

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) 2024-2027

Barcelona Supercomputing Center - Centro Nacional de Supercomputación



May 2024

1 Action Plan 2024 -2027

1.1. Executive summary

The Barcelona Supercomputing Center - Centro Nacional de Supercomputación (BSC-CNS) is the leading supercomputing center in Spain. It houses MareNostrum, one of the most powerful supercomputers in Europe, and is a hosting member of the PRACE European distributed supercomputing infrastructure. The mission of BSC is to research, develop and manage information technologies in order to facilitate scientific progress. BSC combines HPC service provision and R&D into both computer and computational science (life, earth and engineering sciences) under one roof, and currently has over 1.000 staff from 60 countries.

BSC-CNS is committed to the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. In 2013, BSC signed the Declaration of Commitment. With the HR Strategy for Researchers, BSC-CNS wants to keep sustaining the best framework and environment for research excellence, maintaining and improving it by adopting international best practices and high-quality standards.

The "HR Strategy for Researchers" supports research institutions and funding organizations in the implementation of the Charter & Code in their policies and practices. The concrete implementation of the Charter & Code by research institutions will render them more attractive to researchers looking for a new employer or for a host for their research project. Funding organizations implementing the Charter & Code principles will contribute to the attractiveness of their national research systems and to the attractiveness of the European Research Area in general. The logo "HR Excellence in Research" identifies the institutions and organizations as providers and supporters of a stimulating and favorable working environment.

In 2015, BSC received the European Commission's Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) award, which recognizes BSC's commitment to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and furthermore commits BSC to an Action Plan to improve its capabilities and performance across a wide range of training, recruitment and gender issues.

In April 2017, we submitted the interim assessment, and we received the following feedback from the external assessors: The organization is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. There is evidence that the **HRS4R is further embedded**.

With this news, we kept up with our plan implementing the actions designed in the project plan 2017 – 2020.

In 2020, we worked on the renewal assessment and the design of the new project plan for 2021 – 2023. We received the site visit in May 2021, due to COVID restrictions this was held online. The assessors accepted the renewal, as the BSC was progressing with appropriate and quality actions.

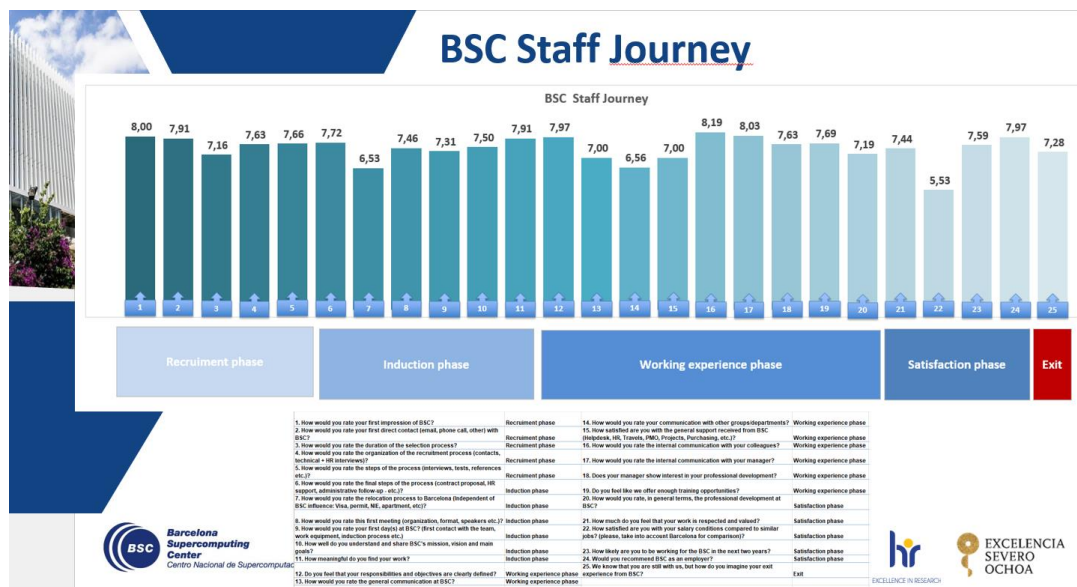
Over the past few years, we have been implementing various initiatives outlined in our Action Plan, which is centered on consolidating open, transparent, and merit-based (OTM-R) guidelines across all recruitment processes. We have also focused on increasing awareness of regulations at both the internal and broader European and national levels, enhancing internal communication, continuously improving career development (ranging from training and performance evaluation to career guidance), and strengthening gender-related activities to promote equal opportunities. Nearly all actions are complete, though some have been extended due to the inherent nature of the actions. A few have been delayed due to shifts in the center's strategic priorities, resource constraints, or unforeseen circumstances that have impacted on our ability to implement these actions.

While preparing for the renewal, we conducted a thorough analysis of the actions implemented to date and also gathered feedback from our community. In March 2024, we conducted a survey focusing on various

aspects of the HRS4R. We then analyzed the survey results with six focus groups representing all professional levels and departments within the organization. These focus group meetings generated ideas and proposals for new actions for the 2024-2027 period:

- Research Engineer
- PhD Students
- Researchers
- Group Leaders
- Support Staff
- Equity Commission

Additionally, we conducted an exercise known as the "Staff Journey," where we analyzed the experiences of staff members from the moment they first learned about BSC to their decision to engage in a recruitment process, and ultimately to their departure from the organization. The insights gained from this exercise highlighted key pain points in the staff journey at BSC, which helped us identify new actions to be implemented in the upcoming project plan. The board of Directors participated as well in this initiative.



The HRS4R steering committee reviewed all the information and designed the project plan for 2024 -2027, which was approved by the executive board on the 20th of June 2024.

The proposed HR Strategy is based on the HR Vision and HR Strategic Objectives below:

HR Mission

BSC-CNS recognizes that researchers from all areas and levels, and the support staff are essential contributors and the key players for science success at the national and international level. BSC wants to promote a challenging work environment where equal opportunities, ethics & integrity, work-life balance, career prospects, and the best work conditions are met.

HR Vision

The BSC vision for 2023 is the following: The next several years will see an impressive wave of growth in High-Performance Computing (HPC), Storage, and Data Science, with the inclusion of Artificial Intelligence (AI), in its transition to exascale. BSC-CNS is committed to being a part of this wave, taking leadership in associated cutting-edge research, and in providing the best possible services within the Spanish and European research and innovation system.

The HR vision is aligned with this, to succeed in this challenge; the HR initiatives will provide excellent global services, policies, and plans. Giving, more than ever, agility to cope with this complex and uncertain context.

HR strategic Objectives

The main HR strategic objectives for 2024 – 2027 are:

- **Enhance Diversity and Inclusion initiatives** and ensure a workplace of equal opportunities, actively fostering a culture that supports LGBTQ+ employees, continues gender equality efforts, introduces female fellowships, and combats sexual harassment.
- **Attract and retain top international talent**, creating a seamless, transparent, and user-friendly recruitment environment following open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment practices, and implementing retaining programmes.
- **Strengthen Training and Professional Development opportunities**, ensuring continuous growth and skill enhancement through the implementation of an online Learning Management System, face-to-face language classes, and specialized trainings in technology transfer and intellectual property management.
- **Enhancing Well-being and Community Engagement**, with a special focus on monitoring and mitigating psychosocial risks associated with work. We will organize targeted actions to cultivate a supportive community among staff. This initiative will be complemented by ongoing efforts to ensure the highest standards of safety and well-being in the workplace.
- **Drive organizational improvements and enhance HR Intelligence**, ensuring that induction materials are thoroughly up-to-date and conducting audits to boost the efficiency of support departments. This will include reevaluating position valuations for fairness and competitiveness and establishing a committee to promote open science practices. Additionally, we will streamline administrative processes and enhance the accessibility of general consultations with the introduction of a chatbot. Together, these efforts will help BSC-CNS overcome Boudreau's wall, significantly enhancing the strategic impact of our HR analytics initiatives.

1.2. Action Plan

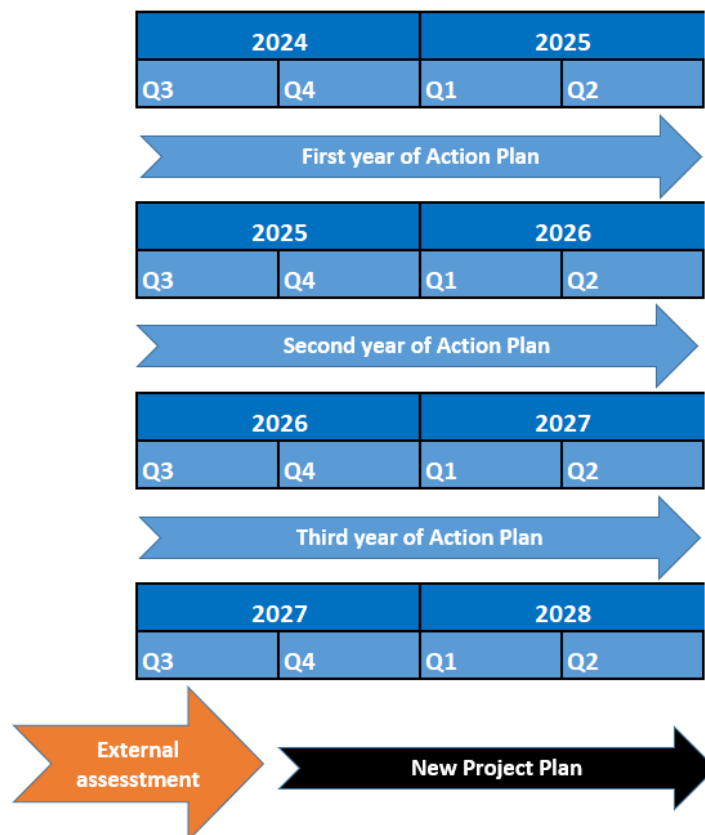
The action plan has been defined in an **inclusive and open process, involving several focus groups and the steering committee with representatives from all research professional categories, areas, and roles.**

This action plan is committed to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and the actions proposed will take place from 2024 to 2027, after this period the action plan will be reviewed by an External Committee which will carry out the Assessment audit, and BSC will adjust if necessary the action plan, and propose new actions for the subsequent 3-year period. Every 3 years the external impartiality and independence evaluation will be done to ensure that the HRS4R logo can be used as proof of BSC HR practices.

The BSC-CNS action plan was approved by consensus by the Executive Board on the 20th of June 2024. It is an extensive and ambitious project that highlights the following main subjects:

- **Strengthening Diversity and Inclusion.**
- **Revitalizing Recruitment and Career Development.**
- **Enhancing Training and Professional Development.**
- **Promoting Community Well-being and Organizational Efficiency.**

Timeline:



Action Plan:

Action Plan 2024 - 2027				
I. Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment				
Action	Responsible	New Action or Continuation	Time frame	Indicator
OTM-R continuous improvement	HR, Recruitment panels	EXTENDED	2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4	Review the information on Intranet and website Recruitment report every year One training action per year for BSC recruiters Implementation of a compulsory agreement signature for all people involved in a recruitment process, which will state the requirements to be taken into account when doing recruitment following OTM-R principles
Revision and improvement of the online recruitment platform	HR	NEW ACTION	2025-Q4	Audit of our internal tool, and implementation if possible, of new features. Also considering the implementation of a new external software. New tool implemented, or new features added to the current system

<p>First Career Fair at BSC</p>	<p>HR, EDI unit, Research staff</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2026-Q3</p>	<p>The First Career Fair at BSC will be an event aimed at showcasing career opportunities within the BSC. It will provide a platform for both current staff and external candidates to connect with various departments, facilitating internal mobility and attracting new talent. Attendees will have the opportunity to meet with leaders and explore diverse career paths in high-performance computing and related fields.</p> <p>Event and number of participants</p>

<p>II. Ethical and professional aspects</p>				
<p>Action</p>	<p>Responsible</p>	<p>New Action or Continuation</p>	<p>Time frame</p>	<p>Indicator</p>
<p>BSC's mission, vision and values: Reaching out the BSC community</p>	<p>Board of Directors and HR</p>	<p>EXTENDED</p>	<p>2025-Q3</p>	<p>Dissemination across the staff of the BSC's mission, vision, and values.</p> <p>Documentation and dissemination of the new documents - brochure</p> <p>Inclusion of this information in the new strategic guidelines for BSC</p>

Equality plan renewal - 2026 -2028	EDI unit and Equality Commission	NEW ACTION	2026-Q1	Documentation and dissemination of the new plan. Report on the specific actions implemented
LGTBIQ+ New plan	EDI unit and BSC Queer group	NEW ACTION	2025-Q1	Documentation and dissemination of the new plan. Report on the specific actions implemented
Scientific female figures recognition and visibility	Research departments, Communication, EDI unit, and Education & Training	EXTENDED	2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4	Prepare actions where female researchers will gain visibility, for instance, seminars. Documentation of the actions done. 4 seminars per year with female figures
BSC Research fellowships for female scientists	Research departments, Communication, EDI unit and Education & Training, and HR	NEW ACTION	2025-Q4	Implement a fellowships program where female researchers will come to BSC as visitors. Documentation of the actions done. At least 4 female researchers granted
Reaching out to the schools (Crazy for Supercomputers initiative)	Communication	EXTENDED	2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4	Annual report Public information in the website https://www.bsc.es/discover-bsc/computing-with-you/visits-for-primary-school
Global Internal communication review and improvement. Increasing visibility of support activities and internal regulations	Board of Directors and Communication	NEW ACTION	2025-Q4	Finding new ways of reaching BSC community, creating of a communication plan with innovative actions to foster internal comms. Documentation of the plan with actions done.

Prepare a Procedure of Conflict Management in BSC	Board of Directors, Health & Safety unit and HR	EXTENDED	2025-Q3	Documentation and dissemination of the new procedure.
Communication campaign against sexual harassment	EDI unit	NEW ACTION	2024-Q4	Communication campaign about this subject, disseminating the current protocols and channels of reporting cases. Documentation of the campaign with actions done.
Implementation of compulsory training in the induction process (Health and Safety, EDI, and cyber security)	Health & Safety unit, EDI unit, System Administration and HR	NEW ACTION	2025-Q2	Documentation of the compulsory training (Presentations, exams) % Number of trained personnel (Target all personnel)
Implementation of internal audits	Board of Directors and HR	EXTENDED	2026-Q4	Documentation registration of the internal audits 1 audit every 3/4 years
Preparation of the Code of Good Practices	Board of Directors and HR	EXTENDED	2025-Q2	Documentation and dissemination of the new procedure.
Creation of an Open Science Committee: Establish a committee to promote open science practices across BSC	Board of Directors and Data Management Group	NEW ACTION	2025-Q1	Creation of an Open Science Committee at BSC. Regulations approved and published in the intranet

III. Working conditions and social security

Action	Responsible	New Action or Continuation	Time frame	Indicator
Implementation of a new chatbot service for internal consultations	Quality and Digitalization officer and HR	NEW ACTION	2025-Q3	<p>Introduce a chatbot to streamline administrative processes and provide quick answers to common inquiries.</p> <p>New service implemented Number of queries Reduction of HR tickets (target 25% of less tickets)</p>
Psychosocial risk assessment (Health & Safety)	Health & Safety unit	NEW ACTION	2024-Q4	Assessment done and report
Employee Experience Survey to EX BSC staff: BSC Folks	HR	EXTENDED	2027-Q1	Survey report
Integration day	HR	NEW ACTION	2025-Q2	<p>Organize an event for foreign members of BSC that allows to know more about local culture and will foster their induction.</p> <p>One event every 2 years Number of participants (Target 15% of non national personnel)</p>

Foster a Family Day	HR	NEW ACTION	2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4	Organize an event that allows employees to bring their families to BSC, fostering community spirit. One event per year (Target: at least 15 children participation)
Well-being programme	Health & Safety unit	EXTENDED	2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4	Documentation and dissemination of the programme KPIs of the actions per year (minimum 3 actions)
Implementation of a Procedure to Ensure Effective Staff Induction	HR	NEW ACTION	2024-Q3	Creation and implementation of a new procedure including a survey to the new BSC staff member and Manager to ensure that the induction is going well during the trial period. All new personnel hired through this process. KPI's about the performance
Incentive Scheme programme	HR	NEW ACTION	2027-Q1	Creation and implementation of a new incentive scheme directly related with compensation. Publication of the plan in the intranet

IV. Training and Development

Action	Responsible	New Action or Continuation	Time frame	Indicator
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<p>Implementation of an online training platform (LMS)</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2026-Q1</p>	<p>Launch a Learning Management System for streamlined access to training resources</p> <p>Implementation of the new system Target: At least 25% of the staff participation in at least one action</p>
<p>Research and support career plan update</p>	<p>Board of Directors and HR</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2026-Q4</p>	<p>Review the current Research career giving more detailed information on how to move within the salary range. Support Career: Follow new guidelines to promote the Research Management career. Valorization of positions.</p> <p>Documentation of the modified documents and new documents.</p>
<p>Mobility Research Stays Improvement</p>	<p>HR and Education & Training</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2026-Q4</p>	<p>Revise and improve the policies and support for research stays abroad, incorporating new regulations.</p> <p>Documentation of new procedure. Annual report about research stays.</p>
<p>Leadership programme (LEAD BSC)</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>EXTENDED</p>	<p>2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4</p>	<p>Documentation and dissemination of the programme. Annual report with statistics 4 training actions per year Target: 12 participants per year</p>

<p>Early researchers training plan: A learning path established to accompany during the PhD</p>	<p>Education & Training and HR</p>	<p>EXTENDED</p>	<p>2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4</p>	<p>Documentation and dissemination of the new programme. Annual report with statistics 4 training actions per year</p>
<p>Spanish for Beginners Face-to-Face Classes</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2025-Q3</p>	<p>Offer language classes to assist international employees in better integrating into the local culture. 2 courses per year Target: 16 participants per year</p>
<p>Tech Transfer Trainings and Awareness</p>	<p>Technology Transfer and HR</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4</p>	<p>Provide training on technology transfer processes and intellectual property management. 2 courses per year (Target: At least 20 participants per year) Documentation delivered in the induction process</p>
<p>Implementation of Training actions done by BSC staff: Taking profit of our hidden expertise</p>	<p>HR and Education & Training</p>	<p>EXTENDED</p>	<p>2026-Q1</p>	<p>Documentation of the actions done. A minimum of 3 training actions per year done by internal personnel</p>
<p>Improvement of the Performance & Appraisal process</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>NEW ACTION</p>	<p>2024-Q4 2025-Q4 2026-Q4</p>	<p>Documentation and dissemination of the P&A programme Annual report with statistics of people following it. Increase of participation of 30% per year</p>

<p>Pilot Mentoring programme</p>	<p>Education & Training, EDU unit and HR</p>	<p>EXTENDED</p>	<p>2025-Q2</p>	<p>Documentation and dissemination of the new programme for all BSC staff. Annual report with statistics Target: At least 5 cases per year</p>
<p>Creation of the career advise service at BSC</p>	<p>HR, PMO, Education & Training</p>	<p>EXTENDED</p>	<p>2027-Q2</p>	<p>Documentation and dissemination of the new service. Annual report with statistics</p>