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Action Plan

2026-2029



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Renewal Internal Review

Case number

2020CZ480208

Name Organisation under review

Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics of the Czech Academy of Sciences

Organisation's contact details

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2. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research	82.9
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	33.45
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is the host organisation)	54.7
Of whom are women	45.05
Of whom are R3 or R4 = established or leading researchers with a large degree of autonomy (e.g. holding the status of principal investigator or professor)	42
Of whom are R2 = recognised researcher (e.g. postdoctoral researcher, junior researcher)	17.05
Of whom are R1 = first stage researcher (e.g. doctoral candidate, research apprentice)	23.85
Total number of students (if relevant)	-
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching, and research staff)	145.8
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for the most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	8 188 114
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	4 044 981
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	2 223 359
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	660 260

The statistics reflect the situation as of 31 December 2025, when the Institute employed 189 people. Unlike previous evaluations, staff data are now reported in FTE rather than headcounts.

The exchange rate used for currency conversion was 24.245 CZK/EUR, corresponding to the official exchange rate on 31 December 2025.

3. ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE

Founded in 1954 with an initial focus on farm animals, the Institute has evolved into a modern research organisation using cutting-edge methods in animal physiology and genetics. Its basic research centres on two main areas: reproductive and developmental biology, and biodiversity and ecology. The Institute also has strong potential for applied research with biomedical applications.



4. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE

4.1 Ethical and professional aspects

Strengths:

- During the implementation of the current HRS4R Action Plan, IAPG significantly strengthened its ethical framework and promoted a culture of research integrity, professionalism, transparency, and mutual respect. A major achievement was the comprehensive revision of the **IAPG Code of Ethics** in 2025, aligning it with current European standards and expanding guidance on research integrity, authorship, conflicts of interest, equal treatment, and appropriate workplace behaviour. The revised Code has been systematically communicated to all employees through presentations prepared by the Deputy Director for Science, departmental meetings, and mandatory acknowledgement by signature.
- The institute also introduced a comprehensive **negative situation-handling procedure** defining reporting channels, responsibilities, confidentiality, and protection against retaliation. In response to employee feedback collected during focus groups, IAPG further strengthened confidence in the system by replacing the position of the internal mediator with an independent external mediation service in 2026, ensuring greater impartiality, professional expertise, and trust. To further enhance accessibility and encourage employees to report concerns safely, the institute also decided to implement the FaceUp whistleblowing platform. This secure, user-friendly online system enables confidential or anonymous reporting of unethical behaviour, workplace conflicts, discrimination, harassment, or other concerns. The platform complements the existing complaint-handling procedure and provides employees with an additional trusted communication channel, reinforcing the institute's commitment to transparency, integrity, and a respectful working environment.
- Ethical awareness has been enhanced through regular training activities covering research integrity, responsible conduct of research, the Code of Ethics, equal opportunities, and the integration of the sex and gender dimension into research. A dedicated workshop introduced employees to the role and services of the **CAS Ombudsperson** (May 2026). Intellectual property issues were explored through an interactive Dilemma Game workshop (May 2026), primarily aimed at early-stage researchers but also attended by several R3 and R4 researchers, resulting in valuable cross-career discussions. The implementation of two consecutive **Gender Equality Plans** (2023–2025 and 2026–2028) demonstrates the institute's long-term commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- Another important strength is the integration of ethical principles into everyday institutional practice. Ethical standards are embedded in recruitment and OTM-R procedures, onboarding, leadership development, research supervision, internal communication, and HR policies. Regular meetings of institute management with laboratory heads, Scientific Coffee seminars, and open communication channels further contribute to a transparent organisational culture based on shared responsibility and trust.



Weaknesses:

- Despite substantial progress, maintaining a strong culture of research integrity requires continuous education and regularly updated training materials, particularly for newly recruited researchers, international employees, and future research leaders. Increasingly interdisciplinary and international research also requires more practical guidance on research data management, responsible use of artificial intelligence, open science, research assessment, and ethical challenges associated with emerging technologies.
- Although formal reporting mechanisms are well established, further efforts are needed to ensure that employees understand the available support services and feel confident using them. Organisational culture should also be evaluated regularly through staff surveys, focus groups, and workplace-climate monitoring to identify concerns early and assess the effectiveness of implemented measures.
- During the next HRS4R implementation period, IAPG will focus on preventive activities, expanded ethics-related training, greater awareness of support services, and the further promotion of responsible leadership, open communication, and a respectful and inclusive research environment supporting both scientific excellence and high standards of professional conduct.

Remarks

- The implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan followed the original objectives; however, several actions were further developed or adapted in response to institutional experience, employee feedback, and evolving European and national requirements. In view of the challenges described in section 'General overview of the implementation process', the implementation timelines of some actions were also adjusted.
- One of the most significant developments was the strengthening of the institute's ethical framework. The **IAPG Code of Ethics** was comprehensively revised in 2025, accompanied by structured training and mandatory familiarisation of all employees. In addition, the institute introduced a comprehensive procedure for handling complaints and, based on feedback from focus groups, decided to replace the originally planned internal mediator with an **independent external mediation service** from 2026 onwards. This solution was considered more impartial, professional, and trustworthy by employees.
- Another important change concerned the implementation of the **Gender Equality Plan**. Since the adoption of a GEP became an eligibility requirement for participation in Horizon Europe, IAPG prepared its first GEP for **2023–2026** and subsequently adopted a new plan for **2026–2029**. Rather than treating the GEP as a separate initiative, its objectives were integrated across the HR Excellence in Research Action Plan and institutional HR policies.
- The institute also expanded several activities beyond the original Action Plan. Internal communication was strengthened through regular meetings of institute management with laboratory heads, including the introduction of an annual strategic planning meeting. Scientific Coffee seminars evolved from purely scientific presentations into a broader platform covering research integrity, career development, gender equality, and



institutional strategy. Furthermore, systematic monitoring of training needs was implemented through institute-wide surveys, focus groups, and personalised communication with researchers, PhD students, and supervisors.

- Some originally planned actions were modified following practical evaluation. For example, the proposal to introduce a dedicated translation tool on the intranet was reconsidered because most strategic and HR-related documents are now available directly in both Czech and English, while modern online translation tools sufficiently cover the remaining needs. Consequently, the institute focused its efforts on maintaining high-quality bilingual documentation rather than implementing a separate translation application.
- Overall, the experience gained during the implementation of the Action Plan has helped establish a culture of continuous improvement, evidence-based decision-making, and active involvement of employees in shaping institutional policies. These experiences will form the basis for the next HRS4R Action Plan, with an increased emphasis on leadership development, internationalisation, researcher support, and maintaining an attractive, inclusive, and ethically responsible research environment.

4.2 Recruitment and selection

Strengths:

- During the implementation of the current HRS4R Action Plan, IAPG further strengthened its recruitment and selection processes in line with the principles of **Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R)**. All research vacancies are systematically published on the **EURAXESS** portal, the institute's website, and other relevant communication channels, increasing the visibility of vacancies and supporting the recruitment of both national and international candidates.
- Recruitment procedures are based on transparent internal rules and standardised documentation, including clearly defined selection criteria, evaluation procedures, and selection committee composition. Job advertisements provide comprehensive information on the position, required qualifications, employment conditions, and application procedures, while also highlighting the institute's commitment to equal opportunities and the HR Excellence in Research principles.
- The institute has continued to improve support for international researchers through English-language recruitment materials, bilingual HR documentation, and an expanded onboarding process. Key institutional documents, including HR policies and internal regulations, are now routinely available in both Czech and English, facilitating the integration of international employees. Recruitment processes are supported by the HR Department, which ensures consistency, compliance with institutional policies, and equal treatment of applicants throughout the selection procedure.
- IAPG has also increased the transparency of recruitment by regularly reviewing recruitment practices within the framework of the HRS4R Action Plan and incorporating feedback from laboratory heads and management. Recruitment has become more



closely linked with long-term strategic planning, enabling better identification of staffing priorities and succession planning for future research leaders.

Weaknesses:

- Despite these improvements, several challenges remain. The institute continues to face strong international competition in recruiting highly qualified researchers, particularly experienced postdoctoral fellows, bioinformaticians, and specialists in emerging research areas. Recruitment is often constrained by limited financial flexibility, fixed national salary frameworks, and the dependence of many research positions on external grant funding, making it difficult to offer long-term employment comparable to leading European research institutions.
- Although recruitment procedures are transparent, attracting a larger and more diverse pool of international applicants remains an important objective. Future efforts should therefore focus on further strengthening the institute's international visibility, expanding active recruitment strategies, enhancing employer branding, and providing more comprehensive relocation and integration support for international researchers and their families.
- Another priority is the continued monitoring of recruitment outcomes through OTM-R indicators, including applicant diversity, recruitment timelines, and candidate feedback. Systematic analysis of these indicators will help identify opportunities for further improvement and ensure that recruitment processes continue to evolve in line with European best practices.
- Overall, IAPG has established a transparent and fair recruitment system that complies with OTM-R principles. The next implementation period will focus on increasing the institute's attractiveness as an international employer while maintaining high standards of openness, transparency, and merit-based selection.

Remarks

- The implementation of the recruitment and selection actions largely followed the original Action Plan; however, several activities were expanded in response to changing institutional needs, evolving European recommendations, and feedback from researchers and laboratory heads.
- A key development was the continued implementation of the OTM-R principles across all recruitment procedures. During the implementation period, IAPG further standardised recruitment documentation, ensured that research vacancies were systematically published on the EURAXESS portal, and strengthened the transparency of selection procedures through clearly defined evaluation criteria and standardised recruitment processes. Unlike in previous years, vacancies are no longer advertised on X (formerly Twitter), as explained in more detail under Action 3 of the Action Plan.
- Greater emphasis was also placed on international recruitment. Rather than focusing solely on advertising vacancies, the institute expanded support for international



applicants by providing bilingual HR documentation, English versions of key institutional policies, and an improved onboarding process. These measures significantly reduced language barriers and facilitated the integration of newly recruited international researchers.

- Another important development was the closer alignment of recruitment with the institute's long-term strategic planning. Regular discussions with laboratory heads and strategic planning meetings enabled management to identify future staffing needs, anticipate succession planning, and better target recruitment towards priority research areas and emerging scientific disciplines.
- Experience gained during the implementation period also highlighted several challenges that extend beyond the institute's direct influence. Recruitment of highly qualified postdoctoral researchers and international experts remains limited by national salary levels, increasing international competition for talent, and the dependence of many research positions on external project funding. Consequently, future efforts will place greater emphasis on strengthening employer branding, expanding international networking, improving relocation support, and creating attractive long-term career opportunities for outstanding researchers.
- Overall, no major deviations from the original Action Plan were required. Instead, the recruitment strategy evolved through continuous improvement and practical experience, resulting in a more transparent, internationally oriented, and strategically managed recruitment system. These developments provide a strong foundation for the next HRS4R Action Plan, which will focus on further increasing the institute's attractiveness to international talent while maintaining full compliance with OTM-R principles and supporting sustainable career development for researchers at all career stages.

4.3 Working conditions

Strengths:

- During the implementation of the current HRS4R Action Plan, IAPG made substantial progress in improving working conditions and creating an inclusive, supportive, and transparent working environment. Considerable effort was devoted to strengthening internal communication through regular meetings between institute management and laboratory heads, the introduction of an annual strategic planning meeting, and regular **Scientific Coffee** seminars, which have become an important platform for scientific exchange, institutional communication, and discussion of HR-related topics.
- The institute further improved employee support by expanding onboarding activities, updating internal regulations, introducing bilingual HR documentation, and making key institutional policies available in both Czech and English. New procedures were established to ensure that employees are systematically familiarised with important internal regulations, ethical standards, and institutional policies.
- Work-life balance remained a strategic priority throughout the implementation period. IAPG strengthened support for employees taking maternity, parental, and other long-term



caregiving leave through the preparation of dedicated information materials and the implementation of measures included in the Gender Equality Plan. The institute also continued to promote flexible working arrangements wherever operationally feasible and further developed support for researchers returning after career breaks through the ReConnect programme and mentoring activities.

- Employee wellbeing and organisational culture were continuously monitored through staff surveys, focus groups, and regular discussions with laboratory heads. Feedback obtained through these activities directly influenced several institutional decisions, including the introduction of an external mediator, expansion of training opportunities, and further improvements in internal communication. The institute also invested in strengthening cybersecurity, updating IT policies, and improving digital communication tools, thereby providing employees with a modern and secure working environment.

Weaknesses:

- Despite these improvements, several challenges remain. The institute continues to face limitations associated with long-term financial uncertainty, which affects the stability of research positions and influences employees' perceptions of long-term career security. As in many publicly funded research organisations, dependence on external grant funding limits the institute's ability to offer permanent positions and highly competitive salaries.
- Employees also identified administrative burden as one of the principal obstacles to efficient scientific work. Although several processes have already been simplified and digitalised, researchers continue to request further reductions in bureaucracy, greater coordination of administrative services, and increased support in project administration, procurement, and human resources management.
- Another area requiring continued attention is the further development of leadership competencies among laboratory heads and supervisors. As management responsibilities become increasingly complex, there is growing demand for structured leadership training, mentoring, and professional management support.
- Finally, although communication within the institute has improved considerably, maintaining active dialogue across all organisational levels will remain a priority. Continued use of employee surveys, focus groups, and regular evaluation of workplace climate will be essential to identify emerging needs and ensure that working conditions continue to evolve in response to employee feedback and institutional priorities.

Remarks

- The implementation of the Working Conditions actions broadly followed the original Action Plan, while several activities were further expanded in response to employee feedback, organisational development, and evolving institutional priorities.
- One of the most significant developments during the implementation period was the strengthening of **internal communication and employee engagement**. In addition to regular meetings between institute management and laboratory heads, IAPG introduced a separate annual strategic meeting, held at the beginning of each year, dedicated to



discussing the long-term development plans of individual laboratories and aligning them with the institute's strategic objectives. Scientific Coffee seminars also evolved beyond scientific presentations and became an important forum for discussing institutional priorities, career development, research integrity, and other topics relevant to the working environment.

- The institute also placed greater emphasis on **employee wellbeing and work-life balance**. New information materials were prepared for employees taking maternity or parental leave, and support for researchers returning after career breaks was strengthened through mentoring activities and the ReConnect programme. At the same time, a new Gender Equality Plan for 2026–2029 was adopted, ensuring continuity of actions supporting equal opportunities, inclusion, and family-friendly working conditions.
- Another important development was the reinforcement of the institute's organisational culture through updated internal regulations, systematic familiarisation with institutional policies, and improved support mechanisms for employees. Based on feedback from staff surveys and focus groups, several measures were adapted to better reflect employees' needs, including expanding training opportunities, improving communication channels, and introducing an independent external mediator to strengthen confidence in conflict-resolution procedures.
- Several originally planned activities also evolved following practical evaluation. Rather than implementing a dedicated intranet translation tool, IAPG focused on preparing key HR documents and internal regulations directly in both Czech and English, which proved to be a more sustainable and user-friendly solution given the widespread availability of high-quality online translation tools.
- Overall, the feedback collected during implementation period through staff surveys, focus groups, and discussions with laboratory heads has become an important source of evidence for institutional decision-making and has helped embed HRS4R principles into the institute's everyday management. These experiences will guide the next HRS4R Action Plan, with particular emphasis on reducing administrative burden, strengthening leadership support, expanding career development opportunities, enhancing researcher wellbeing, and maintaining an open, inclusive, and attractive working environment.

4.4 Training and development

Strengths:

- During the implementation of the current HRS4R Action Plan, IAPG significantly strengthened its approach to researcher training and professional development by introducing a more systematic and evidence-based framework. Training activities are now planned based on regular assessment of employees' needs through institute-wide questionnaires (2023 and 2026), focus group discussions (2025), and continuous dialogue with laboratory heads, researchers, PhD students, and supervisors. This approach has enabled the institute to tailor educational activities to the actual needs of employees at different career stages.



- The institute substantially broadened its training portfolio by combining internal seminars, external courses, webinars, and e-learning modules. In addition to scientific and technical topics, increased attention was devoted to transferable skills, including grant writing, research ethics, leadership, project management, communication, supervision, gender equality, and the integration of the sex and gender dimension into research. The introduction of e-learning has increased accessibility and enabled employees to complete training flexibly according to their individual schedules.
- Particular emphasis has been placed on supporting **early-career researchers**. PhD students receive personalised information about relevant courses and training opportunities, while supervisors are actively involved in identifying educational needs and supporting individual career development. Scientific Coffee seminars have also evolved into an important platform for sharing scientific knowledge, discussing career development, and strengthening interdisciplinary collaboration across the institute.
- Leadership development has become another important priority. Training activities for laboratory heads and supervisors have increasingly addressed leadership, mentoring, communication, and people management, recognising that successful research leadership requires both scientific excellence and managerial competencies.
- The institute also promotes equal access to professional development. Training opportunities are communicated transparently to all employees, participation is monitored, and training materials are made available through the intranet whenever possible. This contributes to creating a culture of continuous learning and supports long-term career development.

Weaknesses:

- Despite significant progress, several challenges remain. Participation in training activities varies among different employee groups, particularly among senior researchers with demanding research and administrative responsibilities. Maintaining high participation therefore requires continued flexibility in training formats, including hybrid and online options.
- Although the training portfolio has expanded considerably, employees continue to request additional specialised courses in areas such as bioinformatics, artificial intelligence, advanced data analysis, leadership, science communication, and project management. The institute also recognises the need to further develop structured leadership programmes for future laboratory heads and strengthen mentoring opportunities for researchers at different career stages.
- Financial and personnel resources inevitably limit the number of specialised external courses that can be supported each year. Consequently, the institute must continue to prioritise training activities according to strategic needs while seeking opportunities to cooperate with partner institutions and external training providers.
- Finally, further development of systematic evaluation of training outcomes, including long-term assessment of the impact of educational activities on career development,



research performance, and leadership competencies, represents an important objective for the next HRS4R implementation period.

Remarks

- The implementation of the Training and Development actions evolved considerably during the HRS4R implementation period. While the original Action Plan focused primarily on increasing the availability of training opportunities, the institute gradually adopted a more strategic and evidence-based approach to researcher development.
- One of the most important developments was the introduction of **systematic training needs assessment**. Rather than relying solely on ad hoc requests, IAPG regularly collected information through institute-wide questionnaires, focus group discussions, and continuous consultation with laboratory heads, PhD students, supervisors, and individual researchers. This enabled the institute to align its training portfolio with the actual needs of employees and emerging strategic priorities.
- The scope of educational activities was also significantly expanded. In addition to scientific and technical training, greater emphasis was placed on transferable skills, including research ethics, leadership, grant writing, project management, communication, supervision, Open Science, and the integration of the sex and gender dimension into research. The institute introduced e-learning modules to complement face-to-face seminars, increasing accessibility and allowing employees to complete selected training at their own pace. Training materials are now also made available through the intranet for future reference.
- Another important change was the introduction of a more personalised approach to professional development. PhD students and their supervisors now receive targeted information about relevant courses, while researchers requesting specialised training are provided with individual recommendations based on their career stage and professional needs. This approach has increased the relevance and effectiveness of educational activities and strengthened support for career development.
- The implementation period also demonstrated that training should be viewed as a continuous process closely linked to institutional strategy. Consequently, training activities have become increasingly integrated with other HR initiatives, including onboarding, mentoring, leadership development, the Gender Equality Plan, and the HR Excellence in Research Action Plan.
- Overall, no major deviations from the original Action Plan occurred; however, several activities were expanded beyond the initial objectives in response to employee feedback and organisational needs. The experience gained has established a sustainable framework for continuous professional development based on regular needs assessment, flexible delivery formats, and close alignment with the institute's strategic priorities. The next HRS4R Action Plan will further strengthen leadership development, mentoring, digital competencies, AI and bioinformatics skills, and systematic evaluation of training outcomes to ensure that educational activities continue to support scientific excellence and long-term career development.



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

The overall strategic priorities established in the original HRS4R Action Plan have remained valid and continue to reflect the long-term development objectives of IAPG. During the implementation period, the institute maintained its commitment to improving recruitment and selection, strengthening ethical and professional standards, enhancing working conditions, and supporting the continuous development of researchers at all career stages.

However, the implementation process, together with employee surveys, focus groups, and strategic discussions with laboratory heads, identified several emerging priorities that have further shaped the institute's HR strategy. In particular, greater emphasis has been placed on leadership development, career development of early-career researchers, international recruitment and integration of foreign researchers, and the systematic support of mentoring and succession planning. These priorities reflect the institute's ambition to ensure long-term sustainability of research excellence and prepare the next generation of scientific leaders.

Another important shift has been the increasing focus on evidence-based HR management. Regular staff surveys, focus groups, personnel analyses, and monitoring of training needs have become integral tools for institutional decision-making, enabling HR measures to be adapted to the evolving needs of employees.

External developments have also influenced institutional priorities. The introduction of mandatory Gender Equality Plans for participation in Horizon Europe, increasing emphasis on Open Science, research integrity, cybersecurity, responsible research assessment, and the rapid development of artificial intelligence and data-driven research have led the institute to expand its training portfolio and update several institutional policies and procedures.

The institute has also recognised the need to further reduce administrative burden on researchers by strengthening shared support services, particularly in grant development, project management, bioinformatics, and data analysis. At the same time, greater attention has been devoted to researcher wellbeing, work-life balance, and creating an inclusive organisational culture that supports collaboration, openness, and equal opportunities.

Overall, the original priorities have not fundamentally changed; rather, they have evolved and been refined in response to institutional experience, employee feedback, and changes in the European research environment. The next HRS4R Action Plan will therefore build on the strong foundations established during the current implementation period while placing greater emphasis on leadership, talent development, internationalisation, digital transformation, and strategic support services that enable researchers to focus on high-quality, internationally competitive research.



Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates changed and, as such, have had an impact on your strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers?

Yes. During the implementation period, several external and internal developments influenced both the operating environment of IAPG and the institute's strategy for implementing the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

At the European level, the introduction of the revised European Charter for Researchers, the increasing emphasis on Open Science, responsible research assessment, research integrity, and the mandatory implementation of Gender Equality Plans within the Horizon Europe framework required the institute to update several internal policies and strengthen its HR strategy. In response, IAPG revised its Code of Ethics, adopted consecutive Gender Equality Plans (2023–2026 and 2026–2029), expanded ethics and gender-related training, and further integrated these principles into recruitment, career development, and institutional governance.

The rapidly evolving research landscape has also increased demand for new competencies, particularly in artificial intelligence, bioinformatics, research data management, and advanced digital technologies. Consequently, the institute expanded its training portfolio and identified these areas as strategic priorities for future staff development.

At the national level, changes in Czech research funding and the continued dependence on competitive grant funding have reinforced the importance of diversifying funding sources, strengthening international competitiveness, and improving institutional support for grant preparation and project management. These developments have also highlighted the need for long-term career development, succession planning, and improved support for early-career researchers.

Internally, IAPG experienced continued growth in international collaboration and an increasing proportion of international employees, requiring further development of bilingual communication, English-language HR documentation, onboarding, and integration services. Feedback collected through staff surveys, focus groups, and strategic discussions with laboratory heads also identified new priorities, including leadership development, mentoring, reduction of administrative burden, improved shared support services, and enhanced researcher wellbeing.

Another important development was the increasing focus on organisational culture and employee engagement. Based on employee feedback, the institute strengthened internal communication, introduced an external mediation service to improve trust in conflict-resolution mechanisms, expanded Scientific Coffee seminars, and introduced regular strategic meetings with laboratory heads to improve transparency and participation in institutional decision-making.

These changes did not alter the fundamental objectives of the HRS4R strategy but led to a refinement of priorities and the expansion of several actions. The institute has shifted from implementing individual HR measures towards a more integrated and evidence-based approach, embedding the principles of the European Charter for Researchers into strategic management, institutional policies, and everyday organisational practice. This evolution has strengthened IAPG's capacity to respond to a rapidly changing research environment while maintaining an attractive, inclusive, and internationally competitive workplace for researchers.



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

Yes. Several strategic initiatives currently under development will influence the next phase of the HRS4R Action Plan and further strengthen the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

During 2026, IAPG initiated the preparation of its new Institutional Strategy for 2027–2032, developed through extensive consultation with laboratory heads, employees, and institute management. The strategy places strong emphasis on scientific excellence, internationalisation, sustainable career development, leadership, shared research infrastructure, digital transformation, science communication and strengthening institutional support services. The priorities identified during this process will be closely aligned with the objectives of the next HRS4R Action Plan.

Based on strategic discussions and feedback collected through questionnaires and focus groups, the institute plans to further strengthen support for early-career researchers, including structured mentoring, leadership development, transparent career pathways, succession planning, and measures supporting the establishment of new independent research groups. Increasing the institute's attractiveness for international researchers through enhanced recruitment, onboarding, relocation support, and bilingual communication also remains a strategic priority.

Another major strategic objective is the further development of shared support services, particularly in the areas of grant development, project management, bioinformatics, statistics, artificial intelligence, and research data management. These measures are intended to reduce the administrative burden on researchers and allow them to devote more time to scientific work. To support this objective, IAPG has recently submitted a project proposal under the MEYS P JAC programme aimed at developing institutional Open Science structures and support.

The institute is also preparing strategic investments in shared research infrastructure, including advanced genomic technologies, bioinformatics capacity, high-performance computing, imaging technologies, and data storage facilities. These investments will support interdisciplinary research and enhance the institute's international competitiveness.

At the organisational level, IAPG intends to continue strengthening evidence-based HR management through regular staff surveys, personnel data analysis, monitoring of training needs, and evaluation of HR policies. The implementation of the Gender Equality Plan (2026–2029) and continued alignment with the revised European Charter for Researchers will remain integral components of institutional development.

Although these strategic decisions do not fundamentally change the objectives of the current HRS4R Action Plan, they will shape the priorities of the next implementation period. The future Action Plan will place greater emphasis on leadership and talent development, international recruitment, researcher wellbeing, digital competencies, shared scientific support services, and strengthening the institute's capacity to conduct internationally competitive and socially relevant research.



5. ACTIONS

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
1. OTM-R Policy implementation Open Transparent merit-based Policy is issued and published on IAPG's HRS4R website in Czech and English.	12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code) (+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (+/-) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (+/-) 20. Seniority (Code) (+/-)	2Q/2021 start, end is not presumed	IT Team HR Department	OTM-R Policy issued and published on HRS4R page 4Q Annual evaluation of recruitment based on OTM-R Policy
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The guidelines were implemented on 1 May 2021. There has been one update since the effective date and implementation of the guidelines. This update concerns Article 10 covering the recruitment quality control mechanisms. The updated version of the guidelines is published in both Czech and English language on the IAPG website under the HRS4R tab. https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
2. OTM-R Policy evaluation forms Evaluation forms ensure evaluation criteria. These evaluation forms take into account the wider range of the evaluation criteria in order to ensure that the bibliometric indicators be	12. Recruitment (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-) 16. Judging merit (Code) (+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (+/-) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) (+/-) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (+/-) 20. Seniority (Code) (+/-)	2Q/2021 start, end is not presumed	HR Department	Recruitment evaluation based on the Evaluation forms mandatory



properly balanced and ensure that the candidates will not be treated unfavourably.				
Current Status: COMPLETED				
Since the effective date of the guidelines defined in item 1, the evaluation forms are used as part of each selection procedure. Prior to the selection procedure itself, the appointed members of the selection committee are instructed by the representative of the HR Department to complete these forms and offered support in doing so. https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
3. Advertising vacancies on Twitter Open positions will be advertised on Institute's Twitter to encourage external candidates to apply. Twitter was chosen as the most attractive social media for researcher's advertising.	12. Recruitment (+/-)	2Q/2021 start, end is not presumed	Centre of Scientific Information (PR Department) HR Department	Most of open positions advertised on Twitter
Current Status: COMPLETED				
IAPG advertises all job openings on Twitter. The information that each vacancy is advertised also on Twitter is set forth directly in Article 4 of the "Guidelines on Recruitment of Researchers". In addition to the above, a training on "Employee Selection, Motivation and Appraisal" was held during the assessment period. This training, with a time allocation of two teaching days, focused on the process of staff selection in a research organisation, from defining the job title to determining how to identify high-potential employees as well as pre-selection and data evaluation based on the available candidate data sources. It also aimed at becoming familiar with the actual employee recruitment and onboarding process, including assistance with the adjustment of the new employee to the new working environment.				



<https://twitter.com/IAPGavcr>

UPDATE 2026: Following the decision of the Czech Academy of Sciences to discontinue its institutional presence on Twitter (now X), IAPG no longer actively uses this platform for recruitment or institutional communication. Instead, vacancies are systematically advertised through EURAXESS, the institute's website and relevant job portals. In Q3/Q4 2026, IAPG will revamp LinkedIn profile to diversify the channels used to advertise job vacancies, ensuring broad visibility among both national and international applicants while maintaining effective outreach through currently active communication channels.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
4. All advertisements link to HRS4R page All advertisements containing links for HRS4R page (action n. 7) to provide information about the recruitment process in IAPG.	12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-)	2Q/2021 start, end is not presumed	HR Department	All advertisements containing link to HRS4R page

Current Status: COMPLETED

All published vacancies contain a click-through link to the HRS4R section of the IAPG website. This information is included in the benefits section of a job advertisement.

The HR AWARD raises the attractiveness of the IAPG for both Czech job applicants as well as those from abroad. Information regarding the rules governing the recruitment process is also provided to all applicants who respond to the advertised vacancy.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
5. Recruitment Manual prepared Recruitment Manual laying down recommended recruitment procedure,	12. Recruitment (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-)	1Q/2022	HR Department	Recruitment Manual available on HRS4R page Everyone involved in the process familiar with the Manual for recruitment. Acknowledgment of the



questions the recruiters should avoid etc. This Recruitment Manual should underpin OTM-R Training provided by HR Manager (action 6).				document confirmed by involved employees' signatures collected at HR Department.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The handbook is issued and being used as support material to the guidelines defined in item 1 of the action plan. The handbook will continue to be used as well as updated if and as necessary in compliance with the internal processes. The HR Manager, who conducts the training courses and will continue to be involved in them in the future, communicated the contents of the handbook to all new evaluators. Records of past training courses are kept with the HR Manager. https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
6. OTM-R Training Full implementation of the principles and practice of OTM - R will be assured by the training of members of the Recruitment Committee provided on request by HR Department.	12. Recruitment (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-)	2Q/2021	HR Department	Training proposal published on HRS4R page. Recruitment Committee members trained by HR department, that is established in Recruitment Manual.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
A mass training regarding this matter took place on 22 October 2021. This training resulted in the issuance of an IAPG Director's Decision containing a list of employees eligible for appointment as members of a selection committee for recruitment of researchers. The employees listed therein are eligible for appointment as members of selection committees. Each selection committee must consist of at least three appointed members. A committee must at all times comprise of (1) a representative of the IAPG's management, or a person authorised by the Director, (2) the direct superior of the prospective employee being selected for the given vacancy, and (3) a representative of the HR Department. As the list of properly-trained employees expands, the Director's Decision is also updated from time to time to include the newly trained employees. The training, which may also take the form of individual consultations, is conducted by the HR Manager and properly recorded, and the attendance sheets are kept with the HR Department.				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
7. HRS4R page designed Institute´s internet web page providing links for: 1) OTM-R Policy including all documents concerning to open positions and selection procedures, which will be available in English and Czech both. 2) Recruitment Manual (recommendations which will not be mandatory) 3) Welcome Office Programme (Adaptation Programme included). 4) IAPG CODE of Ethics 5) IAPG Career Code 6) And other important documents which are relevant to Human Resources and which will be continuously noticed. 7) All trainings organized at the workplace will be offered on HRS4R page in advance.	12. Recruitment (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-)	1Q/2021 start, end is not presumed	HR Department IT Team	HRS4R website page existence http://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The IAPG website is up and running. The documents published on the website are updated by the IT Department to reflect any changes. A link to the website is inserted into all job advertisements. At the same time, a click-through link is usually used to refer, for example, to the Recruitment				



Guidelines, when communicating with individual job candidates, or to the Welcome Office, when communicating with a successful candidate after the end of the selection procedure, etc.
<https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/>

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
8. Document audit Audit of national, sectoral or institutional regulations governing training and working conditions will be done. HR dept. members in cooperation with secretariat will identify whether there are any other documents (apart the ones stored at secretariat) which are obligated or suitable ones to be known by IAPG's employees.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-)	3Q/2022	Secretariat HR Department	Acknowledgment of all those documents will be confirmed by signatures.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The guidelines currently in force were already audited and the audit reports for the preceding period finalised. The IAPG Director's Office drew up a list of applicable regulations currently in force. At present, the Director's Office notifies ALL employees of all newly issued or updated regulations. Each regulation is also published on the intranet to bring it to the attention of all employees. However, no mechanism has been set up so far to demonstrate that all employees have actually read the regulation, so this needs to be addressed in the upcoming period. - 4Q/2024 UPDATE 2026: Familiarisation with key institutional documents, such as the Code of Conduct of the Czech Academy of Sciences and the IAPG Code of Ethics (2025), is carried out at the level of individual departments. To ensure a consistent understanding of the principles of research integrity, responsible conduct of research, and ethical standards, a dedicated presentation focusing on the updated Code of Ethics was prepared by the Deputy Director for Science. The presentation explains the main principles of the Code, practical examples of ethical issues that may arise in research practice, the responsibilities of researchers and supervisors, and the available mechanisms for addressing ethical concerns. Heads of				



departments are responsible for presenting these materials to all members of their laboratories and ensuring that every employee becomes familiar with the documents. Staff members subsequently confirm by signature that they have read the documents, understood their content, and acknowledge their commitment to comply with them. The signed confirmation sheets are archived by the institute as evidence of completed training and familiarisation with the ethical standards.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
9. Document audit - Translations Translations of all internal regulations and documents identified as essential by document audit (action 8) will be provided.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-)	3Q/2022	Grant Team HR department	All important documents translated to English and available in search engine (Action 10).
Current Status: COMPLETED				
Following the audit of the applicable guidelines, all documents were translated into the English language. The original language versions are kept at the Director's Office as well as published on the intranet.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
10. Documents audit - Search Engine The IT section of the IAPG will introduce a new search engine to all institutional documents and regulations, which will be available in Czech and English in one unique network location on the IAPG intranet.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (+/-)	3Q/2022	IT Team	The search engine services



Current Status: COMPLETED
A search engine that allows all employees to search for applicable guidelines and documents currently in force has been implemented and is now available on the intranet.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
11. Welcome Office Programme established Welcome Office is planned as a large programme containing comprehensive information for foreigners interested in co-operation. The programme will also provide Adaptation programme (on boarding programme) for newcomers, which is common in commercial sector.	2. Ethical principles (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-)	3Q/2021	Project Team – The Project Guarantor Head of Laboratories	Director´s directive issued Acknowledgment of the document confirmed by all employee´s signatures
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The “Welcome Office” programme has been fully implemented and is now visible in the HRS4R section of the IAPG website https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/ . At the same time, the information about the existence of the programme now forms an integral part of the “IAPG Human Resources Development Strategy for 2022-2027” and “IAPG Human Resources Development and Employee Education Guidelines”. IAPG considers the Welcome Office as a helpful tool kit for all newly arriving employees, as it assembles all standard practices that serve mainly the foreign employees in dealing with matters accompanying their move to the Czech Republic. The Welcome Office is coordinated by the HR Manager with the assistance of the head of the department/laboratory the new employee is joining. Beyond our designated “Welcome Office” information package published on the IAPG website, a link to which is provided to the selected/elected candidates, the newly recruited foreign candidates get also connected with the Czech EURAXESS Office https://www.euraxess.cz/czech-republic/euraxess-czech-republic .				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
12. IAPG CODE of Ethics + Ethics Committee Board of IAPG approved the renewed IAPG CODE of Ethics with respect to specifics of IAPG extending the Code of Ethics of the Czech Academy of Science. Based on the Code of Ethics sets up an Ethics Committee to which any IAPG employee (researcher or technician) can submit complaint of suspected scientific misconduct or plagiarism.	2. Ethical principles (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals (+/-)	2Q/2021	Project Team – The Project Guarantor Head of Laboratories	Director´s directive issued Acknowledgment of the document confirmed by all employee´s signatures
Current Status: COMPLETED				
On 1 April 2021, an extended version of the Code of Ethics became effective, which follows the Code of Ethics of the Czech Academy of Sciences, and the Rules of Procedure of the Ethics Committee were issued. In compliance with Article VIII of the Code of Ethics, the IAPG has established an Ethics Committee of six members led by a chairman, who was appointed by the Director of IAPG on 1 October 2021. The Ethics Committee reviewed and recorded several referrals throughout the assessment period. https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/hr-award/HRS4R/ UPDATE 2026: In March 2025, the Code of Ethics for Scientific Research at the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics CAS was comprehensively revised and updated to reflect recent developments in research integrity, responsible research assessment, open science, data management, and institutional policies. The revised Code further clarifies the responsibilities of researchers, supervisors, and managers, strengthens the principles of transparency, fairness, collegiality, and accountability, and reinforces the institute's commitment to maintaining a safe, respectful, and inclusive research environment.				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
13. Grant support meeting Originally, a need for stronger support from the grant team was identified. After thorough analysis, SC and WG identified that apart from increasing team FTE (already increased), the researchers are not entirely familiar with current system possibilities. Based on the above mentioned findings, a meeting of the grant team representatives with researchers will be organized to inform them about available administrative support.	1. Research freedom (+/-)	2Q/2021	Grant Team The Project Guarantor	Meeting´s attendance sheets. Meeting´s record of the researchers expectations from the Grant Team.
Current Status: COMPLETED On 1 June 2021, an online meeting of researchers with the grant support staff and the fundraiser took place. A total of 24 employees attended the meeting, including the Director of IAPG and members of the top management. The meeting provided its attendees with information on the types of research funding available in the Czech Republic, impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on science and research and allocation of budget funds (from the state budget of the Czech Republic). Further, the meeting also introduced several EU Funding Programmes financed directly from the EU budget and, occasionally, co-financed from the state budget of the Czech Republic. In addition, latest funding news were also presented at the meeting covering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in relation to economic and social growth-promoting activities, supporting high-quality job creation, etc. It was concluded that attention needs to focus on international cooperation and early grant proposal preparation. Procedures were developed to be put to use when working with the fundraiser. The meeting records are accompanied with attendance sheets. However, as of				



1 November 2022, there is no stand-alone fundraiser position within the IAPG and it is the Grant Support Office that provides information on open and forthcoming calls for application.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
14. Internal Grant Competition In the frame of present HR Award project, the lectures dealing with project management will be organized for researchers. The IAPG organizes the Internal Grant Competition. The aim is to train junior researchers to deal with all administration associated with project preparation and administration.	1. Research freedom (+/-)	2Q/2021, end is not presumed	Grant Team	Internal Grant Competition existence proven with documentation.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The following conditions apply to participation in the internal grant competition: a) upper age limit of 35 years (except for maternity/parental leave and long-term illness), b) applicant may not participate in any other grant application. The competition is held annually and is always launched by an official call for applications coming from the Director of IAPG. Pursuant to the rules, a call is usually launched at the beginning of November with an application submission deadline of 30 November. The results are announced in January of the following year and the supported projects may start in early February. The project implementation period is 11 months, i.e. until the end of December of the respective year. There is a person assigned to provide the employees with detailed information regarding this matter and a separate section on the IAPG's intranet site intended for the employees. The internal grant competition process has already been implemented in the assessment period via a new software tool. Each competition has its own timeline, which sets out the specific actions and timescales involved: The following timescales apply: • Deadline for application submission and approval by the head of laboratory; • Announcement of call results;				



• Launch of approved projects; • Deadline for availability of funds (spending closeout), unspent funds will be returned; • Deadline for project completion; • Deadline for submission of the final report by the grantee. The first call for applications in the 2022 grant competition was announced by the IAPG Director on 27 October 2021, 11 proposals were received from eligible male and female applicants. In agreement with the recommendation of the external members of the Council of IAPG and after consulting the members of the Director's Advisory Board, the Director has decided on 27 January 2022 to award grant support to three projects with the highest score. The second call for applications in the 2023 grant competition was announced by the IAPG Director on 27 October 2022, 7 proposals were received from eligible male and female applicants. In agreement with the recommendation of the external members of the Council of IAPG and after consulting the members of the Director's Advisory Board, the Director has decided on 18 January 2023 to award grant support to three projects with the highest score. UPDATE 2026: The Internal Grant Competition was conducted according to the established evaluation procedure used in previous years. Based on the results of the peer-review process, the Director approved funding for the highest-ranked projects as follows: • 2023: 7 proposals submitted / 3 projects funded; • 2024: 14 proposals submitted / 4 projects funded; • 2025: 10 proposals submitted / 3 projects funded; • 2026: 13 proposals submitted / 3 projects funded.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
15. Heads of laboratories meeting - Contact point There was a gap identified that an announced contact point is missing. Based on Steering Committee discussion, there was pointed that Heads of laboratories should be the right contact point. However, part of them do	4. Professional attitude (+/-)	3Q/2022 start, end is not presumed	HR Department	Attendance Sheet Record



not have enough information. We suppose that actions 9-11 will help them a lot. However, this topic will be communicated and emphasized on one of the Heads of laboratories meeting.				
Current Status: COMPLETED				
A meeting of the heads of laboratories was held on 26 November 2021 and attended by 11 employees. All participants signed the attendance sheet. The meeting dealt with matters related to the “Welcome Office” and updates to the intranet site in terms of creating individual sections for all organisational units. The intranet site will help the newcomer employees with a quick integration. Another item on the meeting agenda was career guidance. UPDATE 2026: Since fall 2022, meetings between heads of laboratories and top management have been held twice a year. The content of these meetings reflects the current needs and priorities of the given period, including for example grant opportunities, changes in funding schemes, systemic changes related to PhD studies, the institutional budget for the given year, and newly emerging opportunities or strategic topics. To increase participation, especially from workplaces located in Prague and more distant Brno, the meetings are organised in a hybrid format (both in person and online). The meeting records are accompanied with attendance sheets.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
16. Work safety and IT security protocols The individual specialized work safety-training and IT security protocols issued by the Heads of laboratories will be recorded in HR Department.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 7. Good practice in research (+/-)	3Q/2021, end is not presumed	Head of laboratories Technical department responsible for the operation. HR department records the specialized work-safety evidence files.	Protocols available at HR Department.



Current Status: COMPLETED
Folders for storing Occupational Health and Safety reports were created during the assessment period. The mechanism ensuring the files are continually updated is now fully functional. Certain issues connected with the preparation of a safety recommendation on responsible use of digital technologies will be transferred to the next assessment period. - 2Q/2024 UPDATE 2026: The implementation of the new Directive on the Secure Use of IT Technologies is described in greater detail under Action 34. The Directive introduced a comprehensive framework governing the secure use of institutional IT resources, including information systems, electronic communication, mobile devices, remote access, password management, data protection, and cybersecurity responsibilities. It also established clear rules for employees regarding the secure handling of institutional information and compliance with national cybersecurity requirements. To support its implementation, employees were informed of the new requirements through internal communication and were required to familiarise themselves with the Directive as part of the institute's mandatory internal regulations. The Directive forms an important component of the institute's efforts to strengthen information security, protect research data, and ensure a safe and reliable digital working environment.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
17. The position of “mediator” established The IAPG Code of Ethics will include the position of mediator (with specific-mail address) for complains of unequal treatment, interpersonal conflicts, discrimination, sexual harassment or other such events. All employees informed about the existence of this new office via e-mail. Information is provided to new employees in frame of	34. Complains/ appeals (+/-)	2Q/2021, end is not presumed	HR Department IT Team	All employees informed about the existence of this new office via e-mail. The position established. Announcement e-mail.



the programme.	Adaptation				
Current Status: COMPLETED					
A mediator position has been newly established at the IAPG. The competencies and role of the mediator are specified in the internal Employment Rules. The employees were notified of the existence of a mediator via email sent on 15 October 2021. The mediator dealt with one matter during the entire assessment period, records of which are kept by the HR Department at the Director's Office. UPDATE 2026: Since 2026, IAPG management has decided to use an externally provided mediation service. This decision was taken to further strengthen the independence, impartiality, and credibility of the complaint-handling process. The institute recognised that mediation and conflict resolution require specialised professional expertise. An external mediator provides not only professional knowledge and experience in conflict resolution but also greater neutrality, ensuring that all parties perceive the process as fair and unbiased. Another important consideration was to increase employees' confidence in the reporting system. Feedback collected during focus group discussions indicated that researchers and other staff members would feel more comfortable discussing sensitive issues with an independent external expert who is not part of the institute's organisational structure.					

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
18. Gender We will monitor the potential wage gap between men and women by introducing and implementing analysis of male / female wages based on multi-territorial inputs and calculating further progress needed to be made - Project 22% of Equality (Logib, MLSA).	27. Gender balance (+/-)	2Q/2022	HR Department Payroll Team	The Project report
Current Status: EXTENDED				
During the assessment period, the IAPG did not participate in a nationwide survey organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic. Instead, a separate survey was conducted in cooperation with the company Gender Studies o.p.s., which was tailored to meet				



the IAPG's needs and was able to serve as reference for the preparation of the Gender Equality Plan. Reasons for not participating in the survey of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic are also stated in the section "Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan?". 3Q/2023 – 2025

UPDATE 2026: Since 2022, having a Gender Equality Plan (GEP) has become an eligibility requirement for participation in many EU-funded research programmes, including Horizon Europe. In response, IAPG prepared and adopted its first standalone Gender Equality Plan for 2023–2026, which was published on the institute's website and implemented as an integral part of the institute's human resources and organisational development. Following an evaluation of the achieved progress, a new Gender Equality Plan for 2026–2029 was prepared and adopted to ensure continuity, address newly identified priorities, and align the institute with current European and national policy developments.

Rather than treating the Gender Equality Plan as a separate initiative, IAPG has systematically integrated its objectives and measures into the HR Excellence in Research Action Plan and other institutional strategies. Progress in implementing the Gender Equality Plan is therefore reflected across multiple actions of the current Action Plan, including recruitment and selection, career development, leadership support, work–life balance, integration of the gender dimension into research, training activities, support for researchers during career breaks, and the promotion of an inclusive and respectful working environment. This integrated approach ensures that gender equality is embedded in the institute's long-term strategic development and everyday institutional practice.

In view of ongoing EU-wide developments in the area of pay transparency and equal remuneration, the institute will pay particular attention to transparent and equal pay practices in the upcoming period. This topic has been included as new Action 72.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
19. Evaluation of attestation protocol extended Recommendation dealing with next professional career progress of employees will be newly part of the Attestations Evaluating Protocol.	28. Career development (+/-)	4Q/2021, end is not presumed	The Project Guarantor	Extension of attestation protocol about a career development recommendation.



Current Status: COMPLETED
The evaluation form was supplemented with a new paragraph “Additional comments and recommendations of the Evaluations Committee in terms of the career development of the employee being evaluated”. This information is included in the new software tool as well.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
20. Software implementation We are introducing a new software that will be used for evaluation of the work performance and that will give a background for structured feedback for those interested in this opportunity.	36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 40. Supervision (+/-)	4Q/2021	The Project Guarantor Head of Laboratories	SW system implementation
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The software was accepted on 11 July 2022, yet some modules are still being tested for functionality and subsequent updates. The new software is used in the digital process of employee evaluations. One portion of the module and its features is intended also for the evaluation of non-academic workers. The use of this module is voluntary. UPDATE 2026: The software has been fully implemented for employee evaluations (attestations) and has become the institute's standard platform for the electronic administration of internal funding schemes. In addition to streamlining the submission and evaluation of proposals, it supports transparent communication between applicants, reviewers, and the institute's management throughout the entire evaluation process. The system is currently used for the administration of the Internal Grant Agency (IGA) competition for researchers up to 35 years of age. The platform facilitates online submission of applications, assignment of reviewers, evaluation of proposals, monitoring of the review process, and archiving of project documentation. Its implementation has significantly reduced the administrative burden associated with internal grant competitions, increased the transparency and efficiency of the evaluation process, and ensured consistent documentation of all stages of proposal assessment and funding decisions. Recently, the software is also used for the ReConnect return grant programme supporting researchers returning after maternity, parental, or other career breaks.				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
21. Human Resources Developmental Strategy Strategy covering human resources development will be prepared. Value of transparency, the whole range of experience, mobility, non – formal qualification ext. as positive criteria will be emphasized there.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 29. Value of mobility (+/-)	1Q/2022	HR Department Working Group	Human Resources Development Strategy presence
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The Human Resources Development Strategy was prepared and approved by the Council of IAPG on 12 October 2022. This strategy identifies the 2022-2027 objectives and covers 8 areas (Recruitment, Adaptation, Career, Evaluation system, Education, Mentoring, Gender Equality, Work-life balance). Visible on intranet only.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
22. Intellectual Property Rights Training Within HR Award project, the education courses about the intellectual property rights will be financed and relevant seminars organized at the workplace. Links to the recommendations from	31. Intellectual Property Rights (+/-)	3Q/2022	HR Department Working Group	Training feedback reports Attendance list Training Scripts



these seminars will be added as a part of documentation for new coming employees.				
Current Status: COMPLETED				
A specialist intellectual property training course was held on 24 February 2022. All of the determined indicators were fulfilled. The training course covered the following areas: • Copyright • Work made for hire • Fair use of copyright-protected works • Open access • Open source • Industrial design • Trademark • Trade secret • Know-how • Trade secret and know-how protection • Patents and utility models • Patenting process • International patent-filing system (PCT), European patent application • Industrial Property Offices and industrial property rights • International cooperation Certain aspects of intellectual property were also discussed in other training courses, e.g. "Cooperation with the Application Sector and Commercialisation of Research, Development and Innovation Outputs" held on 15 September 2022, and another held on 16 February 2023 and 23 February 2023 on "Qualitative and Quantitative Assessment of Research Outputs Around the World and in the Czech Republic". Based on attendee feedback, the training was helpful and the majority of the attendees will make use of the acquired knowledge in practice. UPDATE 2026: At IAPG Day, the institute-wide annual event for all employees held on 21 May 2026, the topic of intellectual property and knowledge transfer was further strengthened through a dedicated lecture entitled "Transfer of Knowledge and Technologies in the Czech Academy of Sciences." The lecture was delivered by Ilona Müllerová, who introduced the role of the Czech Academy of Sciences in supporting knowledge and technology transfer and provided an overview of the institutional framework governing intellectual property protection within the Academy.				

The presentation addressed the practical aspects of identifying research results with commercial or societal potential, intellectual property protection, patenting procedures, licensing, collaboration with industry, and the responsibilities of researchers throughout the technology transfer process. Particular attention was devoted to the support services available within the Czech Academy of Sciences, examples of successful technology transfer, and the importance of balancing scientific publication with appropriate protection of intellectual property. The lecture concluded with an interactive discussion, during which participants had the opportunity to raise questions related to intellectual property management, ownership of research results, collaboration with external partners, and practical issues arising during research projects. The event contributed to increasing researchers' awareness of innovation, valorisation of research results, and opportunities for translating scientific discoveries into societal and economic benefits.

A complementary interactive Dilemma Game workshop, organised in cooperation with the National Library of Technology, addressed intellectual property through practical scenarios and group discussion. Although primarily designed for early-stage researchers, it also attracted several R3 and R4 participants, enabling valuable exchange across career stages.

Indicators: **I1.** Presentation materials; **I2.** Attendance sheets (38 and 20 participants, respectively); **I3.** Programme of IAPG Day; **I4.** Photo documentation of the events.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
23. List of Supervisors The list of supervisors for individual researchers and students will be provided on IAPG intranet page to formalize this aspect.	21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 40. Supervision (+/-)	3Q/2021, end is not presumed	HR Department Working Group (WG) IT Team	The list of supervisors available on intranet. Regular up dated.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The list of supervisors is published on the IAPG's intranet site. UPDATE 2026: To improve the transparency and accessibility of doctoral supervision, the IAPG intranet provides a comprehensive overview of all PhD supervisors and their doctoral students. The database includes information on research topics, university affiliation, year of study, supervisory arrangements, and the respective research laboratory. This resource increases the visibility of doctoral research across the institute, facilitates communication between supervisors and students, and promotes interdisciplinary collaboration. It also enables PhD students to identify colleagues working in related research areas or at a similar stage of their studies, thereby fostering peer networking, informal mentoring,				



and the exchange of experience. In addition, the overview supports institute management in monitoring doctoral education and contributes to a more transparent and coordinated supervision system.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
24. Education Guideline - Training feedback Education guideline will be formulated within HR project. The guideline will ensure that all participants of seminars and other education courses organized by IAPG departments will provide their feedbacks in standardized form. Other employees will submit the standardized travel reports concerning the profit from education events for their next professional development.	28. Career development (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-)	2Q/2021	HR Department	Education guideline issued Travel report form extended for benefit from education event for future professional development Feedback reports protocols about each training available
Current Status: COMPLETED				
Rather than being prepared as a separate document, the training policy was incorporated into the “Human Resources Development and Employee Education Guidelines of the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics”. Thus, the IAPG now has a single document covering both areas. The document was approved by the Council of IAPG on 29 November 2022 and is available to the employees on the intranet.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
25. Regular survey on training topics of interest	37. Supervision and managerial duties (+/-)	4Q/2021, end is not presumed	HR Department	Regular e-mail survey; once a year



HR department will monitor interest in training topics among researchers. Based on the financial possibilities identified trainings will be provided.				
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The requirement to conduct a periodic survey has been incorporated into a newly issued internal policy “Human Resources Development and Employee Education Guidelines of the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics” adopted on 29 November 2022. These guidelines refer to action 24 of the action plan that also mentions the obligation to issue such policy. This survey was conducted in relation to the year 2022 and resulted in the execution of educational activities as part of project implementation. The 2023 educational needs survey has not yet been conducted, since the education and training of researchers as well as that of technical and economic staff is covered until 30 June 2023 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports OP RDE project “Quality Improvement of Human Resources Strategy Management in Science and Research at the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics CAS” (reg. No. CZ.02.2.69/0.0/0.0/18_054/0014650) and includes the following areas: a) MANAGEMENT SKILLS b) PRESENTATION SKILLS c) EMPLOYEE SELECTION, MOTIVATION AND EVALUATION d) MENTORING e) WORKPLACE RELATIONS, CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND CHALLENGES FACED BY MANAGERS IN THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS In 2023, the survey will be conducted in September, in compliance with the provision of clause 10.3. of the newly adopted guidelines, to identify the 2024 educational needs. UPDATE 2026: In accordance with the Human Resources Development and Employee Education Guidelines, IAPG regularly monitors the training needs of its employees. Institute-wide surveys on training interests were conducted in autumn 2023 and winter 2026. The questionnaires enabled researchers and other employees to identify priority areas for further professional development, including both scientific and transferable skills, and provided valuable feedback for planning future educational activities. To complement the questionnaire-based surveys, the institute also collected detailed feedback through a series of focus group discussions held in November/December 2025. These discussions involved researchers from different career stages and organisational units and provided valuable qualitative information on educational needs, barriers to participation, preferred training formats, and priorities for future professional				

development. The focus groups also identified emerging topics requiring increased institutional support, such as leadership and management skills, mentoring, communication, grant writing, research ethics, gender dimension in research, open science, and career development.

In addition to these institute-wide surveys, IAPG adopted a more individualised approach to identifying training needs. Personalised information on relevant training opportunities is regularly distributed to PhD students and their supervisors, taking into account the stage of doctoral studies and specific development needs. Similarly, employees who express interest in specialised training or identify particular professional development needs receive targeted information about suitable external and internal courses, workshops, and seminars as they become available.

The results of the surveys and individual requests are regularly evaluated by the HR Award coordinator and IAPG management and are used when planning the annual training programme, subject to institutional priorities and available financial resources. This flexible approach has enabled the institute to provide training that better reflects the actual needs of researchers at different career stages while making efficient use of available funding.

Indicators: **I1.** Institute-wide training needs surveys conducted in autumn 2023 and winter 2026; **I2.** Personalised training recommendations provided to PhD students, supervisors, and employees requesting specialised training; **I3.** Survey results incorporated into annual training planning; **I4.** Training activities aligned with institutional priorities and available resources.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
26. Trainings available published on HRS4R page All trainings organized at the workplace will be accessible on HRS4R page in advance.	39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-)	4Q/2021	HR Department	Opportunities for trainings published on HRS4R page
Current Status: COMPLETED				
Recent educational activities offer is published from time to time in the HRS4R section of the website. Visible on intranet only.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
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27. Mentoring Programme The recently introduced IAPG Mentoring programme will serve newly incoming researchers, students, and employees at the beginning of their careers. In addition, Heads of Laboratories or other persons (mentors) will be supported in their team leadership skills and familiarized with the possibility of providing career advice and support by the Mentor Guarantor.	28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties (+/-)	1Q/2021	HR Department Mentor Guarantor	IAPG Mentoring Guideline existence; 10 mentors trained by professional expert to improve their skills. 20 mentees trained by mentors. Sessions provided within documents.
Current Status: EXTENDED				
The mentoring programme is currently ongoing, the indicators will be fulfilled by 30 June 2023. The Mentoring Handbook intended for both the mentors and the mentees has already been prepared. To retain the HR AWARD, the IAPG is committed to pursue the mentoring programme even after the completion of the OP RDE HR grant project "Quality Improvement of Human Resources Strategy Management in Science and Research at the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics CAS" (reg. No. CZ.02.2.69/0.0/0.0/18_054/0014650). The mentoring programme is also included in the IAPG Human Resources Development Strategy for 2022-2027. - 2Q/2024, open-end UPDATE 2026: The progress is detailed under Action 37.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
28. Heads of laboratories meeting –	30. Access to career advice (+/-)	1Q/2022	The Project Guarantor Head of Laboratories HR Department	Attendance sheets Record



Access to career advice topic Heads of laboratories or other persons will be informed of the relevance of the career advice. This topic will be addressed at one of the meetings of the heads of laboratories whose competencies in the career counselling will be underpinned by having the opportunity to consult a Mentoring Coordinator.				
Current Status: COMPLETED				
Meeting of the managerial employees was held on 26 November 2021 in the attendance of 11 employees. This was the same meeting as the one mentioned in action 15 of the action plan, where multiple agenda items were addressed.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
29. Science Coffees HR Department will help to renew PhD students meeting, organized each month to present and discuss their research. Meetings stopped due to the Covid pandemic restrictions. Sessions will be provided by one of the researchers.	28. Career development (+/-)	2Q/2021 restart, end is not presumed	Informal activity of researchers HR Department	Monthly meeting's program via e-mail



Current Status: COMPLETED
Regular Scientific Coffees were resumed and are ongoing. This action will be assigned the EXTENDED status due to indicator adjustments. Scientific Cafés are not held precisely once a month, but rather as required and depending on the current situation. Notices of meetings are published on the IAPG website. https://www.iapg.cas.cz/cs/Verejnost-a-media/ open-end
UPDATE 2026: The details are given under Action 38.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
30. All advertisements published on Euraxess Open positions will be advertised on Euraxess.	12. Recruitment (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-)	2Q/2021 start, end is not presumed	HR Department	Open positions will be advertised on Euraxess
Current Status: COMPLETED				
This action is being properly executed as evidenced in the advertised job vacancies section of the EURAXESS website. UPDATE 2026: During the assessment period, IAPG continued to publish all relevant research vacancies (career/tenure-tracked) on the EURAXESS portal in accordance with the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R). EURAXESS serves as the institute's primary international recruitment platform, ensuring broad visibility of vacancies among researchers across Europe and beyond while promoting equal access to employment opportunities. Job advertisements are prepared using standardised templates and include comprehensive information on the position, required qualifications, expected responsibilities, employment conditions, selection procedure, and application deadline. Exceptions are limited to specific project-based part-time positions requiring recruitment of a uniquely qualified expert for a fixed-term assignment, where the recruitment process may follow the conditions specified by the funding body or project agreement. Nevertheless, the principles of transparency, equal treatment, and merit-based selection are maintained in all recruitment procedures. Indicators: I1. Research vacancies systematically published on EURAXESS; I2. Standardised advertisement templates used; I3. Links to HR Excellence in Research and OTM-R information included in advertisements; I4. Increased international visibility and accessibility of recruitment				



(e.g. in 2025 one advertised position attracted 29 international applicants); **I5.** Recruitment procedures conducted in accordance with OTM-R principles and subsequently evaluated on an annual basis to assess whether these principles had been fulfilled in practice.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
31. Preparation of a Newcomer's Guide Newly recruited IAPG employees need to be provided with induction assistance to help them get acquainted with the internal processes as quickly as possible. Each newcomer employee will receive this guide upon commencement of employment + it will also be published on the intranet.	2. Ethical principles (+/-) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 24. Working conditions (++) 30. Access to career advice (+/-)	2Q/2024 4Q/2026	HR Manager, managerial employees	Publication of the guide on the intranet.
Current Status: EXTENDED				
The newcomer information was mainly available as a set of separate documents provided by the HR Department. To make onboarding more accessible, structured and user-friendly, IAPG aims to transform these materials into a practical Newcomers' Guide / employee brochure, bringing together key information for new employees in one clear and easy-to-use format. The guide aims to cover the main areas relevant to new employees and students, including practical workplace information, administration and onboarding, PhD studies and supervision, laboratory and research practice, salaries and financial administration, grant opportunities and mobility, publications and research outputs, career development, PR communication, IT and data management, safe and respectful working environment, and benefits and work-life balance. In parallel, IAPG is also developing a set of FAQs, as the brochure cannot cover all specific situations arising from the different needs of individual laboratories and institute sites in Liběchov, Prague and Brno. The FAQs will therefore serve as a living intranet resource, regularly updated and expanded based on questions and suggestions collected during focus group meetings as well as in day-to-day operation. The publication timeline				



was adjusted to allow for the consolidation of existing materials, consultation across Institute sites, and the incorporation of feedback from different employee groups. The Newcomers' Guide is expected to be published in Q4/2026.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
32. Becoming familiar with the new and updated internal regulations Applicable internal regulations currently in force are published on the intranet. However, there is currently no mechanism in place to prove that all employees have actually read them.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 6. Accountability (++) 7. Good practice in research (+/-) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 23. Research environment (++) 24. Working conditions (++) 37. Supervision and managerial duties (+/-)	4Q/2024, open-end	HR Manager, managerial employees	Existence of an internal document stipulating the rules of becoming familiar with the regulations.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
During the assessment period, IAPG established a formal procedure to ensure that employees become familiar with newly issued and updated internal regulations. All applicable internal documents are published on the institute intranet in a dedicated section accessible to all employees. In addition, whenever a new regulation is issued or an existing one is substantially revised, employees are informed through institutional communication channels and by their heads of laboratories or departments. For key institutional documents, including the Code of Conduct of the Czech Academy of Sciences, the IAPG Code of Ethics, and other regulations related to research integrity, workplace safety, data protection, and internal procedures, dedicated presentations and explanatory materials have been prepared to facilitate understanding of their practical implications. Heads of laboratories are responsible for ensuring that all members of their teams are acquainted with these documents and have the opportunity to discuss any questions. To provide documented evidence of familiarisation, employees confirm by signature that they have read, understood, and agree to comply with the relevant regulations. The signed records are archived by the institute. This procedure has strengthened compliance with institutional policies,				



improved transparency, and created a verifiable mechanism demonstrating that all employees have been informed of important internal regulations.

Indicators: **I1.** Formal procedure for familiarisation with new and updated regulations implemented; **I2.** Key documents published on the intranet; **I3.** Explanatory presentations prepared for selected regulations; **I4.** Employees' acknowledgement documented by signed confirmation sheets; **I5.** Signed records archived by the institute.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
33. Translation tool on the IAPG intranet Taking into account the need to maintain continuity in the translation of documents, the situation will be addressed by placing a translator link on the intranet.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 23. Research environment (++) 24. Working conditions (++)	1Q/2024, open-end	Deputy Director for Organization and Operations + IT Specialist	Existence of the translator on the intranet
Current Status: COMPLETED				
IAPG reviewed the need for a dedicated translation tool on the intranet. Based on experience gained over the past three years, the original need for such a solution has significantly decreased. Most key institutional documents, internal regulations, guidelines, and HR-related materials are now routinely prepared and maintained in both Czech and English, ensuring direct accessibility for international employees without the need for additional translation. For documents that are available only in Czech, employees can make use of widely available online translation AI tools, which have substantially improved in quality and are sufficient for routine orientation in internal documents. As a result, the institute concluded that implementing a dedicated translation application on the intranet would not provide significant additional benefit compared with the current practice.				

Instead, IAPG has focused its efforts on ensuring that all strategically important documents, including HR policies, ethical guidelines, recruitment procedures, and onboarding materials, are prepared directly in both language versions. This approach provides greater reliability than automatic translation and better supports the integration of international researchers into the institute.

Indicators: **I1.** Key institutional and HR documents are available in both Czech and English; **I2.** English versions are being regularly updated together with the Czech originals; **I3.** International employees informed about the availability of bilingual documentation; **I4.** No dedicated intranet translation tool required following evaluation of current practice.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
34. Safety recommendations The IT team will prepare a list of safety recommendations on responsible use of digital technologies. These recommendations will be communicated to all employees.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (+/-) 7. Good practice in research (+/-) 23. Research environment (++)	2Q/2024	Deputy Director for Organization and Operations + IT Specialist	Existence of the document and its publication on the intranet.
Current Status: (Extended 16) COMPLETED				
A Directive on the Operation and Use of IT Resources has been prepared and adopted in January 2026. The directive establishes basic rules for the use of computing equipment, data handling, security of user accounts, and the use of the internal IT infrastructure. Training in the rules set out in the directive is carried out at the level of individual departments by an IT Specialist, as each department has specific requirements regarding its data types, data storage and data handling procedures.				
At the same time, an IT HelpDesk system was launched as the single official channel for submitting and managing IT requests. The system is used in particular for reporting IT problems and failures, requests for software installation or device configuration, access requests to systems and shared folders, and other IT-related requests and consultations. The aim is to ensure transparent record-keeping of requests and more efficient IT support.				



Indicators: **I1.** IT Directive adopted; **I2.** Department-level training provided by IT Specialist; **I3.** IT HelpDesk launched as the official channel for IT requests; **I4.** IT requests are systematically recorded and managed through the HelpDesk system.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
35. Keeping the employee list up-to-date in the Outlook system. Update the list and employees involved in the individual departments and teams in the Outlook system based on the periodic personnel data reports. Sort the names by “last name” for better orientation.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 23. Research environment (++)	1Q/2024, open-end	Deputy Director for Organization and Operations + IT Specialist + HR Department	Updated list in the Outlook application.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
The employee list is regularly reviewed and updated based on periodic personnel data reports to ensure that contact information remains accurate and reflects the current organisational structure. Within the Outlook system, employees are organised by departments and research teams, with names sorted by surname to facilitate quick orientation and efficient communication. The list also reflects personnel changes, including new employees, departures, and changes in departmental affiliation or position. Maintaining an up-to-date directory supports everyday communication across the institute, facilitates collaboration between organisational units, and ensures that employees can easily identify and contact the appropriate colleagues. The Outlook directory is coordinated by the HR Department in cooperation with the IT Specialist to ensure consistency with the institute’s official personnel records.				
Indicators: I1. Outlook employee list regularly updated based on personnel data reports. I2. Employees organised by current departments and research teams, with names sorted by surname.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
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36. Employee use of the official IAPG address If it is necessary to redirect the official IAPG address to another address provided by the employee, the IT Specialist will be the responsible person available for assistance with the process.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 23. Research environment (++)	3Q/2024, open-end	Deputy Director for Organization and Operations + IT Specialist + HR Department	Updated employee and contact list published on the intranet.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
IAPG established a clear procedure governing the use of official institutional email accounts and the redirection of emails to external addresses. The institute's policy emphasises that official communication should be conducted primarily through the institutional @iapg.cas.cz email accounts to ensure data security, compliance with institutional regulations, continuity of communication, and appropriate archiving of official correspondence. In justified cases where employees require email forwarding or other specific email settings, assistance is provided by the IT Specialist, who is responsible for configuring these services in accordance with institutional IT security policies and data protection requirements. This centralised approach ensures that technical solutions are implemented consistently while minimising cybersecurity risks and maintaining the integrity of institutional communication. Information on the use of official email accounts and available IT support has been incorporated into onboarding materials and is communicated to newly recruited employees. The procedure is also aligned with the institute's Directive on the Secure Use of IT Resources, which defines the responsibilities of users and promotes secure handling of institutional communication. Indicators: I1. Official procedure for institutional email use established; I2. IT Specialist designated as the contact person for email configuration and forwarding requests; I3. Information incorporated into onboarding materials; I4. Compliance with the Directive on the Secure Use of IT Resources ensured.				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
37. Update the Mentoring Handbook and include the option to evaluate the mentors/supervisors. Annual PhD students meeting.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems (++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (+/-) 22. Recognition of the profession (++) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (+/-) 32. Co-authorship (++) 33. Teaching (++) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-) 40. Supervision (+/-)	2Q/2024, open-end 4Q/2026, open-end	Deputy Director for Science + Mentoring Guarantor	Updated Mentoring Handbook Training attendance sheet
Current Status: (Extended 27) EXTENDED				
The first version of the Mentoring Handbook has been successfully implemented and serves as a practical guide for mentoring activities at the institute. As the mentoring programme continues to evolve, particularly through the implementation of the ReConnect return grant scheme, the Handbook will be regularly updated to reflect newly identified mentoring needs, practical experience, and examples of good practice, ensuring that it remains a relevant resource for mentors, mentees, and supervisors. Suggestions for improvement were also discussed during focus group meetings. Publication of the updated Mentoring Handbook is planned for Q4/2026.				



The mentoring programme is vivid and has been further expanded through the introduction of PhD Day (held every autumn), an internal student conference where PhD students present the progress of their research in the form of oral presentations or posters. The event provides early-stage researchers with an opportunity to receive feedback from researchers across different career stages, thereby supporting presentation skills, scientific discussion, confidence in thesis defence, and preparation for participation in international conferences. The entire event is conducted in English in order to ensure inclusion of international students and staff and to strengthen the international research environment at the institute.

In 2025, the PhD Day programme was further expanded by introducing a mentoring activity called the “Roundtable”. As part of this activity, a PhD student (typically at a more advanced stage of study) meets together with their supervisor and several senior researchers. The discussion focuses on the progress of the doctoral studies, identification of potential risks or obstacles, and formulation of concrete steps towards successful completion of the PhD. The format provides an opportunity to gain broader professional perspectives, share experiences across career stages, and strengthen support for both PhD students and their supervisors.

Indicators: **I1.** Mentoring Handbook regularly updated; **I2.** Announcement and invitation to PhD Day and attendance sheets are available.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
38. Regular “Scientific Coffee” meetings	3. Professional responsibility (+/-) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++) 9. Public engagement (++) 23. Research environment (++) 28. Career development (+/-) 33. Teaching (++) 38. Continuing Professional Development (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-)	Already in place, open-end	Researchers	Notice of meeting to be either sent via email or published on the intranet.
Current Status: (Extended 29) COMPLETED				



Scientific Coffee meetings have become a well-established and valued component of the institute's research culture and internal communication. They are organised on a regular basis throughout the year (typically once a month, except during the summer holiday period) and provide an informal platform for researchers from different departments, career stages, and scientific disciplines to present their current research, exchange ideas, and discuss new scientific developments.

The meetings are open to all employees, including PhD students, postdoctoral researchers, technicians, and senior researchers, thereby fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, strengthening the research community, and encouraging scientific discussion across departmental boundaries. Most sessions feature presentations by IAPG researchers, while selected meetings also host invited external experts, collaborators, or alumni who introduce new research methods, technologies, funding opportunities, or broader topics relevant to research culture.

In addition to supporting scientific exchange, the meetings provide opportunities for early-career researchers to improve their presentation skills, receive constructive feedback, establish new collaborations, and become more actively involved in the institute's scientific community. Announcements of upcoming meetings are distributed via institutional email and published on the intranet, while presentation materials are made available whenever appropriate.

Indicators: **I1.** Scientific Coffee meetings organised regularly throughout the year; **I2.** Participation of researchers from all career stages and organisational units; **I3.** Inclusion of both scientific presentations and broader topics related to research culture and career development; **I4.** Announcements distributed via institutional communication channels; **I5.** Positive feedback from participants and sustained attendance.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
39. Implement statistical monitoring and evaluation of personnel data, interpretation of staff data in terms of gender and other variables	12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-)	4Q/2023, Continuous fulfilment: at 31 December of the given year, submitted together with the Annual Report	HR Manager / HR Department	Gender-disaggregated statistical outputs + evaluation and comparison with the preceding periods at least once a year
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				



As part of the regular monitoring and evaluation of HR data, the institute assessed the development and structure of its research staff. The monitoring data are available on the HR Award section of the IAPG website¹. The overall number of research staff has remained stable over the monitored period, with 131 persons in 2023, 128 in 2024 and 133 in 2025. The average workload per person is approximately 0.68 FTE, reflecting the grant-based nature of research employment and frequent involvement in multiple projects. This finding was further reflected in the focus groups with early-career researchers, where employment stability was repeatedly raised as a key concern. The same was also confirmed by the strategic survey (June 2026) among Heads of Laboratories, where employment instability was identified as a key barrier to building stable and excellent research teams. Participants pointed out that research staff are often employed on successive fixed-term contracts linked to individual projects, which makes long-term career, personal and lab-strategy planning extremely difficult. Although it may create uncertainty particularly for researchers in the early stages of their careers and may negatively affect their motivation to remain at the institute in the long term, this model in fact reflects the grant-based nature of research funding in the Czech Republic.

The impact of employment instability for researchers is then deepened by a continuing gender gap in career progression. While women represent more than 60% of staff in V3 (equivalent to R2), their share decreases in higher qualification grades, reaching approximately 25% in V6 (R4).

There are several reasons why early-career researchers (may) leave IAPG and in the next phase of HR Award we would like to address these:

- The need for work-life balance and supporting career breaks and return-to-work transitions: IAPG aims to continue offering flexible FTE arrangements and working hours (as it was highly appreciated in gender audit survey), returning grants implementation (New Action 59) and general support for keeping the contact during the career break.
- The need to establish different career tracks (in compliance with Czech Academy of Sciences) - to recognise both leadership and specialist expertise, both with well-defined career plans including competences descriptions and structured training (New Action 53 and 54).

The monitoring data indicate an overall stable staff structure while also highlighting several areas that warrant continued attention. In 2025, nine employees entered the V1 career stage, the majority of whom were under the age of 30, indicating a successful recruitment of early-career researchers and prospective PhD students. At the same time, the institute recorded a decrease of nine researchers at the PhD level. This requires further monitoring to better understand the underlying reasons, including successful completion of doctoral studies followed by career progression and mobility, transitions to other research institutions or sectors, and cases of premature departure from research careers. Distinguishing between these outcomes is important for evaluating the effectiveness of the institute's career development measures, identifying potential retention challenges, and ensuring that appropriate support mechanisms are in place for early-career researchers.

Therefore, the institute systematically monitors the progress of doctoral students, successful thesis defences, as well as unsuccessful study completion and the reasons leading to withdrawal or termination of doctoral studies. This information is and will be regularly analysed to identify

¹ https://www.iapg.cas.cz/export/sites/uzfg/en/hr-award/files/GEP_statistics_2023
https://www.iapg.cas.cz/export/sites/uzfg/en/hr-award/files/GEP_statistics_2024
https://www.iapg.cas.cz/export/sites/uzfg/en/hr-award/files/GEP_statistics_2025



potential barriers, evaluate the effectiveness of supervisory practices and support measures, and implement targeted actions aimed at reducing attrition, improving the quality of doctoral education, and increasing the likelihood of successful completion for future PhD students.

Key risks include the future budgetary impact of V1 progression to higher grades, dependence on grant funding, and the burden placed on senior researchers by high turnover among students and junior staff. The institute therefore identifies the stabilisation of the middle career stage as a priority, particularly through mentoring, mobility support (New Action 60), returning grants and support easing family-work balance (New Action 59 and 62), support for start-up grant applications (New Action 70), structured training and clearer career development pathways (New Action 53 and 54) and monitoring of the wellbeing (New Action 66).

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
40. Training selected female employees in management skills and leadership.	10. Non discrimination (++) 20. Seniority (Code) (+/-) 22. Recognition of the profession (++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment (++) 27. Gender balance (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 33. Teaching (++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies (++) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-) 40. Supervision (+/-)	4Q/2024, open-end	Deputy Director for Science / heads of laboratories / HR Manager	An assembled group of women with a potential for career advancement that meets regularly in order to strengthen their own leadership skills.
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				



The participation in meetings of Heads of laboratories has been expanded to include deputy heads, with the aim of strengthening the involvement of women in leadership and decision-making processes within the institute. The meetings now involve 15 heads of laboratories (4 of them are women) and 15 deputy heads of laboratories (8 women). While the role of deputy heads had previously been rather formal, the institute now seeks to involve them more actively in institutional activities in order to support their development of leadership and managerial competences, increase experience-sharing and access to strategic information, and create a supportive environment for future career progression of women in research management and leadership positions.

Moreover, in 2025 the institute successfully applied for support through the MEYS P JAC Return Projects programme, which will enable targeted support for researchers returning from (or still on) career breaks with career development potential. Within this framework, up to 12 researchers in total will be supported through high-quality EMBO Leadership and Management courses during the period 2026–2029.

So far, four researchers have already used this opportunity: one woman participated in the course “EMBO Lab Leadership for Scientists: Postdocs” (27–29 May 2026) and one woman and two men in the course “EMBO Lab Leadership for Scientists: Group Leaders” (5–8 May and 9–12 June 2026, respectively). In addition, one female Head of laboratory attended a one-day training course focused on difficult managerial conversations organised by Czech Academy of Sciences (29 April 2026). Two other female researchers currently on parental leave will attend “EMBO Lab Leadership for Scientists: Group Leaders” and “EMBO Project management for Scientists” in September 2026.

During the assessment period, the scope of Scientific Coffee meetings was further broadened beyond purely scientific presentations. Several sessions addressed topics related to the HR Excellence in Research Award, responsible research culture, career development, and gender equality. For example, on 25 February 2026, a meeting focused on practical aspects of integrating the sex and gender dimension into research, accompanied by a discussion of examples from biological and biomedical sciences. Another session featured Hayley Lanier, a Fulbright scholar from the University of Oklahoma, who shared her experience on balancing parenthood with an academic career and discussed career development in an international research environment (29 April 2026).

Indicators: I1. Deputy Heads of Laboratories involved in regular Heads of Laboratories meetings, increasing women’s participation in leadership and decision-making structures; **I2.** Targeted leadership and management training provided to female researchers and researchers returning from career breaks. **I3.** Up to 12 researchers planned to be supported through EMBO Leadership and Management courses in 2026–2029. **I4.** Scientific Coffee meetings expanded to include topics related to research culture, career development, gender equality and leadership.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
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41. Mentoring among the current and potential heads of laboratories.	27. Gender balance (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 33. Teaching (++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies (++) 36. Relation with supervisors (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-) 40. Supervision (+/-)	4Q/2024, open-end	Deputy Director for Science / authorised mentors	Periodic mentoring sessions.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
As already briefly mentioned under Action 40, the participation in meetings of Heads of Laboratories has been expanded to include deputy heads, with the aim of strengthening leadership development, experience-sharing and access to strategic information. The IAPG Return Grants project ReConnect is specifically designed to support the successful reintegration of researchers after a career break. One of the key components of the project is a structured mentoring system. Each supported researcher is accompanied throughout the entire project period by an officially appointed mentor (Head of laboratory), who is formally integrated into the project team and supported through a dedicated 0.2 FTE allocation. To ensure high-quality mentoring support, all mentors involved in the programme undergo training in coaching and mentoring skills. The measure is intended to strengthen career development, facilitate reintegration into the research environment, support leadership potential, and promote sustainable career progression after career interruption. So far, 8 women (each with their own mentor) have expressed interest in applying to the internal ReConnect grant competition for the 2026–2029 funding period. Five women already applied in the first call (May 2026) of the internal ReConnect returning grant competition – four of them were awarded funding, and their projects started July/September 2026. Three potential applicants would like to apply in the next call (September 2026). In addition to the above-mentioned programmes and formal support activities, the Deputy Director for Science is available for informal one-to-one consultations on a biweekly basis, providing researchers and research leaders with regular opportunities to seek advice and discuss challenging managerial situations, strategic decisions, leadership development, team dynamics, and other complex issues related to research management and career progression.				



Indicators: **I1.** Deputy Heads of Laboratories included in regular leadership meetings; **I2.** ReConnect mentoring system under preparation for researchers returning after career breaks. **I3.** Mentors formally appointed and supported through dedicated FTE allocation thanks to the ReConnect project. **I4.** One-to-one consultations with the Deputy Director for Science available every two weeks.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
42. Insert the following wording into all job advertisements: „IAPG promotes gender equality and diversity. Thus, we welcome all male and female applicants from different groups of population.”	10. Non discrimination (++) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-)	3Q/2023, open-end	HR Manager / HR Department	Statistical data on the advertised vacancies.
Current Status: COMPLETED				
Implemented. The institute's Gender Equality and Diversity Statement has been incorporated into all standard job advertisement templates and is systematically included in newly published vacancies. The statement clearly communicates IAPG's commitment to equal opportunities, diversity, inclusion, and merit-based recruitment, encouraging applications from all qualified candidates regardless of gender, age, nationality, ethnic origin, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or other personal characteristics. By integrating this statement into all recruitment materials, the institute reinforces the principles of OTM-R and demonstrates its commitment to creating an inclusive and welcoming research environment. The statement complements the objectives of the Gender Equality Plan and the institute's HR Excellence in Research strategy, ensuring that equal treatment is embedded throughout the recruitment process. Compliance with this requirement is routinely monitored by the HR Department during the preparation and publication of vacancies. The effectiveness of the measure is further evaluated through regular analysis of recruitment data, including the diversity of applicants and recruitment outcomes. Applicant statistics, including gender-disaggregated recruitment data, are reported under Action 44.				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
43. Training of the entire staff on gender stereotypes and their internalisation and thus, strengthening the ability to reflect on the unjustified horizontal and vertical gender segregation of jobs.	10. Non discrimination (++) 27. Gender balance (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 33. Teaching (++) 38. Continuing Professional Development (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-)	2Q/2025 open -end	HR Manager / HR Department	E-learning training offer on the IAPG's intranet site.
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				
In February 2026, we launched training for scientific staff covering various topics related to gender in the research community and environment. We used a freely available professional e-learning resource consisting of thematic modules, each combining an educational video with a short questionnaire to reinforce understanding and support knowledge retention: 1 - Gender bias against women in academia and research 2 - Psychological forms of gender-based violence 3 - Sexual harassment in research and academia 4 - What should we do when we encounter sexual harassment in research and academia? 5 - Gender-balanced expression in the academic and research environment 6 - Bias against women in the academic hiring process 7 - What kinds of obstacles do women face in research and academia? 8 - Economic aspects of gender inequality in research and academia 9 - The gender dimension within research 10 - Economic violence in the context of reconciliation work-life balance We consider this e-learning to be a baseline training, providing an accessible format for reaching the entire staff. Our aim is to gradually train all employees across the institute, and it has been incorporated into the onboarding process as mandatory training for newly recruited employees. Indicators: I1. E-learning modules available on the intranet; I2. 67 participants, i.e. 48% of research employees completed the training; I3. Inclusion of training in onboarding process; I4. An email invitation to e-learning and statistics on questionnaire completion.				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
44. Record the number of male and female applicants for vacant positions at the IAPG from a gender perspective and monitor their reasons for leaving a job.	12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-)	3Q/2023, open-end	HR Manager / HR Department	Gender-disaggregated statistical outcomes accompanied at least once a year by evaluation and comparison with the preceding periods.
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				
During the monitored period, gender-disaggregated data on applicants for scientific positions were recorded and evaluated. In total, 61 applicants applied for scientific positions at IAPG, including 19 women, 35 men and 7 applicants whose gender was not identified. In the first year of monitored recruitment procedures, 10 applicants were recorded: 5 women, 4 men and 1 applicant of unknown gender. In the third year, 51 applicants were recorded: 14 women, 31 men and 6 applicants of unknown gender. The collected data show that in overall, men represented a higher share of applicants than women, particularly in the third year of monitored recruitment procedures. However, the data should be interpreted with caution, as applicant numbers may be influenced by the specific field, type and seniority of advertised positions. The results do not in themselves indicate unequal treatment in recruitment, but they point to the need for continued monitoring of the recruitment process from a gender perspective. In the next period, IAPG will therefore focus not only on the gender structure of applicants, but also on the individual stages of the recruitment process, including shortlisted candidates, interview invitations, selected candidates and reasons for accepting or declining offers. Three-year monitoring of researcher departures showed that 27–42% of departures were based on termination by mutual agreement, while 53–68% were due to the expiry of fixed-term contracts, which are mostly linked to grant-funded projects. Over the same three-year period, two employees resigned for personal reasons and three colleagues passed away. No research staff members left during their probationary period. The reasons for termination by mutual agreement varied and included, for example, completion of studies, reaching retirement age, the intention to broaden professional experience through another position or internship, or, in the case of international researchers, return to their home country or continuation of their career elsewhere. In several cases, no specific reason was provided.				

Indicators: **I1.** Gender-disaggregated applicant monitoring has been implemented. **I2.** Men represented a higher share of applicants overall, especially in the third year of monitored recruitment procedures.

Target for next phase: Further monitoring should focus not only on applicant numbers, but also on gender balance across individual stages of the recruitment process.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
45. Meetings of the management with the heads of laboratories to present the strategic goals of the individual laboratories set for the given year and to review the previous year.	4. Professional attitude (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++) 9. Public engagement (++)	1Q/2024, open-end	Director of IAPG / Deputy Director for Science	Annual meetings of the management with the heads of laboratories.
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				
Meetings between IAPG top management and heads of laboratories and their deputies were held twice a year (spring and autumn) in the period 2024–2025. These meetings served as a key platform for strategic communication, coordination, and shared decision-making across the institute. Their agenda regularly included presentations of institutional priorities, annual budget allocation, research performance, grant opportunities, implementation of the HR Excellence in Research Action Plan, updates on PhD student support, personnel development, and upcoming changes in the Czech and European research environment. An additional strategic meeting was introduced during the winter period. On 4 February 2026, IAPG management, the heads of laboratories and their deputies met to discuss the strategic goals and priorities of individual laboratories. The meeting was attended by all laboratory heads, with two being excused and represented by delegated colleagues. In addition to reviewing the previous year's achievements, each laboratory presented its strategic plans for the upcoming period, including research priorities, grant strategies, staffing plans, and infrastructure needs. The meeting concluded with an open discussion. Indicators: I1. Participation rate of laboratory heads and their deputies; I2. Presentation of annual reports and strategic plans by all laboratories; I3. Documented meeting outcomes (minutes, agreed action points); I4. An email invitation to the stakeholders and news post on the institute's website https://www.iapg.cas.cz/en/aktuality/Sharing-Results-Aligning-Direction-Planning-the-Year-Ahead/				



Target: Regular meetings between the management heads of laboratories and their deputies, creating a structured platform for strategic alignment, information sharing, and discussion across the institute.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
46. Prepare a document/leaflet for the employees taking a maternity/parental leave outlining possible forms of communication and cooperation opportunities during their absence from work.	10. Non discrimination (++) 24. Working conditions (++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment (++) 26. Funding and salaries (++) 27. Gender balance (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-)	2Q/2024	HR Manager / HR Department	Prepared document
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				
During the assessment period, a dedicated information leaflet for employees planning or taking maternity, parental or other long-term caregiving leave was prepared. The objective was to maintain communication with employees during their career break, facilitate their future return to research, and ensure they remained informed about opportunities available during their absence. The leaflet provides practical guidance on communication with the institute during leave, opportunities to participate voluntarily in selected institutional activities (e.g. seminars, Scientific Coffees, training events, PhD Day and social events), possibilities for maintaining professional contacts, available funding opportunities, and institutional support before returning to work. It also included all important contact details and other relevant support services. Additional output of this action was the preparation of a handover protocol template to facilitate the transfer of data, samples and information on ongoing projects and manuscripts before or during a career break. The template also supports agreement on the further use of unfinished work and helps clarify expectations between the researcher and the team. Its aim is to protect both sides: the person entering or returning from a career break, who may need to balance work and personal responsibilities, and the research team, which needs to maintain continuity, performance and responsible management of ongoing research activities.				



Indicators: **I1.** Leaflet prepared and published on the intranet; **I2.** Information integrated into HR support materials; **I3.** Handover protocol template to facilitate the transfer of data, samples and information on ongoing projects and manuscripts provided to employees before commencing a career break, available on the intranet.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
47. Training on the integration of the gender dimension into research (in cooperation with external parties). The seminar will be intended for male and female managerial employees as well as employees working on research projects.	2. Ethical principles (+/-) 10. Non discrimination (++) 23. Research environment (++) 27. Gender balance (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 33. Teaching (++) 38. Continuing Professional Development (++) 39. Access to research training and continuous development (+/-)	1Q/2025 (with an earliest possible start date)	Deputy Director for Science / heads of laboratories / scientists and researchers / HR Manager	Training courses on integration of the gender dimension into research - educational activities for team leaders (subsequently offered to other members of staff as well) in terms of gender issues in science and research (a combination of e-learning and other courses).
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED During the assessment period, IAPG implemented a comprehensive training programme aimed at strengthening researchers' awareness and practical understanding of the integration of the sex and gender dimension into research. Recognising that these aspects are increasingly required by both European and national funding agencies, the institute decided to offer the training to the entire scientific community, including principal investigators, laboratory heads, postdoctoral researchers, PhD students, and other researchers involved in preparing grant proposals and conducting research projects. Two complementary activities were implemented: 1) Seminar “Gender in Science”, on 25 February 2026: Covering (i) a talk focused on the gender dimension in the institutional context, research teams, and research design, (ii) a presentation of selected practical examples from relevant studies, and (iii) a moderated discussion. Although delivered in person and online, the training reached a smaller group of participants than we expected (30 in total); however, the discussion was active and generated valuable feedback. The presentation materials and a summary of the discussion are available on the intranet, allowing staff to revisit the content as needed.				



2) E-learning module, launched February 2026:

Short educational videos combined with follow-up questionnaires aimed at reinforcing understanding of the topics. The content focused on the gender dimension in research and gender-inclusive language, which is increasingly important not only for grant writing but also for professional communication more broadly (we will focus on this further in Action. The modules showed higher participation rates (67 participants) and are available on the institute webpage.

Both activities will be further developed and offered again in adjusted or more targeted formats, with the aim of further raising awareness among a broader group of researchers.

Indicators: **I1.** Number of participants in the seminar (30) and e-learning modules (67); **I2.** Availability of training materials (intranet); **I3.** Participant engagement (discussion, completion of questionnaires), **I4.** An e-mail invitation to seminar and e-learning.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
48. Consider the gender dimension in research including the topic itself as well as the selected research methods.	1. Research freedom (+/-) 2. Ethical principles (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (+/-)	1Q/2024, open-end	Researchers / research grant applicants / heads of laboratories	Gender dimension incorporated into the research content at the proposal submission stage.
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				
Currently, consideration of the sex and gender dimension in research has become an integral component of research excellence and a standard requirement of many national and international funding organisations, particularly within the Horizon Europe framework and an increasing number of Czech funding programmes. Consequently, IAPG has actively promoted awareness of these requirements through institutional training activities, internal communication, and guidance for grant applicants (Action 47).				
As a result, the majority of research proposals submitted by IAPG researchers now routinely assess whether sex and/or gender variables are relevant to the proposed research, both in terms of research content and study design as well as the composition of research teams. This approach contributes to improving the scientific quality, reproducibility, and societal relevance of research outcomes while ensuring compliance with current funding requirements. For example, among the 64 grant proposals submitted in 2025, a substantial proportion explicitly addressed the sex and gender dimension where scientifically relevant and considered diversity within research teams whenever appropriate.				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
49. Elaborate a complex procedure covering the entire process from filing a complaint to its resolution, including the responsible persons, deadlines, etc. Focus on setting up straightforward rules at all levels (superiors - subordinates, amongst colleagues).	2. Ethical principles (+/-) 10. Non discrimination (++) 23. Research environment (++) 22. Recognition of the profession (++) 27. Gender balance (+/-)	3Q/2024	Mediator / HR Manager	A prepared and approved procedural document for dealing with negative phenomena.
Current Status: (Extended 18) COMPLETED				
During the assessment period, IAPG developed and implemented a comprehensive procedure for reporting, addressing, and resolving complaints related to inappropriate workplace behaviour, including unequal treatment, discrimination, harassment, bullying, interpersonal conflicts, breaches of ethical principles, and other negative phenomena affecting the working environment. The procedure clearly defines the available reporting channels, responsible persons, individual steps of the complaint-handling process, principles of confidentiality, protection of the complainant against retaliation, and possible resolution mechanisms. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the procedure specifies the roles of Heads of laboratories, the HR Department, Ethics Commission, IAPG management, and external bodies (e.g., Ombudsperson of Czech Academy of Science) ensuring that each case is handled by the appropriate body. Particular emphasis was placed on establishing transparent, accessible, and easy-to-understand rules applicable across all organisational levels, including relationships between supervisors and subordinates as well as among colleagues. The procedure also promotes early resolution of conflicts whenever appropriate through informal dialogue, while ensuring that serious cases are investigated in a structured and impartial manner. The new procedure has been incorporated into the institute's internal regulations and communicated to employees through the intranet, onboarding materials, and HR communication. It complements the updated IAPG Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct CAS, supporting a safe, respectful and inclusive research environment.				



Indicators: **I1.** Complaint-handling procedure approved and implemented; **I2.** Responsible persons and reporting channels clearly defined; **I3.** Procedure published on the intranet and communicated to employees; **I4.** Information incorporated into onboarding materials; **I5.** Integration with the Code of Ethics, Ethics Commission, and external mediation support.

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
50. Preparation of new institutional strategies for 2027–2031 The current institutional strategies expire in May 2027. To ensure continuity and strategic coherence, IAPG needs to prepare and approve a new set of institutional strategies for the period 2027–2032. The process will reflect the outcomes of the HR Award renewal phase, internal assessment, employee feedback, institutional priorities, and current developments in research culture, open science, sustainability, public engagement, and human resources management.	4. Professional attitude 23. Research environment 28. Career development 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	3Q/2026 1Q/2027 2Q/2027 2Q/2027	IAPG Management, Council of IAPG, PR Office.	Indicators: I1. Current 2022–2027 strategies reviewed and key findings reflected in the new strategic framework. I2. Draft strategies for 2027–2031 prepared, consulted with relevant stakeholders and approved by IAPG management / governing bodies. I3. The resulting strategies will be systematically communicated to employees through internal communication channels. I4. Links to the HR Award Action Plan, implementation responsibilities, and monitoring mechanisms defined. Target:



				New institutional strategies for 2027–2032 prepared and approved.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
51. Development of research data management and open science support at IAPG Research data management and open science practices are increasingly important for research quality, transparency, reproducibility, visibility and compliance with funder requirements. IAPG needs to strengthen institutional support in this area, including guidance on open access, data sharing, FAIR principles, data management plans, and intellectual property considerations, and reflect these priorities in the new Open Science Strategy of IAPG (Action 50).	3. Professional responsibility 4. Professional attitude 6. Accountability 7. Good practice in research 8. Dissemination and exploitation of results 31. Intellectual Property Rights 38. Continuing professional development	2Q/2027 2Q/2027 2Q/2027 4Q/2027 1Q/2027	IAPG Management, Open Science / Data Management Support, IT Specialist, Library / Information Services.	Indicators: I1. Institutional guidance on open access, FAIR data, (inter)national repositories, data management plans, and IP considerations made available. I2. Employees are informed about available tools, requirements, support, and good practices. I3. Training or consultation support on open science and research data management provided. I4. Relevant cooperation with CAS, national or international open science platforms supported. I5. Data Steward responsibilities defined and assigned, either within the existing institutional



				support structure or as part of a dedicated Data Steward position. Target: To develop institutional guidance, training and consultation support for open science, research data management, open access publishing, data sharing, reproducibility, and responsible use of research outputs.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
52. Bioinformatics and Data Science Support The increasing complexity of biological data requires stronger institutional support in bioinformatics, statistics, data science, and responsible use of AI tools. Current limitations in accessible expertise limit data analysis capacity, research quality and competitiveness at national and international	7. Good practice in research 23. Research environment 38. Continuing professional development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q2/2027 Q3/2027 Q3/2027 Q1/2028, annually Q4/2027, annually	IAPG Management, Deputy Director for Science, Bioinformatics / Data Science Expert.	Indicators: I1. Bioinformatics and data science consultation support defined. I2. Shared consultation or support service piloted. I3. The final platform will be systematically promoted to staff via internal communication channels. I4. Statistics and AI-related guidance or training offered.



level, and the ability of teams to fully use available datasets. The support model will be developed gradually, taking into account available financial and personnel capacities, and may include consultations, recommended workflows, internal guidance materials, training activities, and links to external expert services.				I5. User satisfaction survey carried out annually. Targets: T1. Improved access to bioinformatics, data science, statistics, and AI-related support for researchers, contributing to higher-quality research practice. T2. Annually, at least 3 different training activities will be offered.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
53. Alignment of IAPG career development processes with the updated CAS Career Development Rules The Career Development Rules for CAS are expected to be updated at CAS level by the end of 2026. IAPG will review its internal career development, evaluation and attestation processes and adjust them accordingly to ensure	11. Evaluation / appraisal systems 21. Postdoctoral appointments 22. Recognition of the profession 25. Stability and permanence of employment 28. Career development 30. Access to career advice 36. Relation with supervisors 37. Supervision and managerial duties	Q2/2027 Q2/2027 Q3/2027 Q3/2027	IAPG Management, Council of IAPG.	Indicators: I1. Updated CAS Career Development Rules reviewed at IAPG level. I2. Relevant internal procedures and documents adjusted. I3. Changes communicated to researchers, supervisors, evaluators, and relevant administrative staff. I4. Career development and evaluation processes



institutional compliance, transparency, and clear communication towards employees.	38. Continuing professional development 40. Supervision			implemented in line with the updated CAS rules. Target: To align IAPG internal career development and evaluation procedures with the updated CAS Career Development Rules and ensure that employees, supervisors, and evaluators are informed about the relevant changes.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
54. Career development framework for researchers Training opportunities are available at IAPG, but they are not yet systematically structured according to researchers' career stages and roles. PhD students and other researchers would benefit from clearer guidance on relevant skills, development priorities, and suitable training	28. Career development 30. Access to career advice 36. Relation with supervisors 37. Supervision and managerial duties 38. Continuing professional development 40. Supervision	Q3/2027 Q3/2027 Q3/2027 Q3/2027, annually Q3/2027 Q4/2027, annually	IAPG management, HR Department, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Recommended training packages defined for key career stages and roles. I2. The ResearchComp framework pilot-tested with PhD students at IAPG. I3. Existing training opportunities mapped against selected ResearchComp competence areas, with priority gaps identified.



opportunities. Additionally, the ResearchComp framework will be tested as a practical reference tool, initially for PhD students, and later for broader researcher development.				14. Researchers at various career stages guided towards suitable training opportunities, based on their development needs. 15. Recommended training pathways communicated to researchers, supervisors, and Heads of laboratories. 16. Participation in relevant professional and transferable skills training monitored annually, including participant feedback on quality, relevance, and applicability. Target: To define recommended training tailored to different career stages and roles, and to pilot the use of the ResearchComp framework in career development support for PhD students through a dedicated workshop and guidance towards relevant training opportunities. (Linked with Action 53).
Current Status: NEW				



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Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
55. Revision of attestation forms to recognise broader contributions to research and institutional life The current attestation forms place strong emphasis on publication records and standard research outputs. Other important contributions, such as participation in the scientific community, mentoring, and supervision of high school and undergraduate students, science communication and public engagement, institutional service, open science activities or transfer of knowledge and technologies, are currently not sufficiently visible in the evaluation process.	11. Evaluation/appraisal systems 16. Judging merit 22. Recognition of the profession 28. Career development 33. Teaching 37. Supervision and managerial duties 38. Continuing professional development	Q3/2026 Q2/2027 Q2/2027 Q3/2027	IAPG Management, HR Award Coordinator, Attestation Evaluation Committee.	Indicators: I1. Existing attestation forms reviewed. I2. Broader contribution categories included in the revised forms. I3. Revised forms approved and introduced into the evaluation process. I4. Researchers and supervisors informed about the updated forms. Target: To revise the attestation forms so that they allow researchers to report and document a broader range of professional activities and merits, in addition to publication records and grant performance.
Current Status: NEW				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
56. Recognition of science communication and outreach as part of research work Science communication, outreach, and public engagement are integral components of responsible research and contribute to the visibility, societal relevance, and impact of IAPG. However, these activities are not always sufficiently recognised as a legitimate part of scientific work or reflected in career development and evaluation processes.	8. Dissemination and exploitation of results 9. Public engagement 11. Evaluation/appraisal systems 22. Recognition of the profession 28. Career development 38. Continuing professional development	Q2/2027 Q3/2027 Q3/2027	IAPG management, HR Department, HR Award Coordinator, Attestation Evaluation Committee.	Indicators: I1. Recognition principles included in the updated Popularization Strategy. I2. Options for recognition or compensation of demanding outreach activities discussed. I3. PR and outreach acknowledged as legitimate professional contributions and public engagement reflected in appraisal / attestation processes. Target: To foster an institutional culture in which science communication and outreach are recognised as valuable professional contributions and embedded in the updated Popularization Strategy of IAPG for 2027–2031 (Action 50) and in revised attestation form (Action 55).
Current Status: NEW				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
57. Strengthening PR support and researchers' communication skills Researchers are increasingly expected to communicate their work to different audiences, including the public, media, schools, and institutional partners. To support effective and consistent communication, IAPG needs to strengthen practical PR support, provide targeted training, and establish clearer cooperation mechanisms between researchers and PR staff. Concurrently, with the rise of Open Science, researchers face higher risks of media controversies, disinformation, online harassment, or miscontextualized statements. PR support must therefore expand to include guidance on navigating these	8. Dissemination and exploitation of results 9. Public engagement 23. research environment 28. Career development 38. Continuing professional development	Q2/2027 Q2/2027 Q2/2027 Q2/2027 Q2/2027 Q2/2028	PR Office, HR Award Coordinator, IAPG Management.	Indicators: I1. Targeted media / science communication training introduced. I2. PR–researcher cooperation defined and communicated. I3. Templates for presentations, posters, and other communication outputs made available. I4. Basic PR and communication guidance included in onboarding materials. I5. Communication skills reflected in researcher development opportunities. I6. A system for crisis communication and reputational risk support created; employees familiarized with available guidelines, key contacts, and institutional support from both IAPG and the Czech Academy of Sciences. Targets:



communication risks and ensuring researchers' safety in the public sphere.				T1. To improve researchers' communication skills and provide practical institutional support for public engagement, media communication, and presentation of research results. T2. The institute will ensure staff are equipped to handle media controversies, disinformation, or online harassment, and know who to contact for institutional and reputational support. T3. At least 4 press releases issued per year 2028 in national or relevant science media.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
58. Promoting gender-inclusive language as part of professional institutional communication	4. Professional attitude 10. Non-discrimination 13. Recruitment 23. Research environment 27. Gender balance	Q4/2026 Q4/2026 Q4/2026 Q4/2026	HR Department, PR Office, HR Award Coordinator, IAPG Management.	Indicators: I1. Short guideline / leaflet on gender-inclusive language prepared.



Gender-inclusive language will support equal opportunities, professional communication, and the quality of grant proposals, public presentations, and institutional materials. As this topic may be perceived differently among employees, IAPG needs to promote a practical, balanced and context-sensitive approach, focusing on clarity, professionalism, and appropriate use.				I2. External specialist consulted, where appropriate. I3. Practical examples for Czech and English communication included. I4. Employees informed about the purpose and appropriate use of gender-inclusive language. Target: To provide practical guidance on gender-inclusive language and support its appropriate use in institutional communication, grant proposals, recruitment materials, and public-facing outputs.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
59. Implementation of return grant projects and establishment of sustainable regular processes Researchers returning from career breaks need	1. Research freedom 10. Non discrimination 23. Research environment 24. Working conditions 25. Stability and permanence of employment 26. Funding and salaries	Q3/2026 Q2/2029 Q3/2026, continuous Q3/2029 Q3/2029 Q4/2029 Q4/2026, continuous	IAPG Management, HR Department, HR Award Coordinator, P JAC ReConnect Project Team, Project Office, PR Office.	Indicators: I1. Dedicated information and support channel for career breaks established. I2. ReConnect return grant scheme implemented.



targeted support to rebuild research capacity, continue their career development and reintegrate into research teams. The ReConnect project introduces return grant support for this purpose. To ensure long-term impact beyond the project period, IAPG needs to implement the scheme effectively and translate tested procedures into sustainable institutional practice.	27. Gender balance 28. Career development 30. Access to career advice 38. Continuing professional development 40. Supervision			I3. Supported researchers provided with relevant administrative, career development and reintegration support. I4. Experience from the P JAC ReConnect project evaluated. I5. Sustainable procedures for supporting career breaks and returns developed. I6. Relevant processes integrated into institutional HR and career development practice. I7. Continuous promotion of support options and training activities will be ensured, with regular reminders provided to staff through appropriate internal communication channels. Targets: T1. To support the successful implementation of return grant projects and establish regular, sustainable processes for supporting researchers
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				before, during and after career breaks. T2. At least 5 researchers successfully reintegrated during the period 2026-2029.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
60. Implementation of new CAS internal funding programmes supporting mobility and international recruitment The new CAS Academy of Future framework introduces internal funding schemes supporting international mobility, career development, return from career breaks and the acquisition of talented researchers from abroad. IAPG needs to integrate these opportunities into institutional practice and establish transparent internal procedures for informing, selecting and supporting applicants.	12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code) 14. Selection (Code) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) 23. Research environment 28. Career development 29. Value of mobility	Q3/2026, continuous Q3/2026 Q1/2027 Continuous Q4/2026, annually	IAPG Management, HR Department, HR Award Coordinator, Project Office, PR Office.	Indicators: I1. Continuous promotion of Academy of Future schemes to researchers. I2. Internal procedures for mobility support and Acquisition Programme nominations defined. I3. Potential applicants and host laboratories supported in preparing applications. I4. Submitted and supported applications monitored. I5. Experience with programme implementation evaluated and internal processes adjusted where needed. Targets:



				T1. To implement the relevant CAS Academy of Future programmes at IAPG, particularly mobility support and the CAS Acquisition Programme for attracting talented researchers from abroad, including returning Czech researchers. T2. At least 3 applications supported by Academy of Future schemes annually.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
61. Strategic training for responsible, safe and high-quality research practice Researchers need regular access to targeted training on topics that are essential for responsible, safe and high-quality research practice. Priority areas include occupational and institutional safety, cybersecurity, risk awareness, animal work and welfare, research and publishing ethics, including predatory publishing and other questionable academic practices.	2. Ethical principles 3. Professional responsibility 5. Contractual and legal obligations 6. Accountability 7. Good practice in research 24. Working conditions 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q2/2027 Continuous Q4/2027 Q4/2027 Q1/2028	IAPG Management, HR Department, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Strategic training plan prepared. I2. Training activities delivered in identified priority areas. I3. Participant feedback collected. I4. Training needs regularly reviewed and updated. I5. Relevant training integrated into the onboarding process. Targets: T1. To strengthen researchers' capacities through strategic workshops and training activities focused on safety, animal welfare, publication ethics, responsible research practice and others. T2. 100% of newly arriving researchers trained in 2 strategic trainings within their first 6 months.
Current Status: NEW				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
62. International onboarding and integration programme for researchers and their families International researchers may face barriers during recruitment, relocation and integration, especially when arriving with family members. Existing support and onboarding materials should be further expanded to provide clearer guidance on relocation, English onboarding and family-related needs. The updated materials will include practical information on childcare and schooling, healthcare, family-related residence procedures, Czech language learning opportunities, local community resources and external support services.	10. Non discrimination 12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) 23. Research environment 24. Working conditions 29. Value of mobility	Q3/2026, continuous Q3/2026, continuous Q3/2026, continuous	HR Department, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Family-related information and contacts to external support services added to Newcomers' Guide, intranet FAQs and relevant onboarding materials, all accessible in English. I2. Czech language courses regularly offered, with participation by international researchers monitored. I3. Feedback from international employees with families used for improvements and updates. Targets: T1. Existing onboarding materials expanded to better support international recruitment, relocation and integration of researchers and their families.

				T2. Czech language courses offered twice a year.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
63. Creation / update of a bilingual orientation system Based on feedback from the international focus group, IAPG will review and improve bilingual orientation information across its sites, including practical wayfinding signs, basic navigation guidance and links to relevant onboarding materials.	10. Non-discrimination 24. Working conditions	Q4/2026 Q4/2026 Q4/2026	Deputy Director for Organisation and Operation.	Indicators: I1. Bilingual orientation signs updated or installed. I2. Key buildings, laboratories and shared areas clearly marked. I3. Feedback from new employees and international staff collected. Target: Improved accessibility, orientation and safety for new employees, students, visitors and international staff across IAPG sites.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
64. Strengthening institutional identity and	4. Professional attitude 5. Contractual and legal obligations	Q4/2028 Q4/2026 Q4/2026	IT Department, PR Office, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Updated institute website launched.



cohesion through unified communication tools IAPG will strengthen institutional identity and internal cohesion by unifying key communication tools, including the redesign of the institute's website and the introduction of unified email signatures. The updated website will provide clearer and more accessible information on the institute, its research, services, organisational structure and support resources. Unified email signatures will support consistent professional communication across departments and sites. Where relevant, they may include standardised legal and procedural disclaimers to clarify communication boundaries and protect employees communicating with external suppliers and service providers.	9. Public engagement 23. Research environment	Continuous Continuous		I2. Unified email signature template prepared and communicated. I3. Relevant legal/procedural disclaimers prepared where needed. I4. Accessibility and clarity of key institutional information monitored through staff surveys, focus groups and informal meetings. I5. Appropriate internal communication channels will be utilized to continuously promote new tools and services. Targets: T1. Stronger institutional identity, more consistent communication and improved accessibility of information for employees, students, visitors and external partners. T2. Two informal meetings held annually with stakeholders from different groups to collect feedback and plan further measures.
Current Status: NEW				



Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
65. Regular review of OTM-R procedures using recruitment statistics and applicant feedback Recruitment data are already monitored, but the evaluation of OTM-R procedures should be further strengthened through structured applicant feedback. While applicants have so far been able to provide feedback on their own initiative, IAPG aims to introduce a short questionnaire for recruitment participants, focusing on the quality, transparency and fairness of the selection process.	12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code) 14. Selection 15. Transparency	Q1/2026 Q1/2026 Continuous Continuous	HR Department, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Recruitment statistics reviewed annually. I2. Gender-disaggregated applicant data evaluated. I3. Applicant and/or selection committee feedback collected where possible. I4. Updated OTM-R procedures and documentation based on feedback. Target: More systematic, evidence-based review of OTM-R procedures and stronger practical implementation of OTM-R principles in recruitment.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
66. Monitoring researcher wellbeing and job satisfaction	23. Research environment 24. Working conditions 28. Career development	Q2/2027-2029 Q2/2027-2029 Q2/2027-2029	HR Department, HR Award Coordinator, PR Office.	Indicators: I1. Annual staff survey implemented.



IAPG will regularly monitor researcher wellbeing, job satisfaction and working conditions through an annual staff survey and biennial discussions in the focus groups. The aim is to identify key concerns, monitor changes over time and use the findings to adjust HR measures, internal communication and support mechanisms.	36. Relation with supervisors	Q3/2027-2029 Q2 and Q4/2027-2029		12. Results analysed and discussed with the focus groups. 13. Key findings reported to the institute management / Steering Committee. 14. Follow-up measures proposed based on survey results. 15. Staff wishlist reviewed twice a year, with feasible suggestions prioritised and gradually addressed depending on complexity and available capacity. 16. Employee survey results and follow-up actions are regularly shared with staff via internal communication channels. 17. The effectiveness of internal communication channels (e.g., intranet, newsletter) is regularly evaluated through feedback and available metrics to guide their further development. Targets: T1. Improved evidence-based monitoring of
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				wellbeing, job satisfaction and working conditions, supporting a more stable, inclusive and motivating research environment. T2. Annual staff survey implemented with a target response rate of at least 40%.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
67. Development of mentoring and training opportunities for technical and administrative staff Technical and administrative staff play a key role in the functioning of the institute, but development opportunities are often more strongly focused on researchers. More structured support is needed to recognise their contribution, strengthen competences and support long-term professional growth. The action will focus on strengthening	23. Research environment 24. Working conditions 28. Career development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q4/2027, 2028 Q1/2028, 2029 Q4/2027, 2028 Q1/2028, 2029	HR Department, HR Award Coordinator, PR Office.	Indicators: I1. Training needs of technical and administrative staff mapped. I2. Targeted training or mentoring activities offered. I3. Feedback collected and used to adjust future activities. I4. Development opportunities communicated internally. I5. Continuous monitoring of staff engagement from various staff categories in voluntary institutional activities (e.g., public



professional competences, institutional knowledge, communication, service quality, cooperation with research teams and opportunities for further development within non-research career paths.				outreach, popularization, and internal events). Target: Broader and more inclusive career development support for technical and administrative staff, strengthening their competences, motivation and integration into the institutional environment.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
68. Training catalogue based on annually identified needs Training opportunities are available, but they should be more clearly structured, communicated and linked to regularly identified staff needs. The catalogue will include internal and external training opportunities relevant to researchers, PhD students, technical and administrative staff. It will	28. Career development 38. Continuing Professional Development 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q4/2027, 2028 Q1/2028, 2029 Q4/2027, 2028 Q1/2028, 2029	HR Department, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Training needs identified annually. I2. Training catalogue prepared and regularly updated. I3. Training opportunities communicated to employees and students . I4. Participation and feedback monitored. Target: Clearer, more systematic and needs-based access



cover both general institutional topics and group-specific needs, such as research skills, leadership, project management, communication, safety, IT, data management, research ethics, language skills and career development.				to training and development opportunities across IAPG, within the institute's available financial and personnel capacities.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
69. Annual HR analytics report and GEP re-audit HR and gender equality data are monitored in several areas, but they should be more systematically integrated, evaluated and used for strategic HR planning. In 2029, IAPG will also carry out a GEP re-audit to assess progress in gender equality and identify priorities for the next period.	10. Non-discrimination 24. Working conditions 25. Stability and permanence of employment 27. Gender balance	Q1/2027-2029 Q1/2027-2029 Q2/2027-2029 Q2/2027-2029 Q2/2029 Q3/2029	HR Department, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Annual HR analytics report prepared. I2. Key HR and gender equality indicators monitored and evaluated. I3. Findings discussed by institute management / Steering Committee. I4. Monitoring results used to define follow-up priorities. I5. GEP re-audit carried out in 2029. I6. A new GEP prepared on the basis of the re-audit findings.



				Target: More systematic, evidence-based HR monitoring and strategic use of HR and gender equality data for institutional development.
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
70. Professional grant development support The action responds to the need for more systematic grant scouting, early proposal development support, review of applications, and guidance for national and international funding schemes, including ERC and Horizon Europe.	4. Professional attitude 23. Research environment 28. Career development 29. Value of mobility 30. Access to career advice 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q1/2027 Q2/2027 Continuous Continuous Continuous	Deputy Director for Science, Project Office, IAPG Management.	Indicators: I1. Designate responsibility to an existing institutional support role or allocate it within a newly established position. I2. Grant database prepared or updated. I3. Grant proposal consultations / reviews provided. I4. ERC / Horizon Europe mentoring or information activities offered. I5. Support for consortium-building provided where relevant. Targets: T1. Proactive and



				systematic support for researchers in developing competitive national and international grant applications. T2. Number of grant proposals submitted (target: at least 30 proposals per year, including at least 3 international schemes).
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
71. Shared research infrastructure and internal collaboration framework Demand for shared technologies and interdisciplinary collaboration has increased, but information about available infrastructure, expertise and cooperation opportunities is not yet sufficiently visible or coordinated. More structured access to shared equipment and	6. Accountability 23. Research environment 24. Working conditions 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q4/2026 Q3/2027 Q4/2027 Q4/2027 Q1/2027-2029	IAPG Management, Deputy Director for Organisation and Operation, Deputy Director for Science, IT Specialist where relevant, HR Award Coordinator.	Indicators: I1. Shared pilot equipment catalogue prepared. I2. Information on shared research infrastructure, available technologies, expertise, and collaboration opportunities is continuously updated and communicated to staff via internal communication channels. I3. Infrastructure roadmap developed.



regular planning of infrastructure priorities are needed to support efficient use of resources, cross-laboratory cooperation and strategic investment decisions.				I4. Booking system or access rules introduced where relevant. I5. Internal networking or matchmaking activities organised. I6. Infrastructure and investment priorities reviewed annually. Targets: T1. More transparent use of shared research infrastructure and stronger interdisciplinary collaboration across laboratories and institute sites. T2. Shared pilot equipment catalogue includes at least 70% of major institutional equipment (>80 K CZK value).
Current Status: NEW				

Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
72. Pay transparency analyses and selection of remuneration model Upcoming pay transparency and equal	10. Non-discrimination 11. Evaluation / appraisal systems 24. Working conditions 25. Stability and permanence	Continuous	IAPG Management, HR Department, Economic Department.	Indicators: I1. Reports from pay transparency analyses.



pay requirements will place stronger emphasis on objective, gender-neutral and well-documented remuneration processes. IAPG needs to ensure that pay differences are transparent, justifiable and regularly monitored.	of employment 26. Funding and salaries 27. Gender balance			12. Determination of remuneration methodology. 13. Benchmarking of individual positions. 14. Internal communication on the establishment of remuneration rules. Target: Transparent, objective and gender-neutral remuneration processes strengthened in line with upcoming pay transparency and equal pay requirements.
Current Status: NEW				

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (internal review for award renewal)

IAPG adheres to the OTM-R principles established by the European Commission, ensuring that recruitment processes are Open (accessible via international channels like EURAXESS), Transparent (providing clear evaluation criteria and timelines), and Merit-based (focusing strictly on the candidate's professional achievements and potential). Job advertisements are published transparently, and candidate selection follows these explicit standards. Members of the selection committees undergo regular, systematic training to stay updated on current OTM-R methodologies and all conducted recruitment procedures are annually retroactively audited to verify compliance with OTM-R attributes.

Over the past three years, out of 40 onboarded research employees, 7 positions were filled through a full external OTM-R recruitment procedure, resulting in 5 appointments. These 7 recruitments were specifically open for strategic roles: 6 were dedicated to postdoc positions or future Ph.D. students fully funded by IAPG, and 1 was for a Head of laboratory. The remaining cases followed other appointment routes due to specific university-related or grant-based conditions:

- 1) Joint university–institute Ph.D. framework (20 students): For PhD candidates, recruitment is closely linked to the university admission process. Available PhD positions are publicly advertised on the websites of the partner universities, where IAPG supervisors announce doctoral research topics and invite prospective candidates to apply. Candidates subsequently participate in the official university admission procedure, including mandatory interviews and evaluation by the respective university admission committees. Duplicating this process through a separate institute-level OTM-R procedure prior to university admission could create practical and legal uncertainties, particularly for international applicants. In addition, recent reforms of doctoral education and funding in the Czech Republic are reshaping admission procedures, funding mechanisms, and the overall number of funded PhD positions. IAPG is therefore working closely with its partner universities (all of them are holders of HR Award) to further harmonise recruitment practices and ensure that doctoral recruitment remains open, transparent, merit-based, and fully aligned with both university regulations and the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. The institute continues to discuss coordinated approaches that increase the visibility of PhD opportunities, ensure fair selection procedures, and provide equal opportunities for all applicants while fully respecting the legal framework governing university doctoral admissions.
- 2) Low-FTE specialized grant positions (13 researchers): Due to specific grant applications, Principal Investigators frequently require highly specialized experts on minimal part-time contracts (typically about 0.1 or 0.2 FTE) or established long-term collaborators. A full external recruitment procedure is not always proportionate for very low-FTE, highly specialised roles, especially where the required expertise is narrowly defined by a specific grant or technical task.
- 3) Direct grant-linked appointments (2 researchers, both of them international): One postdoctoral researcher and one senior researcher were appointed directly, as their recruitment was structurally contingent upon the successful award of specific external grants, in which their names, expertise, and scientific profiles formed an integral and mandatory part of the project proposal. For these grant-funded positions, OTM-R recruitment was conducted through the MERIT programme coordinated by the Central



Bohemian Innovation Ecosystem (SIC), which openly advertised the available positions. IAPG mentors actively contributed by publishing detailed information on the corresponding research projects. This approach ensured broad visibility of the opportunities while respecting the specific recruitment rules of externally funded programmes and maintaining the principles of openness, transparency, and merit-based selection.

Even in cases where a full OTM-R procedure is not applicable, IAPG aims to apply the underlying principles of openness, transparency, merit-based assessment and proper documentation to the greatest extent possible.

6. IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 General overview of the implementation process

Following the end of the OP RDE project funding (Project “Quality Improvement of Human Resources Strategy Management in Science and Research at the Institute of Animal Physiology and Genetics CAS”; reg. No. CZ.02.2.69/0.0/0.0/18_054/0014650), IAPG faced a reduction in dedicated personnel capacity, which led to delays in some activities of the HR Award Action Plan schedule as IAPG management prioritised core administrative operations. However, this constraint prompted the institute to actively seek internal solutions. During this transitional phase, IAPG maintained core activities such as mentoring and training on a smaller, individual basis, while seeking further financial sustainability through a new project application, “Developing the IAPG Research Environment in Line with the HR Award”, submitted under a call launched by the Czech Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports. Unfortunately, the proposal was not funded. The systematic relaunch of the implementation process returned again in September 2025 with the appointment of researcher Marie Altmanová as the new HR Award Coordinator, followed by a restructuring of the Steering Committee. By replacing three departing colleagues (two PhD students and one emeritus professor) with two new PhD students and one R3 researcher, the committee successfully maintained a balanced representation of all career stages.

To drive this new phase through broader internal participation, five career-stage-specific focus groups were established (R1, R2, R3, R4, and international employees). Involving over 30 members, these groups now serve as a vital platform for qualitative feedback, gap analysis, and the co-creation of documents, measures and new actions. This collaborative internal effort is further complemented by the coordinator’s active involvement in national and international networking – such as the CROSS and CARDEA initiatives – and enhanced knowledge-sharing across the Czech Academy of Sciences institutes.

Finally, institutional continuity and long-term stability will be secured in August 2026, when HR Manager Marie Hudečková rejoins the team after a break. To maximise the impact of the next phase, the institute will build on close cooperation among the HR Award Coordinator, who will drive the participatory and strategic agenda; the HR Manager, who will systematically lead core HR processes, including statistical monitoring; the Deputy Director for Science, who will oversee the overall direction and strategic development of research; and the PR Office, which will strengthen internal communication across the Institute. This integrated approach ensures that the next phase of the HR Excellence in Research implementation remains fully aligned with the institute's scientific priorities.



6.2 How have you prepared the internal review?

Building on the approach used in the previous internal review, IAPG broadened its consultation and data collection methods (surveys, gender audit, focus groups, direct feedback from employees during institutional events) to shape the new Action Plan, while also reflecting the new Gender Equality Plan.

The drafting and review process was designed to ensure internal transparency. The initial draft of the review and the new Action Plan was jointly prepared by the HR Award Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Science. The draft was discussed with focus groups and then shared with the entire staff for open feedback and reviewed by the Director's Board. All feedback providers received a response, and relevant comments and suggestions were reflected in the final document. In the final stage, the internal review was formally approved by the Steering Committee, which includes all representatives of IAPG top management.

To complement the internal process with external perspectives, the HR Award Coordinator discussed the process with experienced HR Award holders and experts from other research institutions.

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

Meetings with the heads of laboratories, the IAPG management and the project team were held. The aim of these meetings was to present the changes and new processes to be introduced within the laboratory. Training courses covering the OTM-R process were conducted among the IAPG staff. This resulted in the issuance of a list of employees properly trained to participate in the selection procedure. Information regarding all new measures and processes was published on the intranet. As already mentioned above, a new software intended for the research staff was implemented. The researchers were included in the testing process and trained to use the new software. In addition to the project activities, there were three major information events closely linked to the HR AWARD. These events introduced the benefits as well as the negatives for the research population (mainly the OTM-R process) in relation to the HR AWARD. Strategic directions were pointed out. Each participant was able to ask questions. When adopting the outlined strategies, all staff members were consulted in a comment procedure. Employees were thus able to comment on the draft versions.

Instead of relying primarily on interviews with the committees, the implementation process incorporated active participation and wider feedback channels across the institute:

- 1) All-employee survey and gender audit: A comprehensive survey was conducted alongside an equal opportunities audit. A total of 145 out of 178 employees responded, based on the staff numbers as of 28 February 2026. The results received help to shape support for work-life balance and guide further measures aimed at improving working conditions, organisational culture and equal opportunities across the institute.
- 2) Targeted focus groups: Five career-stage-specific focus groups (R1–R4 and international staff; over 30 members in total) were established to gather qualitative feedback. The groups were jointly coordinated by the HR Award Coordinator and the Deputy Director for Science. These sessions focused on key institutional outputs, including support materials for career breaks (leaflet, checklist, and handover protocol template), a guide for addressing negative workplace situations, and dissemination strategies for career development and tailored training plans. The meetings also provided space to raise current issues and challenges, as



well as to collect suggestions on areas requiring further attention, improvement and institutional follow-up.

- 3) Leadership consultations: Institutional needs for excellent research were gathered via a strategic questionnaire for laboratory leadership, complemented by meetings with the IAPG management, heads of laboratories, and their deputies. Crucially, the discussions mapped major institutional needs, resulting in action points to improve contract stability, ensure adequate remuneration, and strengthen administrative support – specifically through project and HR services – to reduce the administrative burden on Principal Investigators / Head of Laboratories.
- 4) Informal meetings: Smaller, informal discussions among researchers provided additional insights into daily institutional culture.

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

The Steering Committee remained the formal body responsible for overseeing the implementation of the Action Plan, evaluating feedback from the newly established focus groups and reviewing the draft materials. To streamline the preparation of strategic documents, the composition of the Steering Committee was designed to include all members of the Director's Board alongside selected representatives from the focus groups.

The Steering Committee includes the Director; the Deputy Directors for Science, Economy, and Organisation and Operations; the Head of Council of IAPG; the HR Award Coordinator; one R4 representative who is also a Head of Laboratory; one R3 representative; and three R1 researchers (PhD students).

This direct structural link significantly simplified the review process and accelerated document approval. Furthermore, the Steering Committee discussed and approved a two-month extension of the deadline for the HR Award internal assessment. This extension allowed for the completion of ongoing actions, particularly the finalization of the gender audit and the integration of its outcomes into the new Action Plan. Concurrently, the institute is preparing its strategies for the next five-year period, alongside documentation for upcoming financial negotiations and strategic structural changes. All these processes are closely linked to the HR Excellence in Research strategy, forming a cohesive and synergistic institutional framework. Throughout this period, the action plan items were prioritized according to current institutional capacities, ensuring that implementation communication remained active across all career stages and levels of IAPG.

6.5 Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HR Excellence in Research award process? For example, is the HR Excellence in Research award recognised in the organisation's research strategy or overarching HR policy?

The HRS4R Action Plan has been closely aligned with the institute's Institutional Strategy, Human Resources Development and Employee Education Guidelines, Gender Equality Plans (2023–2025 and 2026–2029), Code of Ethics, Open Science Policy, OTM-R Policy, and other internal regulations governing recruitment, career development, ethics, and working conditions. Progress in implementing HRS4R actions is reviewed by institute management and discussed with laboratory heads, ensuring that HR priorities remain closely linked to the institute's scientific and organisational development.



The preparation of the new Institutional Strategy for 2027–2032 has further strengthened this alignment. The strategy identifies employees as the institute's most valuable resource and incorporates many priorities originating from the HRS4R process, including transparent and merit-based recruitment, career development, mentoring, leadership training, internationalisation, researcher wellbeing, equal opportunities, and support for early-career researchers. The next HRS4R Action Plan will therefore form an integral part of the implementation of the new institutional strategy.

The HRS4R process has also become embedded in the institute's governance. Progress is regularly monitored through annual action plan reviews, staff surveys, focus groups, personnel statistics, and discussions with laboratory heads. The results are used to update HR policies and define new strategic priorities based on evidence and employee feedback.

Overall, HRS4R is no longer viewed as a separate European initiative, but as one of the institute's principal instruments for continuous organisational improvement. It provides the framework for developing a transparent, inclusive, and attractive research environment and supports the institute's long-term objective of strengthening scientific excellence, international competitiveness, and sustainable career development for researchers at all career stages.

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

To support the effective and timely implementation of the proposed actions, IAPG has established a governance structure based on strategic oversight, operational coordination and stakeholder involvement. The process will be coordinated through close cooperation between the HR Award Coordinator, the HR department and the Deputy Director for Science, ensuring that HR objectives are aligned with both administrative practice and the needs of the research environment.

Responsibilities for individual actions will be assigned to relevant scientific and administrative units, supporting shared ownership and accountability across the institute, and linked to a defined timeframe, expected outputs and indicators. Progress will be documented and reviewed against these elements, allowing delays, implementation barriers and capacity constraints to be identified at an early stage. Where necessary, priorities, timelines or implementation methods will be adjusted while maintaining the overall objectives of the Action Plan.

Relevant scientific and administrative units will be involved in delivering individual actions, supporting shared ownership and accountability across the institute. The five focus groups will continue to provide regular qualitative feedback on the relevance and practical impact of implemented measures.

The implementation process will be monitored by the Steering Committee. The committee will review progress, discuss implementation barriers, support prioritisation in case of capacity constraints, and help maintain institutional commitment to the Action Plan across IAPG.

6.7 How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?

Progress in the implementation of the Action Plan is monitored on an ongoing basis by the HR Award Coordinator in cooperation with the HR department, and the Deputy Director for Science. Each action has an assigned responsible person or unit, defined outputs, indicators and timeline. The HR Award Coordinator collects regular updates from responsible persons and compares actual progress with the planned outputs and timeline. The Steering Committee will review



implementation progress at least twice a year, discuss any delays or capacity constraints, and agree on corrective measures or timeline adjustments where necessary.

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

The indicators will be used to measure the performance of the revised action plan objectives.

Progress will be measured through output, process and feedback-based indicators defined for each action in the Action Plan.

1) Output indicators will verify whether planned measures have been completed, such as adopted documents, published guidelines, organised training activities, established support schemes or launched tools and procedures.

2) Process indicators will assess whether the measures are implemented systematically, for example through participation rates, number of meetings or training activities, regular updates of internal resources, documented follow-up and involvement of responsible persons or units.

3) Feedback-based indicators will assess the relevance and practical impact of the measures through focus groups, HR data monitoring, surveys where relevant, and consultations with responsible departments and institute management. The results will be reviewed by the HR Award Coordinator and the Steering Committee and used to adjust implementation before the next assessment.

Where relevant, results will be compared with available baseline data, expected outputs and defined targets. Supporting evidence will be documented throughout the implementation period. The HR Award Coordinator and the Steering Committee will review the results and use them to adjust measures, priorities or implementation methods before the next assessment.

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

IAPG will prepare for the external review through a structured process coordinated by the HR Award Coordinator in cooperation with the HR department, the Deputy Director for Science and the Steering Committee.

The preparation process will include collecting and reviewing evidence of implemented actions, including internal documents, guidelines, training records, monitoring outputs, meeting minutes and feedback from focus groups. The Steering Committee will review progress, identify remaining gaps and confirm priorities for the next phase. Particular emphasis will be placed on confirming not only that measures have been formally introduced, but also that they are known, accessible and functioning in practice.

Relevant institutional representatives, including management, HR staff, researchers, PhD students and international employees, will be involved in the review process, so that the assessment reflects both formal implementation and practical experience across IAPG.

IAPG also aims to remain actively involved in the community of HR Award holders and in other initiatives supporting human resources in research, in order to share experience, exchange good practice and further develop its HR processes in line with European standards.



6.10 Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process

The proposed implementation process is designed to be realistic, participatory, and sustainable. IAPG recognises that certain actions will depend on available personnel capacities, budgetary conditions, and broader systemic developments within the Czech research environment, including the recent doctoral education reforms. The Action Plan therefore combines immediate, short-term measures with long-term structural priorities. Concurrently, the institute is actively pursuing external funding opportunities to support comprehensive HR and institutional development.

A key emphasis remains on maintaining regular communication between the HR Award Coordinator, the HR department, IAPG management, responsible units, and the five focus groups. This continuous feedback mechanism helps ensure that implementation responds to actual staff needs, while allowing the Steering Committee to adjust priorities and timelines where necessary. The implementation period also highlighted the importance of communicating upcoming changes clearly and sensitively, taking employees' perspectives into account and explaining the practical implications. Close cooperation with the PR Office has therefore been established to support timely, consistent and accessible internal communication.

The upcoming phase will place particular emphasis on strengthening evidence-based monitoring, improving internal communication and integrating HR Excellence in Research activities into standard institutional workflows. The planned reinforcement of the HR team in August 2026 is expected to provide additional operational capacity and support greater continuity in the coordination and documentation of activities. The overall objective is to progressively embed transparent, supportive and sustainable HR practices across IAPG.

