



Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

May 2015

Human Resources and Education Department

INTRODUCTION

The Catalan Institute of Nanoscience and Nanotechnology (Institut Català de Nanociència i Nanotecnologia, ICN2) is a non-profit research institute located in Barcelona, Spain. The Institute has a large degree of internalization, with about half of the personnel being from nationalities other than Spanish. It aims to be a leading center in the international scene.

ICN2 is a research centre of nanoscience and nanotechnology promoted by Generalitat de Catalunya (Catalan Government), Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas (Spanish Council for Scientific Research, CSIC) and Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (Autonomous University of Barcelona, UAB), considered as a Catalan research centre, identified as 'CERCA centre'. It and was accredited in 2014 as a Severo Ochoa Centre of Excellence.

ICN2's mission is to achieve the highest level of scientific and technological excellence in Nanoscience and Nanotechnology and to facilitate the adoption and integration of nanotechnologies into society and industry.

ICN2 welcomes the Commission Recommendation of 11 March 2005 and commits itself to applying the stated principles in The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Therefore, ICN2 charges the HR & Education Department with ensuring that the Institute meets its goals of excellence through the analysis of current HR policies and the application of the principles set out in the aforementioned Charter.

ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

In preparing ICN2's application to the HRS4R Award, the Human Resources and Education Department made an internal analysis of ICN2's status regarding the application of human resources policies and linked them with the implementation of the principles set out in "The European Charter".

A. PREVIOUS PROJECTS AND ACTIONS

The first step was to gather all the information about the ongoing projects and actions in which ICN2 was involved related to human resources policies, listed below:

1. Severo Ochoa Program

In 2013, ICN2 decided, as a fundamental strategic action, that it should seek the "Severo Ochoa" accreditation, a Spanish national recognition with privileged funding granted to only a few centers in Spain that are evaluated by international committees for their excellence in scientific research, management, HR, and social impact.

The application to this accreditation required, among many other actions, an analysis of the Human Resources practices at the time of application, as well as a plan for how the Severo Ochoa funds would be used to further develop and enhance ICN2's capacities. ICN2's Severo Ochoa program included commitments to develop specific actions in the following areas:

- Gender Action Plan
- Communications and Outreach Plan
- Internationalisation Plan
- Training and Mobility Plan.

ICN2 was awarded the Severo Ochoa accreditation in mid-2014, and started the program implementation. As part of ICN2's commitments, the Human Resources and Education department is obligated to design and implement action plans that enable the achievement of these objectives (Appendix I).

2. Gender Action Plan

One of the first actions under the Severo Ochoa implementation was the appointment of an Equality Committee, comprised of volunteers from both management and scientific personnel, to analyze under a diversity and gender perspective the following indicators, among others, as a first step in drafting a Plan for Equal Opportunity and Diversity Management (Equality Plan):

- Recruitment and onboarding
- Publication and dissemination of scientific research results.

Equality Committee members are the following:

Collective	Name and Surname	Position	Group
Research Group	Pablo Ordejón	Group Leader	Theory and Simulation
Research Group	Mónica Lira	Group Leader	Laboratory of Nanostructured Materials for Photovoltaic Energy
Research Group	Neus Domingo	Senior research scientist	Oxide Nanoelectronics
Management and Services	Lluís Bellafont	Manager	General Manager
Management and Services	Rocío Pérez	Manager	Human Resources & Education
Management and Services	Marta González	Project Manager	Projects

The Equality Committee's initial action consisted in exploring the current situation on Equality for which we used a survey to all ICN2 staff.

EOP Survey

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1ss6QN1s-nJlIZYAWehCv58x9xiTkthavVHY6WGqjMqI/viewform?usp=send_form

(Appendix II)

Based on the analysis, the Committee established initial objectives for ICN2's Equality Plan:

- To establish a periodic analysis of gender- and equality-related indicators to provide useful information and monitoring on the real status of ICN2;
- To incorporate the principle of Equal Opportunities at all organizational levels in ICN2;
- To set an increase in the number of female research staff in ICN2 as one of the global objectives of ICN2;
- To work on communication policies in order to promote a gender-neutral image of science;
- To ensure equal opportunities in promotion, training and development of scientific and professional careers;
- To ensure an environment free of sexism and all forms of discrimination;
- To promote balance between work and personal life;
- To ensure satisfactory working conditions for all staff at ICN2 and prevent harassment in the workplace.

Following presentation of the Equality Plan objectives to both the administrative and scientific management, which were approved, an Action Plan was developed in order to achieve the objectives, and the HR Department was tasked with its implementation.

(Appendix III)

3. Strategic Plan

ICN2 is also developing a Strategic Plan with the participation of all the research Group Leaders, administration managers and managers of scientific and technical support areas. The aim of the document is to identify the challenges facing ICN2 and to set the goals that ICN2 aims to achieve.

The Strategic Plan defines four global objectives:

1. Excellence in Scientific Research and Technology
2. Impact on Industry and Society
3. International Profile and Global Competitiveness
4. Safety, **Equality** and Transparency

This fourth objective of **Safety, Equality and Transparency** is described as follows:

To provide a safe and secure work environment where best practices and responsible research and innovation (RRI) principles are instilled and enforced via continuous improvement processes. To offer a recruitment and career advancement system based solely on merit and free of discrimination. To proactively encourage traditionally disadvantaged groups to pursue career advancement, removing or reducing barriers posed by working conditions,

language, cultural norms or physical access. To operate with transparency and honesty, implementing international standards in ethics, scientific process and management.

Within the Strategic Plan, the HR Department has been assigned the following goals:

1. To foment a feeling of belonging to ICN2
2. To improve HR procedures
3. To develop leadership and management of teams
4. To promote and facilitate continuous education.
5. To attract and retain talent
6. To promote the ICN2 brand

(Appendix IV),

4. Cohesion Working Group

ICN2's Cohesion Working Group (CWG) is an internal committee of senior scientists and managers constituted to identify challenges and propose solutions, as part of a continuous improvement process to make ICN2 a better workplace,

In parallel to the development of the three projects mentioned above, the CWG devoted one specific session to discuss the possibility of applying to the HRS4R Award, as ICN2 considers HR policies to be a key factor in qualifying as an Excellence Research Center. **The CWG recommended pursuing the HRS4R accreditation.** (Appendix V).

B. SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS AND COORDINATION

With all the above occurring within the space of a year, numerous overlapping commitments and parallel actions were underway. The HR and Education Department assumed coordination of all actions, and undertook the preparation of an internal document to identify existing weaknesses, committed goals and desirable actions, linking them with the principles established in the Charter for Researchers (Appendix VI).

In order to achieve broad consensus, and take into consideration the inputs from all levels and sectors of ICN2 staff, the HR and Education Department applied the following methodology:

1. The HR & Education Department designed and undertook a survey aimed at Group Leaders, Divisions and Administration Managers with the objective of showing, discussing and identifying priorities regarding all the projects and actions that the HR Department had identified as relevant to the application of principles set out in the "The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers",

The survey was sent to:

Collective	Name and Surname	Position	Group
Research Group	Jordi Fraxedas	Group Leader	Force Probe Microscopy and Surface Nanoengineering
Research Group	Mónica Lira	Group Leader	laboratory of Nanostructured Materials for Photovoltaic Energy
Research Group	Laura Lechuga	Group Leader	Nanobiosensors and Bioanalytical Applications
Research Group	Daniel Ruiz	Group Leader	Nanostructured Functional Materials
Research Group	Pedro Gómez-Romero	Group Leader	Novel Energy-Oriented Materials
Research Group	Pablo Ordejón	Group Leader	Theory and Simulation
Research Group	Víctor Franco	Group Leader	Inorganic Nanoparticles
Research Group	Josep Nogués	Group Leader	Magnetic Nanostructures
Research Group	Arben Merkoçi	Group Leader	Nanobioelectronics & Biosensors
Research Group	Gustau Catalán	Group Leader	Oxide Nanoelectronics
Research Group	Clivia Sotomayor	Group Leader	Phononic and Photonic Nanostructures
Research Group	Sergio Valenzuela	Group Leader	Physics and Engineering of Nanodevices
Research Group	Daniel MasPOCH	Group Leader	Supramolecular NanoChemistry and Materials
Research Group	Stephan Roche	Group Leader	Theoretical and Computational Nanoscience
Research Group	Aitor Mugarza	Group Leader	Atomic Manipulation and Spectroscopy
Divisions and Core Facilities	Gustavo Ceballos	Divisions Leader	Nanosience Instrument Development Division
Divisions and Core Facilities	Belén Ballesteros	Division Leader	Electron Microscopy Division
Divisions and Core Facilities	José Santiso	Division Leader	Nanomaterials Growth Division
Management and Services	Lluís Bellafont	Manager	General Manager
Management and Services	Àlex Argemí	Manager	Marketing & Communication
Management and Services	Rocío Pérez	Manager	Human Resources & Education
Management and Services	Jordi Reverter	Manager	Technology Transfer
Management and Services	Boaz Kogon	Manager	Strategy
Management and Services	Judit Vela	Manager	Finance
Management and Services	Mireia Martí	Manager	Projects
Management and Services	David Lizcano	Manager	IT
Management and Services	Xavier Ros	Manager	General Services

Representation rate of groups:

Collective	Research group	Divisions and Core Facilities	Management and Services
27	15	3	8
100%	55,6%	11,1%	29,6%

Content and results of the survey, (Appendix VII).

- In addition, a HRS4R Working Group was then appointed, with representation of all work collectives: Group leaders, post-doctoral researchers, doctoral researchers and administration staff.

Members of the HRS4R Working Group:

Collective	Name and Surname	Position	Group
Research Group	Jordi Fraxedas	Group Leader	Force Probe Microscopy and Surface Nanoengineering
Research Group	Inhar Imaz	Post doctoral Researcher	Supramolecular NanoChemistry and Materials
Research Group	Kumara Cordero	PhD Student	Oxide Nanoelectronics
Divisions and Core Facilities	Belén Ballesteros	Division Leader	Electron Microscopy Division
Management and Services	Lluís Bellafont	Manager	General Manager
Management and Services	Rocío Pérez	Manager	Human Resources & Education

Representation rate of groups:

Working Group	Research group	Divisions and Core Facilities	Management and Services
6	3	1	2
100%	50,0%	16,7%	33,3%

The HRS4R Working Group reviewed the previous analysis done by HR and the results of the survey, discussed and added new points of view about human resources practices in ICN2, and finally elaborated the following action plan. (see also contents of the meetings of the HRS4R Working Group, [\(Appendix VIII\)](#))

HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS ACTION PLAN

ICN2 is implementing the following principles of The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers:

- Working conditions.
- Contractual and legal obligations
- Professional Attitude
- Accountability
- Intellectual Property Rights
- Good practice in research
- Recruitment
- Selection
- Access to career advice
- Value of mobility
- Continuing professional development
- Access to research training and continuous development
- Supervision
- Relation with supervisor
- Evaluation /Appraisal system
- Gender balance
- Non discrimination
- Career development
- Ethical principles
- Public engagement

These principles will be implemented and/or reinforced in ICN2 through the following actions:

WORKING CONDITIONS			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
1.Review of the Welcome Package: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improve the procedure of information about relocation and social security coverage. - Detail flexible working hours policy. 	1.Writing of one document with the legal requirements. 2.Dissemination of the new documents to all staff	Dec 2015	HR Department

CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
2.Periodical information to GL and Administration Managers about changes regarding labour legislation	1.Sending emails explaining the changes	Continuous	HR Department
3.Translation of the employment contracts to English	1.Used in new hires	June 2015	HR Department
4.Write a procedure and a policy about financial aid for students and interns	1.Write the procedure 2.Dissemination to GL and Administration Managers	Dec 2016	HR Department

PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE ACCOUNTABILITY			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
5.Write a policy about funding mechanisms and include it in the Welcome Package	1.Write a policy 2.Communication to all employee and new incorporations	June 2016	Projects Department

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
6. Inclusion of the ICN2 Technology Transfer policy in the Welcome Package	1. Delivery of the new policy 2. continuous training about this issue	Dec 2015	TT and HR Department

GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
7. Review the IT procedures and include an IT policy in the Welcome Package	1. Set a policy 2. Communication to all employee and new incorporations	June 2016	IT Department
8. Review the role of the Health & Safety Committee and analyse the need for reinforcing the current resources	1. Follow up of Health & Safety Committee Meetings	June 2016	Directors Office

RECRUITMENT SELECTION			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
9. Write an internal recruitment procedure and Interviewer guide following the principles of transparency and equal opportunities.	1. Write the procedure 2. Communication to all employee	Dec 2015	HR Department, Recruitment Committee
10. Establish an internal recruitment committee	1. Dissemination of the members of the Committee	Dec 2015	HR Department

ACCES TO CAREER ADVICE			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
11. Establish a procedure to support and follow the careers of ex members of ICN2	1. Design a procedure of interviews with ex members ICN2	June 2018	Directors Office and HR Department

VALUE OF MOBILITY			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
12. Contact target Universities and establish Frame Agreements	1. Signature of new Frame Agreement	Continuous	HR Department

GOOD PRACTICE IN RESEARCH CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
13. Design a Training Plan for ICN2 staff that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - English courses - Communication skills - Technology Transfer - Health & Safety 	1. Dissemination and execution of the Plan	June 2015	HR Department

ACCES TO RESEARCH TRAINING AND CONTINUOUS DEVELOPMENT SUPERVISION			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
14. Write one specific Initial Training Plan for new staff	1. Analysis of training needs 2. Dissemination of the procedure	June 2015	HR Department

RELATION WITH SUPERVISOR			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
15. Establish a procedure for certification of attendance of courses and technical proficiency of all ICN2's members	1. Commissioning of the procedure	June 2016	HR Department

EVALUATION/ APPRAISAL SYSTEM			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
16. Design an appraisal system for Administration and Divisions	1. Dissemination of the system 2. Conduction of individual performance evaluations	June 2015	HR Department
17. Design and implement procedures for the evaluation of research performance	1. Implementation of the procedure	Dec 2017	Directors Office, GLs and Scientific Advisory Board

GENDER BALANCE NON DISCRIMINATION			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
18. Establish the Equal Opportunities and Diversity Management Committee	1. Following up of its work	Dec 2015	Directors Office and HR Department

GENDER BALANCE			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
19. Improve policies on work and family balance	1. Establishment of new social benefits 2. Dissemination in Welcome Brochure	Dec 2016	HR Department

CAREER DEVELOPMENT ACCESS TO CAREER ADVICE			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
20. Establish personal development procedures in order to foster career development: - Follow up interviews - Exit interview	1. Start of new procedures	Dec 2018	HR Department

ETHICAL PRINCIPLES			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
21. Writing an Ethical Code of ICN2	1. Appointment of an Ethical Committee 2. Dissemination of the Code to employees	Dec 2016	Directors Office, Manager and HR Department

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT			
Action	Indicator	Timeframe	Responsibles
22. Disseminate the ICN2 Communication Plan, and include a communication policy in the Welcome Package	1. Design one Communication Plan 2. Dissemination to all employee	Dec 2015	Communication and Marketing Department

FOLLOW-UP OF THE ACTION PLAN

The HRS4R Working Group proposed that various working groups would be appointed for the implementation, monitoring and auditing of the main actions of the proposed plan.

These working groups will comprise volunteers who express interest in the development and implementation of HR projects, and give good cross representation across all collectives and groups of employees at ICN2 (junior and senior researchers, technical, administration, female, male, international, local, etc).

An internal audit team will also be appointed to ensure compliance with HR policies and achievement of action plan milestones.