

## TEMPLATE 4: ACTION PLAN

Case number: 2020CZ572526

Name of organisation: Centre of Administration and Operations of the Czech Academy of Sciences

### Summary

The HRS4R Action Plan for the period 2021–2025 included 21 actions, 76% of which were successfully implemented. For the period 2025–2027, we plan to implement 11 actions (including six actions extended from the previous plan).

### Implementation status: HRS4R Action Plan 2021–2025

Status	Number of Ac-tions	%
Completed	16	76 %
Extended	5	24 %
<b>Total</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>100 %</b>

### Updated HRS4R Action Plan 2025–2027

Status	Number of Ac-tions	%
New	6	-
Actions from previous plan	5	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	-

Legend: Completed = successfully completed/implemented action, Extended = the deadline has been postponed, New = a new action that was not included in the original HR Award Action Plan

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

The Centre of Administration and Operations of the CAS is a public research institution registered with the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports of the Czech Republic. It is an independent legal entity of non-profit character, whose aim is to provide infrastructure and services to the Czech Academy of Sciences and its institutes to support research and development activities. In particular, it provides ICT services, academic and professional publishing, science popularisation and marketing, the EURAXESS “welcome centre”, educational courses and cultural events, legal support, technology transfer services, personnel consultancy with a focus on the HR Award, and preschool childcare facilities.

#### STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE:

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

Thematic headings of the Charter and Code	Strengths and weaknesses
<i>Ethical and professional aspects</i>	<p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <p>The CAO does not have its own Code of Ethics; it works with the existing Code of Ethics for Researchers of the CAS, which is not fully in line with the Charter. Since the CAO has not yet carried out any scientific research of its own, it does not have its own strategy for the dissemination of research outcomes and their practical application. Given the minimal number of foreign employees at the CAO, relevant documents are only available in Czech.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <p>The CAO is fully committed to the principles contained in the Code of Ethics for Researchers of the CAS. Staff members consistently avoid all types of plagiarism, respect the principles of intellectual property, and manage public funds transparently. Compliance management practices are in place within the organisation, and a confidential box is available via which employees can report violations of the Code of Ethics. The CAO has appointed a GDPR Commissioner and has incorporated GDPR standards into its internal regulations. The CAS Technology Transfer Office (CeTTAV) is part of the CAO, and provides support to the CAS</p>

and its institutes, including the CAO, in the field of knowledge and technology transfer, in particular through consultancy on intellectual property protection law. CAO has issued its own “Recommendations for the handling of intellectual property” for the CAS, extending the current CAS Code of Ethics to include principles for researchers concerning professional accountability in the areas of intellectual property and knowledge transfer. The CAO provides its staff with training on legislation and other regulations pertaining to occupational health and safety, in complement to the other qualifications and requirements relevant to the performance of their work and workplace, and regularly verifies the knowledge of these regulations and requires and monitors compliance with them.

The CAO organises some of the largest science popularisation events for the public in the Czech Republic, along with lectures, exhibitions, and other events. It also provides marketing and production support to other CAS institutes for their own popularisation events. The CAO runs the Academia publishing house, which publishes original academic monographs, works by Czech researchers, popular science literature, encyclopedic works, and dictionaries. The Annual Report presents, among other things, achievements in the field of technology transfer and in the dissemination and exploitation of research outcomes.

*Strengths and weaknesses: Interim Assessment*

Strengths (newly introduced or further developed):

- The SSČ Strategic Framework for 2024–2027 has been published, clearly outlining the institution’s vision, objectives, and directions for future activities.
- Support services have been centralized (e.g., GDPR compliance, whistleblowing), ensuring greater efficiency and consistency.
- An Ethics Committee has been established as of 1 January 2024, with a clearly defined structure, mandate, and procedures.
- The Gender Equality Committee actively promotes work-life balance, a safe and inclusive environment, and a supportive institutional culture.
- A set of training materials is available on the intranet – ten educational videos accompanied by quizzes, focused on the prevention of gender-based violence.
- Internal regulations regarding intellectual property have been updated, providing employees with clear and accessible information.

- An internal intranet platform has been introduced to support navigation and understanding in the area of intellectual property.
- CETAV (Technology Transfer Centre of the Czech Academy of Sciences) continues to serve as a key support mechanism for technology transfer activities.
- The development of training initiatives focused on ethics and interpersonal relations in the workplace (e.g., discrimination, bossing, mobbing) is planned.

Weaknesses (Persistent or Newly Identified):

- CAO has not yet developed its own Code of Ethics and continues to rely on the general code of the Czech Academy of Sciences, which is not fully aligned with the principles of the European Charter.
- The institution does not yet have a strategy for research dissemination, as it has not conducted independent research activities to date.
- Several key documents remain available only in Czech, posing challenges for the onboarding and integration of international staff.
- The methodology related to intellectual property is not yet consistently understood or applied across the institution.
- The internal platform remains underutilized; further development is planned to improve its accessibility and clarity.

*Remarks:*

At the end of 2023, CAO introduced its Strategic Framework for 2024–2027, defining its vision, mission, and key areas of activity. This step represents a fundamental prerequisite for effective governance, as it clarifies institutional priorities and long-term direction. The centralization of support services—such as GDPR, whistleblowing—responds to increasing demand across the Czech Academy of Sciences for shared administrative solutions. It reduces the burden on individual units and contributes to institutional resilience.

Progress was also made in the area of intellectual property (IP). Internal regulations were updated, and a dedicated intranet page was created, offering clear guidance for staff. CETAV remains a crucial partner in supporting technology transfer and legal aspects of innovation. However, the implementation of IP methodology is not yet consistent across the organization. To improve this, CAO plans to enhance its internal platform and increase its practical value for staff.

Two advisory bodies—the Ethics Committee and the Gender Equality Committee—were established in early 2024. The Ethics Committee was formalized by a Director’s Order and now provides a structured channel for addressing ethical concerns. Further training on topics such as discrimination, bossing, and mobbing is planned. The Gender Equality Committee focuses on improving workplace culture, safety, and work-life balance. Preventive measures include a set of ten educational videos with quizzes available on the intranet, raising awareness of gender-based violence in a practical context.

Despite these advances, several challenges persist. CAO does not yet have its own Code of Ethics and relies on the general code of the Czech Academy of Sciences, which is not fully aligned with European standards. Developing a tailored code would support a clearer ethical framework. The institution also lacks a strategy for research dissemination, as no research has been conducted to date; this will be necessary once activities expand.

Language accessibility remains an issue—many internal documents are available only in Czech, creating barriers for international staff and limiting inclusivity. Further translation efforts are needed to support internationalization. Finally, although the internal platform exists, its use remains limited. Further development is planned to improve usability, structure, and relevance.

Together, these strengths and weaknesses highlight CAO’s progress in building institutional infrastructure and governance while also pointing to areas that require continued attention and investment.

#### *Recruitment and selection of employees*

##### **Weaknesses:**

The recruitment process primarily relies on the professionalism of our HR staff; it is not formalised in the form of a Code for the recruitment of new employees, and the criteria are defined ad hoc for every position. The composition of the selection committee is not regulated, nor are there precisely defined criteria for evaluating candidates. Advertisements for job vacancies do not include any description of career development expectations. They are written in a formal style and do not correspond to current trends in recruitment for research and creative positions. Staff are relatively unaware of job vacancies within the organisation and no OTM-R document is made available on the intranet.

##### **Strengths:**

The Human Resources Office considers the recruitment process an important and integral part of its daily work. Job vacancies are advertised well in advance and include a job description and candidate requirements. Vacancies are advertised on job portals, on the CAO and CAS websites, on LinkedIn, and other social networks. We participate in job fairs. Selection procedures are organised by the HR Office in compliance with all professional and ethical principles. We support gender diversity and do

not discriminate against job applicants on the basis of age or nationality. The appointed selection committee assesses candidates in accordance with the job requirements, taking into account their experience and achievements and upholding the principle of equal opportunities. Career breaks and variations in the chronological order of CVs are duly taken into account. Career breaks do not constitute grounds for discrimination or exclusion from the selection procedure. Professional experience gained abroad is recognised and valued positively. Mobility within the country, interdisciplinary mobility, and mobility between institutes are also welcome. The Human Resources Office communicates with all candidates on an ongoing basis and informs candidates of the outcome promptly once the selection procedure is completed. Feedback is provided to unsuccessful candidates on request.

*Strengths and weaknesses: Interim Assessment*

Strengths (New or Further Developed)

- A Recruitment Methodology has been introduced, standardizing the recruitment process.
- Transparency in selection procedures has improved.
- The composition and rules of selection committees are now clearly defined.
- The HR department actively promotes equal opportunities and provides training for managers.
- A referral program is in place, encouraging staff to recommend suitable candidates.
- Plans are in place to present recruitment campaigns in a modern and engaging way, e.g. through professional video content.
- There is a clear emphasis on employer branding.
- The OTM-R policy (Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment) has been published on the institution's website.

Weaknesses (Persistent or Newly Identified)

- The recruitment methodology is not yet fully embedded across the organization – its application varies between departments.
- Job advertisements are still lacking in content – they often fail to communicate attractive messaging, opportunities for career development, or long-term prospects.
- Previous issues remain unresolved, such as overly formal language and outdated communication style in job postings.

**Remarks:**

The recruitment process has moved towards greater standardization. A dedicated Recruitment Methodology has been developed and published, and the transparency of selection procedures has improved. Selection committees now operate under clearly defined rules and structures. The HR department actively promotes equal opportunities and delivers regular training to managers. A referral program is in place to support recruitment, motivating current employees to recommend suitable candidates.

Despite these advances, the recruitment methodology is not yet fully integrated across all departments—its use and implementation still vary. Recruitment communication, especially job advertisements, remains an area for improvement. Many postings lack engaging content, particularly with respect to career development and long-term opportunities. To address this, the institution plans to produce a professional recruitment video to present the organization in a modern, accessible way and to strengthen employer branding efforts.

**Working conditions**

**Weaknesses:**

There are no formally encoded rules for the meetings of the Ethics Committee. Our internal regulations on health and safety are only available in Czech. During the epidemiological situation, we lacked a formal model of flexible working (working from home). Certain legal and regulatory documents are not yet available in digital form. We do not have any competence models for individual positions within the organisation, only job descriptions. Our internal communications platform (Intranet) is considered by some employees to be poorly organised and does not include interactive elements such as a “chat” function.

**Strengths:**

The CAO can be considered a modern, well-equipped workplace providing a safe working environment. We have a Collective Agreement in place, which ensures that the interests of the unions and of the organisation’s leadership are perfectly harmonised in the area of employee care. As an employer, the CAO contributes to pension funds and life insurance as well as providing employees with additional benefits.

Every year a questionnaire survey takes place among all staff – the Staff Satisfaction Survey. Every comment received about the working environment is given individual attention.

The CAO enables its staff to achieve a good work-life balance: it offers flexible working hours, work from home, part-time contract options, job shares, childcare facilities, contributions to leisure activities, and much more.

Salary conditions are equal, and men and women are equally represented in key positions.

Once a year a staff evaluation process takes place. During informal interviews with line managers, staff discuss how they have met their targets from the previous period and set targets for the next year. They also discuss their satisfaction with the working environment and any suggestions for its improvement. The evaluation process further includes a plan for the employee's further development and continuing education.

Within the organisation we have established a "Learning Society" – employees take on the role of internal lecturers. Employees are offered language courses free of charge during their working hours. We also organise courses in hard and soft skills. Within the organisation we provide internal professional consultations in knowledge and technology transfer, intellectual property protection and contractual relationships, as well as individual consultations relating to personal and career development.

*Strengths and weaknesses: Interim Assessment*

Strengths (New or Further Developed)

- An e-learning course on occupational health and safety (OHS) has been introduced, improving access to safety information.
- Flexible work arrangements have been formalized through the creation of a "Remote Work Flexibility" policy and a model telework agreement.
- A dedicated and well-structured intranet page provides essential information and documents related to flexibility.
- Development of competence models has been launched, starting with managerial roles.
- Employee appraisal processes have been partially digitalized, marking a first step towards modernizing HR systems.
- A strong collective agreement remains in place, with competitive benefits and a solid framework for employee development and training.
- Improvements to the intranet are planned, focusing on clarity and interactive elements.
- A recruitment video is being prepared to support HR marketing and employer branding.

Weaknesses (Persistent or Newly Identified)

- Competence models are not yet fully implemented – current work is limited to a subset of roles.

- Digitalization of employee appraisal processes is incomplete – the current solution lacks user-friendliness.
- OHS internal regulations are still only available in Czech, which can pose difficulties for non-Czech-speaking staff.

*Remarks:*

Significant progress has been made in the area of working conditions. An e-learning course on occupational health and safety (OHS) was introduced, improving access to essential safety information for employees and modernizing the institution's approach to workplace safety. Flexible working arrangements have been formalized through the creation of a "Remote Work Flexibility" policy and a model agreement for telework. A dedicated intranet page provides employees with comprehensive information and all relevant documents on this topic.

Work has also begun on the development of competence models, initially focused on managerial positions, and the process of digitalizing employee appraisals has been launched—currently implemented through a combination of existing tools. A strong collective agreement remains in place, along with competitive employee benefits and a structured system for professional development and training.

Ongoing challenges include the incomplete implementation of competence models and the need to upgrade the digital appraisal process into a robust, user-friendly system. In the near future, the institution also plans to release a recruitment video and to further improve the intranet, with a focus on clarity and interactive features.

*Training and development*

**Weaknesses:**

The individual processes in question are set up correctly, but there is sometimes a lack of willingness to implement them in everyday practice and the rules are not consistently applied in some departments.

**Strengths:**

All staff have access to specialist professional training and their career development is fully supported.

The "onboarding process": every new employee is personally welcomed by their line manager, is provided with a "buddy" for their adaptation, and is given materials (brochures), introducing the relevant department and the organisation as a whole. Adaptation courses are regularly organised for new employees. At the end of the adaptation process, an adaptation evaluation takes place.

During an employee's career at the CAO, they have an interview each year with their line manager, in an informal setting, as part of the staff evaluation process. Meetings between employees and management staff are also organised.

The Learning Society is put in place for the mutual sharing of know-how among the CAO's staff (reverse mentoring). Employees are also offered coaching in professional development.

"Outplacement": When employees leave the organisation, we conduct "exit interviews" and take into account the obtained feedback. Where possible, we support our employees in finding another position within the CAO.

*Strengths and weaknesses: Interim Assessment*

Strengths (New or Further Developed)

- A stable and systematic onboarding process is in place, including personal welcome, assigned mentor, training, and effectiveness evaluation.
- Comprehensive support for professional development, offering courses in specialist knowledge, soft skills, and IT competencies.
- Mentoring and coaching opportunities are available and tailored to individual needs.
- Annual appraisal interviews include feedback, development planning, and job satisfaction assessment.
- The organization promotes a learning organization culture, including knowledge sharing and reverse mentoring.
- A system of exit interviews is in place, with active follow-up on collected feedback.
- A "Buddy" role is in preparation, providing personal support to new employees during onboarding.
- Plans are in place to digitalize the appraisal process and improve communication and compliance monitoring.

Weaknesses (Persistent or Newly Identified)

- Processes are well designed, but implementation is inconsistent across units of the institution.
- There is varying willingness across departments to apply established procedures in practice.
- Onboarding is not uniformly applied throughout the organization.
- Digitalization of the appraisal process is incomplete, currently managed through provisional tools.

**Remarks:**

In the area of education and training, a stable structure has been established. It includes systematic onboarding with personal welcome, an assigned mentor, and regular adaptation training, the effectiveness of which is subsequently evaluated. A persisting weakness is the insufficient and uneven implementation of this process across all units of the institution.

Employee development is supported throughout the entire career via a broad offering of professional, soft-skills, and IT courses. Mentoring and coaching are also available as needed. Annual appraisal interviews focus on feedback, personal development planning, and job satisfaction. The organization actively promotes the concept of a learning organization and systematically collects insights from exit interviews.

Currently, a stronger “Buddy” system is being developed to provide newcomers with personal support during their adaptation. At the same time, the institution is working on the robust digitalization of the appraisal process, which is currently managed through temporary tools.

However, a key challenge remains the varying level of willingness and consistency in applying established procedures across departments. This will be addressed through stronger internal communication, staff training, and consistent monitoring.

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

Yes, several priorities have evolved in response to both internal developments and external expectations. In the short term, there has been a clear shift towards the formalization and standardization of previously informal or inconsistent processes. This is particularly evident in the areas of recruitment, working conditions, and ethical governance. A newly introduced Recruitment Methodology and “Remote Work Flexibility” policy indicate a focus on transparency, equal treatment, and modernization. A notable priority is also the digitalization of the appraisal process, aiming to streamline employee development planning.

In the medium term, the organization is prioritizing the implementation of competence models, initially for managerial roles, and expanding them to support structured professional development. Another strategic medium-term goal is to increase the consistency of policy application across all units, addressing current variability in the implementation of onboarding, appraisal, and ethical procedures.

The internationalization and inclusivity of internal processes have become more prominent as well, especially regarding language accessibility and cultural adaptation for foreign employees. There is a growing recognition of the need to make institutional materials available in English to ensure inclusivity and prepare for greater staff mobility.

Lastly, employer branding and modern communication have gained importance, with plans to launch a professional recruitment video to better present the institution to external candidates and attract high-quality applicants.

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

Yes, several changes in the operational context have influenced the HR strategy. The institution is increasingly embedded in a competitive and international research environment, requiring higher standards of transparency, fairness, and professional HR practices. This pressure has led to the centralization of support services such as GDPR, ethics management, and whistleblowing, reflecting a broader effort across the Czech Academy of Sciences to unify and professionalize administrative functions.

Another important factor is the increasing demand for flexibility and digital tools, accelerated by public health circumstances (e.g., COVID-19) and evolving employee expectations. This prompted the formal adoption of remote work policies and the development of e-learning tools for occupational health and safety.

Additionally, internal evaluations have shown disparities in the application of procedures across units, which has led to the need for stronger internal communication, staff training, and clearer monitoring frameworks.

The need to support gender equality and workplace well-being has become more urgent, especially in the context of European standards and funding requirements. The establishment of the Gender Equality Committee and the Ethics Committee responds directly to this shift.

Lastly, the institution's expanding role in knowledge and technology transfer has highlighted the importance of internal legal and ethical frameworks. As activities move closer to applied research and commercialization, the HR strategy must support responsible innovation and capacity building in these areas.

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

Yes, several strategic decisions are already in motion that will directly impact the action plan. Most significantly, the introduction of the Strategic Framework 2024–2027 sets out a new institutional vision, mission, and priorities. This document serves as a governance tool and creates the foundation for aligning HR actions with broader organizational goals.

One strategic initiative is the development of a dedicated Code of Ethics tailored specifically to the institution, as the current reliance on the Czech Academy of Sciences' general code no longer fully meets internal needs or European standards. This will enhance clarity in professional conduct and decision-making.

Another key decision is the progressive implementation of competence models, which will support more transparent staff development, succession planning, and recruitment. This shift is already being piloted in managerial roles and is expected to expand further.

The digitalization of staff appraisals and the creation of a robust, user-friendly internal platform are also central to future planning. These changes aim to improve user experience, transparency, and efficiency.

Additionally, the planned launch of a professional recruitment video and improvements to the intranet signal a strategic commitment to employer branding and internal communication.

In summary, these strategic steps are intended to create a more coherent, inclusive, and professional HR environment that supports institutional resilience and aligns with European research standards.

## ACTIONS

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published in an easily accessible section of the organisation's website.

Please provide the link to the organisation's webpage(s) dedicated to HR Strategy:

\*URL:

Please fill in a sum-up list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the GAP Analysis:

Proposed Actions (A)	GAP Analysis Principle(s)	Timetable (by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible department	Indicator(s) / Target(s) (I)	Status of achievement/Remarks
Free text - 100 words max	Retrieved from the GAP Analysis				
A1 Create an appendix to the relevant regulations and codes regarding the provisions proposed in the "Recommendations for Managing	3. Professional responsibility	4Q 2023	Technology Transfer Office of the CAS	Indicator: An appendix or addendum to the internal regulation entitled "Managing the Outcomes of Research, Development, and Innovation".	Status: Completed  Remark: An internal regulation was issued in the form of Director's Order No. 10/2023, <i>Handling of Results in Research, Development, and Innovation</i> , effective from 1 July 2023. This directive sets out the principles for managing research, development, and innovation results within the Centre of Administration and Operations of the Czech Academy of Sciences (SSČ AV ČR). It

Intellectual Property” and the corresponding “Regulation on the registration of items protected by intellectual property rights and their exploitation”.				Target: To create a set of instructions to ensure researchers are informed of ways of managing the outcomes of research.	provides employees with a clear framework and guidance on how to handle the outcomes of research activities.
A2	5. Contractual and legal obligations	4Q 2023	Technology Transfer Office of the CAS	Indicator: An appendix or addendum to the internal regulations entitled “The protection, registration, and enforcement of intellectual property rights in the CAO”.	Status: Completed
Preparation and implementation of processes to ensure compliance with legal and ethical regulations by CAO research staff, in particular to ensure proper management of intellectual property and to ensure proper awareness of contractual obligations in research projects.				Target: To ensure researchers are informed of the laws, regulations, and contractual obligations pertaining to intellectual property rights.	Remark: An internal regulation was issued in the form of Director’s Order No. 11/2023, <i>Protection, Registration, and Exercise of Intellectual Property Rights at the Centre of Administration and Operations of the Czech Academy of Sciences (SSČ AV ČR)</i> , effective from 1 July 2023. The order specifies procedures for reporting intellectual property, keeping records, remuneration schemes, and contract arrangements. This regulation helps SSČ employees better navigate intellectual property management, relevant legal regulations, and contractual obligations. Within the SSČ’s activities, including those of CETAV (the Technology Transfer Centre), and in support of the Academy’s institutes in technology transfer, employees are now better equipped to provide full assistance. They are already actively contributing to drafting internal regulations for various Academy institutes as part of this support.

A3	The creation of a manual for employees pertaining to the Collective Agreement	7. Good practice in research  23. Research environment  24. Working conditions	2Q 2022 created; updated on an ongoing basis in accordance with the current version of the Collective Agreement	Human Resources Office	Indicator: A manual for the Collective Agreement  Target: Introducing employees to the basic aspects of the Collective Agreement, raising awareness of this important document amongst all CAO employee.	Status: Completed  Remark: In line with the HRS4R strategy and our commitment to transparency and accessibility of employment conditions, we ensure that the updated Collective Agreement is published annually on the Intranet. This update is accompanied by a clear summary of key changes and an overview of current benefits and entitlements. By translating contractual provisions into an accessible format, we strengthen employees' awareness of their rights and promote an open and informed working environment, in accordance with OTM-R and good HR practice.
A4	Pilot project for online health and safety training for employees.	24. Working conditions	4Q 2022	Human Resources Office	Indicator: Online health and safety training for employees (mandatory for all employees once every three years)  Target: To ensure organisational and methodical performance of tasks in the field of health and safety of CAO employees and to create a working environment that ensures safe work conditions and the protection of	Status: Completed  Remark:  As part of strengthening the occupational health and safety (OHS) system, a pilot project was launched in 2023 to develop and implement an online OHS training course for employees. This e-learning course was designed as mandatory training, to be completed by all employees once every three years, and is available via the Edunio learning platform.  The course systematically introduces employees to key principles of workplace safety, their rights and responsibilities regarding OHS, and provides practical guid-

				life and health of employees during the work process.	<p>ance on how to act in emergency situations. It also includes interactive elements and a final test to verify understanding of the core topics.</p> <p>This project represents a first step toward modernizing the OHS system within CAO and emphasizes an effective, accessible, and repeatable form of training in this area. Thanks to its online format, the course is time-flexible and allows completion without the need for in-person attendance, thus contributing to greater accessibility and the continuous strengthening of safety awareness throughout the organization.</p>
A5	Supplementation of the CAO's Deed of Establishment.	8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	1Q 2023	Advisory and Administrative Office – Advisory and Administrative Director	<p>Indicator: Document – Updated Deed of Establishment of the CAO. Website link to document.</p> <p>Target: As part of the Deed of Establishment, additional emphasis will be placed on the CAO's role in disseminating the outcomes of research in the form of publications, education, and knowledge and technology transfer.</p> <p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: Effective from January 1, 2023, and filed in the Collection of Deeds of the register of public research institutions maintained by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT): › <a href="https://rvvi.msmt.cz/">https://rvvi.msmt.cz/</a>. The Deed of Foundation defines the purpose of establishing CAO – research and infrastructure activities. The year 2023 marks the first year of operation of the Centre under the new wording of the Deed of Foundation.</p> <p>The updated Deed of Foundation allows us to become more actively involved in research projects in the fields of information technologies, technology and knowledge transfer, and science communication and public outreach. We will also adjust the structure of our Annual Report (Section A6) to better highlight the activities identified in the new Deed as essential.</p>

A6	9. Public engagement	3–4Q/2022	External Relations Division	Indicator: Document – Translated Annual Report  Target: To allow non-Czech speakers access to information	Status: Completed  Remark: The activity can be considered ongoing. Reports for 2022 and 2023 have been translated so far, and the translation of the 2024 report is in preparation. If needed, non-Czech-speaking employees have access to basic information; however, the Centre currently does not employ any such staff member.
A7	10. Non discrimination	4Q 2023	Human Resources Office + Advisory and Administrative Office – Legal Section	Indicator: Identifying core CAO internal regulations and their translation.  Target: Familiarising non-Czech speaking CAO employees with the core internal regulations of the organisation.	Status: Completed  Remark: The following documents have been selected and translated: Work Regulations, Organizational Rules, Salary Regulations, Collective Agreement, Director's Order on Attendance, and the Organization and Management of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS). The documents will be updated regularly. They are published on the intranet.
A8	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	2Q 2023	Human Resources Office	Indicator: A functional evaluation module in the HR/payroll system  Target: Integration of the evaluation process	Status: Completed  Remark: Temporarily managed using a combination of tools – MS Word, MS Lists, and PERMWeb. We are currently requesting a "Performance Evaluation" module as part of the tender for a new Human Resources Information System. Unfortunately, the current provider was not able to fully implement this module. As a result, full

				into the HR/payroll system. Data output from the system	digitalization has not been achieved, and we have relied on existing tools. Nevertheless, this represents progress towards a paperless solution.
A9 Introduction of 360° feedback for managers and key staff.	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	2Q 2022 (pilot project) Additional stages in the following years	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Implementation of an evaluation process in the form of a pilot 360° feedback project for managers and key staff.</p> <p>Target: To obtain comprehensive feedback on the work performance and conduct of managers and key staff and to provide them with relevant development opportunities.</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: As part of a pilot project, a 360° feedback process was introduced for managers and key staff. The aim of this activity is to obtain a comprehensive and balanced view of the assessed individuals' work performance, communication skills, teamwork, and managerial behaviour. The evaluation results serve as a basis for individual development plans and are also used as a supporting tool during annual performance reviews.</p> <p>Feedback is provided through a written report followed by a personal development interview aimed at understanding the outcomes and jointly defining concrete steps for professional growth. Currently, this process is regularly applied to top and middle management as well as selected expert teams where a need for deeper developmental guidance has been identified. This approach supports a culture of open communication, mutual respect, and continuous improvement of competencies at all levels of leadership.</p>

A10	12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code)	3Q 2023	Human Resources Office	Indicator: Recruitment Code of Conduct	Status: Completed
Creation of a Recruitment Code of Conduct.				<p>Target: To ensure equal conditions and transparency in the recruitment and selection of staff, to define the principles applied in the selection procedure.</p>	<p>Remark: A Recruitment Code of Conduct has been developed and implemented, serving as a practical tool to ensure equal access, transparency, and standardization of procedures in the recruitment of new employees. The methodology has been made available on the internal portal under the section "For Managers / Hiring a New Employee," ensuring access for all those involved in the recruitment process.</p> <p>The document is based on the principles of Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R). It defines all key stages of the recruitment process, including the preparation of job advertisements, composition of the selection committee, candidate evaluation, and communication of results.</p> <p>The HR department actively provides training to managers on how to apply the methodology, offers individual support during specific recruitment procedures, and collects feedback to enable continuous improvement of the process.</p> <p>The implementation of this tool represents an important step in the realization of the HRS4R strategy, demonstrating the organization's commitment to upholding international standards in human resources management in research and to conducting recruitment in a transparent and fair manner.</p>

A11 Dokument – OTM-R	12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code)	2Q 2024	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Document/methodology in Czech and English</p> <p>Target: Formalisation of established procedures. Description of the HR processes during the individual stages of the employment relationship, spanning the selection process, the beginning of the employment, the adaptation process, and the end of the employment relationship.</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: An OTM-R document has been created and published in both Czech and English, providing a systematic description of HR processes at all stages of the employment relationship – from recruitment and selection, through the establishment of employment and the adaptation process, to the termination of employment.</p> <p>The document serves as a formal framework for established and proven HR practices. Its aim is to support transparency, equal treatment, and process predictability for both job applicants and internal stakeholders, including managers and the HR team.</p> <p>By publishing the document in both language versions, the organization enhances the accessibility of information for international applicants and employees.</p> <p>The OTM-R document also represents a key milestone in the implementation of the HR Award (HRS4R) strategy, reaffirming the organization's commitment to upholding international standards in human resources for research.</p>
A12 E-learning module for members of selection committees.	14. Selection (Code)	4Q 2023	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: E-learning module with selection procedure rules, interview structure, common mistakes, types of interviews, types of questions.</p>	<p>Status: Extended 2Q 2026</p> <p>Remark: Although this activity has not yet been implemented, it remains a priority and is planned for the upcoming period. Its realization is considered an im-</p>

				Target: To assess the quality of selection procedures and the development of selection committee members.	portant step towards further alignment with the institution's strategic objectives and continuous improvement in the area of human resources management.
A13 Hybrid on-site work–remote working model.	24. Working conditions	1Q 2022	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Documents – Internal regulation establishing rules and requirements for remote working and an Agreement with the employee.</p> <p>Target: To allow employees adequate quality working conditions, incl. flexibility – choice of the location of work on certain days.</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: The document <i>Remote Work Flexibility</i> was created and issued to define clear rules for performing work outside the employer's premises. It includes a template for a <i>Remote Work Agreement</i>, which can be used not only for standard employment contracts but also for agreements on work performed outside employment (DPP) and agreements on work activity (DPČ).</p> <p>The aim of the document is to support a better work-life balance for employees while ensuring clearly defined and legally compliant conditions for remote work.</p> <p>All employees were informed about the new internal regulation through the Intranet and their direct supervisors. The document is available on the internal portal and is regularly updated in line with legislative developments and organizational needs.</p>

A14	24. Working conditions	3Q 2022	External Relations Division + IT Division	<p>Indicator: A new version of the Intranet.</p> <p>Target: to provide clear, comprehensive and easily accessible information, to improve communication and awareness across the CAO, to create a platform for sharing online training</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: A new, more user-friendly version of the internal Intranet website has been created, providing employees with access to all essential information, forms, and internal regulations in one place. The new Intranet also functions as a regular “newsletter,” keeping employees informed about updates from the management, news across the Centre, upcoming training opportunities, and invitations to social and team events. Additionally, the Intranet serves as a gateway to all internal applications used within the organisation, supporting smoother navigation and communication across departments.</p>
A15	24. Working conditions	4Q 2023	Human Resources Office + Web Administration Section + External Relations Division	<p>Indicator: Digitalisation of certain labour-law related tasks into the e-files of employees in the HR system. Creation of a library of digital documents.</p> <p>Target: Facilitating work with labour law documents, all in accordance with the Labour Code.</p>	<p>Status: Extended 1Q 2026</p> <p>Remark: Meetings with vendors of digital signature workflows and electronic document archiving are currently underway. The selected solution will be integrated into the new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to streamline document management and support a fully digital HR environment.</p>

A16 A “Cafeteria” system (an e-shop style self-service benefit system)	26. Funding and salaries	2Q 2022	Human Resources Office + Web Administration Section + External Relations Division	<p>Indicator: Implementation of a “Benefits Cafeteria” function on the platform of the benefits provider.</p> <p>Target: To make the range of offered benefits more transparent and attractive for employees. A self-service option for employees to choose/order benefits.</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: The cafeteria system was successfully implemented; however, due to legislative changes and a reduced budget for the social fund from which benefits are financed, we transitioned to a pre-paid system. As a result, the cafeteria system was discontinued.</p>
A17 “Competency models”	28. Career development	3Q 2024	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Document – Competency models for individual work positions.</p> <p>Target: Better targeting of the education and analysis of training needs for managerial positions. For other positions these will be created in the following period.</p>	<p>Status: Extended 3Q 2026</p> <p>Remark: In line with the long-term strategy of professionalizing management and human resources development, the preparation of competency models for key managerial positions has been initiated. These models serve as a structured framework outlining the expected knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for effective performance in managerial roles. They also provide a foundation for targeted training, performance evaluation, and employee development planning.</p> <p>The creation of competency models has been included as a key activity in a project proposal submitted under the OPJAK funding programme to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MŠMT) in December 2024.</p>

					<p>The outcome of the evaluation is expected in summer 2025. If approved, implementation of the models will proceed on a larger scale with the support of external expertise and methodological guidance. Should the project not receive funding, we plan to develop selected models internally using existing capacities and know-how.</p> <p>The implementation of competency models will enhance the transparency and efficiency of HR processes, improve the planning of educational activities, and support leadership development within the organization. This step also aligns with the principles of the HR Award (HRS4R) strategy and contributes to fostering a performance-oriented, professional, and growth-driven work environment.</p>
A18	34. Complaints/ appeals	2Q 2023	Chair of the Ethics Committee	<p>Indicator: Document – Rules for the regular meetings of the Ethics Committee.</p> <p>Target: Drawing up rules for the Ethics Committee's work, which have not yet been formally enshrined.</p>	<p>Status: Completed</p> <p>Remark: Effective from January 1, 2024, an internal regulation was enacted in the form of Director's Order No. 18/2023, formally establishing the Ethics Committee of the Centre of Administration of the CAS. The document clearly defines the composition, role, and powers of the Ethics Committee, including the procedures for handling reports of potential breaches of ethical principles in the workplace.</p> <p>The introduction of this committee and the corresponding methodology significantly strengthens the framework for promoting ethical conduct and a culture of trust across the organization. Employees now have</p>

					<p>clear information on what constitutes unethical behavior and how to confidentially and safely report any concerns.</p> <p>This step is also part of the broader HRS4R strategy and represents an important milestone in the effort to build a responsible and transparent research organization.</p>
A19	<p>36. Relation with supervisors</p> <p>40. Supervision</p>	1Q 2024	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Drawing up an adaptation process evaluation form, establishment of rules for the evaluation of the adaptation process.</p> <p>Target: Establishing this process of interviews at the end of the probation period as standard. The aim is to allow the new employee to adapt quickly and adequately to the position, potentially aiding them promptly if the adaptation does not go well for whatever reason.</p>	<p>Status: Extended 3Q 2025</p> <p>Remark: A comprehensive onboarding plan has been developed to guide the entire three-month probationary period, supported by a methodology designed specifically for supervisors. This structured approach ensures consistency, clarity of expectations, and smoother integration of new employees into the organization.</p> <p>As part of our continuous improvement in employee experience and retention, we are preparing to implement a follow-up mechanism at the end of the probation period. This will include a standardized feedback questionnaire for new employees and a structured discussion between the supervisor and the employee, with the possibility of HR involvement where appropriate.</p> <p>These steps are part of a broader effort to enhance organizational culture, improve leadership accountability, and strengthen employee engagement from the very beginning of the employment relationship.</p>

A20	2. Ethical principles	1Q2024	Human Resources Office	Indicator: Establishing the “Buddy” role, raising awareness of it, training.	Status: Extended 1Q 2026
Support for the role of the adaptation process guide	3. Professional responsibility				Remark: Due to capacity constraints, the implementation of this activity has been postponed and is now planned for the upcoming period.
	5. Contractual and legal obligations				
	8. Dissemination, exploitation of results			Target: To facilitate the adaptation process for new employees. To place greater emphasis on the role of the “buddy” (adaptation process guide), who accompanies new staff, trains them, supports them, facilitates onboarding.	The introduction of the “Buddy” role – an experienced colleague who supports the adaptation of new employees – is being prepared as part of a systematic onboarding approach. The plan includes promoting the importance of this role, training selected employees, and considering motivational rewards for those who take it on. The aim is to foster a welcoming work environment, reduce the initial stress of newcomers, and support their effective integration into the team. This initiative will include organization-wide communication about the role’s significance, professional training for designated Buddies, and evaluation of options for financial or other forms of recognition.
					The implementation of the Buddy system aims to create a supportive and inclusive workplace, enhance onboarding efficiency, and ease the transition for new employees. At the same time, it strengthens a culture of collaboration, knowledge-sharing, and shared responsibility across the organization.

A21 Implementing the questionnaire survey	18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)  19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)	4Q/2022	External Relations Division/Human Resources Development Projects Section	Indicator: Distribution of the questionnaire to researchers from abroad.  Target: The aim was to map long-term administrative barriers to international mobility. The survey included 30 questions focusing on motivation for a research career, experience with administrative and cultural barriers, satisfaction with working conditions in the host organisation, use of support services, etc.	Status: Completed  Remark: A total of 138 research staff participated in the extensive questionnaire survey. The questions covered all the planned thematic areas, including the application of gender balance principles. The final report is available on the CAO website in the Research section.
A22 Implementation of the scientific accelerator "Application Development and Commercialisation Programme" (PRAK), accessible to researchers within	8. Dissemination, exploitation of results  9. Public engagement 31. Intellectual Property Rights	3Q 2023	Technology Transfer Office of the CAS	Indicator: Establishment of an internal regulation titled "Directive of the Academic Council of the Czech Academy of Sciences on the Application Development and	Status: NEW  Remark: Currently, work is underway on an amendment to the directive that will allow the funding of projects not solely aimed at commercialisation ("income") but also at achieving positive socio-economic impacts ("impact"). The 5th round of the programme was launched

the broader environment of the Czech Academy of Sciences.				Commercialisation Programme of the CAS".	in May 2025, and the activity is therefore considered ongoing.
				Target: (1) To finance activities primarily aimed at the commercial application of knowledge, and (2) To motivate researchers to apply and commercialise the results of their research.	
A23 Creation of a recruitment video	12. Recruitment 15. Transparency (Code)	3Q 2025	Human Resources Office	Indicator: Production of a strategic recruitment video as part of the broader HR Excellence in Research (HRS4R) implementation framework, aligned with the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R). The video will serve as an authentic and professionally developed tool to communicate the organisation's mission, core values, work culture, and commitment	Status: NEW  Remark:

				<p>to supporting the career development of its employees.</p> <p>Target: The initiative aims to strengthen the visibility and attractiveness of CAO. By presenting a compelling narrative that highlights meaningful work, inclusive culture, and opportunities for personal and professional growth, the recruitment video seeks to attract qualified and motivated candidates who resonate with the institution's values and long-term strategic goals.</p>	
A24	30. Access to career advice	4Q 2026	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Strengthening and systematic development of an internal database of lecturers, mentors, and consultants as part of the ongoing "Learning Organization" initiative. This database will provide staff with direct</p>	<p>Status: NEW</p> <p>Remark:</p>

access to internal expertise and allow them to choose educational opportunities tailored to their roles, personal development goals, or based on manager recommendations.

Target: The main goal is to position internal education as a strategic tool for improving employees' professional competence, enhancing internal processes, and raising the quality of services provided to the institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences. By promoting a culture of mutual learning and knowledge sharing across departments, the initiative supports increased work efficiency and interdisciplinary collaboration. Internal education is

				integrated into employee performance evaluations, onboarding processes, and career development pathways. The Learning Organization project strengthens our role as a preferred partner within the CAS and a progressive employer that supports professional growth.	
A25 Leaderships workshops	30. Access to career advice 36. Relation with supervisors 37. Supervision and managerial duties 38. Continuing Professional Development	1Q 2025	Human Resources Office	Indicator: Completion of a structured series of workshops for all team leaders across the organization, focused on strategic themes of the Charter and Code (recruitment and selection, onboarding, performance evaluation, employment relationships, and remuneration).  Target: This initiative aims to enhance managerial competencies in alignment with the	Status: NEW  Remark: The workshops offered participants a comprehensive overview of key HR topics and actionable tools for immediate application in their management practice, particularly the integration of theory with real-world scenarios and the opportunity to share experiences. The activity laid the groundwork for a unified understanding of leadership roles within the context of HRS4R and reinforced expectations for effective team management.

				<p>strategic implementation of HRS4R principles. The workshops provided a practical framework and tools to improve team leadership, promote transparency in management processes, and strengthen the role of team leaders in applying modern HR practices. This contributes to a more professionalized leadership culture based on the values of openness, accountability, and long-term development of human capital.</p>	
A26	24. Working conditions	3Q 2024	Human Resources Office	<p>Indicator: Organization of summer day camps for children of SSČ employees and staff from other research institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences, including full-day programming and catering.</p> <p>Target: The goal of this initiative is to support</p>	<p>Status: New</p> <p>Remark: Completed. New activity, successfully implemented as a pilot program. Due to the strong positive feedback and high demand, the camps will be continued in 2025 as part of the organization's family-friendly support strategy.</p>

				employees' work-life balance by providing meaningful and reliable care for children aged 6–12 during the summer holiday period. The program includes morning sports sessions led by experienced instructors and afternoon creative workshops focused on imagination, teamwork, and skill development. Children spend the week in a safe, engaging, and friendly environment, allowing parents to focus on their work responsibilities.	
A27 Optimization of HR Processes through Implementation of a new HRIS	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems  24. Working conditions  37. Supervision and managerial duties	4Q 2026	Human Resources Office	Indicator: Implementation of a Human Resources Information System (HRIS) to streamline and digitalize key HR processes.  Target: The main goal is to enhance operational efficiency by eliminating	Status: New

redundant tasks and reducing administrative workload. The new HRIS will provide improved access to reliable data, supporting evidence-based managerial decisions, workforce planning, and strategic HR management. This step contributes to the professionalization and transparency of HR operations and offers a better user experience for employees and managers alike. The activity aligns with the organization's commitment to innovation, digital transformation, and modern HR standards.

*The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan.*

*(free text, 1,000 words maximum)*

The CAO is fully aware of the importance of implementing the principles of transparency, openness, and consideration of merit in its recruitment of new employees in line with OTM-R policy. We perceive compliance with international standards when recruiting to vacant positions as a positive signal that we send to potential job applicants, thereby increasing the CAO's attractiveness as an employer.

At present, OTM-R policy is generally followed, with only minor shortcomings found in some areas – notably the lack of formalisation of established procedures in the form of a separate guideline or methodology. During the implementation phase, it is therefore our intention to prepare a document in both Czech and English that will describe the HR processes at each stage of the employment relationship, from the selection procedure through the beginning of employment and the adaptation process, right through to the termination of the employment relationship. Special attention will be paid to the selection procedure. This document, which will set forth binding procedures, will describe and anchor every individual step taken during the selection and recruitment process, rules for appointing selection committee members, their roles and responsibilities. This document will also be used by managers and selection committee members as a methodological guide.

#### **Statement on the Implementation of OTM-R Principles (Internal Review for Interim Assessment):**

The implementation of OTM-R principles is continuously monitored as part of the structured internal management of the HRS4R Action Plan. Oversight is carried out on two levels – operationally by the working group and strategically by the steering committee. The working group regularly monitors the execution of individual actions, gathers input from practice, and proposes adjustments to the implementation. The steering committee ensures alignment with strategic goals and revises priorities or methods when necessary.

In terms of OTM-R, we have established and formalized transparent recruitment procedures in a publicly available document that serves as a binding framework for all selection processes within the organization. These principles are also integrated into internal HR guidelines and are subject to annual updates. All employees have access to these documents via the intranet, supporting equal opportunities and transparency.

Internal review of OTM-R compliance is supported by tracking tools that document the status of each action, related outputs, and relevant training activities. Feedback from both line managers and employees plays a key role in identifying gaps between formal policy and everyday practice. This approach allows us to make timely adjustments and ensures the continuous improvement of recruitment standards in line with the HRS4R strategy.

**CAO actively adheres to the principles of open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R).**

The steps outlined below are not only a formal implementation of the OTM-R policy but, more importantly, concrete tools that help build applicant trust, strengthen the professionalism of internal processes, and contribute to the long-term attractiveness of the institution on both national and international levels:

- Issuing a Recruitment Methodology, which formalizes selection and hiring processes, including rules for the composition and activities of selection committees.
- Training for managerial staff and potential members of selection committees, focused on fair candidate evaluation and effective communication during the recruitment process.
- Support for internal mobility, including proactive communication with current employees about opportunities to participate in internal recruitment processes.

**Planned steps to improve employee engagement and experience:**

- Interviews or surveys with new employees during their probationary period, aimed at identifying their experiences and any specific needs.
- Participation of a representative from the Human Resources Management Department (HRMD) in the final interview before the end of the probationary period.
- Methodical support and training for mentors ("buddies") of new employees, to ensure the onboarding process is as smooth and effective as possible.
- Implementation of regular onboarding training for new staff, covering organizational structure, ethical standards, and practical institutional information.
- Exit interviews with departing employees, to better understand the reasons for leaving and collect feedback.
- Compilation of a summary Exit Report every 6 months, which will serve as a basis for improving HR policies and the work environment.

*If your organisation already has a recruitment strategy which implements the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment, please provide the web link where this strategy can be found on your organisation's website: <https://www.ssc.cas.cz/en/work-for-us/hr-award/>*

URL: The creation of a binding document in line with OTM-R is part of our Action Plan.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### *General overview of the expected implementation process:*

We planned to begin the implementation process and work on each measure at the start of 2022. The measures will be based on the findings of the attached GAP analysis. Suggestions that were raised during the regular questionnaire survey – Staff Satisfaction Survey – will also be taken into account, as will suggestions gained during interviews as part of the employee appraisal process, and proposals raised in regular meetings by members of working groups.

We will proceed according to the OTM-R checklist and work to improve formal insufficiencies.

The steering committee in cooperation with the working group will define the individual steps to be taken, the timeline, and which staff and departments will be responsible for their completion, based on their competencies. The resulting documents and methodologies will, after approval by the steering committee, be gradually implemented within the organisation, in line with the established timetable.

In the attached Action Plan we present activities that reflect the current infrastructural character of the CAO. During 2022 and 2023, however, we expect a substantial change, in which the CAO will, besides providing support to other CAS research institutes, also start to carry out scientific research of its own. This situation will demand a thorough revision of the Action Plan with careful attention paid to the specifics of working with human resources in science and research. During this planned revision, we will extend the action plan to include activities designed to ensure proper management of intellectual property, establish rules for the dissemination of research outcomes (“a licencing strategy”) and to ensure proper awareness of contractual relationships during the implementation of research projects. We will organise training courses on background research involving patent and specialist literature and propose rules for taking the career development of research staff into account – supporting attendance at specialised international conferences and workshops, publication and teaching activities to the extent usual in the research environment.

The implementation process will be monitored by the working group, which is made up of a range of specialists from all key areas. The working group will submit regular reports to the steering committee on the completion of the planned steps, in terms of both content and timing; the steering committee will approve the completed steps and the manner in which they were carried out. One year after implementation, an evaluation of qualitative changes and of the effectiveness of the measures implemented will be carried out, and the measures further revised if necessary.

The proposed measures are expected to benefit the organisation in particular by optimising and formalising existing internal measures in line with OTM-R policy and the principles of the Charter & Code, raising staff satisfaction, and making the CAO more attractive as an employer.

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

Checklist	* Detailed description and due justification
<i>How will the implementation committee and/or steering committee regularly oversee progress?</i>	The steering committee will meet once a month to supervise the activities of the working group and assess its reports, define responsible staff and departments, approve individual steps, and oversee the completion of the Action Plan in accordance with the planned timetable. The steering committee may also dismiss individual members of the working group and nominate new members.
<i>How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?</i>	<p>All employees are to be informed by the CAO Director on an ongoing basis in which stage the implementation of the Action Plan is currently and what progress has been made.</p> <p>Representatives of the newly forming research community will be part of the working group with the option to participate in drawing up and approving new documents, regulations, and procedures.</p> <p>The Monitoring Committee meetings will be open to all CAO staff, i.e., to the research, administrative, and technical community.</p>
<i>How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.</i>	The CAO subscribes to a human resources policy based on the principles of HRS4R, the Charter & Code, and OTM-R, as is shown by its decision to implement these principles within its internal regulations and by the participation of the organisation's Director and all top management staff in the work of the steering committee.
<i>How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?</i>	<p>The working group meets on a regular, continual basis both in person and online. All its members have access to all relevant documents and conversations via a shared drive. Any workflow problems are promptly resolved.</p> <p>Information from the working group's meetings are regularly communicated to the steering committee, which monitors the individual activities, including adherence to the timetable for each task. The steering committee has the power to intervene if it observes insufficiencies or failures to comply with the timetable.</p>

<i>How will you monitor progress (time-line)?</i>	An overall timeline is part of the Action Plan. The working group is responsible for monitoring progress and adhering to the timetable; it meets regularly to monitor potential problems and proposes timetable changes to the steering committee.
<i>How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?</i>	<p>The Action Plan includes specific outcomes (indicators), completion (production) of which serves as confirmation of the fulfilment of the given point. The working group assesses whether these indicators have been completed in a sufficient manner, and passes them to the steering committee, which either approves them or requests amendments/additions.</p> <p>The regular questionnaire survey – Staff Satisfaction Survey – will in future focus more closely on HRS4R principles. As such, we will be able to observe and compare year to year the effects of the measures implemented and their impact on staff satisfaction. We will also obtain feedback via the interviews that take place within our staff appraisal process.</p>

### How have you prepared the internal review?

The internal monitoring of the HRS4R Action Plan implementation is conducted systematically on two levels.

The first level is represented by a working group composed of representatives from individual departments. This group meets regularly to track progress on specific activities. It collects practical feedback, evaluates the implementation status of each measure, and proposes operational adjustments to timelines or implementation methods where needed.

The second level of control is exercised by the Steering Committee, which oversees the overall fulfilment of the Action Plan. The Committee has the authority to request additional deliverables, refine indicators, or propose new measures in response to changes in context or insights gained during implementation.

A key element of internal monitoring is the definition of clear indicators for each activity. These indicators are designed to allow unambiguous assessment of whether a particular measure has been fulfilled. Typical indicators include the creation of documents (e.g. guidelines, methodologies, forms), the establishment of new processes (e.g. formal interviews after probation periods), or the number of individuals involved (e.g. in training or surveys).

Internal monitoring also includes regular evaluation of staff feedback—mainly through surveys and interviews conducted as part of employee assessments. This feedback helps identify areas where activities, although formally completed, have not yet had a sufficient impact on daily practice, allowing for a timely and flexible response.

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

Employees, the research community, and other key stakeholders have been strategically involved in the HRS4R implementation process from the outset.

The foundation of this involvement is an interdisciplinary working group, whose members represent not only different departments but also various categories of staff. This structure ensures that practical needs and suggestions from day-to-day experience are reflected in both the design and execution of measures.

In addition, regular staff surveys are conducted and serve as a key source of input for shaping the Action Plan. For example, a 2022 survey among re-searchers identified barriers to scientific mobility, which are now being addressed through targeted actions.

Another central element of engagement is the staff evaluation system, which includes informal conversations that provide valuable feedback. The working group analyses this feedback and translates it into proposals for adjustments to the Action Plan.

Transparent communication also plays an important role. The intranet provides access to relevant outputs (e.g. OTM-R documents, guidelines, survey results), as well as updates on planned changes, training opportunities, and ways to get involved (e.g. through e-learning modules).

This two-way exchange of information between the implementation team and the broader community strengthens not only the quality of the measures, but also staff ownership and acceptance of the process.

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

Yes, as part of the HRS4R strategy implementation, a Steering Group has been established. It is composed of representatives from the organisation's leadership and key departments. This group meets regularly to review the progress of individual actions and, when necessary, proposes adjustments or priority changes.

In parallel, there is also a Working Group with an operational role, responsible for the day-to-day implementation. Its members are in direct contact with end users (e.g. employees, line managers) and have insight into practices within different departments. The Working Group prepares documentation for the Steering Group, coordinates staff surveys, reviews outputs, and gathers feedback.

The two groups work in close coordination. Their effectiveness lies in the connection between the strategic level (Steering Group) and day-to-day operations (Working Group). This setup enables flexible implementation management that reflects both the organisation's practical realities and its long-term objectives.

The Steering Group also has the authority to approve updates to the Action Plan and ensures alignment with the principles of the Charter and Code. An important part of its role is to evaluate the impact and sustainability of the implemented measures.

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

Yes, HRS4R is systematically aligned with the organisation's strategic documents and overall direction. As a provider of comprehensive support to research institutions within the Czech Academy of Sciences, we consider it important to lead by example. Therefore, the principles of HRS4R are embedded in our human resources development strategy and reflected in our HR policies.

One concrete example of this alignment is the implementation of an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process in accordance with OTM-R principles. These principles have been formalised in a publicly available document and are also integrated into internal guidelines, forming a binding framework for all recruitment processes within the organisation.

Further alignment is evident in the integration of HRS4R principles into onboarding, employee evaluation, career development, and work environment support. Key topics such as equal opportunities, flexibility, transparent communication, and professional development are embedded both in the organisation's strategic goals and in specific HR tools—such as planned competency models, e-learning modules, and the digitalisation of HR processes.

Moreover, the HRS4R approach shapes our organisational culture. We promote openness, a safe and inclusive work environment, and a healthy work-life balance. This approach has led to the creation of a Gender Equality Plan, the establishment of an Ethics Committee, and other supporting initiatives that go beyond the basic requirements of HRS4R implementation.

In summary, HRS4R is not seen as a one-time project but as an integral, long-term part of our organisational culture—a tool for improving the quality of the working environment and increasing our attractiveness to the research community.

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

The implementation of proposed actions is ensured through a combination of clear responsibilities, continuous monitoring, and integration into strategic processes. Each activity in the Action Plan has an assigned owner—either a specific department or individual—who is responsible for its execution and timely delivery. Progress is monitored regularly through both the Working Group and the Steering Committee. The Working Group oversees the implementation of individual steps, reports on progress, identifies potential obstacles, and proposes adjustments when necessary. This helps prevent delays and ensures smooth execution.

To support accountability, each action is accompanied by measurable indicators—such as the creation of specific documents, the launch of e-learning modules, or the availability of content on the intranet. These indicators allow for objective evaluation of whether the action has been completed and to what

extent. Line managers are actively involved in the implementation process. They participate in training sessions, have access to methodological materials, and are encouraged to support the changes within their teams.

Importantly, HRS4R is embedded in the organisation's strategic framework. It is taken into account during planning activities, budget preparation, and staff evaluations, which helps ensure continuity and long-term commitment to the implementation process.

### **How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?**

Progress is monitored based on the timeline defined in the Action Plan, where individual activities are scheduled by quarter and by year. This timeline serves as the foundation for regular checkpoints, which are reviewed by the Working Group and submitted to the Steering Committee. An essential tool in implementation management is a tracking table, where the status of each action is regularly updated using labels such as “new,” “in progress,” “completed,” or “postponed,” along with a brief comment and date. This table is shared among team members to ensure transparency and a clear overview.

Progress is also monitored through regular meetings of the Working Group, typically held every two months. Additional meetings may be convened when necessary—for example, to resolve specific challenges or to respond to changes in external conditions.

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

Progress is measured using a combination of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Each activity in the Action Plan has a clearly defined completion indicator, which may take the form of a document (such as a guideline or policy), a launched service (such as an e-learning module), an implemented process (such as performance reviews after probation), or an achieved result (such as a translated document or a completed workshop).

In addition, we gather regular feedback from employees, mainly through surveys and appraisal interviews. These insights help us assess the real-world impact of implemented measures on everyday practices and employee satisfaction.

We also plan to use analytical tools from a new HRIS system, which will be able to generate data on employee engagement, training participation, use of evaluation forms, and more. These outputs will support not only the monitoring of progress but also the planning of future actions.

Beyond tracking whether an activity has been “completed,” we focus on evaluating its actual contribution—reflected in behavioural change, improved processes, and increased trust in the HR system.

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

Preparation for the external assessment is ongoing. All outputs from the implementation of actions—such as policies, e-learning modules, training sessions, and guidelines—are systematically archived and recorded by the working group.

Each activity has a clearly defined indicator and implementation status, which are tracked in a shared monitoring table. This allows us to easily demonstrate progress at any time.

We also maintain a transparent communication approach. Key documents, such as the OTM-R policy and onboarding guidelines, are available online, increasing visibility for external reviewers and stakeholders.

Prior to the assessment, an internal audit will be conducted. The working group will verify alignment between the planned actions and actual implementation, fill in any missing documentation, and prepare a summary overview for the evaluators.

We also involve department heads to ensure they are ready to present specific outcomes achieved within their units. Emphasis is placed on documenting and sharing examples of good practice, which can contribute positively to the external review.

### *Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process:*

The Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS) brings together 54 research institutes, to which the Centre for Administration and Operations provides infrastructural support. We provide a range of activities closely related to HRS4R for the CAS institutes.

As far as “Ethical and Professional Aspects” are concerned, we provide services in technology transfer, commercialisation of results and intellectual property management; we help to fulfil the Academy’s public commitment by publishing academic and popular science publications, organising popularisation events and running internship schemes for talented students.

In terms of “Recruitment and Selection”, we provide consultations on selection procedures and advertising through the EURAXESS Jobs portal.

In “Working Conditions and Social Security” we provide labour-law advice and operate the EURAXESS Welcome Centre, which provides services to all foreign staff at the CAS.

In “Training and Development”, we organise a range of training programmes for researchers/staff at all levels in the CAS (institute management, research team leaders, science popularisers, technical and finance administrators, etc).

At present, we are not a classic research institute, although we are part of a large research community. We have only just begun making plans for our own research activities, and a new Deed of Establishment to include these activities is in the process of approval. As research institutes rely on us for advice and services in the HR field, and we provide consultations related to HRS4R and the HR Award, we have decided to get to grips with this process not only from a theoretical perspective but also in practice.

By implementing modern HR principles suitable for the academic and scientific environment, we believe that we can achieve significant progress in employee care and human resources management. We reached this conclusion after extensive discussion and with the understanding that the CAO is not a typical research institute, whose goal is to provide R&D infrastructure and support activities, primarily to the Czech Academy of Sciences and its institutes. We have outlined how and why the CAO is seeking the prestigious HR Award for excellence in human resources management in the scientific environment (the HR Excellence in Research Award) in the document “The Centre of Administration and Operations – the CAS institutes’ first port of call”.