

TEMPLATE 4: ACTION PLAN

Case number: 2020CZ572526

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

Contact details: Národní 1009/3, 110 00 Prague 1, Czech Republic

SUBMISSION DATE: 27/10/2021

1. ORGANISATIONAL INFORMATION

Please provide a specific number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.

STAFF AND STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students involved in research either full-time or part-time	*0
Of whom are international (i.e., foreign nationality)	*0
Of whom are funded externally (i.e., for whom the organisation is host organisation)	*0
Of whom are women	*0
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor	*0
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with the postdoctoral level	*0
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with the doctoral level	*0
Total number of students (if relevant)	*0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching, and research staff)	* 324.93

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for the most recent fiscal year)		€
Total annual organisational budget		17,968,998
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)		9,115,055
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)		644,404
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research		5,987

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.

2. 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>Weaknesses:</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>Strengths:</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</p>



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 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.

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.

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.

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.



3. 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)
<i>Free text - 100 words max</i>	<i>Retrieved from the GAP Analysis</i>			
A1 Create an appendix to the relevant regulations and codes regarding the provisions proposed in the "Recommendations for Managing Intellectual Property" and the corresponding "Regulation on the registration of items protected by intellectual property rights and their exploitation".	3. Professional responsibility	4Q 2023	Technology Transfer Office of the CAS	<u>Indicator:</u> An appendix or addendum to the internal regulation entitled "Managing the Outcomes of Research, Development, and Innovation". <u>Target:</u> To create a set of instructions to ensure researchers are informed of ways of managing the outcomes of research.
A2 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	5. Contractual and legal obligations 31. Intellectual Property Rights	4Q 2023	Technology Transfer Office of the CAS	<u>Indicator:</u> An appendix or addendum to the internal regulations entitled "The protection, registration, and enforcement of intellectual property rights in the CAO". <u>Target:</u> To ensure researchers are informed of the laws, regulations, and



and to ensure proper awareness of contractual obligations in research projects.		contractual obligations pertaining to intellectual property rights.		
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	<u>Indicator:</u> A manual for the Collective Agreement <u>Target:</u> Introducing employees to the basic aspects of the Collective Agreement, raising awareness of this important document amongst all CAO employees.
A4 Pilot project for online health and safety training for employees.		4Q 2022 (completed)	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> Online health and safety training for employees (mandatory for all employees once every three years) <u>Target:</u> 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 life and health of employees during the work process.
A5 Supplementation of the CAO's Deed of Establishment.	8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	1Q 2023	Advisory and Administrative Office – Advisory and Administrative Director	<u>Indicator:</u> Document – Updated Deed of Establishment of the CAO. Website link to document. <u>Target:</u> 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.
A6 Translation of the Annual Report into English.	9. Public engagement	3–4Q/2022	External Relations Division	<u>Indicator:</u> Document – Translated Annual Report <u>Target:</u> To allow non-Czech speakers access to information
A7 Create a list of core CAO internal regulations and have those translated into English and published.	10. Non discrimination	4Q 2023	Human Resources Office + Advisory and Administrative Office – Legal Section	<u>Indicator:</u> Identifying core CAO internal regulations and their translation. <u>Target:</u> Familiarising non-Czech speaking CAO employees with the core internal regulations of the organisation
A8 Digitalisation of the evaluation process	11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems	2Q 2023	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> A functional evaluation module in the HR/payroll system <u>Target:</u> Integration of the evaluation process into the HR/payroll system. Data output from the system
A9 Introduction of 360° feedback for managers and key staff.		2Q 2022 (pilot project) Additional stages in the following years	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> Implementation of an evaluation process in the form of a pilot 360° feedback project for managers and key staff. <u>Target:</u> To obtain comprehensive feedback on the work performance and conduct of managers and key staff and to provide them with relevant development opportunities.



A10 Creation of a Recruitment Code of Conduct.	12. Recruitment 13. Recruitment (Code)	3Q 2023	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> Recruitment Code of Conduct <u>Target:</u> To ensure equal conditions and transparency in the recruitment and selection of staff, to define the principles applied in the selection procedure.
A11 Document – OTM-R		2Q 2024	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> Document/methodology in Czech and English <u>Target:</u> 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.
A12 E-learning module for members of selection committees.	14. Selection (Code)	4Q 2023	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> E-learning module with selection procedure rules, interview structure, common mistakes, types of interviews, types of questions. <u>Target:</u> To assess the quality of selection procedures and the development of selection committee members.
A13 Hybrid on-site work-remote working model.	24. Working conditions	1Q 2022 (completed)	Human Resources Office	<u>Indicator:</u> Documents – Internal regulation establishing rules and requirements for remote working and an Agreement with the employee.



				<p><u>Target:</u> To allow employees adequate quality working conditions, incl. flexibility – choice of the location of work on certain days.</p>
A14		3Q 2022 (com- pleted)	External Relations Division + IT Division	<p><u>Indicator:</u> A new version of the Intranet.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 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>
A15		4Q 2023	Human Re- sources Of- fice + Web Administra- tion Section + External Relations Division	<p><u>Indicator:</u> 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><u>Target:</u> Facilitating work with labour law documents, all in accordance with the Labour Code.</p>
A16	26. Funding and salaries	2Q 2022 (com- pleted)	Human Re- sources Of- fice +	<p><u>Indicator:</u> Implementation of a “Benefits Cafeteria” function on the platform of the benefits provider.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> To make the range of offered benefits more transparent and attractive for employees. A self-service option for employees to choose/order benefits.</p>
A17	28. Career develop- ment	3Q 2024	Human Re- sources Of- fice	<p><u>Indicator:</u> Document – Competency models for individual work positions.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Better targeting of the education and analysis of training needs</p>

				for managerial positions. For other positions these will be created in the following period.
A18	34. Complaints/ appeals	2Q 2023	Chair of the Ethics Committee	<p><u>Indicator:</u> Document – Rules for the regular meetings of the Ethics Committee.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> Drawing up rules for the Ethics Committee’s work, which have not yet been formally enshrined.</p>
A19	36. Relation with supervisors 40. Supervision	1Q 2024	Human Resources Office	<p><u>Indicator:</u> Drawing up an adaptation process evaluation form, establishment of rules for the evaluation of the adaptation process.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 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>
A20		1Q2024	Human Resources Office	<p><u>Indicator:</u> Establishing the “Buddy” role, raising awareness of it, training.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 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.</p>

A21 Implementing the questionnaire survey	2. Ethical principles 3. Professional responsibility 5. Contractual and legal obligations 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	4Q/2022 (completed)	External Relations Division/Human Resources Development Projects Section	<p><u>Indicator:</u> Distribution of the questionnaire to researchers from abroad.</p> <p><u>Target:</u> 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.</p>
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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.

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:

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

4. 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
<p><i>How will the implementation committee and/or steering committee regularly oversee progress?</i></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?</i></p>	<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>
<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></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><i>How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?</i></p>	<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>
<p><i>How will you monitor progress (timeline)?</i></p>	<p>An overall timeline is part of the Action Plan. The working group is responsible for monitoring progress and adher-</p>



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

ing to the timetable; it meets regularly to monitor potential problems and proposes timetable changes to the steering committee.

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.

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.

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”.