

TEMPLATE 3: INTERNAL REVIEW

Name Organisation under review: **Biomedical Research Institute Sant Pau (Sant Pau-RI)**

Organisation's contact details:

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Web-link to published version of organisation's HR Strategy and Action Plan:

<http://www.recercasantpau.cat/en/research/information-to-researchers/>

Web-link to organisational recruitment policy (OTM-R principles):⁴⁵

<http://www.recercasantpau.cat/en/research/information-to-researchers/>

SUBMISSION DATE TO THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION: JUNE 2024 (LOAD TO PLATFORM)

1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

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

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
<i>Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research</i>	1041.1
<i>Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)</i>	147.2
<i>Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)</i>	773.5
<i>Of whom are women</i>	615.3
<i>Of whom are stage R3 or R4¹ = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.</i>	281,9
<i>Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level</i>	360.2
<i>Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level</i>	56
<i>Total number of students (if relevant)</i>	
<i>Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)</i>	1148.7
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year) 2019	€
<i>Total annual organisational budget</i>	30.030.000
<i>Annual organisational direct government funding (block funding, used for teaching, research, infrastructure,...)</i>	4.300.000
<i>Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)</i>	15.490.000

¹

http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_fini.pdf

<i>Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research</i>	11.836.028
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ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE (*a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words*)

The Research Institute of Sant Pau Hospital (IR Sant Pau) established on June 4, 1992, is a scientific foundation, which mission is to promote basic, clinical, epidemiological and healthcare research in the fields of health sciences and biomedicine. The main aims of IR Sant Pau are to improve people's health and quality of life through the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge, training of researchers at the International level, the generation of health care innovations, and the application of medical advances in clinical practice and health policies.

IR Sant Pau is a biomedical research centre of excellence affiliated with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) since 2009 and member of the Catalan System of Research Centres, CERCA, since 2011.

IR Sant Pau has more than 1000 basic and clinical researchers, some of them are influential first-level researchers in the areas of oncology, cardiology, neurosciences and epidemiology and public health, among others. They are distributed in 70 multidisciplinary research groups and currently execute more than 400 research projects.

IR Sant Pau is one of the most active biomedical research centres in Catalonia, especially in relation to translational research and the application of new discoveries to clinical practice. Its research results have generated dozens of patents and 6 innovative biotech spin-offs. It has 16,000 m² of facilities attached to the Hospital de Sant Pau, including a highly technological building designed with environmental sustainability criteria. It publishes annually around 1,000 scientific articles in international journals and conducts about 600 clinical trials with drugs. New building has allowed the integration of all researchers in a single space, facilitating social and scientific interaction.

Summary

The Sant Pau Research Institute (IR Sant Pau), part of the Catalan System of Research Centres (CERCA), is a Biomedical Research Institute accredited by the Spanish Institute of Health Carlos III (ISCIII) since 2011. Comprising researchers from various institutions, its mission is to enhance population health and life quality through scientific knowledge dissemination and innovation in healthcare. Focused on translational research, it spans specialized clinical research, epidemiology, basic research, and teaching. With 893 researchers, 49 accredited groups, and strategic areas covering various diseases and disciplines, it aligns research with advanced therapies, precision medicine, and healthcare improvement, generating patents and biotech spin-offs. Its facilities include an environmentally sustainable building, facilitating collaboration and innovation.

2. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE (NARRATIVE)

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.

Ethical and professional aspects

Strengths:

IR Sant Pau has different committees to support, advise and oversee ethical and scientific issues. In particular, the Ethical Clinical Research committee and the Animal Experimentation committee guarantee the fulfilment of the ethical and scientific good practices principles set out in the national and international regulations and guidelines.

The Ethical Clinical Research Committee has just been renewed, in order to adapt this committee to the new clinical treatments and research approaches. It is now including experts on digital health and medtech.

In 2022 IR Sant Pau appointed Prof. Santaló new ombudsperson at IR Sant Pau. He is Professor of Cell Biology at the UAB, member of the Observatory of Bioethics and Law of the UB, and of the Ethics Committee for Animal and Human Research and of the Biosecurity Committee of the UAB. He acts as an independent mediating agent in a suspicion of possible scientific misconduct or professional conflicts. The ombudsperson also ensures compliance with the Code of Good Research Practices and acts to ensure the integrity of the institution's research.

We have created the new "Research Integrity Committee", a new advisory and mediating independent body to act as mediator between the institute's research staff when possible scientific misconduct is suspected. It is chaired by the IR Sant Pau ombudsperson Prof. Santaló, which ensures independence from other institutional bodies, confidentiality and broad experience in this field.

We also have a new version of the "Good Research Practices Code". It has been updated and adapted to the CERCA conduct code and the European scientific integrity framework (ALLEA code). It includes, among other improvements, wording with inclusive language, the RRI principles and the institute's RRI plan, as well as various legal and institutional aspects.

In 2023 we have established the IR Sant Pau Whistleblower Channel, an internal mechanism to communicate anonymously, possible regulatory violations or breaches of integrity committed by its bodies or by the people who serve them.

In terms of transparency, we keep strongly committed and raise awareness of our activity with the society through public engagement activities and by publishing the scientific annual report, and updating information in our website and other communication channels.

The latest years we have been promoting all these aspects and new procedures and policies have been developed and shared with the IR Sant Pau community.

Weaknesses:

Even the efforts to raise internal awareness on these topics, still more communication is needed to ensure all the IR Sant Pau members are aware of policies, procedures and good practises. There is still a lack of knowledge of the ethical and good professional practices principles outlined by the C&C and adopted by all the researchers and staff.

An improvement of the communication of contractual and legal obligations to the staff is necessary.

Additionally, it is important to improve the interaction with society, leading to greater knowledge of the Sant Pau-RI strategy.

Lack of performance assessment systems linked to professional career elements.

Remarks (max 500 words)

As mentioned, in the latest years we have been promoting all Ethical and Professional aspects. New committees (renewal of the Ethical Clinical Research Committee, Creation of the Research Integrity Committee, appointment of an external ombudsperson,...) procedures and policies (new Code of Good Research Practices, new Whistleblower channel,...) have been developed and shared with the IR Sant Pau community.

We have been fully aligned with the initial plan but opened to integrate new trends and opportunities.

Recruitment and selection

Strengths:

IR Sant Pau maintains a policy based on the general principles of objectivity, non-discrimination, merit, training and equal opportunities. Also, the institute has implemented recruitment procedures and an open, transparent and merit-based selection process.

We also are actively promoting our capacity for talent attraction at all levels. For example, by:

- working together with the Autonomous University of Barcelona (UAB) in order to define a young talent recruitment policy
- actively participating in the application for projects focused on I3 mobility to attract international, intersectoral and interdisciplinary talent, both postdoctoral grants and co-fund projects of the Marie Skłodowska Curie actions.
- Maintaining national and international programmes and policies, such as Ramon y Cajal Fellowships, Río Hortega Fellowships or Miquel Servet Fellowships.

Since 2021, IR Sant Pau has a new HR department. The unit was created within the organisation and not as an external body. The management of the HR issues and having HR professionals in house allowed us to develop and implement new HR policies, to offer a better specialised service, and to better align our HR strategy with the HRS4R.

The institute provide highly stimulating environment. The scientific structure with research areas and transversal programmes facilitates interdisciplinarity and collaboration amongst groups and research fields.

IR Sant Pau offers excellent facilities, good scientific services and supportive administration and research management offices. Also, we are currently working on a renewed collective labour agreement favourable to researchers (R1-R4)

IR Sant Pau is fully committed to gender equality, diversity and inclusion. We have a gender balance committee and a Gender Equality Plan in place. Also, at scientific level, Sant Pau is a reference for Gender and Women's Health research, and in 2023 we launched a Women's Health and Gender transversal research programme.

We also offer interesting training opportunities. The institute develops an Annual Training Plan for all the personnel based on the identification of needs. The training plan is monitored by the institute's Training Committee.

Weaknesses:

We have implemented the OTM-R policy but still have room for improvement in terms of success regarding our talent attraction capacity.

Some aspects to be improved could be:

- Improvement in the dissemination of the announcements, particularly at the international level.
- Lack of proper inclusion and diversity policies.
- research assessment policies are not aligned with the new fair and responsible research assessment practices, including recruitment and performance assessment processes.
- Local and national public policies and regulations regarding international employees in public institutions. The current regulations can be barrier to hire international candidates (language restrictions, equivalent academic...).

Remarks (max 500 words)

As mentioned, we have created an own Human Resources Unit within the institute, which allowed us to better implement and develop the HRS4R.

Working conditions

Strengths:

Renewal of the labour agreement. IR Sant Pau is currently working in a renewed collective labour agreement that emphasises the scientific career perspective (R1-R4). The institute invests economic resources to stabilise researchers and co-finance contracts.

New job categories. IR Sant Pau set and defined the different career profiles and job categories with their grading, conditions and job descriptions. By defining these job categories, IR Sant Pau promotes transparency, equality and career pathway.

The institute offers excellent facilities and good scientific services. All the scientific services are credited by the national and European Quality Assurance standards and certifications.

Supportive research management and administration. IR Sant Pau has strong administration and research management units to support researchers in all aspects. These units are highly professional and deliver long-term strategic planning as well as are integrated in national and international networks.

Flexibility. After the pandemic, we have implemented teleworking conditions for some areas and units. It allows the groups and units to offer a more flexible scheme and higher

Opportunities. IR Sant Pau strengthens translational and collaborative research, acting as a link with industry, other public research institutions and training centres, healthcare providers and other organisations, providing enormous opportunities to grow professionally.

Weaknesses:

Low talent attraction capacity. Our pay scales and remuneration are still not attractive enough for international researchers. We are also not competitive since we cannot ensure stability due to the relationship between scientific positions and competitive funding.

Need to improve internal communications and internal engagement. There is a low sense of belonging, which translates into a low participation of the research community in the decision-making process or in a working environment that can be improved.

It is important to improve the general use equipment and spaces, generating a better research environment.

Remarks (max 500 words)

We have been able to describe the job categories for every career profile. The definition of these job categories will be a useful starting point when defining new career development pathways, to improve our capacity to retain and attract talent.

Also, we are currently working in a renewed labour agreement, which will emphasise the scientific career perspective (R1-R4).

Finally, our support research units have grown, creating new units to better support researchers in all administrative and strategic research management aspects.

Training and development

Strengths:

The institute develops an Annual Training Plan for all the personnel based on the identification of needs. The training plan is monitored by the institute's Training Committee. The plan includes different actions such:

1. Specific training for personnel who requests it, since is a need to carry out their functions in their work place.

2. Transversal training defined by decision-makers that may be of interest to different professional groups and which respond to the different plans and policies of the institute, such as specific training actions on innovation, international projects or open access to data.
3. Training that is compulsory in order to carry out the functions in the workplace, for example work at the facilities of the Animal Housing Service.

In 2023, IR Sant Pau incorporated a dedicated training officer within the HR office. It is crucial to plan de develop the annual training plan, and more important, to respond to the real training needs of the IR Sant Pau community and staff.

The institute is part of the Sant Pau Barcelona Health Campus, which includes the Sant Pau Learning Campus. It allows our researchers and personnel to access a soon-to-be Learning Campus of excellence with an innovative perspective to offer learning solutions adapted to the needs of learners and aimed at improving the results of the organization.

Weaknesses:

There is lack of a specific support plan for emerging groups and for beginning researchers.

There is no definition of the Career Development or Career Plan. So, the Annual Training Plan is not aligned with any defined Career pathway, which would be helpful to better identify the training needs for every career stage.

There is no evaluation of the impact of the training. We could offer better training options if we could measure the impact every course or training session has in our organisation and its professionals.

Remarks (max 500 words)

A new training officer has been integrated in the HR Unit in order to better develop and plan the IR Sant Pau annual training plan. This will be crucial to improve our career development plan and to better train our researchers in every career stage.

Have any of the priorities for the short- and medium term changed?

The institute faced financial deficit and developed a Sustainability Plan to be implemented in 2020-2024. The sustainability plan has been both investment oriented but excellence and scientific challenging focused. Thus, the Sustainability Plan was in line with the institute's Strategic Plan, setting a clear roadmap towards sustainability without compromising scientific excellence.

The Sustainability Plan was structured around three strategic pillars: first to promote projects and actions to generate more income for the Institute, second to optimise resources and, last to support strategic investments considered critical to achieving the objectives described in the plan. To achieve these objectives, we have created cross-disciplinary groups and a dashboard

However, due to financial restrictions imposed by the Sustainability Plan, some of the actions initially planned in the Strategic Plan were postponed. In particular, actions related to talent attraction, such as intramural projects, were affected.

So, we have seen our short- and medium-term priorities affected by those financial restrictions.

On the other hand, we have been able to create a new structures and units to support the HRS4R and our organisation. For example:

- Creation of an HR department, separately from the Hospital, which not only takes care of hiring new staff and meeting the needs of the research groups, but one that can propose new HR policies (e.g., talent recruitment gender equality...) in collaboration with the Institute's management team. The HR department has also defined the skills and responsibilities of the different jobs and help with career development.

- Creation of an International Projects Unit, to increase our capacity to attract international funds and our presence in International projects and consortia.
- Creation of the RRI Unit, to develop the RRI strategy and to embrace openness and the RRI principles.
- Strengthen the communication structure and renew the brand.

IR Sant Pau is committed with open science, responsible research and innovation and supports fair and responsible research assessment practices. We have embraced openness and are working to integrate these principles in the institute. Thus, from the last the interim assessment, we have evolved and developed new plans and policies, such as the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) plan, the impact strategy, and open science strategy. Also, we are about to join CoARA, to develop a new Research Assessment plan.

All these new approaches and priorities will be embedded in the new Strategic Plan (2025-2030) that we are currently developing. We will review and define the vision and mission of IR Sant Pau while integrating new priorities and goals in our strategic planning for the next five years.

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

As mentioned, in the last four years IR Sant Pau has been immersed in the Sustainability Plan, making some of our priorities to be postponed or changed. In some cases, they had an impact on our HR strategy mainly regarding talent attraction activities. On the other hand, we have fully integrated the HRS4R when creating and developing new policies, procedures or structures.

The creation of the new HR Unit allowed us to create new policies regarding human resources professionalised personnel, new management systems and tools. For example, we improved and ensure the OTM -R, we included a new data and intellectual property disclosure in the work contract, we described the job functions and profiles as a starting point to draft a career pathway or career development programme.

Also, we have strengthened our relationship with our sister organisations and we are now operating under a new brand to promote and reinforce the whole campus. In 2023 we launched the Sant Pau Health Campus Barcelona, which includes the Sant Pau Hospital, the Sant Pau Research Institute, the Sant Pau Private Foundation, and the Sant Pau Learning Campus.

Within this new Sant Pau Health Campus Barcelona umbrella, we should be now able to promote and reinforce our HR strategy making our institute more competitive and increasing our capacity to attract talent and to offer career development, training and other opportunities.

The institution is immersed in a highly disruptive change process which obligates to optimize the management structure and to implement new IT tools to improve the management processes. It impacts positively in the personnel, facilitating the mechanical tasks and allowing to dedicate more time to higher added value management activities. Definitively this improves the labour environment.

In this new structure have created a specific unit on Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) with the final goal of developing a specific plan, including the following acting lines:

1. Ethics:

Review the Good Scientific Practices code and adapt it to the CERCA code which we have been added. We must name a person to perform the functions of *Onbusperson* internally in institute, in order to foment the performance of good practices and assure a correct follow-up of the conflicts.

2. Gender equality:

The gender dimension must be present transversally in all the research and recruitment processes, therefore a transversal program in all the research areas is going to be organized in order to identify the initiatives which could be shared among the groups.

3. Governance:

Assure that the RRI is incorporated in the Strategic Plan of the institution and monitor all the actions derived from the RRI plan, assuring the transparency of the activities defined in the plan and the equal participation in the governance organs.

4. Open access:

The research and innovation must be accessible and transparent; therefore, we must create a policy of open access for the publications and data and design indicators in order to monitor the actions performed.

5. Citizen participation:

It is important to implicate the society in order to give it a relevant role in all the phases of research and innovation projects. For that, we plan to identify the initiatives from the institute where patients are involved and foment this kind of activities.

6. Scientific education

The institute is committed to public engagement and to scientific dissemination and outreach activities. We have organised and coordinated several activities to bring our research closer to society while promoting a real dialogue with the public. Also, we contribute to science education through several programmes and activities.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?

We are currently developing a new Strategic Plan for the institute. We will be crafting and developing the new strategic plan in 2024, which will be implemented and deployed 2025-2030.

So, we are now in a very good moment to include the C&C principles and the HRS4R action plan in our new strategic plan. It will ensure that we are fully integrating those principles and actions in our road map for the future five years and that this is not going to be a separate action plan.

The creation of the new strategic plan is going to be collaborative, since we really want it to be impactful, transformative and helpful to improve the sense of belonging and commitment of the IR Sant Pau members.

We will perform several interviews, organise sessions and working groups in order to have everybody involved in a manner.

The plan will, of course, include a Talent axis, with strong focus on talent attraction, professional development and a career plan.

This new transformative and collaborative strategic plan, will boost our capacity to embrace no only the current C&C principles, but the new C&C principles and the new approaches on research assessment.

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, omitted or added, please provide a commentary for each action.

See ANNEX I: Action plan

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 *:

<http://www.recercasantpau.cat/en/research/information-to-researchers/>

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

IR Sant Pau employs an open, merit-based staff selection process, posting job offers online with minimal administrative hurdles. To align with C&C and OTM-R Toolkit standards, improvement actions are planned. The institution maintains a policy based on the general principles of objectivity, non-discrimination, merit, training and equal opportunities. The aim of this policy is to guarantee that minorities have access to employment under equal conditions in the selection processes and hiring of personnel.

Consequently, one of the priorities for the Institute is to ensure that the hiring of the most suitable candidate be carried out through an open, transparent and merit-based selection process (OTM-R) as shown in Figure attached in platform. The follow-up of these directives will promote the mobility of personnel, the exchange of knowledge and, in short, the increase in the quality of teaching and research.

As an example of our commitment to the human resources strategy of the European Union, the selection and hiring procedures for personnel at our Institute are governed by a set of basic principles that guarantee equal access to employment. Consequently, we follow the constitutional principles of equality, merit and capacity, respecting in all cases the national and international regulations in force in this area, specifically the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C).

The activities we have focused on during this last phase have been:

(3) Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?

- HR informs about the procedure when a recruitment has to be carried out
- Specialised technical staff has been incorporated to centralise the process (New HR structure)
- New Onboarding process defined

(9) Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?

- Improve working conditions (bargaining agreement)
- Define social benefits
- Talent attraction policies
- Professional career definition is process
- Teleworking & flexibility
- Flexibility has been provided to increase salaries through salary supplements to have more competitive salaries

(7) Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?

- Attracting foreign talent is one of the main challenges for the next three years

N.B. Please be aware that your OTM-R policy should be 'embedded' into the institutional HR strategy at the renewal phase at the latest.

4. IMPLEMENTATION (MAX. 1 PAGE)

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

INITIAL PHASE (2014-2015)

In June 2014, IR SANTPAU endorsed the C&C. During the second half of this year, an Internal Analysis was conducted by an interdisciplinary team through several meetings with members of the Governing Board, the Management Board, and researchers from all career levels. The project team was composed of:

Management and Administration staff:

- Jaime Kulisevsky (Director)
- Alfons Hervàs (Deputy Director and HRS4R project leader).
- Hilda Herrero (Director Management and Administration)
- Jordi Virgili (Head Quality Assurance and Information Systems)
- Fabiola Fernández (Head Unit of Research Projects)
- Pere Lloreda (Head Human Resources)
- Ramira Soto (Head Training)
- Rafael Fernández (Human Resources Manager)
- Isabel Arrieta (Human Resources Manager)

Research staff:

- Luis Vila (equivalent to R3, head of a research group), retired in 2016
- Mercedes Camacho (equivalent to R2)
- Jordi Clarimon (equivalent to R2, head of an emerging group)
- Jesús Martín Campos (equivalent to R2)
- Luis Carlos Navas (equivalent to R1)

The HRS4R analysis at IR SANTPAU has been based on:

1. The principles contained in the C&C.
2. The inventory of national and regional legal regulations relating to the C&C and its principles.
3. The inventory of internal regulations relating to the principles of the C&C.
4. IR SANTPAU's Strategic Plan for 2014-2018.

The overall timeline for the whole project has been as far as detailed following:

Jun '14: Declaration of commitment to the C&C.

Sep '14: Meeting with CERCA's Director. Confirmation for implementing the project.

Oct '14: Meetings with researcher's representatives and management staff. Kick-off meeting of the project team.

Oct – Des '14: Project team meetings focused to the internal analysis.

Jan'15: Project team agreement on the action plan.

Feb'15: Approval of the action plan by the IR-HSCSP Director. First submission to the European Commission and publication of the HR Strategy Document / Action Plan.

Apr'15: Endorsement of the strategy by the Permanent Commission of the IR-HSCSP's Board of Trustees. Resubmission to the European Commission, including the last endorsement and the amendments concerning dates in the action plan suggested by the Euraxess team.

Upon receiving the European Commission's acknowledgment, the second phase started with the implementation and subsequent evaluation of the actions defined (see action plan updated in platform), following the standard procedure designed in the HRS4R.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE - 1st Step (2016-2021 - Interim Assessment)

The implementation of the HR Strategy and its action plan was estimated to extend over four years, from early 2015 to the end of 2018, due to the expectation that a new building for our institute would open throughout 2017. A self-assessment was planned for early 2017, followed by an external evaluation two years later. Due to the events detailed previously and the delay in the new building's construction, the implementation process was extended until 2019. The monitoring of the action plan and all its deviations was reflected in the action plan table. A project team was created for follow-up, holding biannual meetings.

In 2018, a strategic reflection of the institute resulted in the Strategic Plan 2019-2023. In this plan, the HR strategy appeared transversally in the different strategic axes:

- Strategic Axe 1: Scientific Excellence
- Strategic Axe 2: Impact transfer and Innovation
- Strategic Axe 3: Internationalization and strategic alliances
- Strategic Axe 4: Scientific support services
- Strategic Axe 5: Funding catchment and sustainability

It is important to highlight the strategic goals defined such:

- Elaboration of a RRI plan
- Improving HR policies to retain talent
- Implementing a continuous training strategy adapted to the professionals' needs
- Advancing the social responsibility culture based on our values
- Maintaining HRS4R certification
- Enhancing internal communication and transparency
- Developing active catchment policies
- Definition and implementation an Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Process (OTM-R)

The deployment of all activities derived from the strategic plan were started in 2019 since the direction of the institute changed but thereafter, due to the situation derived from the COVID-19 pandemic, this plan has been drastically affected.

A new HR action plan was set to be defined during the first trimester of 2021, encompassing:

1. The principles contained in the C&C. Gap Analysis performance.
2. Check-list OTM-R (2nd review)
3. IR SANT PAU's Strategic Plan 2019-2023.
4. Institute's Sustainability plan 2021-2024
5. Auditors' recommendations after the internal audit assessment

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE - 2nd Step (2021-2024 - End Implementation Phase)

This phase will continue with the completion and integration of the above strategies, aiming for sustained improvement and alignment with broader institutional goals. For the definition of this new action plan for 2021-2024, a Gap Analysis was carried out. The aim of this analysis is to identify the necessary actions to be reviewed prior to the on-site audit, which will be held in June 2024.

In the first year (June 2021 - June 2022), we made several modifications to the organizational chart and incorporated new professional profiles.

The Evaluation Committee responsible for defining the 2021-2024 actions includes the following professionals:

- Rosa Mª Ballester: Head of the RRI Unit
- Ruth Acosta: Head of the HR Unit
- Silvia Ribas: Head of the Legal Advice Unit
- Laia Cendrós: Head of International Relations
- Miriam Ors: Scientific Deputy Manager
- Jordi Surrallés: Scientific Director
- Reyes Grases (until September 2023) / Jaume Bacardit (from September 2023): Management Director

The monitoring of the defined action plan is carried out through the steering, management, and monitoring committees of the institute itself, as these are transversal committees that address all topics. Given the maturity of the system, it is not considered necessary to create a specific monitoring committee. These committees are:

- Steering Committee: It is responsible for the overall strategic direction and oversight of the institute's activities. It ensures that the action plan aligns with the institute's long-term goals and mission. The Steering Committee regularly reviews progress reports and provides guidance on high-level decisions to keep the action plan on track.
- Scientific Internal Committee: Comprising leading researchers and scientific advisors, this committee focuses on the scientific aspects of the action plan. It evaluates the research outputs, ensures compliance with scientific standards, and oversees the integration of new scientific insights into the action plan.
- Management Committee: It handles the administrative and operational aspects of the action plan.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below:

- **How have you prepared the internal review?**

In order to prepare the internal audit assessment we have worked together with staff members which have not been involved in the implementation process such the new HR responsible and the new Quality department responsible.

The internal review was carried out through a multidisciplinary approach that included the following:

1. Action plan follow-up. A designated team performed follow-up of the plan during the implementation phase. Since follow-up was discussed in depth at meetings involving the whole team, all details are reflected in the written minutes of the meeting.
2. The indicators defined in the report have been monitored by the Knowledge Management Unit and through the Institute's information system.
3. The internal review includes the OTM-R checklist, which was completed by the new director of the Human Resources (HR) department, who has led implementation of the process at the Institute since her appointment.

4. The internal review was performed by the Deputy Scientific Director, who evaluated all relevant documents collected during follow-up.

The institute has developed an integrated Quality System designed to unify the various quality system standards such as ISO9001, the Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) regulations for pharmaceuticals, and the R&D&I Management System. In the last year, other accreditations have been obtained, including the seal for Human Resources Excellence in Research and accreditation by the Health Research Institute. The good practices policy of our management system calls for an annual review of the steps taken to implement the HRS4R plan.

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

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE - 1st Step (2016-2021 - Interim Assessment)

As mentioned before, we have created a work group formed by research and management and administration staff. As mentioned before, we created a work group formed by research and management and administration staff.

Research staff:

Luis Vila (equivalent to R3, head of a research group)

Mercedes Camacho (equivalent to R2)

Jordi Clarimon (equivalent to R2, head of an emerging group)

Jesús Martín Campos (equivalent to R2)

Luis Carlos Navas (equivalent to R1)

Any R4-equivalent researcher has participated in this project due to the fact that IR-HSCSP has not those senior profiles currently.

Some of these personnel are no longer with the institution, so they will be renewed for the next phase, keeping as many researchers as possible, so as not to lose traceability.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE - 2nd Step (2021-2024 - End Implementation Phase)

In that phase we have involved the research community through our Scientific internal committee. This committee is made up of representatives of all the groups of researchers, a representative of training, innovation and quality.

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

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE - 1st Step (2016-2021 - Interim Assessment)

Yes, there was a working group created for that. This group met regularly since 2018 for the follow-up of the implementation phase. The composition of the project team has been:

Management and administration staff:

- Jaime Kulisevsky (Director)
- Alfons Hervàs (Deputy Director and HRS4R project leader).
- Hilda Herrero (Director Management and Administration)
- Jordi Virgili (Head Quality Assurance and Information Systems)
- Fabiola Fernández (Head Unit of Research Projects)
- Pere Lloreda (Head Human Resources)
- Ramira Soto (Head Training)
- Rafael Fernández (Human Resources Manager)
- Isabel Arrieta (Human Resources Manager)

Research staff:

- Luis Vila (equivalent to R3, head of a research group), retired in 2016
- Mercedes Camacho (equivalent to R2)
- Jordi Clarimon (equivalent to R2, head of an emerging group)
- Jesús Martín Campos (equivalent to R2)
- Luis Carlos Navas (equivalent to R1)

For the next phase, the committee was modified so that the process was led by human resources department.

IMPLEMENTATION PHASE - 2nd Step (2021-2024 - End Implementation Phase)

In the first year (June 2021 - June 2022), we made several modifications to the organizational chart and incorporated new professional profiles.

The Evaluation Committee responsible for defining the 2021-2024 actions includes the following professionals:

- Rosa Mª Ballester: Head of the RRI Unit
- Ruth Acosta: Head of the HR Unit
- Silvia Ribas: Head of the Legal Advice Unit
- Laia Cendrós: Head of International Relations
- Miriam Ors: Scientific Deputy Manager
- Jordi Surrallés: Scientific Director
- Reyes Grases (until Sept'23) / Jaume Bacardit (from Sept'23): Management Director

The monitoring of the defined action plan is carried out through the steering, management, and monitoring committees of the institute itself, as these are transversal committees that address all topics. Given the maturity of the system, it is not considered necessary to create a specific monitoring committee. These committees are:

- **Steering Committee:** This committee is responsible for the overall strategic direction and oversight of the institute's activities. It ensures that the action plan aligns with the institute's long-term goals and mission. The Steering Committee regularly reviews progress reports and provides guidance on high-level decisions to keep the action plan on track.
- **Scientific Internal Committee:** Comprising leading researchers and scientific advisors, this committee focuses on the scientific aspects of the action plan. It evaluates the research outputs, ensures compliance with scientific standards, and oversees the integration of new scientific insights into the action plan.

- Management Committee: This committee handles the administrative and operational aspects of the action plan.

- **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?**

First, it should be noted that both the 2014-2018 and the 2019-2023 strategic plans include implementation and monitoring of the European Human Resources plan. Also, we are currently drafting and developing the new strategic plan 2025-2030, which will continue to integrate and embed the C&C principles and the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers.

<http://www.recercasantpau.cat/en/the-institute/corporate-information/strategic-plan/>

The mission of the Sant Pau Institute for Biomedical Research Institute is to improve the health and quality of life of people through the production and dissemination of scientific knowledge, the training of researcher to international standards, the generation of health innovations, and the application of advances to clinical practice and health policies. The **VALUES** on which the Institute is governed are the following:

- Excellence
- Collaboration and multidisciplinarity
- Transparency
- Efficiency
- Ethical and social commitment
- Responsibility
- Continuous improvement and innovation
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Application of the knowledge generated

The institute has developed various policies and plans, all of which are aligned with the different aspects of HRS4R.

- Gender equality plan
- Training plan
- [Guide to good scientific practices](#)
- Quality plan, preparation of the comprehensive quality system plan
- [Personnel selection plan](#)
- Data protection regulations
- Intellectual property regulations
- [Responsible Research and Innovation \(RRI\) plan](#)

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

In recent years, the institute has developed an integrated Quality System designed to unify the various quality system standards such as ISO9001, the Good Manufacturing Practice regulations for pharmaceuticals, and the R&D&I Management System. In the last year, other accreditations have been obtained, including the seal for Human Resources Excellence in Research and accreditation by the Health Research Institute. The good practices policy of our

management system calls for an annual review of the measures taken to implement the HRS4R plan, which will be included in the Management Review report.

The Action Plan has been monitored by a designated committee led by the HR director. The committee included research staff, management staff, and representatives of the Institute's management and quality teams. The director of the newly-created RRI unit has also joined the committee. The number of participants remained the same as during the implementation phase.

This committee main functions were:

1. Evaluate compliance with the criteria defined in the European Charter for researchers and code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers
2. Define any new actions needed to comply with the code of conduct
3. Define the indicators to monitor these measures
4. Monitor defined actions and indicators
5. Prepare the annual report for management review

The action plan already defines the person in charge, implementation dates, and monitoring indicators. The scorecard is managed by the committee and included in the management review report.

- **How are you monitoring progress?**

The progress of the implementation of the activities is performed in the follow-up meetings with the working group.

The monitoring of the defined action plan is carried out through the steering, management, and monitoring committees of the institute itself, as these are transversal committees that address all topics. Given the maturity of the system, it is not considered necessary to create a specific monitoring committee. These committees are:

- Steering Committee: This committee is responsible for the overall strategic direction and oversight of the institute's activities. It ensures that the action plan aligns with the institute's long-term goals and mission. The Steering Committee regularly reviews progress reports and provides guidance on high-level decisions to keep the action plan on track. Meetings are held weekly.
- Scientific Internal Committee: Comprising leading researchers and scientific advisors, this committee focuses on the scientific aspects of the action plan. It evaluates the research outputs, ensures compliance with scientific standards, and oversees the integration of new scientific insights into the action plan. Meetings are held quarterly.
- Management Committee: This committee handles the administrative and operational aspects of the action plan. Meetings are held monthly.

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

The action plan defines the person in charge, implementation dates, and monitoring indicators. The scorecard will be managed by the committee and included in the management review report.

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

To prepare for the next phase, which includes the on-site audit, we must start by making the action plan for the next three years. This will be based on:

- Review of the gap analysis to be prepared with the current working group incorporating the new profiles that will participate in the team.
- Implementation of the auditors' recommendations following the interim internal review.

The key to the success of the phase will be to involve all the personnel participating in the process, for which we will prepare a specific training plan combining a workshop session and two training sessions.

The next step is to create the action plan, defining the timing and the person in charge and, of course, a scorecard that will allow monitoring. This will be monitored with quarterly team meetings and an annual review report should be made to the management.

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

IR Sant Pau has developed, implemented and integrated the HRS4R and embedded the C&C principles in the strategy of the institute. Now, we are drafting and developing the new strategic plan 2025-2030, which will continue to integrate and embed the C&C principles and the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers.

This new transformative and collaborative strategic plan, will boost our capacity to embrace not only the current C&C principles, but the renewed C&C principles as well as new reforming research assessment criteria.

We will endorse the current C&C principles but also will consider the new C&C principles, with major focus on gender balance, equality, equity, inclusivity and open science, as recommended by the EC in the [Council Recommendation of 18 December 2023 on a European framework to attract and retain research, innovation and entrepreneurial talents in Europe](#).

Also, we will be joining the Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment ([CoARA](#)) in the coming months, so we will also integrate the new research assessment plan in our strategic plan.

So, the new IR Sant Pau Strategic Plan 2025-2030 will set the basis to achieve our goals and mission, while contributing to the new reality and challenges of the research and innovation organisations in Europe. It will imbricate both the biomedical scientific purpose and the governance and transformational changes to achieve scientific excellence, and to fully contribute to societal challenges.

We are pleased with the path we have covered and committed to keep progressing in the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers in our policies and practices.