



HRS4R
ACTION
PLAN



1. Organisational Information.

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

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	218
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	20
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	44
Of whom are women *	131
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	34
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	21
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	20
Total number of students (if relevant) *	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	436

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget*	24.289.999 €
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for Research)	17.321.921 €
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	5.166.021 €
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	1.802.057 €

* This amount represents the total annual organizational budget for research. Direct government funding for other, non-research activities amount to a global funding of 30.177.562 €

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

Fundación Pública Andaluza Progreso y Salud (FPS) is a public foundation which belongs to the Andalusian Regional Ministry of Health and Families (CSyF). FPS provides services to the Andalusian Public Health System through three lines of activity: Research and Innovation (R&I); Information and Communication Technologies (ICT); and Training and evaluation of professional competences (IAVANTE). One of the main goals of FPS is to boost health R&I. FPS is in charge of providing facilities and support to the centres and research groups during the whole scientific process. Besides it manages the research competitive calls for proposals of the CSyF.



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 at your organization.

Ethical and professional aspects*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

We received a predominantly positive general assessment on ethical and professional aspects. Freedom in research, responsibility, non-discrimination and exploitation and dissemination of results stand out among our strengths. At the FPS researchers are free of limitations that may hamper the development of their activities and fully enjoy freedom for interpreting their results and designing their experimental strategy within the allocated budget. However, lines of research are limited to health-related topics, and generally defined by the different funding bodies.

In compliance with the legal and paralegal framework that, at the national and international level, governs research and development activities in biomedicine, we provide full support to fulfill funding bodies' ethical requirements. We guide and encourage good practices in accountability and promote dissemination and exploitation of research results. At the FPS, all researchers are recognized as professionals and treated accordingly, in a non-discriminatory way. Further, an Equity Plan for the organization will be shortly approved.

Legal and contractual obligations, public engagement and assessment and evaluation systems received a somewhat lower positive assessment. Despite the FPS periodically circulates information regarding legal and contractual obligations, researchers are not fully aware of them. Survey data shows that we would benefit from publishing a code of good practices comprising contractual duties and responsibilities particularly regarding collection of laboratory data, security, authorship and reference to third parties' works, intellectual property, recovery from ITC and computer casualties (A23), accountability (A11) and confidentiality and data protection (A17). Also, including these standards in a welcome guide for newcomers (A18) and offering training (A13) on these aspects may help researchers to convey these principles to one another and to those beginning a career in research.

A Professional Development System designed for assessment and counseling exist within the FPS but, this system can be improved, simplified and extended to all researchers independently of their seniority. Public engagement should be promoted within the FPS, providing ways for dissemination of results to society. Thus, we plan to implement a public engagement program that, associated to our improved professional development system (A20), establishes progressive dissemination objectives according to career stage (A21). Finally, we will also release a Health and Safety Plan for our organization (A17).

Recruitment and Selection*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Overall, compliance with the principles of recruitment and selection may be improved in the FPS. Our outstanding strengths comprise appreciating chronological variations in the *curricula vitae* and positively



assessing any mobility experience. Further, our selection processes weigh all outstanding results within a diversified career path, not focusing only on the number of publications.

Pending from the regional government of Andalusia, the FPS is bound to the principles of equality, merit and capacity. These principles are included in the Spanish Constitution and in various legal and paralegal bodies of national and regional scope of application, which regulate our practice regarding research staff selection, recruitment and hiring.

Notwithstanding we observe that, when comparing our practice with the principles of the C&C, our weaknesses lie in the recruitment, selection and postdoctoral appointments of our researchers. In particular, the entry and admission standards are not published on our website but in the national legislation. The FPS should undertake specific actions to make its selection procedures internationally comparable. Also, communication of the results from the selection processes may be subjected to certain improvements. We will address these issues by undertaking a complete revision and update of our selection, and recruitment procedures in order to bring them closer to the principles of the C&C (A10). Further, we should try to increase the number of staff dedicated to these processes in order to provide better quality, currently hindered by work overload.

Working Conditions*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Recognition of the profession and intellectual property rights are our strengths in this area. However, survey data shows that teaching, complaints and appeals, stability and permanence in employment and participation in decision-making bodies showed insufficient compliance.

Researchers are bound to the FPS by contracts that fully comply with the Spanish legal framework for hiring researchers. Our researchers are recognized professionally and enjoy a good working environment. Researchers work in facilities equipped with the necessary infrastructure to carry out their research work. The FPS offers good conditions for balancing family and professional life and the Technology Transfer Office ensures the correct protection and exploitation of research results.

FPS researchers are located in three joint research centers (Cabimer, Genyo, Bionand),. Each research center holds researchers from the different institutions participating in the centre. These researchers are bound to the directives undertaken by the decision-making bodies of the centers (the Board of Directors and the Scientific Direction) as well as to the particular hiring conditions of each of the institutions participating in the centre and/or of funding agencies, depending on each case. The Board of Directors and the Scientific Director are supported in their decisions by the internal and external scientific advisory boards. The Board of Directors comprises members from each of the associated institutions while the Internal Scientific Advisory Board comprises a group of representatives of the center's researchers. The External Scientific Advisory Board members are outstanding and prestigious researchers, some of them from international research centers.

However, our GAP analysis highlighted the need to improve our direct communication with our researchers throughout the entire HRS4R process. Hence, we directed several actions to this overarching



goal, as displayed on our action plan scheme (objectives -second column to the left). We expect that actions A1, A2, A5, A7, A8, A11, A16, A18, A19, A22 and A25 will be contributing to this end. Particularly, A1 is concerned with the creation of a stable FPS-only committee that will be the referring body for all FPS decisions affecting researchers. This committee will be conformed by researchers and managers, and membership will be rotatory. Decisions undertaken by this committee will be binding, thus creating a new decision making body within the FPS and a venue for directly discussing issues of importance for researchers and their careers. The FPS will also strengthen the participation of its researchers in the decision-making bodies through a specific program (A7) intended for this purpose.

A few of the weaknesses revealed by our survey are not addressable at the moment. The FPS, bound by the current legal framework, conducts its scientific activities according to the budgetary possibilities, which are in turn determined by legal decrees that ban incrementing the number of stabilized employees to public entities, blocking the possibility of offering an attractive professional development path to our researchers. Instability of employment may affect the development of research lines and/or their continuity. For that reason, the FPS will attempt, within its possibilities, to strengthen this weakness through the periodic analysis of the normative governing the research career in Andalusia, pursuing creative solutions to improve stability of employment (A3).

Likewise, the development of our own research career plan is hindered by legal limitations. Despite, an itinerary, specific and adapted to our researchers, was designed on the basis of available public competitive calls, to steer their professional development. Further, we actively encourage participation in all calls and offer support and management services to our researchers. Nonetheless, we plan to communicate our reviewed professional development strategy, its funding framework, the experience and competency requirements by level / category / research stage and the limiting regulations that apply to it (A5). In addition, we will define and implement a professional development advisory plan (A6), a mentoring plan to improve the focus of senior researchers on the junior researchers' professional development (A14).

As stated in its bylaws, the FPS is not a teaching institution. Seeking to advance knowledge in healthcare, our researchers do not have teaching responsibilities that may limit their dedication to research. However, knowledge transfer is a task that, being intrinsic to research, contributes to the professional development of our researchers. In order to strengthen our weakness in teaching we plan to define options to develop teaching activities within the FPS, acquaint all researchers with their teaching responsibilities (A8) and foster regulated teaching for our researchers, such as lecturing graduate programs offered by universities (A9).

Usually, any complaint conveyed through the different communication channels available to our researchers has been addressed promptly and professionally. However, the absence of a well-defined procedure for complaints and appeals is a weakness that will be addressed early by our Action Plan (A2).

Training and Development*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Compliance with the principles of training and development can be improved in the FPS.



As strength, we make a considerable effort to launch a periodical training program comprising courses covering all areas relevant to our scientific activity. In addition, we carry out a Professional Development System to instrument, among other, the evaluation and assessment of the supervision/teaching duties of principal researchers. Our management staff conveys to group leaders information regarding training and group development expectations, along with the provision of a specific budget for training.

Our greatest weakness here lies in the access to training in research and in the continuous development, possibly due to the fact that we rely on principal investigators for conveying training goals to less experienced researchers. To improve this, we will request, as an objective for senior researchers, the submission of a training plan for their team (A12). Also, we will design, implement and evaluate periodically a comprehensive training program for researchers, to support and encourage training and professional development at all levels (A13). We will also attempt to foster the tasks of supervision and management, the role and duties of mentorship (A14), and to set the conditions necessary for an efficient transfer of knowledge to less experienced researchers to prime their career development. This set of actions will be complemented with communicating our code of good practice (A23) and our guide for using laboratory notebooks (A22) and to activate our new procedure for complaints and appeals (A2).



3. Actions.

n°	Principle	P	Clase	Cat
34	Complaints/Appeals	1,70	-/-	C
25	Stability and Permanence of Employment	1,68	-/-	C
28	Career Development	1,67	-/-	C
35	Participation in Decision-making Bodies	1,62	-/-	C
33	Teaching	1,53	-/-	C
12	Recruitment (Charter)	1,45	-/-	B
30	Access to Career Advice	1,43	-/+	C
39	Access to Research Training & Continuous Development	1,37	-/-	D
14	Selection	1,36	-/+	B
37	Supervision & Managerial Duties	1,29	-/+	D
40	Supervision	1,28	-/+	D
15	Transparency	1,28	-/+	B
24	Working Conditions	1,26	-/+	C
13	Recruitment (Code)	1,26	-/+	B
4	Professional Attitude	1,23	+/-	A
21	Postdoctoral Appointments	1,22	-/+	B
23	Research Environment	1,22	-/+	C
5	Contractual & Legal Obligations	1,21	-/+	A
11	Evaluation/Appraisal Systems	1,19	-/+	A
9	Public Engagement	1,18	-/+	A
38	Continuing Professional Development	1,18	-/+	D
19	Recognition of Qualifications	1,18	-/+	B
36	Relation with Supervisors	1,15	-/+	D
26	Funding & Salaries	1,15	+/-	C
3	Professional Responsibility	1,14	+/-	A
27	Gender Balance	1,14	-/+	C
29	Value of Mobility	1,14	-/+	C
2	Ethical Principles	1,13	-/+	A
7	Good Practice in Research	1,13	+/-	A
32	Co-authorship	1,11	+/-	C
16	Judging Merit	1,10	-/+	B
22	Recognition of the Profession	1,08	+/-	C
10	Non Discrimination	1,06	+/-	A
8	Dissemination & Results Exploitation	1,05	+/-	A
6	Accountability	1,03	+/-	A
31	Intellectual Property Rights	1,01	+/+	C
20	Seniority	1,00	+/-	B
18	Recognition of Mobility Experience	0,95	+/-	B
1	Research Freedom	0,92	+/+	A
17	Variations in the Chronological Order of CVs	0,56	+/+	B

Table 1. RANKING OF PRIORITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE C&C PRINCIPLES. **N°:** Number of principle; **Principle:** name of principle; **C:** Fulfillment: - / - Insufficiently fulfilled; - / + Partially fulfilled; +/- almost but not completely fulfilled; +/+ fully fulfilled. **Cat:** Category: A: Ethical and professional Aspects; B: hiring and recruitment; C: working conditions and social security; D: training and professional development.

Priority	Objective	Code	Action	Indicator/milestone	Responsible	Principle	Category	Preparation & Dissemination	2019	2020				2021				2022				2023				2024								
									Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Self assess	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	CE	
1	01	A1	To create a stable and rotating committee for consultation and decision-making on issues that affect researchers and that will be the referring body for at least the Complaints & Appeal procedure (A2); the annual discussion of the research situation (A3); for reviewing and adapting HR procedures to the C&C (A11); for the definition of the mentoring plan (A15) and for the definition of the Code of Good Practices in Research (A25).	- 1- Minutes of the committee meetings (minimum 2 meetings/year: May, November)	GM	2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 25, 27, 28, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40	A,B,C, D		1		1			1					1								1					1		
1	01	A2	To define, implement and develop a specific procedure for complaints and appeals.	- 2- Procedure for complaints and appeals approved. - 3- Procedure effectiveness assessment	IMO	34, 36, 32	C,D			2					3																			
2	03	A3	To annually discuss and analyze the situation of the research career and its legal framework, with the aim of identifying means and opportunities to promote long-term temporary contracts (> 5 years) and advance professional development and its concretion in the FPS.	- 4- Annual meeting of the commission to analyze regulatory updates. - 5- Periodic report on regulatory developments and their usefulness for offering long-term contracts for our researchers.	IMO	25,28	C			4 5					4 5											4 5						4 5		
2	03	A4	To examine the possibility of managing the aggregated replacement rate of the Andalusian Public Health System in order to assign the upcoming vacancies of the system to the biomedical research managing foundations for the incorporation of researchers as distinguished investigators, which entails stabilization.	-6- To call upon the corresponding bodies to assess the feasibility of this idea.	GM	25	C		6																									
3	01	A5	To define and communicate our research professional development strategy, its funding framework, the experience and competency requirements by level /category/research stage, and the limiting regulations that apply.	- 7- Document describing our professional development strategy. - 8- Dissemination of said document to researchers.	R+i/ IMO	28,11	C			7 8																8					8			
3	03	A6	To define and implement a career development advisory plan.	-9- Appointment of staff commissioned to the service -10- Document describing the scope and implementation of the service. -11- Evaluation of the service (post-service survey).	R+i	28, 30	C																				11					11		
4	01	A7	To define and implement a plan for participation of researchers in decision-making bodies.	-12- Document describing the scope and implementation of the plan. -13- Annual monitoring and analysis report.	GM/ R+i/ IMO	35	C			12					13											13					13			
5	01	A8	To define and notify researchers of their teaching responsibilities and options for developing teaching activities.	-14- Internal instruction for teaching activities. -15- Planning for implementation of the teaching instruction. -16- Dissemination to all interested parties.	IMO	33	C																											
5	03	A9	To foster regulated teaching options for our researchers, within the possibilities included in the legal framework.	- 17- Definition and activation of the procedure for accessing to regulated teaching. - 18- Number of regulated teaching hours taught per researcher.	GM	33	C																				17					18		
6	02	A10	To review, update and disseminate internally all phases of our selection and recruiting procedures, adapting them to the principles of the C&C, to Directive 2005/36 / EC and to the OTM-R.	- 19- Creation of a working group for reviewing and adapting our HR procedures to the C&C. - 20- Updated procedure reviewed and approved. - 21- Monitoring and quality control of the recruiting procedure.	IMO	5, 12,13,14, 15,16, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 27	A,B,C, D		19		20																21					21		



*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. (max. 1000 words) **

Our recruiting policy is designed to ensure selection of the best candidate, purposely using any available selection methodology that complies with the principles of publicity, merit, equality and capacity to which we are legally bound. Incorporating the best candidates to our organization will encourage mobility of researchers and circulation and exchange of knowledge, ultimately increasing the quality of research.

Thus, we understand that researchers, organizations, funding entities and, ultimately, the European Research Area (ERA), will benefit from implementing the OTM-R, a mainstay of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment.

This policy will be applied to any vacancy related in one way or another to research, regardless of its professional group, which includes not only researchers but also support and management staff among others.

Our recruiting procedures typically start with a public call stating the minimum requirements for accessing each position -depending on its professional group- as well as the merits to be assessed. On the basis of each vacancy profile we perform specific tests that ensure quality and objectivity in the process.

We will ensure compliance with the OTM-R by fulfilling the following standards:

- **Publicity:** Calls will be published in our website and disseminated through all channels apt to reach the largest number of people susceptible to apply.
- **Equality:** Ensure at all times equal treatment to all candidates meeting the minimum requirements.
- **Merit and Capacity:** Preselected candidates will undertake specific tests that guarantee the unbiased selection of the best application.

Depending on the vacancy profile, selection methodology will be a combination of the following tests:

- Curricular analysis
- Application of the scale of merits previously established in the call.
- Psychotechnical tests
- Knowledge tests
- Personal interviews

In order to improve the impartiality of our recruiting process, we will bring on a selection committee comprising profiles related to the Human Resources area, as well as to the targeted work area. For certain highly specific vacancies, the selection committee may also include external advisers specialized in the subject.



4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

Implementation of the HRS4R action plan will be organized from the Steering Committee, on the basis of the priorities derived from our GAP analysis (table 2, p.12 Process Description document). According to this, given equal relevance, higher priority will be assigned to the less fulfilled principle. In particular, of the 10 highest priorities, 60% are block C principles: Complaints and Appeals (Principle 34; A2); Stability and Permanence of Employment (Principle 25; A3, A4), Professional Development (Principle 28; A3, A5, A6, A14), Participation in decision-making bodies (Principle 35; A1, A7), Teaching (Principle 33, A8, A9, A13), and Access to Professional Guidance (Principle 30, A6); 20% are block B principles: Recruitment (Principle 12; A10, A11) and Selection (Principle 14; A10) and 20% are principles from block D: Access to Training in Research and Continuing Development (Principle 39; A12, A13) and Supervision and management tasks (Principle 37; A14). Our approach consists of a 5-year planning that will generate within the first 2 years, a solid backbone of resources and procedures adapted to the principles of the C&C for supporting subsequent developments within the 3 years following our internal review and the evaluation.

Our GAP analysis led us to define a few transversal objectives for steering the Action Plan implementation:

- O1: To promote communication between management staff and researchers, boosting their participation in any activity of the FPS.
- O2: To review, analyze and adapt to the C&C all internal procedures by coherently incorporating the actions agreed upon.
- O3: To advance in the definition of a professional development strategy for the FPS that is compatible with the limiting regulations.

Therefore, in coordination with the different areas, the Steering Committee will define the working schedule such that synergies with our normal activity guide implementation, thus avoiding a negative impact on our performance. Annual objectives for the development of the approved actions will be set for all departments and amenable staff; researchers from all stages will be actively involved in the process.

Although supervision of the implementation will ultimately depend on the Steering Committee, the Human Resources department will assume the management and coordination of the project. An implementation commission comprising representatives from all HRS4R relevant areas will be configured for the close supervision of the progress. Amenable staff from the areas of Research, Project Management, Technology Transfer, Resources Development and Human Resources is required to ensure compliance with deadlines and objectives.

HOW WILL THE IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE AND/OR STEERING GROUP REGULARLY OVERSEE PROGRESS?*

The Steering Committee will set responsibilities and deadlines for all different actions on the basis of their priority. The implementation commission will subsequently monitor objectives, deliverables and indicators



through periodic assessment and, if necessary, will design alternative solutions or routes to meet them, ensuring always the highest quality of works and diligence in our efforts.

HOW DO YOU INTEND TO INVOLVE THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY, YOUR MAIN STAKEHOLDERS, IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS?*

A transversal objective of the Action Plan is to encourage communication between our managing staff and our researchers and increase their participation in any activity of the FPS. To do this, researchers will be asked to participate in the consultation committee that will be formed to carry out the proposed actions.

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.*

The FPS is guided by the vision of being a national reference for the management and support of biomedical research and healthcare innovation. Thus, our efforts are aimed at advancing our capabilities through an array of **strategic goals**, among them:

1. Consolidate the organizational and research management services model of the Andalusian Public Health System (APHS), guaranteeing its quality and equity.
2. Promote the acquisition, stabilization and development of human resources to support the advancement of research and innovation within the APHS
3. To strengthen the activity of FPS research groups in strategic areas, as a Public Research Organization..
4. To act on the bedrock principles of sustainability and internationalization of R&D Contribute to the increase of public calls for regional funding of research and innovation activities and to their effective management.
5. Promote the development of new lines of research and innovation in Health, reorienting the generation of knowledge towards the fulfillment of needs of the healthcare system and / or market, and consolidating instruments to allow profit harvesting from innovation from a social and economical perspective.
6. Development of information systems for decision making and dissemination of results
7. Enhance social recognition of research and innovation, especially of that developed within the APH.

These objectives are reflected in the FPS Strategic Plan, which has been developed by the Steering Committee. In the process of developing this plan, the priorities and strategies of the European, national and regional level were analyzed, including the HRS4R. Specifically, HRS4R principles are the basis for designing the Human Resources strategy of the FPS (2. Promote the acquisition, stabilization and development of human resources, in order to support the advancement of research and innovation within the APHS), the strategy for strengthening the activity of the FPS research groups (3. Strengthen the activity of FPS research groups in strategic areas, as a Public Research Organization), and the strategy for



the internationalization of the FPS R&D activities (4.To act on the bedrock principles of sustainability and internationalization of R&D)

HOW WILL YOU ENSURE THAT THE PROPOSED ACTIONS ARE IMPLEMENTED?*

We internally control our activity through participative management by agreeing objectives with our staff. Hence, annual objectives for the execution of the approved planning will be set for all departments and amenable staff. In addition, the implementation committee will ensure the appropriate progress of the project and provide support for solutions and alternatives if unexpected obstacles are encountered.

HOW WILL YOU MONITOR PROGRESS (TIMELINE)?*

The implementation committee will agree deadlines for each milestone, sending a quarterly progress report to the Steering Committee. Thus, it will be possible to ensure a good progress pace and a dynamic articulation of solutions to deal with contingencies.

HOW WILL YOU MEASURE PROGRESS (INDICATORS) IN VIEW OF THE NEXT ASSESSMENT?*

The Action Plan already defines some indicators related to the implementation process, but the implementation commission will identify, at the beginning of activities, the most suitable indicators, milestones and deliverables for monitoring progress so that it can be assessed quantitatively and/or qualitatively, aiming at our self-evaluation at the end of the second year.