**Implementation Phase Interim Assessment - EC Consensus Report**

Case number

2020CZ518664

Name Organisation under assessment

Biofyzikální ústav Akademie věd ČR, v. v. i.

Organisation’s contact details

Královopolská 2590/135, Brno, Czech republic, 612 65, Czech Republic

Submission date of the Interim Assessment Internal Review

16/01/2024

Submission date to the European Commission

19/02/2024

Quality assessment

The quality assessment evaluates the level of ambition and the quality of progress intended by the organisation.
If any statements have prompted a "no" or "partly" in the evaluation, please provide recommendations:

Has the organisational information been sufficiently updated to understand the context in which the HR Strategy is implemented? Yes

Does the narrative provided list goals and objectives which clearly indicate the organisation’s priorities in HR-management for researchers? Yes

Has the organisation published an updated HR Strategy and Action Plan been updated with the actions’ current status, additions and/or modifications? Yes, and i tis an impressive work.

Is the implementation of the HR strategy and Action Plan sufficiently embedded within the organisation’s management structure (e.g. steering committee, operational responsibilities) so as to guarantee a solid implementation? Yes

Has the organisation developed an OTM-R policy? Yes

Strengths and weaknesses

On the basis of the information submitted and taking into account the organisation’s national research context, how would you as an assessor judge the HR Strategy’s **strengths and weaknesses?** (maximum 1000 words)

Strengths:

* The Internal Review is described clearly and in detail and is the result of intense work. The strengths and weaknesses have been properly identified and the progress so far is presented in details.
* As stated, the institution's strategic priorities involve a number of actions that are in line with the HRS4R, which ensures more effective engagement in the implementation of the HR strategy.
* The Ethical and Professional principles generally covered by national legislation, policies at the Czech Academy of Science and strategic internal documents. IBP established a good ethical framework and practice in research. A new action on open science, including DMP, and the creation of a central data repository has been proposed.
* Great initiatives are proposed for young researchers in the form of educational courses, talks of Czech researchers, support for mobilities.
* The use of EURAXESS for publishing job announcements.
* IBP is actively engaged in setting up a good level of research environment and working conditions for its PhD students and employees, as demonstrated by the many actions undertaken (as described in actions 6-10). Terms of employments are visible on the IBP website. Among the good points are flexible working hours and remote work possibilities, safety of working conditions, support for a favorable work-family/life balance, part-time for women, possibility to work at universities, specific courses offered on topics required by scientists etc. It should be underlined the high attention that was paid to reduce the work load of department leaders and researchers.
* The Institution has a good and diverse training courses, as is presented in the AP, available for all staff, on various aspects of research, project management, soft skills. However, I could not find the list of courses which are available on the institutional website.
* Conducting an Employee Satisfaction Survey, a new action in AP, a great way to get employee feedback.

Weaknesses:

* Lack of an HR office for academic and/or non-academic positions. The IBP stated that there are "HR teams for various positions are represented by the HR Working Group with responsibility for the entire recruitment process". However, in the era of high competition, including for attracting talent, the role of the HR office is crucial for supporting strategic objectives.
* Lack of visibility of the list of courses for training and development available on the institutional website. Include the offer of (academic) leadership programmes and encourage the attendance for all the leaders.
* Principles: 35. Participation in decision-making bodies and 36. Relation with supervisors are not enough approached, described.

**During the transition period special conditions apply:**
Institutions having started the HRS4R implementation prior to the publication of the OTM-R toolkit and recommendations by the European Commission (2015) may not have prioritised actions implementing the OTM-R principles yet. In this case, they should not be penalised but strong recommendations should be made to address these principles appropriately.

**At this point of the INTERIM assessment, the institution does not jeopardise maintaining the HR award.** Nevertheless, the institution is advised to take into account the comments and recommendations of the assessors to meet all assessment criteria at the next assessment (in 36 months).

Recommendations

Which of the below situations describes the organisation’s progress most accurately? Tick the right situation and add comments/general recommendations accordingly.

HRS4R embedded x

HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed

HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed

**Additional comments \***

Undoubtedly, the Institute of Biophysics, CAS (IBP) is proving to be strongly committed to the implementation of HRS4R and progress so far is presented in details. New actions and goals linked with the identified weaknesses and specific actions were undertaken in the context of the European policies e.g. Open Science – Data Management Plan, Gender issues, evaluation of the staff and institution with focus to ARRA.

I consider that the 40 principles are well known by researchers and that the IBP made great efforts to incorporate them into the institute's policies and strategy.

**Explanation**

* **HRS4R embedded:** The organisation is progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan. **There is evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**
* **HRS4R embedded, corrective actions needed:** The organisation is, for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. **There is some evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**
* **HRS4R embedded, strong corrective actions needed:** The organisation is not deemed to be implementing appropriate and quality actions and this raises some concern for the future efforts to implement actions closely aligned to the Charter and Code. **There is a lack of evidence that the HRS4R is further embedded.**