



**ÚOCHB** <sup>AV</sup><sub>CR</sub>  
**IOCB PRAGUE**

Ústav organické chemie a biochemie  
Akademie věd České republiky, v. v. i.  
Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry  
of the Czech Academy of Sciences



# **HR Excellence in Research**

## **HR Strategy and HR Action Plan**

**Case number:** 2019CZ474773

**Name of organisation under review:** Institute of Organic Chemistry and Biochemistry of the CAS

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# HR Strategy

As of 31 December 2020, the IOCB proudly employs 848 people, of whom 442 (52.1%) are men and 406 (47.9%) are women; 192 employees (22.6%) are foreigners. The workforce at the IOCB includes 582 scientific staff, 158 technical staff, and 82 administrative staff.

The HR policy of the IOCB is based on valid legal norms of the Czech Republic as well as on the Statutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences (CAS) and its Career Development Rules for Employees with a University Degree. It also reflects current trends in HR strategies while respecting the specific nature of scientific work. In December 2019, the IOCB adopted the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers; additionally, the institute is firmly committed to aligning its internal recruitment standards with the European Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

The IOCB actively supports internationalization and goes to considerable lengths to avoid academic inbreeding by deploying internationally targeted recruitment campaigns and promoting mobility, especially for researchers at the beginning of their careers. In accordance with the rules of HRS4R, scientific positions are widely advertised not only in the Czech Republic but also abroad on portals such as EURAXESS, Nature Careers, Jobs.cz, and others. Positions are also posted on the IOCB and CAS websites. Communication in the recruitment of new employees is conducted as needed in either Czech or English.

As per CAS regulations, a selection committee of at least three members is appointed by the director of the institute for each science job opening. The members of the selection committee are primarily chosen from institute staff based on their professional experience and specific scientific expertise relating to the requirements of the given position.

Special care is taken in appointing employees to the position of group leader. The selection process is overseen by the International Advisory Board, a special advisory body to the director of the institute comprising internationally recognized experts. The IOCB has pioneered a progressive system of junior groups, with talented scientists from different countries hired in an open international competition, during which candidates are required to demonstrate their unique expertise and submit scientific proposals.

Each spring, the IOCB organizes a PhD recruitment day and invites shortlisted candidates for in-person (remotely via Skype for long-distance candidates) interviews and discussions with selection committees. Selected candidates then apply for a PhD study programme at either Charles University or the University of Chemistry and Technology and are required to successfully pass the entrance exams.

The International Advisory Board also participates in the regular evaluation of the scientific groups. Every five years, all the research groups undergo a comprehensive review process in strict adherence to transparent rules based on scientific merit. For the purposes of the evaluation, the groups are represented by their leaders, who present materials documenting the scientific results of the groups and engage in discussions with the International Advisory Board, which in turn recommends various organizational changes to the director of the institute.

In parallel with the evaluation of the scientific groups, employee appraisals are also conducted in compliance with CAS regulations.

The IOCB supports all its employees in their career advancement and continuous training. Employees are encouraged to attend various training courses, and researchers are supported in obtaining science degrees and science teaching degrees (DSc., habilitation, etc.).

The IOCB is also an ardent promoter of international mobility and has even established a special project office to support scientists in project preparation and gather and monitor available open calls involving scientific mobility. The office provides application assistance to individuals interested in various fellowships.

The IOCB takes an active approach to work-life balance that is primarily based on individual arrangements between employees and their group leaders. Among the most common practices are part-time scheduling and the option to set one's own working hours. Moreover, the SARS-CoV 2 pandemic has led to significant changes and greater flexibility in telecommuting.

# Action Plan

## 1. Organisational Information

Staff & Students (as of 31 December 2019)	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	710
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	217
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	0
Of whom are women	438
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	310
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	168
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	232
Total number of students (if relevant)	323
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	896
Research Funding (figures for fiscal year 2019)	€
Total annual organisational budget	88 997 497
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	7 670 340
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	4 504 393
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	76 822 764

The IOCB is an independent research institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences. Our mission is basic research at the interface of chemical and biological sciences and the translation of results from basic research into applications and commercial assets. The institute comprises three research clusters and fifty research groups.

## 2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice:

Thematic heading of the Charter and Code	Strengths and weaknesses
<b>Ethical and professional aspects</b>	<p>From a formal point of view, all the principles under this chapter of the Charter are well managed by national legislation and official documents issued by the Czech Academy of Science.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The very simple management structure is based primarily on the high degree of autonomy of individual group leaders. The leaders of the groups are top scientists who exercise complete freedom in their research while taking full responsibility for the scientific results of their team.</li> <li>■ The IOCB has its own internal scientific group review system, with evaluations conducted at regular intervals by the International Advisory Board. This method of peer review evaluation is unique in the Czech Republic.</li> <li>■ The IOCB has appointed two people to the post of Ethical Proxy, independent advisers providing mediation in the event of any conflicts of employment. Such a position is unique in the Czech Republic.</li> <li>■ Non-discrimination is guaranteed in all respects. The IOCB is fully bilingual: all communication is conducted in both Czech and English.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The IOCB financially supports mothers with young children upon their return to work.</li> <li>■ The IOCB has an efficient intranet for easy access to important information and documents.</li> <li>■ The IOCB produces excellent scientific results and has a long tradition of successful applied research supported by its subsidiary IOCB Tech.</li> <li>■ The IOCB has its own well-established communications department, which assists scientists in presenting their work to the public and organizes various popularization events.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There is no internal code of ethics for researchers or internal committee for research integrity.</li> <li>■ The IOCB does not have systematic training for young researchers on issues of professional ethics.</li> <li>■ Newcomers may have difficulty navigating various internal regulations and procedures.</li> <li>■ Many events supporting the careers of young scientists, namely conferences and popularization and social events, were cancelled due to the ongoing SARS-CoV-2 pandemic; not all of them have been reorganized online.</li> <li>■ The SARS-CoV-2 pandemic has resulted in the need to legislate and technically secure some forms of work using online systems; however, working from home is not possible for all positions.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Recruitment and selection</b></p>	<p>Because most advertised scientific openings are for a limited duration (usually the duration of a specific project) and because emphasis is placed on the mobility of researchers, the constant rotation of employees is a common part of the HR process at the IOCB. This places increased demands on the correct selection and recruitment of new employees, especially for positions R1 and R2. Therefore, we try to pay maximum attention to this process. Open and transparent recruitment and the development of an appropriate recruitment strategy is one of the IOCB's priorities. When selecting new employees, we place particular emphasis on their expertise, scientific excellence, and experience appropriate for the position. Research group leaders, the selection of which is overseen by the International Advisory Board, play a crucial role in the recruitment of new employees, continuously posting positions depending on the needs of various research projects. This allows them to select the candidates who are best suited for a particular position.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The processes of selection and recruitment of new employees are governed by Czech labour law and CAS regulations.</li> <li>■ The IOCB is an internationally recognized institute with a number of collaborators abroad, which makes it an attractive employer not only for researchers from the Czech Republic but from other countries too.</li> <li>■ The IOCB is fully bilingual, which eliminates the language barrier for new entrants from abroad while encouraging the recruitment of such workers.</li> <li>■ Openings for researchers are always advertised on international portals.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The IOCB uses an individual approach to hiring candidates, with the main emphasis on equal and fair opportunities and a gender-balanced environment.</li> <li>■ In the selection process, we place particular emphasis on the scientific expertise, skills, and experience of the candidates. Experience from other workplaces, especially foreign ones, is welcome.</li> <li>■ A career break has no influence on an applicant's evaluation. The applicants' qualities are assessed in a comprehensive way, including his or her professional history and merits.</li> <li>■ For the recruitment of PhD students, we use a unified PhD interview day platform, which is now in its fourth year.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Internal regulations for the recruitment of new employees date to 2013 and need revision.</li> <li>■ The bureaucratic burden associated with recruiting new employees can be quite significant, particularly due to the different requirements of grant providers.</li> <li>■ Some parts of the recruitment process are not fully electronic (e.g. occupational safety training).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Working conditions</b></p>	<p>The IOCB offers a research environment that is transparent and clear to everyone and ensures fair and stable working conditions. "Stable working conditions" does not mean open-ended contracts but rather a situation where employees know what to expect in terms of contract duration, salary, benefits, and social security.</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Researchers at all career stages are recognized as professionals. All R1 researchers enrolled in doctoral programs have employment contracts, which they fulfil in the context of their doctoral education and collaboration with respective universities providing PhD training.</li> <li>■ Within the institute, there is a strong interdisciplinary connection between groups which has a positive effect on a number of joint projects.</li> <li>■ The IOCB has a strong institutional background, including the possibility of institutional financing thanks to patent revenues and technology transfer.</li> <li>■ Above and beyond ordinary administration and support, the research teams can take advantage of the services of the following shared departments: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) the subsidiary IOCB Tech provides assistance in the application of research as well as strong support for technology transfer;</li> <li>b) the Project Office seeks out grant opportunities and assists researchers in submitting grant and scholarship applications to support scientific mobility;</li> <li>c) the Communications Office helps with the formal editing of various documents, the communication of scientific results to the general public, and the organization of various scientific and social events;</li> <li>d) the Legal Department assists in the preparation and implementation of trade agreements and tenders and provides consultation in current legislation.</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ The IOCB helps employees balance work and family life, both financially (support for mothers with children under four years of age) and by allowing employees to set their own working hours or to work part-time.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ At all levels, we adhere to the principles of non-discrimination as an integral part of IOCB culture. The IOCB is fully bilingual (Czech and English).</li> <li>■ In 2020, the position of Ethical Proxy, mediators of various labour disputes independent of the institute's management, was established at the IOCB. Such positions are still unique in the Czech Republic.</li> <li>■ Lunches are subsidized for all employees.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Some work tools are still not available online, such as occupational safety training.</li> <li>■ In connection with measures introduced due to the SARS-CoV2 pandemic, the need arose to develop methodologies for remote work and remote access.</li> <li>■ Working conditions for expectant mothers are stipulated by Czech labour law; however, the IOCB lacks a comprehensive methodology to help women navigate this life situation.</li> <li>■ The number of women in decision-making positions is not fully balanced.</li> <li>■ The rules governing career development for researchers are set forth in CAS regulations; however, they have not been adapted in any way for the needs of the IOCB.</li> <li>■ There are no clear internal rules for long term mobility.</li> <li>■ A mentoring programme for beginning researchers has been introduced at the IOCB, but it is not widely used yet.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Training and development</b></p>	<p>The IOCB is a top scientific institute in the field of organic and physical chemistry and biochemistry in the Czech Republic and in the international context. The goal of the IOCB is to employ leading scientists and provide them with substantial institutional and scientific support, including internal and external training courses. The institute's goal is to increase the employability of the researchers and to offer a good start for the continuation of their career beyond the IOCB (mainly postdocs and PhD students).</p> <p><b>Strengths:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Thanks to its strong institutional background and funding, the IOCB is able to offer several scholarships each year for gifted PhD students and post-doctoral fellows (IOCB fellowships).</li> <li>■ For the strengthening of bilingualism at the institute, language instruction is organized for employees, both Czech classes for foreign employees and English classes for Czech employees, and is partially subsidized by the institute.</li> <li>■ The institute has established the position of PhD Coordinator, whose job it is to help PhD students throughout their time at the IOCB as well as to organize various events (including PhD Interview Day) and help students address various life situations.</li> </ul> <p><b>Weaknesses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ There is no comprehensive programme for mentoring junior group leaders.</li> <li>■ There is a lack of courses in managerial skills and work with human resources.</li> <li>■ Existing courses are offered through various institutions, and their selection is not clearly unified. Furthermore, feedback is not always available on ongoing courses.</li> </ul>

### 3. Actions

Link to the institute's dedicated HR Strategy webpage:

- English version: [www.uochb.cz/en/hr-award](http://www.uochb.cz/en/hr-award)
- Czech version: [www.uochb.cz/cs/hr-award](http://www.uochb.cz/cs/hr-award)

Proposed actions	Gap principle(s)	Timing	Responsible unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
<b>1. Ethical and professional aspects</b>				
<b>1.1</b> The Code of Ethics for Researchers of the CAS will be adopted for the IOCB	2, 3, 4, 32	6/2021	Institute director, Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All researchers will be acquainted with the ethical principles of scientific work and their specific settings within the organization.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The number of researchers who are familiar with the ethical principles will increase. The internal Code of Ethics will be posted to the institute's website. Training courses on the ethics of scientific work will be organized on an ongoing basis, especially with regard to researchers at the beginning of their careers. Successful PhD students will be introduced to the ethical principles during a PhD boot camp – a team-building stay undertaken at the beginning of their studies.</p>
<b>1.2</b> An Internal Commission for Scientific Integrity will be established.	2, 3, 4	12/2022	Institute director	<p><b>Target:</b> Establish an internal ethics committee for the IOCB by the end of 2022.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The Internal Commission for Scientific Integrity will be officially appointed by the director of the institute.</p>
<b>1.3</b> The two positions of Ethical Proxy were established at the IOCB during the fall of 2020. The operation of the Ethical Proxy will be evaluated at the end of 2021 and again at the end of 2022.	2, 3, 4, 34	12/2021, 12/2022	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All employees of the institute (scientific, technical, and administrative) have at their disposal elected representatives with whom they can discuss possible work disagreements and problems.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Internal statistics on the number and data of cases handled by the Ethical Proxies will be created while strictly maintaining the anonymity of complainants.</p>
<b>1.4</b> The internal rules for intellectual property protection and confidentiality of information will be translated into English.	3, 5, 6, 8, 31, 32	9/2021	HR department	<p><b>Target:</b> All researchers will be introduced to innovative providers for the publication and application of their results. Each researcher will receive a written version of these rules in Czech and English and, if necessary, will be provided with support from the Tech Transfer team.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The English version of internal rules for intellectual property protection and confidentiality will be posted to an internal webpage.</p>



<b>1.5</b> The method of communication between scientists and administrative departments will be monitored.	6	12/2021	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> Internal recommendations for managing communication between administration and scientists in the form of a manual of internal procedures for various common life and work situations (for example, when going on an internship or, conversely, the arrival of trainees, for expectant mothers, for parents of small children, for collecting benefits).</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Improving the processes of official communication in everyday work and life situations.</p>
<b>1.6</b> Regular meetings of researchers and administration representatives will be convened to address various issues.	6	9/2022	Institute director	<p><b>Target:</b> By the end of first assessment period, a communication platform will be fully established to improve communication between different administrative departments and scientists with the aim of sharing information and operationally addressing different situations.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Number of meetings held (minimum 10 per year).</p>
<b>1.7</b> Special training in research ethics issues will be offered to young researchers.	3	12/2022	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All researchers will have free access to courses in scientific ethics and scientific writing.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Improving the qualifications of researchers (especially R1 and R2 stages) by developing their soft skills primarily with regard to writing scientific texts (papers, proposals). Statistics on the number of researchers who have taken courses in scientific ethics, scientific writing, or other courses with similar content will be compiled.</p>
<b>1.8</b> The internal regulations in Occupational Safety and Health will be reviewed and translated into English.	7, 23	12/2021	Occupational health and safety officer	<p><b>Target:</b> All employees are regularly trained in occupational safety by their managers. They will now be provided with support in the form of simple written basic rules available online in Czech and English.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The reviewed regulations in Occupational Safety and Health will be posted on the website (both in English and Czech).</p>
<b>1.9</b> The internal rules for expectant mothers will be prepared.	7, 23	12/2021	HR department	<p><b>Target:</b> All employees will have access to documents that make it easier for expectant mothers to navigate relevant legislation and understand their rights and obligations in this situation in relation to their employer.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The rules for expectant mothers will be posted on the internal website.</p>
<b>1.10</b> The system of the internal evaluation (attestation) of researchers will be reviewed and innovated.	10, 28	12/2022	Institute management	<p><b>Target:</b> All employees will be acquainted with an overview of regular career attestations that take place at the institute.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The reviewed rules for internal evaluation (so called attestation) will be posted on the internal website.</p>

2. Recruitment				
<b>2.1</b> The internal regulation for Hiring University Graduates for research departments will be reviewed.	13,15	6/2022	HR department	<p><b>Target:</b> All potential job seekers at the IOCB will have a simple guide, issued in Czech and English, on how to apply for a job. This should lower the administrative barrier for new candidates for various positions.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The updated document will be made available on the internal website.</p>
<b>2.2</b> The full support documentation for recruitment process will be available electronically.	13	12/2021	HR department	<p><b>Target:</b> All documents and templates for job seekers will be easily accessible in a uniform format from a single location.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Full support documentation for the recruitment process will be available electronically.</p>
<b>2.3</b> The rules for publishing openings on different servers will be unified.	13	12/2021	HR department	<p><b>Target:</b> All group leaders announcing openings will have a template available for the preparation of advertisements.</p> <p>The aim is to simplify and clarify the administration of creating advertisements while maintaining their maximum information potential with an emphasis on the complete openness of all positions.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Creating a template for listing an advertisement for an opening.</p>
<b>2.4</b> The documentation used in selection will be revised, taking into account previous experience from selections for various types of positions.	14, 15, 16	3/2022	HR department, Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All members of the selection boards will be provided with detailed documentation on the selection process in order to maintain its maximum openness and transparency.</p> <p>The documentation will also include instructions from the commission on the rules of the OTM-R policy.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The new documentation will be made available to selection committees (both in Czech and English).</p>
<b>2.5</b> Feedback will be provided to all candidates selected for an interview.	15	12/2021	The chairpersons of selection committees	<p><b>Target:</b> All candidates invited for interviews will be informed of the outcome and provided with feedback.</p> <p><b>Indicators:</b> The number of interviewed candidates, both accepted and rejected, will be analysed by the HR department. Amount of feedback provided by the HR department.</p>
<b>2.6</b> Comments arising from the postdoc platform will be recorded and provided to the institute's management as feedback.	21	12/2021	The chairperson of the postdoc platform	<p><b>Target:</b> The frequency of feedback from researchers in the early stages of their careers (R1 and R2) to institute management will be increased.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Feedback from the postdoc platform will be included in the strategy of the institute.</p>

3. Working conditions and social security				
<b>3.1</b> The new Wage Regulation was released during 2020. It will be fine-tuned in 2021.	5, 24, 26	12/2021	HR department	<p><b>Target:</b> By the end of 2021, conclusions will be reached on the monitoring of the new Wage Regulation.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The amount of feedback from laboratory managers and employees gained through discussion in open forums (regular meetings with group leaders and staff meetings).</p>
<b>3.2</b> The simple overview of labour rules and policies will be summarized in a Welcome Pack for new employees.	26	12/2021	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All new employees will obtain a Welcome Pack, the aim of which is to simplify and automate the administrative process when hiring new employees with regard to their cultural diversity.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The Welcome Pack for new employees will be available on websites.</p>
<b>3.3</b> Women will be encouraged to apply for decision-making positions.	27	12/2022	Institute management	<p><b>Target:</b> The number of women in decision-making positions will be gradually increased. For each position, in the event of a match in the profile of the candidates, a female candidate will be given priority in the selection procedure.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The number of women in decision-making positions will be increased. The number of women in senior scientific positions and in the management of the institute will be increased by 10% by the end of 2022.</p>
<b>3.4</b> A Gender Equality Plan will be prepared.	27	6/2022	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> A strategic plan on how to further increase equal opportunities and diversity will be prepared.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> A gender equality plan will be drafted and published.</p>
<b>3.5</b> Rules for short-term and long-term mobility will be introduced.	29	12/2022	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All employees and trainees will have easy access to rules for different types of short-term and long-term scientific internships. The focus is on Erasmus-type internships and the IOCB's own summer student programme.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> Rules for short-term and long-term mobility will be prepared and published.</p>
<b>3.6</b> A career advice system for young researchers will be adopted.	30	12/2022	Scientific coordinator	<p><b>Target:</b> All researchers in R1 and R2 positions will have access to a career programme that will give them an overview of the possibilities for further career growth, including assistance in applying for various types of study stays and scholarship programmes.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> A number of supported international mobility projects for researchers at different stages of their careers.</p>
<b>3.7</b> The election procedure for all decision-making bodies will take place electronically.	35	3/2021	IT department	<p><b>Target:</b> All employees will have access to an electronic voting system.</p> <p><b>Indicator:</b> The number of elections that will take place on an electronic basis.</p>

4. Training				
<b>4.1</b> An interactive first aid training course will be implemented.	7, 23	12/2022	Scientific coordinator	<b>Target:</b> The aim is to train all staff in first aid in a modern way that will increase the readiness of staff for possible critical situations at work and beyond. <b>Indicator:</b> An interactive first aid training programme will be carried out (if possible due to the SARS-CoV2 situation).
<b>4.2</b> The possibilities of an online occupational safety training programme in Czech and English will be tested.	7, 23	6/2022	HR department	<b>Target:</b> All employees will have access to regular online safety training. <b>Indicator:</b> An occupational safety training programme will be available online.
<b>4.3</b> A special website will be set up with an interactive list of training courses.	4, 39	12/2021	Scientific coordinator	<b>Target:</b> All employees will have access to a selection of online courses to enhance the continued training of the institute's staff. <b>Indicator:</b> Access to a clear and filtrable selection of courses on the institute's intranet.
<b>4.4</b> Evaluation of experiences from informal mentoring programmes and an increase of mentoring of junior group leaders will be implemented.	37	12/2022	Institute management	<b>Target:</b> Availability of a mentoring programme for all group leaders, especially for young beginning leaders. <b>Indicator:</b> Organization of a mentoring workshop.
<b>4.5</b> The management course will be organized and evaluated.	38, 39	12/2022	Scientific coordinator	<b>Target:</b> All group leaders will have access to continued training of managers in the area of human resources management. <b>Indicator:</b> The number of courses and number of participants in the management course (if possible due to the SARS-CoV2 situation).

Implementation of the OTM-R toolkit will be an integral part of the complex revision of the recruitment policy. The first step has already been completed, and the IOCB has reviewed current recruitment policy, practices, and procedures (as a part of the Gap Analysis and the OTM-R checklist). The OTM-R checklist has been completed and is attached to the Gap Analysis. The revised OTM-R policy will be published online (OTM-R principles 1, 2).

The IOCB is an internationally recognized scientific institute open to all scientists with the appropriate qualifications. All scientific positions are open to citizens of the European Union and other countries. The selection process, as well as other formal tasks when hiring new employees, is fully bilingual (both in Czech and English) (OTM-R principle 5, 8).

Openings are offered online through various web portals (EURAXESS, Nature Career, Jobs.cz, CAS) depending on the specific position and the requirements of the providers. These offers will be unified in terms of content and methodology (OTM-R principles 4, 11, 12, 13, 14).

A revision of the internal code regulating the recruitment process will be prepared and published. The selection committees already have three members (according to CAS regulations). Attention will be paid to the gender balance of the selection committees and to the proper instruction of their members. The selection process comprises two rounds and is transparent and indiscriminating. All applicants are informed of the results of the process. Feedback is provided to applicants who continue to the second round (OTM-R principles 1, 2, 3, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21).

## 4. Implementation

Implementation of the HR Strategy is one of the priorities of IOCB management. The management of the institute is aware of the importance of managing HR processes for the quality of the working environment and, consequently, the quality of the scientific work conducted at the institute. At the same time, the management of the institute places great emphasis on a simple management structure, in which the leaders of individual groups are fully responsible for their research, researchers, and project finances. Taken together as part of the HR strategy, the management of the institute will try to support the creation of the best possible support tools and policies, with which individual group leaders will be able to select the most suitable candidates for their announced positions from the widest possible circle of applicants.

The HR Award working group, established to prepare the Gap Analysis and the Action Plan, together with the Steering Committee (IOCB Board), will continue its work in the implementation phase. The overall implementation process, its monitoring, and reporting to management will be the responsibility of the scientific coordinator, who will also continue as the chair of the HR Award working group.

Regular semi-annual monitoring and reporting to management and to the IOCB Board will be established. Reporting on the HR Strategy will be included as an integral part of the annual activity plan of IOCB management. As the implementation phase will require researcher participation, the HR Strategy will be regularly discussed among supervisors as a part of group leader meetings.

The implementation of individual measures will proceed according to the Action Plan and the OTM-R checklist; however, due to the global SARS-CoV2 pandemic, it is not possible to rule out unexpected changes arising from travel or assembly restrictions.

<p><b>How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?</b></p>	<p>The HR Award working group together with the Steering Committee (IOCB Board), will continue its work in the implementation phase. The overall implementation process, its monitoring, and reporting to management will be the responsibility of the scientific coordinator, who will also continue as the chair of the HR Award working group.</p> <p>Regular semi-annual monitoring and reporting to management, the IOCB Board, and the HR Award working group will be established.</p> <p>The HR Award working group will meet on a regular basis within the individual subgroups, which were already defined during the preparation of the GAP analysis. These smaller groups will enable the operational management of individual tasks falling under the relevant points of the action plan, including their ongoing revision based on feedback and the course of implementation. Within this platform, it will also be possible to overcome any difficulties and obstacles that might arise in the implementation of individual changes. However, we assume that it is through regular and open communication with the representatives of all professional groups at the institute that we will be able to prevent the emergence of most of the obstacles arising from mutual incompatibility.</p>
<p><b>How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?</b></p>	<p>The HR Strategy will be regularly discussed as a part of group leader meetings.</p> <p>Representatives of the group leaders are also members of other governing bodies involved in monitoring the implementation of the HR Award working group (Steering Committee). The group leaders will therefore have regular access to new information regarding the implementation of the HR Strategy and will be regularly consulted on these steps.</p> <p>Given that the HR Award working group involves both scientists of all scientific levels (R1-R4) and administrative staff, it will be possible to not only regularly evaluate the implementation process</p>

	<p>but also respond flexibly within regular open discussions on the implementation of individual action plan points. Proposals arising from the retrospective evaluation of the implementation of individual steps will be discussed within the HR Award working group and continuously included in the planned steps.</p>
<p><b>How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with HRS4R and ensure it is recognized in the organisation's research strategy as the overarching HR policy?</b></p>	<p>Most of the HRS4R principles have already been included in the functioning of the institute. As previously mentioned in the GAP Analysis, 10 of the 40 C&amp;C principles have already been fulfilled, and the others have been partially fulfilled. A procedure for the implementation of the other rules is defined in the Action Plan.</p> <p>HRS4R has been fully incorporated into the strategic development of the institute.</p>
<p><b>How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?</b></p>	<p>We will monitor the implementation of the process at different levels depending on the specific action. In some cases, we will keep statistics (number of participants in different events); in others, we will ask for feedback from the participants of the event or from interested groups (e.g. group leaders, postdocs). We will then evaluate this feedback in the framework of the HR Award working group and include any comments in the process of implementation, which we see as a living and essentially never-ending process. A comprehensive evaluation of the first phases of the HR Award implementation will be part of the institute's annual self-evaluation.</p>
<p><b>How will you monitor progress (time-line)?</b></p>	<p>The persons responsible for the implementation of individual tasks will be in regular contact with the scientific coordinator, who will monitor the process and report to the management of the institute. Regular evaluation of the implementation process will also take place during regular meetings (formal and informal) within the HR Award working group or its subgroups. Institute staff will be informed about the procedure at regular management meetings with the leaders of research groups and at staff meetings.</p>
<p><b>How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?</b></p>	<p>The individual indicators will be checked according to the established Action Plan. The management of the institute and the IOCB Board will be regularly informed about the procedure.</p> <p>All objectives set out in the action plan will be regularly monitored and discussed at meetings (formal and informal) of the HR Award working group and its subgroups. At the same time, their ongoing fulfilment and possible adjustment based on feedback from the implementation will be included in the continual updates to the timetable.</p>