	Procedure included in the new Quality Plan 2019.	

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

Increase knowledge in the intellectual property rights and transfer of results.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
31. Intellectual Property Rights	Q4 2017	Innovation Unit	IPR revision of projects. N° of organised courses on IPR.
38. Continuing Professional Development			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Training courses, infodays and specific meetings with researchers have been organised.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

Increase visibility of the IIS positions internationally.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
28. Career development	Q1 2018	Human Resources Unit	IIS Web Site and job offers in EURAXESS and other websites / N° of published job offers
30. Access to career advice			

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	New time planning: Q4 2019. The new procedure for human resources recruitment, as defined in Action Plan 3, will include specific rules and actions for the publication of job offers.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8

To define the number of strategic alliances with research Partners to promote researcher's mobility.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)			
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)	Q2 2018	Executive Director	Nº of alliances. Nº of researchers in other centres.
29. Value of mobility			
38. Continuing Professional Development			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Continuous. Several cooperation agreements have been signed with entities both at national, European and international level. An Internationalisation Plan is being defined in order to reinforce strategic alliances in different European countries and also in other third countries to implement specific mobility plans for researchers. Several specific actions under the Erasmus+ Programme are being agreed with partner entities.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

To define the strategic plan 2017-2021 to promote that researchers know short and medium time work activities in IIS Aragón.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
4. Professional attitude	Q4 2018	Scientific Director	% of Strategic plan achievement. Nº of projects or research lines which are aligned with the strategic plan.
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	New Strategic Plan (2018-2022) defined and approved. In 2019 the Plan has had a mid-term review with very satisfactory results (74% level of implementation). New actions have been included for the 2020-2022 period.		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 10

To define specific tasks for each profile (pre doc, post-doc, project manager...)

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems			
13. Recruitment (Code)			
28. Career development			
30. Access to career advice			
36. Relation with supervisors	Q4 2018	Human Resources Unit	Coordination of the action as European framework of researchers at regional level.
37. Supervision and managerial duties			
38. Continuing Professional Development			
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11

To procedure the monitoring and managing of research projects.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
4. Professional attitude	Q4 2018	Projects Unit	Nº of projects

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	Management and continuous follow up of research projects is being performed.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 12

To encourage that female and young researches take part into internal scientific committees.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
10. Non discrimination			Meeting minutes / N° of women in the IIS committees, and in projects.
13. Recruitment (Code)	Q4 2019	Scientific Director	
27. Gender balance			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Current female members of Internal Scientific committee are above 40%		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13

To procedure the mentoring process of young researchers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			
28. Career development			
30. Access to career advice			
33. Teaching			
36. Relation with supervisors	2019 - 2020	Research Resources Unit	N° of researchers who are monitored
37. Supervision and managerial duties			
38. Continuing Professional Development			
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		

Proposed ACTIONS

Current Status	Remarks
COMPLETED	This task has been redesigned and scheduled for the current strategic planning

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 14

To develop/define the internal development plan for IIS researchers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			
30. Access to career advice			
33. Teaching			
36. Relation with supervisors			
37. Supervision and managerial duties	2019 - 2020	Scientific Director	IIS rules and procedures
38. Continuing Professional Development			
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED	Basic categories established		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 16

To define and establish an investigation procedure in case of a malpractice in research

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
2. Ethical principles			
3. Professional responsibility			
4. Professional attitude			
5. Contractual and legal obligations			
7. Good practice in research	Q1 2020	Scientific Director	To publish the procedure
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems			
34. Complains/ appeals			
36. Relation with supervisors			
Current Status	Remarks		
COMPLETED			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 17

To create a Commission to face the conflicts between the staff

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
2. Ethical principles			
3. Professional responsibility		Labour Risk	
4. Professional attitude	Q2 2020	Prevention and Data protection	Number of meetings per year
10. Non discrimination		Unit	
34. Complains/ appeals			
	Current Status	Remarks	
	COMPLETED		

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 18

Define and approve an Equality Plan for the Institution with a broad approach.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
10. Non discrimination	Q4 2020	Labour Risk Prevention and Data protection Unit	Publication in web
27. Gender balance			

Current Status Remarks

COMPLETED

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 19

Analyse and implement complementary management systems to facilitate joint monitoring of R&D activities, their resources, and their outcomes. The information should be accessible for the researchers through the management tool.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
4. Professional attitude	Q2 2025	Projects Unit	
6. Accountability			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Action 20

Conduct a survey of all research groups to identify current and future facility needs to ensure the proper execution of R&D at IIS Aragon, and develop a functional plan that brings groups physically closer, avoiding dispersion and maximizing synergies between them. This plan will also incorporate common labs and platforms with additional needs.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
24. Working conditions	Q2 2025	Tech Support Unit	Functional facilities report
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 21

Consult research groups on their external communication needs to develop a workflow that enhances the dissemination of their activities and results.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	Q4 2024	Communication	Number of groups contacted (target: 10 per year)

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 22

Leverage patient engagement initiatives carried out by hospitals to include scientific aspects and bring R&D closer to society.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	Q3 2024	Clinical Research Unit	Number of initiatives / target: 4
9. Public engagement			

Current Status Remarks

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 23

Design recruitment programmes for researchers, predoctoral, postdoctoral, and clinical personnel in conjunction with private entities.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
12. Recruitment			
13. Recruitment (Code)			
16. Judging merit (Code)	Q2 2026	Projects Unit	Number of positions co funded by private capital / Target: 3
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			
22. Recognition of the profession			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 24

Define a collaboration model between research groups and companies to enable shared use of research infrastructures

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	Q1 2025	Innovation Unit	Specialized services provided as a result of group research / Target: 4
23. Research environment			
31. Intellectual Property Rights			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 25

Design a programme that facilitates researcher mobility to other research centres or companies

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	Q4 2024	Projects Unit	Number of research stay /
29. Value of mobility			Target: 10

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 26

Work together with the Department of Health of the Government of Aragón and the University of Zaragoza to define a clinical research career model in the healthcare system, supported by the new Science Law (Law 17/2022, of September 5).

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			Clinical researchers with permanent contract /
22. Recognition of the profession	Q1 2026	Scientific Direction	Target: 3
28. Career development			

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 27

Organize sessions among researchers, the pharmaceutical industry, and patients to improve society's understanding of clinical trials.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
2. Ethical principles			
3. Professional responsibility			
5. Contractual and legal obligations	Q2 2025	Clinical Research Unit	Number of sessions / Target: 2
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results			
9. Public engagement			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 28

Update the transfer plan updating the instruments already included for the exploitation of research results, and promoting training in the area.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	Q3 2024	Innovation	Plan publication
31. Intellectual Property Rights			

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 29

Review and update the IIS Aragón Good Scientific Practices guide, involving the participation of the ethical committees for human research and animal practice.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
3. Professional responsibility			
4. Professional attitude			
5. Contractual and legal obligations	Q3 2024	Clinical Research Unit	Publication of the updated guide
7. Good practice in research			
Current Status	Remarks		

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 30

Promote equal representation in researcher representative bodies, and ensure the consideration of the gender dimension in research projects to improve the quality and social relevance of the results

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
7. Good practice in research	Q2 2024	Scientific Direction	Percentage of female members in Internal Scientific Committee / Target > 40%
10. Non discrimination			
27. Gender balance			
35. Participation in decision-making bodies			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 31

Develop a citizen participation strategy to foster collaborative research and innovation processes involving all societal actors.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
9. Public engagement	Q4 2025	Communication Unit	Projects involving society started / Target: 2

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 32

Collaborate with other IIS Aragón partners in order to extend the training offer to our researchers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
38. Continuing Professional Development	Q4 2024	Projects Unit	Actions for other centres open to IIS Aragon researchers / Target: 5
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 33

Organize seminars open to external personnel to transfer generated knowledge to different research groups

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results			
9. Public engagement	Q2 2025	Innovation Unit	Number of seminars / Target: 4
31. Intellectual Property Rights			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 34

Define a professional research career pathway that allows researchers to progress through different thelevels of the European research framework.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)			
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)			
19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)	Q4 2025	Scientific Direction	Scientific Career Development Policy approved
20. Seniority (Code)			
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			
22. Recognition of the profession			
28. Career development			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 35

Develop activities to promote a mentoring culture that supports the professional development of young researchers, both clinical and non-clinical.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
28. Career development	Q4 2025	Scientific Director	Number of mentors / target: 4
37. Supervision and managerial duties			
40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 36

Review and update the Equality Plan to ensure equal conditions and opportunities for men and women, ensuring compliance with current regulations

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
10. Non discrimination	Q4 2025	HR	Equality Plan updated and published
27. Gender balance			

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 37

Develop scientific leadership skills of researchers at the most advanced levels of the research career (R3-R4)

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
22. Recognition of the profession			
33. Teaching			
36. Relation with supervisors			
38. Continuing Professional Development	Q3 2025	Projects Unit	Number of leadership workshops / Target: 2
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 38

Work with other institutions (ARAID) to define an evaluation, selection, and co-funding system for professionals that favours the incorporation of scientific talent at IIS Aragón and contributes to the recruitment of future scientific leaders in the coming years.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems			
12. Recruitment			
16. Judging merit (Code)			
18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)	Q4 2024	Management	Number of researchers incorporated through ARAID / Target: 2
19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)			
21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)			
25. Stability and permanence of employment			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 39

To update the current recruitment procedure for research personnel to include it in the corporative quality management system

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
12. Recruitment			Recruitment process
13. Recruitment (Code)	Q2 2025	HR	integration it
14. Selection (Code)			quality system

Current Status Remarks

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 40

Update and improve the internal communication plan by adapting the channels to different types of researchers, in order to become more effective.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
23. Research environment	Q2 2025	HR	Approval and publication of the updated plan
24. Working conditions			

Current Status Remarks

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 41

Training in cross-cutting skills adapted to the different stages of research development

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
5. Contractual and legal obligations			
28. Career development			
33. Teaching	Q4 2025	Projects Unit	Number of training sessions organized / Target: 3
38. Continuing Professional Development			
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
Current Status	Remarks		

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 42

Update the annual training needs survey in order to personalized it to each level of the research career (R1-R4).

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
33. Teaching	Q3 2024	Projects Unit	Perform 3 different consultations: for R1, R2 and R3-R4 researchers

Current Status Remarks

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 43

Establish a development evaluation system that allows researchers to receive feedback periodically in order to prepare them for external evaluations.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems			
30. Access to career advice			
36. Relation with supervisors	Q2 2025	Projects Unit	
38. Continuing Professional Development			
40. Supervision			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 44

Training in conflict management and dissemination of current action protocols.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
5. Contractual and legal obligations	Q1 2025	HR	Number of training sessions / target: 2
10. Non discrimination			

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 45

To perform welcome meetings for new researchers and other personnel (support, administrative, etc.) to help them to understand the organization and the main contact people.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
23. Research environment			
24. Working conditions	Q3 2024	HR	Number of sessions / Target: 2
30. Access to career advice			

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 46

Conduct professional development sessions with researchers, especially those with emerging groups, to provide them with advice to advance in their scientific development, as well as in the development of their group.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
22. Recognition of the profession			
28. Career development	Q2 2025	Projects Unit	Number os sessions
30. Access to career advice			
38. Continuing Professional Development			

Current Status Remarks

NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 47

Include general IPR training for postdoctoral researchers

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
5. Contractual and legal obligations	Q4 2024	Innovation	Number os sessions / Target: 2
39. Access to research training and continuous development			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 48

Define and use mobility as part of the general criteria in the recruitment process, not only for specific positions

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
29. Value of mobility	Q2 2026	HR	Criteria updated

Current Status	Remarks
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NEW

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 49

Improve the definition of research profiles, adding in more detail their specific tasks, and considering the differences between clinical a non-clinical researchers.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems			
13. Recruitment (Code)			
28. Career development			Number of different profiles defined
30. Access to career advice	Q4 2025	HR	
36. Relation with supervisors			
37. Supervision and managerial duties			
Current Status	Remarks		
NEW			

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 50

Appoint a representative for predoctoral researchers as a point of contact to address their needs, serving as a liaison.

GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/ semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
10. Non discrimination			
28. Career development			
32. Co-authorship	Q4 2024	Scientific Directo	Representative Nomination
34. Complains/ appeals			
36. Relation with supervisors			
	Current Status	Remarks	
	NEW		

Unselected principles:

26. Funding and salaries

The extended version of the reviewed HR Strategy for your organisation for the next 3 years, including the OTM-R policy must be published on your organisation's website.

Please provide the link to the dedicated webpage(s) on your organisation's web site *:

URL *:

<https://www.iisaragon.es/empleo/human-resources-strategy-hrs4r/> (<https://www.iisaragon.es/empleo/human-resources-strategy-hrs4r/>)

If your organisation has already filled in the OTM-R checklist in the Initial Phase, please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above in the action plan (as emerged from the Gap Analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress of the implementation versus the initial phase.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Initial Phase)

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Interim Assessment)

IISA, as a public entity, complies with the current Spanish legislation in force in this area. According to this legislation, all public procurement must be open, transparent, and based on merit. Consequently, all job vacancies are published on the website of IISA (as described in the *Recruitment and selection* section), without prejudice to the fact that they may be published in other ways. Especially in the case of offers for researchers, these offers will be published on the EURAXESS website.

Moreover, the offers include information on the procedure in a transparent manner, including, among other aspects:

- the competencies of the positions;
- the working conditions;
- the selection criteria (skills and merits required) mandatorily and evaluated;
- the rating system: maximum and minimum points obtained per criteria;
- the detailed list of the Selection Board;
- the selection process: description of the different phases of the process.

However, and especially as a result of the pandemic situation that has affected us, there are weak points that have to be reviewed and assessed to be adapted to the new situation.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Internal Review for Award Renewal)

IIS Aragón is a research center dependent on the regional government. This implies that, as a public initiative center, its hiring processes adhere to legally established principles, that fully align with those that govern OTM-R (Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment). According to the current regulation, hiring policy always ensures that job offers are published, open to all candidates who wish to apply (provided they meet the minimum requirements), and that they include a criteria published along with the call for applications, that will be used to assess the merit of each candidate.

Moreover, the offers include information on the procedure in a transparent manner, including, among other aspects:

- the competencies of the positions;

- the working conditions, including salary
- the selection criteria (skills and merits required). The mandatory criteria and those that are evaluated are explicitly stated
- the rating system: points obtained per criterion;
- the detailed list of the Selection Board, that always includes researchers
- the selection process: description of the different phases of the process.

Since the COVID19 pandemic, all our recruitment processes are conducted through electronic methods, helping researchers from abroad to apply. A digital copy of the documentation is submitted through a form published on the website. In order to keep administrative burden as low as possible, no additional documents are requested unless the candidate is selected. The use of e-recruitment tools is complemented with videoconferences to interview those candidates that cannot attend in person.

All candidates, selected or not selected, are notified telephonically or by email with the outcome when the process finishes.

However, there are some actions that are included in the action plan in order to improve our recruitment:

- Position definition profiles are going to be modified, to add more detail and become more specific about their tasks.
- An employee satisfaction survey is conducted on a regular basis. This methodology allows for the detection of the needs of individuals within the organization, as well as human conflicts that may be affecting the environment and the work itself. The information obtained enables the analysis of the impact of the labor measures implemented, as well as the satisfaction of the researchers.
- In addition to the information provided to new researchers through the welcome pack, welcome sessions will be held. These sessions will be conducted with the latest hires, and they will provide general information about the institute and identify the people to whom they can turn in case they have any needs
- In the modification of the communication plan, the possibility of regularly using new tools that allow for more effective dissemination of job offers will be included. This includes advanced use of professional networks, such as LinkedIn, as well as other platforms that complement the IIS Aragón's own website and Euraxess.

Please be aware that your OTM-R policy should be 'embedded' into the institutional HR strategy at the award renewal phase. The extended version of the reviewed HR strategy including the OTM-R policy and actions should be published on your organisation's website.

4. Implementation

General overview of the implementation process: (max. 1000 words)

The preliminary evaluation process, design, and implementation of a specific action plan focused on fulfilling the HRS4R strategy principles is included as part of the Strategic Plan of IIS Aragón, effective until 2027. By integrating the strategy into the institute's strategic planning, it is ensured that the monitoring of its actions is carried out periodically by the Board of Trustees, the governing body of the Institute.

For the implementation of each of the contemplated actions, a responsible unit has been designated, according to the structure of the institute's management units. The coordinator of each unit will be responsible for implementing each action and measuring the associated indicators that can demonstrate their effectiveness.

The structure of the institute includes a Scientific Directorate, responsible for establishing the institute's overall scientific policy. The research programs, which bring together different groups by common theme, depend on the Scientific Directorate, and each is led by a coordinator. In parallel, the management structure is headed by an Executive Director, who represents the highest authority regarding the institute's human resources. Under this direction, the following units are established:

- **Project and Scientific Management Unit:** provides technical support for the scientific monitoring of the evolution of research groups. In addition to monitoring competitive funding projects, this unit is also responsible for developing research careers in conjunction with the human resources department. As part of the development of researchers, it is in charge of planning the detection of training needs and their execution.
- **Clinical Research Unit:** provides technical support to trials and clinical studies, having a significant interaction with the healthcare centers that are part of the institute.
- **Innovation Unit:** is responsible for managing agreements with companies and the technology transfer from the groups to the production sector. Its functions include protecting research outcomes and advising on their exploitation.
- **Technical Support for Research Unit:** ensures the proper functioning of the facilities and research equipment.
- **Communication Unit:** is responsible for designing and applying the entity's communication strategy, developing the institute's Communication Plan, which includes both internal and external communication.
- **Human Resources Unit:** handles selection and recruitment processes, as well as applying the policy approved by the Directorate.

The coordinators of the units that have a greater role in the implementation are part of the working group, which is led by the Executive Director, as the highest responsible for human resources. This working group includes support researchers who provide support for activities that particularly affect them, such as scientific career development or interaction with certain groups of researchers, like predoctoral researchers (R1).

The strategic monitoring of the implementation will be carried out by the Internal Scientific Committee, which is chaired by the Scientific Director

and includes a majority of researcher members, as well as the presence of the Executive Director and several representatives from the main management units.

Regarding temporal planning, the actions will unfold over the next 3 years, being regularly reviewed by the Internal Scientific Committee, which will have the authority to modify the planning, adding new actions, extending the duration of the already planned actions, or reformulating those that are obtaining satisfactory results. After the 3 years of validity, it is anticipated that the reformulation of the new Strategic Plan of the Institute will begin, which will include as part of its internal analysis the final results of this action plan.

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

Note: Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How have you prepared the internal review?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The internal review of the strategy's compliance is conducted by contacting the various stakeholders of the institute: contracted researchers at all career levels, affiliated researchers, heads of the entities that are part of IIS Aragón, and other agents involved in health R&D, such as hospital service chiefs and patient associations. These consultations were carried out in two phases. The first phase took place during the second half of 2022, during the preparatory analysis for defining the current Strategic Plan of the institute. With the information collected, several action plans were designed to be developed during the period 2023-2027, many of which have a direct impact in the principles of the HRS4R strategy.

Additionally, during the first half of 2024, a specific analysis of the situation and compliance with each of the HRS4R principles was conducted. This action was carried out by the working group, which designed an anonymous survey sent to contracted and affiliated researchers. The survey aimed to have researchers evaluate the compliance of IIS Aragón with the principles, identifying areas where improvements could be made. The survey was sent to 1049 researchers, including both associate and contracted researchers, and received 109 responses (10.4%). However, the response rate has been very uneven, being notably higher among the staff of IIS Aragón, where the response rate reaches 34.4%. Once the survey was closed and the results analysed, different focus groups of researchers were organised, taking into account the different levels of their research careers. Each group, addressed the topics where possibilities for improvement had been identified, with the aim of gaining a closer understanding of the researchers' opinions, and developing actions agreed upon with them.

Finally, after completing the meetings with the focus groups and drawing conclusions, a specific action plan was developed and presented to the Internal Scientific Committee for its comments and final review.

How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Researchers are integrated into the implementation process in various ways and at different levels. On the one hand, the Internal Scientific Committee a body that supports the Scientific Directorate and includes representation of researchers at different stages of their research careers, has been designated to carry out the strategic monitoring of the implementation.

Additionally, there are specific actions that will require the support of research staff, as their perspective is indispensable. . For example, the creation of a working group for the Development of a Scientific Career path that allows the progression of researchers through objective criteria is planned. This initiative is driven by the regional government and is developed in coordination with other research institutions in the region. However, the advice of the research staff is essential in establishing the criteria, so they will be included in the specific working group for this purpose.

Another action that will require the involvement of researchers is the promotion of a mentoring plan. This initiative arose as a proposal from several principal investigators who have expressed their willingness to participate. Some isolated actions have already been carried out , focusing on the career development of clinical staff, but the action plan envisions a structured approach.

Furthermore, another action involves designating a reference person for predoctoral researchers to serve as a channel for their suggestions. This person will be a predoctoral researcher and will be integrated into the representative bodies of the researchers, specifically the Internal Scientific Committee.

Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

A working group is responsible for the effective implementation of the actions, as well as their monitoring. This working group includes the Executive Director of the Institute and representatives from the main management units involved, such as human resources, project management, training, and communication. The composition of this working group is further complemented by the participation of researchers who ensure that the implementation is appropriate and help assess the success of the actions undertaken.

On the other hand, there is an Internal Scientific Committee of the Institute that includes researchers from different levels of the research career (predoctoral, postdoctoral, and senior). This committee is composed of the coordinator of each research program(R3-R4), as well as a representative of predoctoral researchers(R1), another from postdoctoral researchers(R2), and another from clinical researchers(R2). Additionally, the Scientific Director, the General Manager, and the coordinators of the main management areas that handle training, human resources, innovation, and intellectual property management are included, as well as the Scientific Director and representatives from the management units. Among its functions is the strategic monitoring of the Project.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's * research strategy, overarching HR policy



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

IIS Aragón is an institute accredited by the Spanish Ministry of Science and Innovation, and as such, it must meet the requirements set by the Ministry to maintain its accreditation. These requirements are outlined in the Technical Accreditation Guide, published by the Carlos III Health Institute, a body under the Ministry. The latest revision of the guide dates back to 2019, and among the included modifications is the need for the human resources policies of health research institutes to align with the HRS4R strategy. This means that the institutes must commit to the content of the Charter&Code, having a specific human resources plan for researchers based on the principles outlined in these documents. Additionally, there is a strong emphasis on the necessity for researchers to have representative bodies through which they can submit proposals to the Directorate. .

As a result of these requirements, the current Strategic Plan of IIS Aragón includes several actions aligned with the HRS4R strategy, in addition to having a specific Action Plan for the Development and Implementation of HRS4R. Having a specific plan in this area ensures the focus of the decision-making bodies, which periodically evaluate the degree of compliance with the Strategic Plan and all the action plans defined within it. . This approach not only facilitates the institute's compliance with regulatory mandates but also enhances its operational transparency and its ability to respond to the changing needs of its research community, thereby fostering an environment conducive to scientific innovation and excellence.

How has your organisation ensured that the proposed actions would be also implemented?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The actions have been designed to address the needs and shortcomings expressed by researchers at different levels. The Action Plan was designed by the working group, which includes the Executive Director of the institute, ensuring the explicit approval of the institute's management. The inclusion of the main units responsible for the actions along, with the Executive Directorate, in the working group ensures their implementation.

Regarding the monitoring of progress in the implementation, an indicator with a target to be achieved and a timeframe for completion has been established for each action. This will allow the strategic committee to objectively track the progress. The evaluation of progress will be carried out by the Institute's Internal Scientific Committee, which includes researchers at different levels of their research careers (predoctoral, postdoctoral, and senior), as well as the Scientific Directorate and representatives from the management units. One of its functions is the strategic monitoring of the Project.

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How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The monitoring will be conducted at two levels:

1. **Monitoring by the Working Group:** Quarterly meetings have been planned to assess the actions that have been implemented and measure the indicators. These meetings will involve the heads of the units responsible for implementing the defined actions along with the Executive Director.
2. **Monitoring by the Internal Scientific Committee:** A semi-annual review will be conducted based on the indicators defined for each action and the degree of implementation according to the scheduled timeline.
3. **Annual monitoring within the Strategic Plan Framework:** The HRS4R strategy has its own Action Plan within the Strategic Plan. The annual review of the Strategic Plan includes evaluating the execution level of each action plan.

To facilitate monitoring, a spreadsheet has been created to track the progress of each action and their respective indicators. It is the responsibility of each unit in charge of an action to ensure that the information is updated for each working group meeting

This structured approach ensures a thorough and continuous assessment of the implementation progress, enabling timely adjustments and ensuring the institute remains aligned with its strategic objectives and complies with HRS4R standards. The involvement of both the working group and the Internal Scientific Committee in the monitoring process allows for balanced oversight that leverages both operational and strategic perspectives, thereby enhancing the effectiveness of the implementation and evaluation processes.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

As specified in the previous section, indicators will be measured by the units responsible for the actions on a specific Excel sheet of the strategy. This will allow assessing the progress of the actions every three months, which is the frequency at which the working group is expected to meet. Additionally, in case of deviations, the Internal Scientific Committee will be responsible for evaluating them, addressing the causes that lead to those deviations. Based on the assessment, the action period may be extended, the objective modified, or, if there are issues with the measurement, the indicator may be modified and the objective adapted.

All this information will be used to assess the implementation of the actions in 2026, with the aim of reformulating the strategy for the next three years. Furthermore, it will also be taken into account in the internal analysis of the next strategic plan, the formulation of which should begin in 2027 to be effective for the period 2028-2033. This prospective approach ensures that the strategic initiatives of IIS Aragón continuously improve and align both with current outcomes and future objectives, thereby fostering an adaptable and responsive research environment.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

From the institute's perspective, external evaluations are deemed necessary and highly valuable to provide additional opinions and viewpoints that contribute to improving the implementation of actions, ultimately leading to better research conditions for researchers. As IIS Aragón is an institute accredited by the Ministry of Science, Innovation, and Universities, every five years the Carlos III Health Institute conducts an audit detailing areas where greater effort is needed for improvement. This constructive approach is always beneficial, as it helps realign tasks and identify needs that may not be apparent from an internal standpoint.

Regarding the external review of HRS4R, although indicators are typically measured every three months and presented twice a year to the Internal Scientific Committee, the working group will conduct an extraordinary measurement of the indicators to assess the degree of implementation of planned tasks. If there are indicators not met or tasks delayed, the causes will be analysed, and all information will be forwarded to the Internal Scientific Committee. IIS Aragón will appoint a spokesperson to liaise with the auditing team providing the necessary information and coordinating the visit, including contacting researchers and management staff as needed. This structured approach ensures thorough oversight and continuous improvement, fostering an environment conducive to cutting-edge research and operational excellence.

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

Health Research Institutes, including IIS Aragón, are composed of associated researchers and contracted researchers. Associated researchers have their employment linked to one of the entities that are part of the institute (hospitals, universities, or other centers), usually as civil servants, while directly hired researchers have an employment relationship established with the foundation that manages the institute itself. This means that there are certain actions whose impact applies to all researchers (associated and contracted), while in other cases actions only apply to contracted researchers. Generally, actions included in the sections Ethical and professional aspects and Training and development meet the needs of all researchers, while those included in Recruitment and selection and Working conditions mainly affect contracted researchers, since the ability to influence the selection procedures and working conditions of other institutions is very limited.