



**Univerzita
Karlova**

Implementation of HRS4R at Charles University

Renewal of the HR Excellence in Research Award (HR Award) 2024

Number: 2018CZ348775

Contact person: Věra Šťastná

Date of submission: April 2024



Approved by the HR Award Steering Committee of Charles University on 26 February 2024

Considered by the HR Award Working Group of Charles University on 29 February 2024

Approved by the Rector's Board on 4 March 2024

Considered by the Extended Rector's Board on 11 March 2024

Considered by the Academic Senate of Charles University on 22 March 2024



1. Organisational Information

STAFF & STUDENTS (2022)	FTE	Ph.D.
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	4 603	6 609
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	652	2 074
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	55	
Of whom are women *	1761	3 395
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	1471	
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	2077	
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	1055	6 609
Total number of students (if relevant) *	51 727	
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	8 800	

Note: PhD students are students within the Czech legal framework. Some of them may be employed at the university in addition to their studies, but this is not always the case, so the figures for employees and PhD students are listed separately.

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year) € (year 2022)	
Total annual organisational budget	563 249 000
Total annual organisational research budget	178 096 000
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	96 619 000
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	78 953 000
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	2 524 000

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



The university's organizational profile is the same as in 2021. Charles University was founded in 1348 and is a modern, cosmopolitan, and prestigious university. It is the largest university in the Czech Republic and offers a wide range of subject areas – medicine, pharmacy, natural sciences, humanities and social sciences, theology, and sports at the bachelor's, master's, and PhD level. It is the highest rated Czech university in international ranking systems. It has seventeen faculties (fourteen in Prague, two in Hradec Králové, and one in Pilsen), four university institutes, five additional workplaces (e.g. the Institute for Language and Preparatory Studies, the Central Library), three special-purpose facilities serving the entire university (e.g. Dormitories and Refectories), and the Rectorate, which is the executive apparatus of the university.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Ethical and professional aspects:

Strengths:

- From the previous evaluation, emphasis should be placed on academic freedom, the Code of Ethics, the Ethics Committee, and the Research Ethics Committee.
- Adopting the [Equal Opportunities Plan](#) which contains all areas recommended by the European Commission and clearly allocated financial and HR resources to ensure its implementation and regular evaluation of meeting the goals.
- Strong leadership support leading to social security, equal opportunities, and sustainable development.
- In the area of social security and the prevention of gender-based violence, strengthening of the ombuds position, introducing lectures for new students and employees, and creating methodologies and guidelines.
- A wide range of activities to improve the working environment culture: educational events, instruction, and training.
- Strong cooperation with other universities at the national and international level.
- Adopting and implementing a [Charles University Sustainable Development Strategy](#).
- Progress relating to open science: the Centre for the Support of Open Science successfully operates at the Central Library and coordinates a network of faculty Open Access Coordinators.
- The repository of CU publication activities is fully functioning, including methodologies and guidelines and a functional help desk at the L1 and L2 level.
- Methodologies, guidelines, consultation support, and education for faculties are available; a network of faculty data stewards is being created.

Weaknesses:

- An inconsistent approach across faculties.
- Currently, there aren't sufficient measures on the university level relating to broader diversity or intercultural communication in the ordinary operations of the institution. There is a lack of



data for monitoring diversity, with the exception of gender (in order to operate with intersections in ensuring equality).

- Unequal representation of men and women in the hierarchy of higher-level positions (slowly changing vertical gender segregation).
- Still insufficient awareness among all employees about activities; constant work needs to be done on improving internal communication.

Academic freedom, ethical aspects, non-discrimination are incorporated into the CU Constitution and the Code of Ethics. The university has an Ethics Committee that deals with potential violations of the Code of Ethics, and a Research Ethics Committee that deals specifically with research.

In 2022, CU adopted the first [Equal Opportunities Plan \(2022–2024\)](#). The university's management explicitly declares equality and a safe environment as its priority. There is a member of the Rector's Board responsible for its implementation. Important steps were the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Board where all faculties and units of CU are represented, the establishment of a university-wide ombuds (1 January 2023) and a similar position in all faculties. In addition to handling complaints, the ombuds also acts preventively e.g., she has coordinated the education and professionalization of faculty ombudspersons, issued a methodology for investigating complaints relating to inappropriate behaviour, in cooperation with Masaryk University, has prepared an entry training module for employees in the area of social security.

A coordinator for the equal opportunities' agenda ensures implementation of the Plan and coordination throughout the university. In 2023, more than 40 awareness-raising and educational events took place. The university participated in the UN's global campaign 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. Emphasis is placed on gender-sensitive language (including training). The share of female representation in university media has increased significantly.

In cooperation with Czech universities, three publications supporting the development of social security at universities were created. On an international level, the university is active in the 4EU+ alliance, and its representative is the Vice-Chair of the WG for Equality and Diversity in the Coimbra Group.

In addition to this area, in 2023, it adopted the first [Charles University Sustainable Development Strategy: Towards Sustainability 2030](#), which is implemented mainly through a two-year [Action Plans](#).

The [Centre for the Support of Open Science](#) successfully operates at the Central Library. A network of Open Access faculty coordinators has been established, and the centre publishes guidelines on its web pages, such as [how to publish in open access](#), [how to avoid predatory journals](#). Thus, the university motivates its academic staff and researchers to carry out open publishing in a responsible manner, which is also taken into account when evaluating the results of research work and subsequent bonuses during the allocation of financial resources, where work published in high-quality academic journals is especially valued.

CU has fully implemented its [repository of publication activities](#). The first version of the university-wide [universal repository of research data](#) was prepared. In the area of research data management, all CU researchers have at their disposal templates for creating [data management plans](#), either as a part of research projects supported by grants with fund recipients using templates recommended by a specific funds' provider, or researchers who create plans can use already existing general templates, e.g. the template for Horizon Europe, which was also translated



into Czech and is used by certain national providers. For more information, see chapter 3. Actions, the Action no. 39.

Recruitment and selection:

Strengths:

- The Competitive Hiring Process Code was also applied to other positions (not only academic).
- Launch of the pilot operation for the unified application for selection procedures at several faculties.
- Integration of the advertising environment on an external job portal.

Weaknesses:

- Absence of a unified methodology for the recruitment process and weak education within the university.
- Insufficient and non-automated statistical outputs at the university level.

[The Competitive Hiring Process Code](#) implemented by the university fulfils the principles of Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) for the recruitment of academic staff. In 2022, it was updated in connection with the newly established measure for framework career principles for the entire university. It also applies to selection procedures for postdocs and to non-academic employees who are hired in senior positions. A CU employee questionnaire from the autumn of 2023 confirmed that, in practice, the procedures are carried out in accordance with the Competitive Hiring Process Code.

Although the recruitment process is not yet completely uniform in most faculties and units, the launch of a new internal application for selection procedures in pilot operation at several faculties in 2023 contributes to accelerating the unification of procedures across the university, primarily with respect to the digitalization and automation of processes. This application fully complies with the requirements of the Competitive Hiring Process Code.

It allows advertisements to be prepared, approved, and published in both Czech and English. An advertisement entered in the application is automatically transferred to the CU career pages and the Researchjobs portal. The application also enables the nomination of a selection committee, the collection of basic information about applicants, including their materials for the selection process, and their subsequent evaluation. In addition, the application addresses the identity of internal and external applicants in the context of the GDPR and cyber security. An analysis of the requirements of another advertising portal, Euraxess, was carried out with the aim of automatically publishing advertisements on this website. The application will continue to be developed so that it can be used in as many faculties as possible throughout the university, which is also part of the new action plan for 2024–2026. In addition to unifying, digitalizing, and improving the recruitment process, this application will also make available overall reporting, among other things, regarding the gender of applicants (those who have applied and those who have been selected) and members of the selection committee. Currently, this information cannot be obtained centrally.



In addition, the advertising environment on the largest external job portal in the Czech Republic (jobs.cz) was unified for all faculties and units, although this is primarily geared to advertising administrative positions. During the next period, we will focus on the connection with the internal application for advertising vacancies with the aim of unifying the procedures in the recruitment process as much as possible.

Additional support for unifying the recruitment process will consist of education on the recruitment process, both for selection committees and head employees. The [career pages](#) are updated on a regular basis. However, there is no uniform design for the career pages. In addition to the university's career pages, each faculty maintains its own ones. Greater centralization and introducing a unified design will require a complete makeover of CU's web pages, which is a long-term and demanding process. This step is part of the new action plan for the period 2024–2026.

Working conditions:

Strengths:

- Support for international employees in the onboarding process (Staff Welcome Centre)
- Coordinating non-financial benefits
- A wide range of activities for the development and well-being of employees
- Mental health services

Weaknesses:

- Non-uniformity of procedures and policies throughout CU, strong autonomy of faculties in the area of HR (also with respect to national legislation)
- Inconsistency of HR systems at the units
- Overall underfunding of higher education in the Czech Republic

For the optimal integration of new employees and for understanding the functioning of the entire university, regular training was introduced. The goal for the future period is to harmonize the onboarding process throughout the university. Two manuals were issued: the [Manual for Employees of Charles University](#) and [Manual for New Employees of the Rectorate](#).

Based on the employee satisfaction survey or the employee evaluation outcomes, new measures regarding flexible working hours, performance of remote work and the rules for providing days of personal leave and development were created or updated.

In the area of well-being, new events have been introduced to improve physical and mental health and to promote social interaction at the workplace. Activities for improving the health of employees have been expanded and psychological and legal counselling and coaching are available. In 2023, the Centre for the Care of the Soul was established. Language courses, thematic trips and beneficial partnerships with various institutions are available.

However, the process of improving working conditions and well-being is still experiencing inconsistencies in the procedures and policies throughout CU. This is also significantly affected by the overall underfunding of higher education. According to the OECD Education at a Glance comparison (2023), the Czech Republic spent 1.12% of GDP on higher education (including



significant funds from structural funds), while the average for OECD countries was 1.39% and the average for EU countries was 1.27%. When compared with neighbouring countries or countries of comparable size, higher education spending as a share of GDP was 1.34% in Germany, 1.75% in the Netherlands, and 1.58% in Austria. Similarly, the poor financial situation in the Czech Republic is reflected in expenditures per student (recalculated according to purchasing power parity). In the Czech Republic, this figure is \$16,190. The average in OECD countries is \$19,775, in the EU \$18,571. in Germany \$20,788, in the Netherlands \$21,779, and in Austria \$22,251.

The centre for international employees, [Charles University's Staff Welcome Centre](#) (SWC), provides support associated with coming to the Czech Republic for academics arriving from abroad and their family members. The SWC serves as a central location for advice and support, an integral part of its activity is the development of methodologies for unifying HR processes relating to internationalization at CU.

To improve internal communication and the exchange of information throughout CU, several activities and projects were implemented in 2021–2023 (including the design for the intranet platform).

For improved cooperation and the exchange of senior academic staff within the 4EU+ alliance, the concept of “visiting professorships” was created. Each senior academic staff member can apply each year for financing a six-month stay at one of the partner universities. As a part of the pilot call for 2023, nine candidates were selected for stays at a university from the 4EU+. During these stays, joint educational and research activities take place that contribute to the development of new educational frameworks, professional knowledge and skills.

Training and development:

Strengths:

- Unified framework principles for career development and evaluation of academic staff, researchers, and lecturers.
- Uniform principles for career development and evaluation of administrative staff.
- Established lifelong learning centre.

Weaknesses:

- The rules for associate professorship and professorship procedures have not yet been fully harmonized with developments in the area of HR (career regulations, employee evaluation, education in pedagogical skills).
- Lower awareness of the importance/benefits of evaluation.
- Low correlation of the evaluation results with further development and remuneration.

Framework [principles for the career development of academic staff, researchers, and lecturers](#) were issued based on experience from the pilot evaluation and existing faculty regulations. The principles also include the settings for the employee evaluation process. All faculties and units issued their adapted measures to provide clear rules for career development and to set up the evaluation system. Based on this, they then started the evaluation process. An internal IT tool was launched in a pilot to support it. The indicator for adopting relevant regulations and initiating



evaluation was included in The Principles for the Allocation of Contributions and Subsidies at CU (the Principles).

Feedback on the settings for career principles and evaluation was also provided by a survey (2023). The results show the need for greater focus on the implementation of the new measures in practice and highlighting their benefits in creating a more transparent working environment with clear career progression opportunities. It is clear from the responses at faculties where evaluation has been ongoing for a longer period of time the implementation of these measures was perceived more positively.

Based on experience from evaluations, it became necessary to revise the rules for associate professorship and professorship procedures and to link them to evaluations. Therefore, in the next action plan period, modified recommended criteria will be prepared.

In addition, a Rector's directive was issued that requires all faculties and units to evaluate administrative employees as well. The position of postdoc was set out in a [Rector's directive](#) and was included in the career principles. As part of the expanded educational offerings in accordance with The European Competence Framework for Researchers, postdocs can now take courses of Czech, science and innovation management, or open science. Joint 4EU+ courses are also fully open to all postdocs. Offers with links are advertised on the [Postdoctoral Hub](#) where postdocs can find out about opportunities for additional collaboration and grants.

As part of developing the pedagogical competences of academic staff, two Rector's directives were issued that introduce the obligation to take basic courses relating to pedagogical competence, the successful completion of which is checked during evaluations according to the career regulations. The courses are intended to provide graduates with basic knowledge of university teaching and to introduce to them innovative methods and forms of teaching that are carried out at CU. Web pages were created to support this activity. In addition, a parameter supporting the development of pedagogical competencies was introduced in the Principles.

[The complete offer of lifelong learning](#) is available on the web pages of the Centre for Lifelong Learning.

Courses for the employees of Charles University are provided via the CU Educational Portal, which also enables the monitoring of employee education. The programmes are divided into areas of pedagogical, managerial, and IT competencies. The "Development Centre" Programme was introduced for head employees, which analyses managerial competencies and prepares an individual educational plan. A pilot project for the Academy of Personal Development was launched at the Extended Rectorate for people with potential.

Have any of the priorities for the short and medium term changed? (max 500 words)

In terms of priorities, there have been no changes. The priorities of the HRS4R action plan and maintaining the HR Award are an integral part of the university's strategic plan for the period 2021–2025. In February 2022, a new Rector took over the leadership of the university. In the programme for the new management, emphasis is also placed on new topics, such as [equal opportunities](#), [social security](#), or [sustainable development](#). Thus, in addition to fulfilling the activities of the HRS4R action plan for the period 2021–2023, one of the steps of the new management was to create an [Equal Opportunities Plan](#), and as a part of this, a new advisory body to the Rector, the Equal Opportunities Board. Starting in 2023, the new Charles University



[Ombuds](#) commenced her activities. There are also ombudspersons at the CU faculties. The university has established its [strategy in the area of sustainable development](#), i.e. it has set out the basic concepts and goals for sustainable development and incorporated them into the [2023-2024 action plan](#). After its assessment, it will be followed by another two-year plan, and it will continue in this manner until 2030. Charles University's ambition is to contribute to fulfilling the sustainable development goals, especially in its primary roles, i.e., in education and research. However, the university's third role is no less important, i.e., participation in public debates, popularization of research, and putting research results into practice. Due to its size, the university wants to meet goals in its own operations as well.

The position of member of the Rector's Board for social affairs and sustainable development was established within the [university's top management](#). Another significantly supported new agenda is the further education of academic staff relating to pedagogical skills. A position in CU's management was established for this agenda as well, namely member of the Rector's Board for development of the pedagogical competencies of academic staff.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organization operates changed and as such have had an impact on your HR strategy? (max 500 words)

The period 2021–2023 was still significantly affected by the effects of the Covid 19 pandemic. Despite all of the restrictions, positive developments also occurred during this period. It was possible to establish more flexible working conditions, which the university attempts to promote in the future as well (remote work, flexible working hours, days of personal leave and development). At the end of 2023, the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament adopted an amendment to the Labour Code, which, among other things, implements the European directive on work-life balance. Last but not least, the new security measures at universities, which are now being discussed and developed, will have an impact on the development of human resources. A driving force behind this was the [tragic events at the CU Faculty of Arts](#) on 21 December 2023.

Are any strategic decisions under way that may influence the action plan? (max 500 words)

We anticipate an amendment to the Higher Education Act, which the university has thoroughly commented on in several rounds for the Ministry of Education. The changes will be significant, especially with regard to PhD studies. Higher demands will be placed on PhD students, and their financial security should be significantly increased. In addition, the ministry is changing the method of financing this type of study (from per capita to lump sum). Thus, the university no longer needs to recruit large numbers of students to obtain funding and can focus on a more rigorous selection of its PhD candidates. As a result, this will lead to a reduction in the number of PhD students and an increase in their scholarships. Currently, insufficient financial security has forced students of PhD study programmes to earn additional income, and not all of them managed to find a job connected to their dissertation research. The university expects these changes to help PhD students concentrate more on their studies and research projects and consequently higher quality PhD studies and a higher rate of student success, which is currently unsatisfactory.

As part of the amendment, there were also other proposals regarding the development of human resources, as a result of which the university will be forced to revise most of its internal regulations and the internal regulations of the faculties. The process will be demanding, but it is also an opportunity to further unify and modernize current practices at CU.



The amendment to Act no. 130/2002 Sb. was also discussed (Act on the support of research and development from public funds), which will also have an impact on the activities of universities. The Ministry of Education has just started the discussion.

3. Actions

Assessment of the measures for the 2021–2023 action plan

New 2024–2026 action plan



Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment)

The [Competitive Hiring Process Code](#) was updated in 2022. In connection with this, additional consultations took place at the HR level regarding compliance with OTM-R principles throughout CU and raising awareness for appropriate standards in this area.

The principles of the Competitive Hiring Process Code may be applied to other positions as well (not only academic staff). Procedures are also being unified with respect to advertising vacancies and managing the recruitment process for administrative positions (with a view to unifying all recruitment processes).

HR training focusing specifically on the topic of effective recruitment took place in 2022, and we will repeat this training in the future. In 2023, the new position of recruitment specialist was established at the Rectorate, which, in the first phase, supports the unification of the recruitment process for administrative positions. As part of the 2024–2026 action plan, it will further expand its activities to other types of positions.

With respect to internal development at CU, an internal application for selection procedures is being developed that complies with the requirements of the Competitive Hiring Process Code. This was gradually launched on a pilot basis at three faculties. The application allows you to prepare, approve, and publish advertisements both in Czech and English. Advertisements entered in the application are automatically uploaded to the CU career pages and the Researchjobs portal. The application also enables the nomination of a selection committee and the collection of basic information about applicants and their materials for the selection procedures and their evaluation. In addition, the application addresses the identity of internal and external applicants in the context of the GDPR and cyber security. An analysis of the requirements of another advertising portal, Euraxess, was carried out with the aim of automatically publishing advertisements on their website. This application will continue to be developed so that it can be used in as many faculties as possible throughout the university. In addition to unifying, digitalizing, and improving the recruitment process, this application will also allow overall reporting, among other things, regarding the gender of applicants (those who have applied and those who have been selected) and members of the selection committee. This information is not available centrally at this time. Moreover, the advertising environment on the largest external job portal in the Czech Republic (jobs.cz) was unified for all faculties and units, although this is primarily focused on advertising administrative positions. During the next period, we will focus on the connection with the internal application for advertising vacancies with the aim of unifying the procedures within the recruitment process as much as possible.

The heterogeneity of the university still does not allow a central team to supervise the compliance of all OTM-R principles at the faculty level and, if necessary, sanction non-compliance. A solution is offered in the form of a unified application that is currently being developed.

The overall strategy of supporting external applicants is fully in line with CU's strategic plan. Applicants are presented with the advantages of the working environment, work-life balance, an equal opportunities plan, the principles of career development, employee benefits, etc. The overall policy and strategy of supporting international applicants creates a comprehensive ecosystem



that is fully in line with CU's strategic plan. An important element was the establishment of a relocation centre, the [CU Staff Welcome Centre](#), which contributes to the attractiveness of CU as an employer and helps international employees adjust to their new environment.

The recruitment strategy is in line with other policies relating to the employment of disadvantaged persons, which is reflected, for example, in the establishment of the Equal Opportunities Board and the creation of the Equal Opportunities Plan.

Our OTM-R strategy promotes favourable working conditions. The effort to obtain the best talents on the labour market is a natural impetus for improving working conditions (leading to the above activities).

Advertisements in the new application are displayed uniformly with clearly defined parameters. Displaying advertisements on servers such as Researchjobs or Euraxess also requires a uniform presentation. Advertisements on the CU career pages (internally or on the external advertising portal jobs.cz) are similarly displayed in a uniform fashion.

On the CU career pages, applicants can find in the published advertisements links to important sources of information about CU (such as benefits, support for employees, etc.) or materials for participating in selection procedures.

The individual faculties are mainly responsible for using the Euraxess portal. We are gradually striving to make better use of all of the available options in the portal.

For recruitment, we use several platforms – the CU career pages, the job portals jobs.cz and práce.cz, Researchjobs, Euraxess, or other individual activities of the faculties.

We reduce the administrative burden for applicants by expanding the digitalization of processes. Applications for selection procedures can be submitted electronically, and it is also possible to conduct interviews remotely.

The Competitive Hiring Process Code defines the conditions for the creation and configuration of the selection committees.

Selection committees are organized mainly with regard to expertise. However, other criteria are taken into account with regard to the seniority, gender, and nationality of members of the selection committees. A new unified application will make it easier to monitor the structure of the selection committees.

Selection of the best candidate is based on the rules of the selection procedures described in detail in the Competitive Hiring Process Code, and the selection committee is required to follow these rules.

At the end of the selection process (for unsuccessful candidates, this may already be in progress), the selection committee immediately informs all candidates about the result of the selection procedures.

If a candidate is interested in feedback on participation in the selection process, information is provided about their strengths and weaknesses.

At the faculty level, statistics are kept regarding selection procedure complaints. However, there is no unified mechanism for resolving selection procedure complaints. The newly established



position of university ombuds and faculty ombudspersons makes it possible for candidates to contact these persons with their complaints.

A system for evaluating compliance with the conditions of the OTM-R principles during the selection of employees has not been officially established at CU. However, the Competitive Hiring Process Code clearly specifies the obligations and rules for the entire selection process.

4. Implementation

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

The pace of implementation process for the HRS4R action plan was varied. Most of the points in the action plan were fulfilled. As in the previous period, a Steering Committee and a Working Group composed of representatives from all faculties and some of the units, which met on a regular basis, were used for the continuous evaluation and control of fulfilling the activities aimed at maintaining the HR Award. The process most often took place in such a way that the implementation team in cooperation with the managers of activities (see below) proposed a solution, and in most cases, in cooperation with other colleagues, guarantors of the individual measures. The proposal was then submitted to the Steering Committee, and its suggestions were incorporated. Subsequently, it was sent to the entire Working Group, i.e. to the contact persons at each faculty, who could submit suggestions or comments. After an agreement was reached and the comments were incorporated, the documents were discussed and/or approved by other bodies. The first body was always the Rector’s Board, which also discussed and approved the six-month and annual implementation of the action plan, the Extended Rector’s Board, where the results were communicated to the management of units. Selected topics were continuously discussed according to the agenda with the faculty secretaries or the vice-deans, and their initiatives operatively influenced the form and implementation of these activities. The members of the implementation team are in close contact with the university management. The implementation team meets once every two weeks and is led by the vice-rector for strategy and development. The steps can thus be consulted and have the support of the university management.



Implementation of the priorities of the action plan is also supported financially, for example, from the Programme for the Support of Strategic Management at Charles University or operational programmes.

It is clear from the evaluation that it was not possible to follow the established schedule, but the goal was to finish the tasks or to fulfil them as much as possible by the end of 2023. For more details, see section “3. Assessment of the measures for the 2021–2023 action plan and proposed measures 2024–2026” or their attachments. If a goal was not met, the activity was taken up again



(this was mostly connected to new goals in a specific area) and included in the new 2024–2026 action plan.

An example is IT support – whether it involves an application to support selection procedures, which is still only in the pilot phase at several faculties, or, as seen during implementation, the creation of a unified application to support the evaluation of academic staff, researchers, and lecturers or administrative staff. The same was true for mobility records. This is why a working group was established for supporting the development of IT systems for the HR area, including those that fall under the HRS4R action plan, and which meets once a month and regularly informs the university management about progress or ongoing problems in this area. The new CU management also established the new position of vice-rector for information technology who is responsible for this development.

During the 2021–2023 period, as in the previous period, the members of the working groups participated in training and the exchange of experiences related to the issue of maintaining the HR Award, for example, a meeting organized by the Czech Academy of Sciences in 2023 or meetings with partners in the 4EU+ Alliance concerning individual topics of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. The Staff Welcome Centre team also went to European universities (Uppsala in Sweden or Toledo in Spain) for inspiration. The exchange of experience was valuable not only in the area of HRS4R policy and maintaining the HR Award, but also, for example, in the area of onboarding international researchers.

Involved bodies and departments

Steering Committee

Name	Unit
Josef Fontana	Chair, Vice-Rector for Strategy and Development
Kateřina Grygarová	PhD student
Lenka Henebergová	Member of the Rector's Board for Social Affairs and Sustainable Development
Adéla Jiroudková	Head of the Research Support Office of the CU Rectorate
František Lukáš	Head of Human Resources and Payroll Office of the CU Rectorate
Martin Maňásek	Bursar
doc. Radek Skarnitzl	Faculty of Arts
prof. Petr Solich	Faculty of Pharmacy
Věra Šťastná	Head of Department of Analyses and Strategies of the CU Rectorate
prof. Jan Trlifaj	Faculty of Mathematics and Physics

**Working Group**

Name	Unit
Jana Ferbyová	Catholic Theological Faculty
Mgr. Pavel Moskala, Th.D.	Protestant Theological Faculty
doc. PhDr. Jiří Pavlík, Ph.D.	Hussite Theological Faculty
Bc. Iveta Zichová	Faculty of Law
Ing. Petra Bernardová – Eva Janovská	First Faculty of Medicine
Jitka Bendová	Second Faculty of Medicine
prof. MUDr. Hana Malíková, Ph.D.	Third Faculty of Medicine
Ing. Daniela Vyzrálová	Faculty of Medicine in Pilsen
Ing. Gabriela Hrubecká	Faculty of Medicine in Hradec Králové
prof. PharmDr. Tomáš Šimůnek, Ph.D.	Faculty of Pharmacy in Hradec Králové
doc. Mgr. Radek Skarnitzl, Ph.D.	Faculty of Arts
Ing. Kateřina Konečná	Faculty of Science
prof. RNDr. Jan Trlifaj, CSc., DrSc.	Faculty of Mathematics and Physics
Mgr. Ivana Metelková	Faculty of Education
Bc. Angelika Hájková	Faculty of Social Sciences
Eva Snížek	Faculty of Physical Education and Sport
Mgr. Jan Tuček, Ph.D.	Faculty of Humanities
Ondřej Rydval, M.A., Ph.D.	Centre for Economic Research and PhD Studies
prof. PhDr. Petr Svobodný, Ph.D.	Institute of the History of Charles University and Archive

Implementation Team

Name	Unit
Josef Fontana	Chair, Vice-rector for strategy and development
Lenka Henebergová	Member of the Rector's Board for Social Affairs and Sustainable Development
Věra Šťastná	Head of the Rectorate's Department of Analyses and Strategies
František Lukáš	Head of the Rectorate's Human Resources and Payroll Department
Tereza Smužová	Rector's Office
Zuzana Poláková	Head of the CU Point
Iveta Bayerová	CU Point - Equal Opportunities Agenda Coordinator



Simona Teplá	Head of the CU Point - Staff Welcome Centre
Nikola Burkovská	Rectorate's Human Resources and Payroll Department
Jana Lungová	Rectorate's Human Resources and Payroll Department
Martin Zelenka	Rectorate's Department of Analyses and Strategies

Other bodies and departments and their involvement

Stakeholder	Involvement
<p>Rector</p> <p>The highest official of academic self-government; she heads the university.</p>	<p>The Rector was informed on a regular basis of the individual steps of implementation and commented on them.</p>
<p>Rector's Board</p> <p>The Rector's permanent advisory body, which meets approximately once a week. It consists of vice-rectors, the Head of the Rector's Office, the Bursar, the Chair of the CU Academic Senate, student representatives, and several other members entrusted with a certain agenda.</p>	<p>Members of the Rector's Board were part of teams that prepared materials for the individual steps falling within their agenda. Subsequently, they submitted these materials to the entire Rector's Board for approval. In addition, the board was regularly informed of the status of implementing the action plan and any risks or obstacles.</p>
<p>Extended Rector's Board</p> <p>The Rector's permanent advisory body, which meets approximately once a month. It consists of members of the Rector's Board, deans of faculties, and directors of other units of the university.</p>	<p>Thanks to the documents submitted to the Extended Rector's Board, it was possible to inform the management of all faculties and other units of the key steps for HRS4R implementation and, in particular, to ensure coordination throughout the entire institution.</p>
<p>Meeting of Secretaries</p> <p>The Bursar's permanent advisory body, which mainly discusses economic and operational issues. It consists of the secretaries of all faculties.</p>	<p>Thanks to the documents submitted to this body, the specific steps for HRS4R can be discussed more efficiently and transferred directly to the faculties, e.g. to economists, deans, or HR employees. In addition, this board provides important feedback on individual activities and the possibilities for their implementation.</p>
<p>Academic Senate of Charles University</p> <p>There are 70 members, of which 34 are students and 36 are academics. The members are elected by the academic</p>	<p>All changes to the internal regulations and the strategic documents of the university have been submitted to the Academic Senate. The Senate was also informed of the steps that await the university in connection with maintaining the award. It discusses the action plan and</p>



<p>community. The senate is responsible for primary decision-making, elects the Rector, and approves the budget, internal regulations, and the strategic plan of the university.</p>	<p>its fulfilment every year. It discusses and approves the new HRS4R Action Plan 2024–2026 and will also discuss this self-evaluation report.</p>
<p>Ombudsperson</p>	<p>The job of the ombudsman is to protect the rights of students and employees in situations in which their interests and justified claims may be, are or have been jeopardized as a result of inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour, conflict situations, inactivity on the part of University bodies, and so on. In HRS4R she is involved in actions connected with cultivating of a system for the protection of employees' rights at CU.</p>
<p>Human Resources and Payroll Office of the CU Rectorate</p> <p>Its main role is methodology and coordination throughout the university.</p>	<p>The head is a member of the Steering Committee. Employees of the HR department participated mainly in implementation work relating to recruitment and HR administration, for example, the HR information system WhoIs.</p>
<p>Rectorate's Student Affairs Department, in particular, the Doctoral Studies Office</p>	<p>The head of the Doctoral Studies Office was mainly involved in all steps relating to PhD students, especially their education and keeping them better informed.</p>
<p>Research Support Office, especially the Rectorate's European Centre</p> <p>It sets out research strategies, prepares internal grant schemes, and assists with project applications as a part of national and international grant schemes</p>	<p>The head is a member of the Steering Committee. As a part of HRS4R, the staff dealt mainly with the education of academics, the support of grant opportunities, steps to increase the success rate of grant submissions and good practice in research. They prepared a new round of internationally guaranteed evaluations of research work at CU. The Committee for Research Ethics and Postdocs also falls under their purview.</p>
<p>CU Point, especially the CU Staff Welcome Centre</p> <p>Information, counselling, and social centre offering services to students, alumni, and employees</p>	<p>We mainly consulted the staff of the CU Staff Welcome Centre about the situation with respect to international employees, opportunities for recruiting them, as well as the services offered both to international employees joining CU and to the administrative staff of the faculties (e.g., visas, taxes, etc.). CU Point is also responsible for the agenda of gender equality and sustainable development.</p>
<p>Department of Analyses and Strategies</p> <p>It handles the preparation of analytical documents used to determine the university's strategy for further development and the formulation of its goals in the medium and long term, preparation of documents for the assessment of fulfilling these goals,</p>	<p>It took on a coordinating role in the implementation of; HRS4R. In addition, it ensured that the measures and goals of the action plan were included in the university-wide strategy, or vice versa.</p>



preparation of the main strategic documents of the university, including the assessment of their fulfilment.	
Central Library In addition to coordinating the regular library and information agenda, it is in charge of Open Access, open science, and data management.	The employees of the Central Library, especially the Centre for the Support of Open Science, participated in activities relating to the methodological management of the faculties, preparation of methodological materials, support in preparing the data management plan, and the administration of research data.
Computer Science Centre Its agenda includes all IT infrastructure and information systems.	The Computer Science Centre develops all changes in the HR information system.
DPO Personal data protection officer at CU	She is responsible for the entire agenda regarding implementation of the GDPR at CU, including complaints. As a part of HRS4R, she is involved in particular in handling personal data as a part of research data management and in the HR area.
Administrative staff at the faculties, especially HR staff	The HR staff at the faculties are those who actually prepare and participate in the evaluation of academic staff, administer selection procedures, and work with the HR information system. Thus, they were an essential consulting group and those who actually implemented the steps at the faculties.
Academic staff and researchers	In addition to their involvement in the Steering Committee, the Working Group, and the bodies described above, they participated in ad hoc consultation groups on the individual implementation steps, and they participated in a survey. Some of them turned to us with suggestions and comments, which we then used for the next steps.

How have you prepared for the internal review?

We started with the materials collected during the entire three-year implementation of the 2021–2023 action plan. In a number of cases, they overlapped with the [Strategic Plan \(2021–2025\)](#). First of all, we evaluated the current implementation of the action plan and collected ideas for the new action plan. We fulfilled the priorities of the action plan as a part of various strategic projects – the Operational Programme Science, Research, and Education and its successor the Operational Programme Jan Ámos Komenský, the National Recovery Plan and the programme established for the period 2021–2025 by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports to support the management of higher education institutions. Projects taken up with our partners from the 4EU+ Alliance contributed an international dimension. As described above (at the end of Part II), implementation



of the action plan and the priorities for the new plan were also influenced by conditions at the national level.

The ideas for the new action plan came from the initiatives of the members of the HR Award Steering Committee, as well as the HR Award Working Group consisting of representatives from all faculties for the area of HRS4R, fulfilling the priorities of the strategic plan, and implementing strategic projects (see above). Important suggestions were also obtained through the university's bodies, especially the two Rector's Boards and the Meeting of Secretaries. In addition, meetings with HR employees offered valuable input directly from the faculties.

During 2019/2020, an internal internationally guaranteed evaluation of research work took place at Charles University, which also contributed a number of recommendations. Other input included the results of surveys that we carried out among the CU staff in selected areas relating to implementation of the 2021–2023 action plan (e.g. feedback on the grant support provided or hiring and assisting international employees).

Hence, initiatives from various groups were gathered and processed by the implementation team and then discussed within the departments of the Rectorate or the units responsible for implementing the action plan and other selected administrative staff of the Rectorate. Subsequently, they were commented on by the members of the HR Award Steering Committee and Working Group. After approval by the Rector's Board, the new action plan was consulted with the Equal Opportunities Board, and the faculties or other units could comment on it by way of the Extended Rector's Board, in which all deans and department directors are represented. The proposals were then discussed and approved again by the Rector's Board and the Academic Senate of Charles University.

How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?

Academic staff and researchers were involved at several levels (see above). In addition, surveys were carried out at different levels according to topics and target groups, for example:

- Employee satisfaction as a part of the equal opportunities audit (all CU employees were contacted)
- A survey for postdoctoral fellows regarding the services offered,
- A survey for employees who came to CU from abroad and used SWC services (2023)
- A 2021 nationwide survey of PhD students where the material facilities for PhD students were evaluated; the survey was carried out by the Ministry of Education,
- A survey in the area of settings for career principles and evaluation, services of the Staff Welcome Centre for employees who came to CU from abroad and grant support at CU (2023).

The results from these surveys were incorporated into the individual measures of the action plan and were considered during their implementation and taken into account when preparing the new HRS4R action plan. In addition, in the area of grant support for example, it became clear that many researchers do not know about the Rectorate's comprehensive project consultancy service. As part of reforming project support (REFRESH), CU will work towards making university-wide



services more widely known and used. In addition to the lack of information, researchers mentioned the need for a team approach and adequate administrative support in obtaining projects, too much bureaucracy or the fact that, even though the whole process is very demanding, applicants are often not valued for obtaining the grants for the workplace. A certain “oversaturation” with other grant schemes, especially from operational programmes, also played a role.

Through representatives of the faculties in the Working Group, the university approached the units during the second half of the year to communicate what they had assessed as positive development in the activities connected with the 2021–2023 action plan, what they did not succeed in doing, and what the next period should entail. All faculties participated. They assessed the implementation of measures for HRS4R as being positive overall, e.g. changes connected to implementation of university-wide framework principles for career development and employee evaluations, the subsequent evaluation of workplaces and employees, and university-wide methodological support. The introduction of the position of ombuds at Charles University and the faculty ombudspersons was also evaluated positively, and more emphasis was placed on internationalization, including the translation of relevant documents and the creation of a bilingual environment.

On the contrary, the faculties stated that there was insufficient support for balancing work, private life, and family life, IT support, and the internal communication between the Rectorate and the units should be improved. The onboarding and exit process for employees should also be strengthened, and the activities dealing with PhD studies should be improved. All of the mentioned topics were incorporated into the new 2024–2026 action plan.

Academic staff and researchers were also involved in the preparation of the new action plan. The topics came from the initiatives of the members of the Steering Committee, the Working Group, fulfilling the priorities of the strategic plan, implementing strategic projects, the internal internationally guaranteed evaluation of research work (2019–2020), and the results of the above-mentioned surveys. Thus, suggestions from various groups of people at CU were gathered, and they were also involved in the subsequent processing of the data. The first proposal came from the implementation team, and it was discussed within the departments of the Rectorate or the units responsible for implementation of the action plan and other selected employees of the Rectorate. After approval by the Rector’s Board, it was commented on by the members of the Steering Committee and the Working Group and consulted with the Equal Opportunities Board and the faculties or other units (their management) through the Extended Rector’s Board. After this, the proposal was again discussed and approved by the Rector’s Board and finally by the CU Academic Senate.

Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?

The university did not change much from the past period with respect to the management or coordination structure, because it had proven to be effective. The Steering Committee and the Working Group of faculty representatives for HRS4R fulfilled their role. Included among the



university bodies with which implementation is regularly discussed was the Meeting of Secretaries, where all faculties are represented, and a meeting with HR staff, where representatives of all faculties are again invited.

As mentioned above, since support of the university management and faculty management is important, the Rector's Board and the Extended Rector's Board are also an integral part of the implementation committees. The importance of the involvement of university management and the faculties is underlined by the fact that the priorities of the action plan for HRS4R are incorporated into the strategic plan of the university.

As a part of the Rector's Board, the fundamental direction that Charles University will take in the areas covered by the HRS4R action plan at CU is discussed and approved. Consensus is then sought in the Extended Rector's Board with the management of the faculties and units (deans and unit directors).

As described above, the secretaries of the faculties play an important role in the implementation process. See also the sections "General overview of implementation", "How have you prepared for the internal review?", and "Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?".

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? For example, is the HRS4R recognized in the organisation's research strategy, overarching HR policy?

These priorities and goals have been incorporated into the strategic plan of the university from the start of the activities associated with implementing the HRS4R measures and maintaining the HR Award. As mentioned in the previous point, both documents are interrelated, and the priorities set out in them influence each other. What needs to be done as a part of the activities connected with implementation of the HRS4R priorities affects the priorities of CU's strategic plan and incorporating them into the implementation plans each year. These are, for example, activities in part I of the strategic plan dedicated to the people at the university (The best people make the best university) or part II dedicated to academic work and research at CU (Research capable of competing at an international level), similarly to part V (Unity in diversity – united under a brand, united by principles), e.g. as a part of the activities relating to the digitalization of agendas and the building of an IT infrastructure or the area of sustainable development, etc. Thanks to this, coordination is ensured between the university's direction, especially in the area of human resources development, strategy in research, open science, academic integrity, and PhD studies, its equal opportunities policy, social security, or its action plan in the area of sustainable development and HRS4R action plans.

Financial resources are allocated for the implementation process, especially as a part of the Programme for the Support of Strategic Management and Operational Programmes, where one of the indicators is maintenance of the HR Award.



The same as in previous periods, the university has a web page for [HRS4R](#), which is linked to the university's career pages.

How has your organisation ensured that the proposed actions would be also implemented?

The measures associated with the HR Award are part of CU's strategic plan 2021–2025. A relevant member of the university management is responsible for fulfilling each priority of the strategic plan. Hence, a member of the university management is designated for each HRS4R measure.

The Bursar and Vice-Rector for Strategy and Development are responsible for the overall implementation of HRS4R.

In addition to the member of the university management in charge of a specific activity, a professional guarantor is appointed at the working level from among the heads of respective departments of the Rectorate or the directors of support units (e.g. the Central Library or the Computer Science Centre), who is the de facto manager for fulfilling the relevant HRS4R measure. They communicate with the management and the units, monitor the implementation schedule, resolve any problems, etc.

An important role in implementing the activities connected with the HR Award is played by the implementation team, which consists of representatives from various departments of the Rectorate responsible for the most important parts relating to implementation of HRS4R policy consistently with maintenance of the HR Award – the head of the HR and Payroll Department, the head of the Rectorate's Research Support Office and the European Centre, the Secretary of the Equal Opportunities Board, the head of the Staff Welcome Centre, the head of CU Point, which takes care of the well-being of employees, the head of the Department of Analyses and Strategies, which handles compliance of the most important strategic documents (the strategic plan and the annual implementation plans) and the HRS4R action plan, and the overall coordination of activities, etc.

As mentioned above, the university bodies also have an important function in implementing the activities of the HRS4R action plan, and where individual activities or ongoing implementation is discussed. These are mainly the two Rector's Boards and the Meeting of the Secretaries of the faculties. The annual performance of tasks is then presented and discussed with the CU Academic Senate. Meetings with HR professionals at the faculties also proved to be very useful. For more details, see the sections "General overview of implementation", "How have you prepared for the internal review?" and "Do you have an implementation committee and/or steering group regularly overseeing progress?".

We also try to get feedback from researchers themselves. For more details, see the section above "How have you involved the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?".

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?



Every six months, a report on implementation of the action plan is submitted to the Rector's Board. This report is created in cooperation with the Steering Committee and the Working Group for implementing the measures of the HRS4R action plan, in which all faculties are represented.

The annual report on implementation of the action plan is then submitted to the CU Academic Senate for discussion.

How will you measure progress (indicators) in view of the next assessment?

Indicators are set in the action plan individually for each measure. Every six months, a report on implementation of the action plan for the past period is submitted to the Rector's Board. This report is created in cooperation with the Steering Committee and the Working Group for implementing the measures of the HRS4R action plan, in which all faculties are represented.

A number of indicators are incorporated into the indicators and goals of Charles University's strategic plan and its implementation plans, the fulfilment of which is also evaluated annually.

The annual report on implementation of the action plan for the past year is then submitted to the CU Academic Senate for discussion.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?

We have prepared ourselves through a rigorous, critical, and open self-evaluation based on the study of existing materials and a discussion in which both the HR Award committee and the university bodies were involved. During the assessment and self-evaluation, we also asked representatives of the faculties what they did best in fulfilling the HRS4R policy associated with the HR Award, what did not go well, and what should be present in the new 2021–2023 action plan. We carried out several surveys, e.g., how researchers and academic staff perceived project support, the assistance of the Staff Welcome Centre in the case of international employees, or the evaluation of employees.

In the preparation of the self-evaluation report and in the future preparation for external evaluations, we took advantage of and will continue to take advantage of our experience, for example, from two international evaluations by the European University Association – Institutional Evaluation Programme (in 2018 and 2020) or the internationally guaranteed evaluation of research work at CU (2020). The evaluation by the National Accreditation Bureau as part of the process of obtaining institutional accreditation (2017–2018) or the evaluation of the university by the National Accreditation Bureau for Higher Education, which took place in 2023, contributed to the university's capacity for critical self-reflection. This evaluation has always assisted the university in developing its new strategy in a specific area or the strategic plan. The same will be the case for evaluation of the action plan for fulfilling the university HRS4R connected to maintaining the HR Award. Charles University would like to be a strong university in the European Research Area, and therefore an independent "European" view of its HR policy in science and research is very valuable. The university would like to apply the results of the evaluation and the new HRS4R action plan 2024–2026 in preparing its 2026–2030 strategic plan, which will begin at the end of 2024/beginning of 2025.



Annexes:

Implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan – 2021-2023

Draft HRS4R Action Plan – 2024-2026