

ICREA HRS4R STRATEGY

ACTION PLAN 2023-2026

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ICREA HR STRATEGY - ACTION PLAN

Name Organisation under review: ICREA (Institució Catalana de Recerca i Estudis Avançats)

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

<https://www.icrea.cat/en/hrs4r-human-resource-strategy-researchers>

REVISION DATE: MAY 2023

Organisational information

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers*	285
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	123
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	69
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	285
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	0
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	0
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	6
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year) €	
Total annual organisational budget	39579602
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	39205489
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	374113

Narrative

Nothing of note has changed in our priorities over the last three years. Thanks to the commitment of our government, ICREA is back to filling 20 positions a year (compared to 10 positions since 2015). This allows us to increase the number of researchers again, after several years of almost no net growth.

In 2015, owing to budgetary restrictions, the positions went down from 20 to only 10 a year. Up until then, ICREA had always called for the five areas each year, but with only 10 positions available, the calls were split and from then on they alternate each year: three in one year, two in another.

With the increase to 20 positions in 2022, we have maintained the scheme of separate areas and now the 20 positions are dedicated to a narrower set of disciplines. While it is too early to see the effects of this change, we expect it to increase the diversity of researchers joining ICREA. This we consider to be a positive outcome.

ICREA is currently drafting an ambitious Gender Equity Plan that may introduce important changes, with actions that may affect both ICREA internal processes and the entire set of Host Institutions. While at the time of writing the drafting of the plan is still under way, when the present report will be uploaded and the site visit take place, it is foreseen that related changes will be already under way. This process started in 2022 and is scheduled to enter into the implementation phase before the summer.

Another major change is the segregation of the ICREA *Acadèmia* programme from other ICREA activities. This programme is a funding scheme that offers university professors at a growing phase of their careers an opportunity to intensify their research efforts through a teaching relief mechanism. The programme has been a part of ICREA since 2008 and is very popular and successful among Catalan university faculty. It uses the same selection process that ICREA employs for recruitment of ICREA professors, creating a refreshingly new system that identifies the most promising individuals and gives them the opportunity to devote more time to research, something that their universities found difficult to do, for a number of reasons.

Unfortunately, legal changes over recent years have forced the *Acadèmia* programme into the format of a public subsidy, which is subject to a large number of requirements. This puts pressure on the evaluation system to resemble the current Spanish grant scheme, in particular to apply similar type of criteria. ICREA evaluations rely on both quantitative indicators and qualified opinions of independent experts, which avoids reducing the evaluation to numerical tables and ratings to make final decisions on funding. This is in line with evaluation procedures followed by other prestigious funding bodies, such as the ERC, but it clashes with the dominant evaluation systems in Spain. ICREA has been struggling to comply with the legal requirements while at the same time maintaining its own processes and criteria. A compromise has been found, but it does represent a huge drain of resources, and also entails certain legal risks for the institution, which the Catalan government has decided to avoid by transferring the entire programme to L'Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca ([AGAUR](#)),

which already has a system prepared to comply, thus making good use of economies of scale and at the same time reducing the burden on ICREA.

Strengths and weaknesses of current practice

Ethical and professional aspects

The main picture has not changed significantly. The strengths and weaknesses identified so far still hold true. However, over the last few years we have seen increasing managerial obligations, bigger groups, more concern for student welfare, need for a work-life balance, and at the same time increasing pressures to publish and advance careers, stiff scientific competition in many fields of research, which poses huge challenges that are quite unheard of in the academic world, challenges calling for advanced managerial skills. While we may all wonder whether this is a healthy transition for research, the unquestionable facts remain. There is an increase in harassment reports in academia, mental health among scientists of all stages is a growing concern and nothing seems to suggest that this is a passing fade. The pandemic did exacerbate something that was already gaining momentum under the surface.

Leadership, group management, managing diversity, all seem relevant skills today, but few researchers have ever had any formal training in them. Over the last few years, we have been preparing a battery of actions aimed at addressing such issues. These range from direct psychological support to training in group management, to self-assessment techniques.

On another note, all these combined pressures have a dark side, and we are witnessing an increase in workplace harassment accusations in academia, with cases cropping up all over Europe. While we can normally rely on the protocols and best practices applicable at each host institution, it is also essential that ICREA researchers have their own standards and guidance.

A number of actions have been aimed at these particular issues: improve and update our code of best practices, making explicit mentions of the responsibilities and obligations that a good mentor should always embody and represent. Draft and approve our own protocols to prevent and address harassment cases, should they appear, and to act subsidiarily when the protocols in force in the host institutions are not adequate or applicable.

Like all good practices, stress must be placed on the prevention and not on reactive actions. The challenge remains to make the best research while also having correspondingly high ethical standards.

Further explanations can be found in the Training and development section of this same form.

Recruitment and selection

The movement towards open science is gaining momentum. Both DORA and COARA are promoting a new set of principles for research assessment. This is a relevant

movement for ICREA, since it has always had these practices and principles built into its recruitment processes, and has relied mostly on peer reviewed opinions, and on qualitative judgement of research outputs rather than numerical indicators. We feel that this endorses and supports our principles, and further strengthens our commitment.

On a more practical note, we have increased the number of reviewers in our panels from about 6 to about 9 people, and as a result, the diversity of subareas has correspondingly increased,. Interdisciplinary profiles are now evaluated by an expanded mechanism: main panels now can request opinions from relevant experts from related panels. But ranking decisions remain within the panel the applicants choose. Finally, the personal circumstances area of the application form has proved a very welcome feature that sees quite a lot of use.

The main weaknesses, on the other hand, have not changed at all and in fact have become more of an issue for ICREA administration: increased reporting and monitoring, heavier administrative requirements and an administration that remains almost as minimal as it was 20 years ago, still offering top class support to ICREA Research Professors.

Working conditions

Since the Interim assessment, there have been further improvements in working conditions that are of note here. Our tax relief system is now well integrated into ICREA procedures: as many as 53% of ICREA Researchers have enrolled in the system.

Integration with Host Institutions has progressed substantially: there are no additional labour contracts of ICREA researchers with their host institutions. This has been a considerable operation spanning over two years of work and now only a few contracts still remain, for exceptional reasons linked to the funding of certain projects. In total, over 120 contracts have been integrated into the main ICREA contract, with their corresponding retributions now channeled through the ICREA paysheet. Both sources of income are properly itemised and researchers can track the amounts they receive from each institution.

Additionally, starting on 2023. ICREA salary is broken down into the original salary and the increases that have been obtained through our system of evaluations for promotion. This allows a clear view of the salary improvements linked to individual performance and increases personal awareness of the impact of our evaluation system.

MORE IMPROVEMENTS:

-12 payments a year rather than the obsolete system of 14 payments (even though the Catalan government still uses the 14 payments).

-Retirement age is now 67 years of age although ICREA still offers the option of an extension to 70. This is the current maximum age for Catalan university teachers and professors. ICREA follows that age limit and will adjust if any changes are made to it.

-Increased life insurance coverage: this is a recent change introduced at the beginning of 2023, to expand the coverage that our corporate life insurance offers to our ICREA Research Professors.

-Improved travel insurance: as of January 2023, all trips abroad have a full health and travel assistance automatically.

-Evaluation procedures: first evaluation now has three levels of salary increase. Before this change was introduced, the initial evaluation only allowed for two steps.

-Honorary and Ambassadors: ICREA now offers an honorary position to ICREAs who retire, to keep them within the community primarily as a way to thank them for their efforts and dedication, and also as a way to maintain links with them. Their experience and profile are an exceptional resource, particularly for younger ICREA scientists and before this was introduced, all links with our former ICREAs were severed after retirement. The position is honorary and has very little cost, but a high value for all involved.

-Distinguished researcher contracts are now the standard ICREA contracts.

-Changes in the law to make ICREA researchers permanent personnel of the universities where they work, thus sorting a long-standing issue affecting their participation in university committees and decision organs of all sorts.

Some of these changes will make themselves felt right away, while others will have a delayed impact. However, the trend in improving working conditions over the last few years is very clear.

Since the Interim report, two new laws have been passed both in Spanish and in Catalan Parliament related to many aspects of our profession. There is a new Spanish Science and Technology Law from September 2022 and a Catalan Science Law that was passed on December 2022.

In addition, at the end of 2021, the Spanish Labour law received a complete overhaul and as a result of that, no temporary contracts are allowed in Spain anymore (barring a few exceptions). This means that all our candidates coming from Catalonia will have permanent contracts as well. This wouldn't be a problem except for the fact that researchers with a permanent position in the Catalan research system are not allowed to apply. We are working on a redefinition of the concept 'permanent position' so that it does not exclude people in tenure tracks in Catalan universities and research centres.

This has already been passed by the Board on June 2023 and it is ready for the next ICREA call on January 2024.

Training and development

We have planned a series of seminars to address training issues for our senior researchers. This is a draft at the moment, and the specific contents still has to be

determined, but it is happening during 2023 and will continue into 2024. Depending on success and opportunity, this will become a regular ICREA activity.

Over the last few years, we have seen a trend develop and pick momentum and we think we, as an institution, must respond to it so that our ICREA Research Professors feel prepared and in charge of their careers. The demands of being a PI, keeping a high research profile on the one hand, and the demands imposed by leading a research group on the other, are very different and while researchers have had extensive training throughout their careers on how to become excellent researchers, few of them have had any specific training on the many complexities of managing a research team. It is becoming increasingly important that our researchers have the means to become also competent and successful leaders of junior researchers. This is a general trend that we see around us and also everywhere else. Several researchers have expressed the need to receive specific training on how to manage a research team, since this goes far beyond mentoring PhD students (but this remains an important part of it!).

As our numbers grow, so does the number of potential moral, scientific and legal issues and the need to invest in expert guidance to prevent them and to handle conflict when it arises.

We have decided to promote research management training and to offer to our researchers the opportunity to acquire and develop the skills needed to become better managers. A number of actions have been introduced, notably the creation of a training itinerary that our PIs can choose to follow, focused on precisely these issues.

As always in ICREA, any training plans must take into account the fact that our researchers do not share our premises with the administration and indeed not even with the other ICREAs (at least in most cases). Online training, scheduled meetings, seminars and the annual ICREA day are the only moments where we personally interact as a community. Hence their importance.

We will be monitoring training impact and effectivity and hopefully over the next few years we will be able to see a reduction of stress levels and an improvement of the satisfaction and the accomplishments of our PIs.

Comment on the implementation of the OTM-R principles

No real changes to the improvements made in the initial years. ICREA management has continued to refine ICREA evaluation procedures. As stated above, the number of reviewers has gone up, diversity of subareas has increased, and interdisciplinary profiles are now evaluated by an expanded mechanism

The personal circumstances area of the application form has proved a very welcome feature that sees quite a lot of use.

ICREA has always been a firm proposer of a merit based recruiting system. This is one of the reasons it was created in 2001: to offer a recruitment avenue that was not tainted by the endogamy and bad practices of the academic community at the time. After more than twenty years, and massive improvement of the entire system in this direction, ICREA is still seen as a model of recruitment practices.

Implementation

General overview of the implementation process

There is a steering committee in place since the beginning of the process in 2015. Awareness and involvement of our research community are expected to continue throughout the implementation of the strategy thanks to:

1. Inclusion in our newsletter of the latest changes and improvements.
2. Consultation and update with the workgroup.
3. Regular communication of the changes and actions taken via the intranet, mailing lists and communication in colloquia and our annual general meeting.

Actions are prioritised and implemented according to the timeline proposed (at least most of them!). The timeline responds to a number of restrictions in cost, person power and the windows of opportunity that the calls offer throughout the academic year. Most of the single actions have been implemented already, and there are a number of them which do not really have a proper end date because of their very own nature (like raising awareness, communications, and so forth).

Our Board of Directors is informed of the relevant actions regularly at the ordinary meetings, which take place twice a year.

Internal review preparation

As planned in the initial submission, the internal review was drafted by the steering committee and shared, discussed and agreed with the work group before submission. No

polls nor any other broader system of consultation was used since we are still using the initial analysis to monitor progress.

It's worth noting that while the internal review process described here may be effective for identifying and addressing specific issues, it may not capture the perspectives and needs of a broader stakeholder group. As such, it's important to consider other forms of consultation and engagement to ensure that diverse perspectives and voices are heard and incorporated into decision-making processes. For the next phase of the action plan we have included a large consultation effort to all ICREA researchers, equivalent to the original poll, to monitor changes and identify new avenues of improvement.

Involvement of the research community

Through the discussions and consultation with the Work Group. This group is formed by (7) researchers from institutions representative of our total ICREA Research Professors. They are based in universities, CERCA and CSIC centres, and are all senior group leaders. Some are also directors of their research centres, some are totally centered on their research and as a whole, The Work Group has a representation of a wide number of sensitivities, gender, professional and personal situations and nationalities. This diversity is essential for ensuring that the HRS4R is inclusive and considers the needs of all researchers within the institution. The Work Group has been driving the HRS4R since the beginning of the process, and its accumulated experience has been instrumental in reaching our goals as an institution. By working together and leveraging their collective expertise, the institution can continue to improve its support for researchers and advance its research mission. The intention is to create a rotation mechanism so that a larger proportion of ICREA Research Professors will be involved in the Work Group over time.

Implementation committee /steering group

We have both a steering committee and a Work Group that are engaged in the implementation and the monitoring of progress. The steering committee is directly involved in the implementation and reporting to the Board of Directors. The Work group is the consultation and discussion organ where the ideas are generated, rated and prioritised. Also, the Work Group drafts and reviews all the documentation that gets uploaded to this platform, and monitors the implementation of the Action Plan.

To ensure that decisions and progress are seamlessly integrated in the policies and management of the institution, both bodies are chaired by the Executive Director. The arrangement has worked well and has not been changed since the initial phase of the accreditation.

Alignment of the HRS4R with ICREA strategy

The HRS4R policy is already well aligned with ICREA principles and with ICREA recruitment and selection processes. Several actions in the plan were directed towards addressing the communication and dissemination of this circumstance (see for instance actions I.1, I.2, and 1.6).

In fact, the very concept of an OTM-R and the guiding principles of the HRS4R have always been part of the ICREA values and have been a fundamental part of its mission in the Catalan research system. ICREA was designed and has remained true to the concept of an OTM-R system. It is not an exaggeration to say that the reason ICREA was created was to add an open, transparent and rigorous merit-based recruitment tool for research institutions in Catalonia.

Implementation practical aspects

Right from the start, the process was integrated with the management bodies of ICREA to guarantee that whatever decision and actions were planned would not simply sit by the side of the mainstream management of the organisation. This has proved successful and at the same time, it was probably the easiest way to implement the changes: rather than making them an added obligation that comes on top of what needs to be done in the ordinary running of ICREA, the HRS4R has naturally merged with the day-to-day tasks and obligations so that the actions have been gradually implemented as part of the general management. ICREA has a very tiny administration, and this was probably the only way to do this.

This line of work will continue in the future, by seamlessly integrating all actions related to our HRS4R into our day-to-day management of ICREA.

Monitoring progress

The steering committee of the HRS4R and the Executive direction are directly responsible for its implementation. Monitoring and execution are therefore under the responsibilities of the same organs so it is impossible that misinformation or misunderstandings can arise. When an action is lagging behind, it is clear to the executive direction which tries to address the situation (although that may not always be possible!).

It may be important to add here that the ideas and actions have generally been discussed coinciding with the reviews and phases of the assessments. In a sense, the different deadlines and reminders of the HRS4R assessment have worked well to introduce moments for long term consideration that otherwise might not have happened. It is all too easy to focus on the short term and forget the longer pressing issues.

Measurement of progress for next assessment

The Steering committee regularly prepares progress reports to be included in the ordinary Board meetings, which take place twice a year. The indicators are self-evident in most cases so this is not a big challenge, at least in our case. The indicators listed in the initial action plan remain mostly valid and are still useful. We may add and remove indicators as we move forward if we feel that their usefulness has changed or if other indicators are better at monitoring efficacy of the actions.

About the adjustments made in the interim review:

The general tone of the review was very positive, but there was an important concern raised by the panel of evaluators. The report found that there was a lack of indicators to measure progress. In the light of this remark, after reception of the interim report we circulated and debated the issue with the workgroup. As a result of those consultations, an updated version of the plan was created where extra effort was put in expanding the field of actions, and also to create realistic indicators that could be used to better trace and measure progress. As discussed earlier, the actions and general implementation are integrated with the ordinary management of ICREA and therefore it is easy to see how things progress, and to make adjustments and changes when needed.

We believe that the new version is far more articulated in that respect, and also, that the resulting plan has been improved, and that it is now better and more ambitious. Many of the actions will overflow the review period and become part of the next cycle of renewal but, with a realistic view, we feel that this is how things should progress anyway. The bigger changes tend to take longer than the small actions.

Preparation for external review

ICREA is a singular institution and it is very likely that the reviewers will have many questions about its procedures and operations. These questions, requests and inquiries will be the main driver of the external review. Moreover, by the very nature of ICREA, a large number of the HRS4R issues are not directly applicable and -at least on that respect- the review should be much simpler than that of other larger institutions. Essentially what ICREA does has to do with selection and promotion, so we will be prepared to share with the team all our processes and results.

Above all, however, we would suggest and encourage the reviewers to interview random ICREA Research Professors to gain an insight of what ICREA means to them and how ICREA has contributed to the fulfillment of their research careers.

Annex- Proposed ACTIONS 2023 - 2026

Action 1. Official policy declarations

GAP Principle(s)

1. Research freedom
2. Ethical principles
3. Professional responsibility
4. Professional attitude
5. Contractual and legal obligations
6. Accountability
7. Good practice in research
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
9. Public engagement
10. Non discrimination
15. Transparency (Code)

Timing

Q1 2019

Responsible Unit

Direction/communications

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & Dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Official declarations have been included in the annual memoirs and in the new framework agreements with host institutions. (date of completion depends on type of document) These are fundamental policy topics included in our Bylaws and the framework agreements with Host Institutions.

Action 2. Code of Best Practices

GAP Principle(s)

- 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results
- 15. Transparency (Code)
- 16. Judging merit (Code)

Timing

Q2 2018

Responsible Unit

Direction/administrations

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & Dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

The latest versions of our Code of Best Practices should be always available online. In addition to being posted on the website, the code is attached to all new labour contracts.

Action 3. Policy on dissemination

GAP Principle(s)

- 2. Ethical principles
- 9. Public engagement
- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 15. Transparency (Code)

Timing

Q2 2017 to Q4 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction/communications

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & Dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Notify the ICREAs of the importance of dissemination and communication through inclusion of regular sections in the newsletter, dissemination entry form in the intranet, scientific highlights now feature weekly in our homepage.

Action 4. Policy on innovation

GAP Principle(s)

- 2. Ethical principles
- 7. Good practice in research
- 15. Transparency (Code)
- 31. Intellectual Property Rights

Timing

Q2 2017 to Q4 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & Dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Clarify the position of ICREA towards the exploitation of research results. Seminar on KTT, current IP regulation posted on the intranet.

Action 5. Non discrimination.

GAP Principle(s)

- 4. Professional attitude
- 9. Public engagement
- 10. Non discrimination

Timing

Q1 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction/communications

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & Dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Make an institutional declaration about non-discrimination and post it on our website. This was added recently since it got overlooked among the other, bulkier actions.

See: <https://www.icrea.cat/en/who-we-are>

Action 6. Recusal of evaluators**GAP Principle(s)**

- 4. Professional attitude
- 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- 36. Relation with supervisors

Timing

Q1 2018

Responsible Unit

Direction/administrations

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Senior call forms

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Implemented since ICREA Senior call 2018

Action 7. Consideration of personal circumstances.**GAP Principle(s)**

- 2. Ethical principles

-
- 4. Professional attitude
 - 12. Recruitment
 - 13. Recruitment (Code)
 - 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)
 - 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)
 - 20. Seniority (Code)
 - 22. Recognition of the profession
 - 27. Gender balance
 - 28. Career development

Timing

Q1 2019

Responsible Unit

Direction/administration

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Senior call forms

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

A section for 'personal circumstances' for candidates included from the ICREA call 2018

Action 8. Recruitment documentation

GAP Principle(s)

- 12. Recruitment
- 13. Recruitment (Code)
- 14. Selection (Code)
- 24. Working conditions

Timing

Q2 2019

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & Dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Preparation of a document containing the main aspects of the recruitment process.

Action 9. Feed back to applicants

GAP Principle(s)

- 4. Professional attitude
- 12. Recruitment
- 13. Recruitment (Code)
- 14. Selection (Code)

Timing

Q1 2018

Responsible Unit

Direction/administration

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Intranet forms

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

All non selected applicants get feedback since 2018

Action 10. Disclosure of panel members

GAP Principle(s)

- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 36. Relation with supervisors

Timing

2017

Responsible Unit

Direction/administration

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

web site disclosure

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Disclosure happens after completion of service in the panels (a maximum of 4 years for any given panel)

Action 11. Life Insurance issues**GAP Principle(s)**

4. Professional attitude

26. Funding and salaries

Timing

Q2 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

The current life insurance for ICREAs should be better explained to the ICREA researchers. (Linked also to the increase of coverage applied in 2022)

Action 12. Pension schemes**GAP Principle(s)**

25. Stability and permanence of employment

-
- 26. Funding and salaries
 - 28. Career development
 - 38. Continuing Professional Development

Timing

Q2 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction/Board of Trustees

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Contributions

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Corrective measures: added Tax relief option through flexible compensation plan, active at the beginning of Q2 2020. It is working well, and 53% of ICREA researchers use one or more of the options offered.

Action 13. Clarify rules for sabbaticals and stays of research.

GAP Principle(s)

18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

29. Value of mobility

Timing

Q1 2018

Responsible Unit

Administration

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

The rules for sabbaticals and stays of research abroad should be better communicated. Document explaining rules for sabbaticals is posted on intranet.

Action 14. Identify interests in developing management skills.

GAP Principle(s)

- 23. Research environment
- 24. Working conditions
- 28. Career development
- 30. Access to career advice
- 35. Participation in decision-making bodies
- 36. Relation with supervisors
- 37. Supervision and managerial duties
- 38. Continuing Professional Development
- 39. Access to research training and continuous development
- 40. Supervision

Timing

Q3 2020

Responsible Unit

Administration

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Questionnaire/dissemination

Current Status

EXTENDED

Remarks

Will capture this information directly from ICREA Research Professors. It's the basis for training courses (leadership, communication skills, conflict resolution...).

Action 15. Training programme for the ICREA administration

GAP Principle(s)

- 38. Continuing Professional Development

39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing

2018 - 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction/Administration

Current Status

EXTENDED

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Training

Remarks

training on several topics relevant to office management, software tools, stress management, time optimisation and even first aid course.

Action 16. Preparation of a document containing the main aspects of the evaluation process

GAP Principle(s)

- 2. Ethical principles
- 3. Professional responsibility
- 4. Professional attitude
- 7. Good practice in research
- 15. Transparency (Code)
- 16. Judging merit (Code)
- 20. Seniority (Code)

Timing

Q4 2017

Responsible Unit

Direction/Administration

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks**Action 17. Changes in our Manual of Best Practices****GAP Principle(s)**

21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

23. Research environment

24. Working conditions

28. Career development

34. Complains/ appeals

35. Participation in decision-making bodies

37. Supervision and managerial duties

40. Supervision

Timing

Q2 2018

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Include in our manual of Best Practices information on the importance of supervision and mentoring of younger researchers

Action 18. Promotion process information.**GAP Principle(s)**

21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

28. Career development

35. Participation in decision-making bodies

40. Supervision

Timing

Q2 2018

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Documentation & dissemination

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Include in the documentation about the Promotion process a description of the importance of supervision and mentoring of younger researchers.

Action 19. Notify Host Institutions of the historic gender ratio of their applicants

GAP Principle(s)

12. Recruitment

27. Gender balance

Timing

Q3 2020

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Communication

Current Status

IN PROGRESS

Remarks

Simply informative, but expected to raise awareness among the institutions. Female researchers percentage in ICREA has been growing slowly but steadily. No idea how much this action is contributing to the improvement but it cannot hurt. Will maintain action for the time being.

Action 20. Compute and report salary gender equality.

GAP Principle(s)

- 10. Non discrimination
- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 16. Judging merit (Code)
- 24. Working conditions
- 26. Funding and salaries
- 27. Gender balance
- 28. Career development

Timing

Q4 2018 onwards

Responsible Unit

Management

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

<+-5% or non significant

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

There does not seem to be a salary gender gap at ICREA at the moment. However, this action has been closed, superseded by the drafting and negotiation of a gender equality plan (see below)

Action 21 Creation and approval of a workplace harassment protocol

GAP Principle(s)

- 2. Ethical principles
- 3. Professional responsibility
- 10. Non discrimination
- 15. Transparency (Code)
- 16. Judging merit (Code)
- 24. Working conditions
- 28. Career development

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- 34. Complains/ appeals
 - 36. Relation with supervisors
 - 37. Supervision and managerial duties

Timing

Drafting Q3 2023
Approval Q2 2024

Responsible Unit

-Drafting: OSHA
-Negotiation: Direction
-Approval: Board

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Document, Agreement of the board

Current Status

IN PROGRESS

Remarks

Will cover the preventive actions and also the reactive protocols to be used. Will be reviewed every two years after approval

Action 22. Gender Equity Plan

GAP Principle(s)

- 2. Ethical principles
- 4. Professional attitude
- 7. Good practice in research
- 10. Non discrimination
- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 12. Recruitment
- 27. Gender balance
- 28. Career development

Timing

Drafting Q4 2022 Approval Q4 2023 Monitoring Q4 2024

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Document signed

Current Status

IN PROGRESS

Remarks

Plan contemplates periodic revisions and an improved version at the end of the cycle.

Action 23. Salary Improvement on first evaluation

GAP Principle(s)

- 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 16. Judging merit (Code)
- 24. Working conditions
- 26. Funding and salaries

Timing

Q4 2020

Responsible Unit

Exec Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

New salary levels, documentation, Board agreement

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

First evaluations come with three levels of possible increase (not two, like before) this improves all three positive outcomes by one step.

Action 24. Eligibility of permanent positions

GAP Principle(s)

- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 12. Recruitment

Timing

Q1 2024

Responsible Unit

Exec Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Approval of the Board

Current Status

NEW

Remarks

ICREA has always insisted on hiring people from outside or in temporary positions in Catalonia. As per changes in Spanish labour law and to maintain eligibility of tenure track applicants. It must be in place before the ICREA call 2024.

Action 25. Manual of Best Evaluation Practices for evaluators

GAP Principle(s)

- 2. Ethical principles
- 3. Professional responsibility
- 4. Professional attitude
- 5. Contractual and legal obligations
- 6. Accountability
- 7. Good practice in research
- 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
- 14. Selection (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)

Timing

revision Q2 2024 revision Q2 2026

Responsible Unit

Exec Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Document, procedures

Current Status

NEW

Remarks

In response to conflicting views among panel members, we have identified the need to insist in the avoidance of quantitative indicators and to further strengthen the adhesion to DORA and COARA. Will be revising every two years.

Action 26. Psychological support service**GAP Principle(s)**

- 23. Research environment
- 24. Working conditions
- 38. Continuing Professional Development

Timing

Q2 2021

Responsible Unit

OSHA

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Number of consultancy hours

Current Status

IN PROGRESS

Remarks

Experienced therapist offered to all ICREAs to deal with any issues related to mental health and wellbeing.

Action 27. Increased life insurance coverage

GAP Principle(s)

23. Research environment

24. Working conditions

Timing

Q3 2022

Responsible Unit

Direction

Current Status

COMPLETED

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Increased coverage for ages over 50.

Remarks

This a single action that changed our insurance policy and has resulted in bigger compensations in case of decease for the specitic age group.

Action 28. Extension of travel insurance coverage

GAP Principle(s)

23. Research environment

24. Working conditions

29. Value of mobility

Timing

Q1 2023

Responsible Unit

OSHA

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

Several improvements over the standard insurance to improve health and accident protection during European trips.

Action 29. Improved paysheet information.

GAP Principle(s)

- 22. Recognition of the profession
- 24. Working conditions
- 26. Funding and salaries
- 28. Career development

Timing

Q1 2023

Responsible Unit

Finance

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

New paysheet

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

This allows full tracking of promotion rewards and all compensations received from Host Institutions, when applicable. Researchers have a much better awareness of the structure of their retributions and compensations.

Action 30. Recognition of ICREA Research Professors as permanent personnel in universities

GAP Principle(s)

- 22. Recognition of the profession
- 24. Working conditions
- 35. Participation in decision-making bodies

Timing

Q4 2022

Responsible Unit

Board

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Changes in the Catalan Science Law: article 63.5

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

A small but ambitious modification that allows ICREAs to be considered permanent personnel at Catalan universities

Action 31. Training on stress management

GAP Principle(s)

- 23. Research environment
- 24. Working conditions
- 38. Continuing Professional Development

Timing

Q2 2021

Responsible Unit

ExecDirection

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Course and certificate

Current Status

IN PROGRESS

Remarks

Action 32. Training on MSOffice productivity tools

GAP Principle(s)

- 24. Working conditions
- 28. Career development
- 38. Continuing Professional Development

Timing

4Q 2020 4Q 2023

Responsible Unit

Finance

Current Status

IN PROGRESS

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Training for the admin team. It is updated regularly.

Remarks

Next sessions planned for end of year.

Action 33. Creation of the Honorary ICREA position**GAP Principle(s)**

16. Judging merit (Code)

20. Seniority (Code)

22. Recognition of the profession

Timing

Q4 2023

Responsible Unit

Direction

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Board approval, appointments

Current Status

NEW

Remarks

An honorary position for ICREA Research Professors who retire with us after a successful career.

Action 34. A second edition of the institutional poll to all ICREAs**GAP Principle(s)**

1. Research freedom

2. Ethical principles

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- 3. Professional responsibility
 - 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems
 - 12. Recruitment
 - 13. Recruitment (Code)
 - 14. Selection (Code)
 - 15. Transparency (Code)
 - 16. Judging merit (Code)
 - 23. Research environment
 - 24. Working conditions
 - 26. Funding and salaries
 - 28. Career development
 - 30. Access to career advice
 - 34. Complains/ appeals
 - 35. Participation in decision-making bodies
 - 38. Continuing Professional Development
 - 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing

design Q2 2024 execution Q42024 implementation Q1 2025

Responsible Unit

HResources

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Poll, results, analysis, new actions

Current Status

NEW

Remarks

This will be the equivalent of the original poll and will help top monitor changes and also identify new avenues of improvement.