



Human Resources Strategy For Researchers - HRS4R



Human Resources Strategy for Research – HRS4R at the Institut de Recherche pour le Développement

Internal review
Revised action plan 2022-2024



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

CONTENTS

Monitoring and steering of the 2020-2021 action plan	2
Methodology for the internal review	2
Internal review.....	3
Professional responsibility and ethics	3
Recruiting	5
Working conditions	6
Training and professional development.....	7
2022-2024 Action plan.....	7

Monitoring and steering of the 2020-2021 action plan

During the initial phase of the process, a cross-disciplinary project team was created with the involvement of the Institute's 3 divisions. Three task officers were designated to refer respectively to the Mission for Research Evaluation and Programming (MEPR, Science Division), the department of Human Resources (HR, Support Division), and the Department of European and International Affairs (SAE, European Affairs Office, Development Division). Since being awarded the HRS4R label, the project team continues to follow up on progress made on actions each semester, with bilateral meetings or group workshops on actions needing redirection.

A steering committee consisting of the General Secretary, the Mission for Research Evaluation and Programming task officer (MEPR, Science Division), the head of Human Resources (HR, Support Division) and, the head of the Department of European and International Affairs (DRIE, Development Division) meets each semester to oversee progress on the plan. They find solutions for any obstacles, and to relay information to supervising staff responsible for the teams that carry out the actions. The steering committee is also responsible for alerting the institution to the possible consequences that change in workplace policy and environment.

Methodology for the internal review

In order to follow up on planned actions and maintain the coherence of new actions, the HRS4R project team has kept in contact with the different actors involved in the 2020–2021 action plan:

- **Focal points:** Individual interviews were organised with action advisers to discuss progress on the actions carried out, identify those actions which could be renewed and improved upon, and envision new actions.
- **Cross-disciplinary groups:** In order to maintain coherence between the different actions taken, cross-disciplinary groups were established around the topics of ethics, deontology, and scientific responsibility, Career development, Optimising scholarships for the Global South

The project team met with the cross-disciplinary groups to discuss progress on the actions that were carried out, to identify those actions which could be renewed and improved upon, and to envision new actions.

- **Managers of the human resources department :** concerned by 60% of the actions of the plan, le HR Departement (managers and focal points) participated in two collaborative workshops during which new actions were identified and prioritized, some actions have been improved or extended, and all the actions have been planned over 3 years.
- **Researchers :** The project team regularly reported progress on the action plan to the heads of the 5 different scientific departments. The HRS4R process was presented and discussed by the sectoral scientific commissions (CSS) consisting of the scientific directors responsible for the recruitment and evaluation of permanent researchers, whose term began at the end of 2020. A specific communication plan with multiple articles was created and published in the HR and institutional newsletters, presenting the HRS4R label process and shedding light on planned actions. Towards the end of 2021, a survey was given to all researchers (doctoral students, research managers and directors) to assess their knowledge of the label and allow them to self-report on different principles of the research charter and the priority of planned actions.

The discussion of focal points allowed the cross-disciplinary groups and the HR and project groups to carry out an assessment of the 2020–2021 action plan and build a new plan.

Le plan révisé 2022- 2024 a été présenté au comité technique d'établissement public (CTEP) le 3 décembre 2021 et au conseil d'administration le 17 décembre 2021.

Internal review

Since obtaining the HRS4R label, the IRD's organisational policies have been significantly realigned with the label's principles, either through changes in national regulations or through directions laid out by the Institute's new governance in its executive mission statement or in the future objectives contract, certain elements of which directly echo HRS4R objectives.

- Methods to highlight our unique fair partnership model with the Global South and French overseas departments
- Setting policy in favour of early-career researchers
- Implementing the 'gender equality in the workplace plan' and working towards a plan to combat discrimination
- Supporting open science for development
- Committing to job and skill management and a dynamic HR policy.
- Supporting a quality of workplace life policy

Several of these larger objectives, such as promoting open science or policies in favour of early-career researchers, go beyond the boundaries of the institution's HR policy and are pertinent to all levels of the institution. Some of these objectives have led to the creation of specific task forces with multi-year action plans (for open science, job and skill management, and deontology), pertaining either to gender equality in the workplace, quality of work life, or open science.

Professional responsibility and ethics

STRENGTHS

The institute has strengthened its means and initiatives for open science in regard to concerning researchers' accountability in terms of scientific production during their missions.

The development of open science (research, publication, and data) has been one of IRD's clearly stated priority goals for the last 2 years. A task force specifically focusing on open science was created in 2020. An ambitious roadmap has been created, along with an action plan divided into 4 principal areas: Open Government, Open Science, Open Innovation, and Open Education. An on-line tool to help researchers with valorising data (DATA Suds) was also set up in 2019.

The Institute commitment to scientific integrity and ethics has been strengthened significantly. The Institute reinforced its approach towards ethics with the establishment of the Ethics Advisory Committee for Research Conducted in Partnership [CCERP - Comité consultatif éthique pour la recherche en partenariat] in 2018 and by joining INRAE-CIRAD-IFREMER Ethics Advisory Committee at the beginning of 2020. The creation in 2021 of a deontological task force attached directly to the Governance (consisting of a scientific integrity specialist, a deontological whistle-blower, and a mediator) will allow these subjects to reach the attention of higher levels of administration.

Regarding **biodiversity and benefit-sharing**, the Institute has pursued and strengthened its implementation of the Nagoya Protocol with continued training and communication for researchers. This includes access and benefit-sharing (ABS) clauses in all research contracts signed by partners. A Nagoya committee guides the application of protocol within the Institute and in cooperation with

other research organisations, with the principal task of assisting researchers in their ABS procedures, especially by offering support in the drafting of administrative documents.

The Institute is committed to the implementation of the Research Fairness Initiative (RFI). The RFI is an educational organisational tool, which encourages research institutions to describe the ways in which they will take action to create reliable, sustainable, transparent, and efficient partnerships in research and innovation, and how they can improve their procedures.

In 2020, IRD also adopted an environmental roadmap in order to address local and national environmental issues with 5 main axes travel, use of technology and digital resources, energy and heritage optimisation, consumables and services, and responsible research (impacts arising from scientific activity).

Valorisation, innovation and knowledge sharing

The procedure to identify and guide researchers in support of their commercialisation valorisation and innovation projects was strengthened locally by the creation of 3 regional innovation and commercialisation valorisation departments. A valorisation commercialisation, innovation and transfer of results training plan for researchers has been designed and implemented.

Transparency and feedback concerning IRD research

In addition to the measures that are already in place within the Institute institution, IRD is developing several digital tools which will significantly simplify the process and improve the quality of support provided to researchers in their accountability duties (for example, laboratory logbooks and digital timesheet follow-up tools).

Furthermore, the IRD has implemented new procedures in accordance with financial conflict of interest (FCOI) policy for research projects financed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NIH is a research firm belonging to the United States Department of Health and Human Services which sets forth a series of policies on potential conflicts of interest for organisations that receive research funding.

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WEAKNESS

Certain changes within the Institute's organisation (departure of the integrity specialist in early 2021) delayed the implementation of planned actions linked to issues of ethics and professional accountability. The creation of the deontology task force in 2021 will allow actions driven by the HRS4R programme to proceed in a coordinated fashion and ensure their long-term sustainability.

Recruiting

STRENGTHS

Access to information on open research positions has been made easier for all researchers. The circulation of published job offers has been improved, including temporary research positions: a new, more modern and attractive page for applicants entitled 'Working Together' has been added to the IRD website, on which all open positions are published in both English and French. Open research positions are published on Euraxess, and some are also published on specialised scientific sites or professional networks (Linkedin).

A communication plan (information meetings, specific information for the internal website) has been established to promote Marie Curie individual scholarship opportunities for IRD researchers.

A significant effort made concerning under-represented groups

One of the major facets of the new Governance's roadmap is the 'reinforcement of policies to benefit young people'. The Institute has committed in particular to increasing the number of younger researchers recruited with funding from State subsidies. An assessment of the doctoral student population was carried out by the HR department in 2021, leading to the identification of possible levers to optimise hosting and integration conditions.

Abiding by the principles of workplace gender equality laid out in the action plan, the sectoral scientific commissions in charge of recruiting and evaluating permanent researchers were trained with respect to the effects of gender stereotypes in professional settings. This training will soon be extended to all professionals responsible for recruiting and signals the beginning of a closer collaboration on recruiting issues (criteria and process) between the HR department and the Science Division.

Over the last two years, IRD has committed to expanding its recruitment of disabled persons for scientific positions. In 2019, the Institute signed a disability convention with the State, committing to hire 25 disabled persons over the next 3 years, 15 of which are to be permanent positions. The HR department has carried out several communication and awareness campaigns targeting scientific decision-makers in order to facilitate scouting and hiring of disabled researchers.

WEAKNESSES

HR teams were strongly mobilised extremely occupied with in the management of the COVID crisis, causing the scheduled implementation of certain actions to be pushed back.

Hiring practices and guidance for temporary staff (project researchers, doctoral and postdoctoral fellows) still need improvement. The efforts made in the course of the first action plan will carry forward in the 2022–2024 plan.

Efforts still need to be made to ensure complete transparency in the hiring of permanent researchers (distinguishing between research topics and actual 'job descriptions') and the wider circulation of job descriptions (translating job offers into multiple languages has not yet become the norm). The spread of information concerning competitive applications is still too limited, and the delay between

publishing the offers and the due date for submitting applications is relatively short, making the process difficult for purely external candidates.

Working conditions

STRENGTHS

A confirmed willingness to improve researchers' quality of life in the workplace

This willingness is manifested by the creation of an ambitious plan for improving quality of work life over 4 years (2020–2023), based on the conclusions of a 2019 social audit. The plan accounts for 4 areas of improvement which are completely in line with HRS4R objectives:

Area 1 – Placing value on professional backgrounds and strengthening team spirit

Area 2 – Guidance and support for supervisors in their managerial activities

Area 3 – Taking care of personnel's health and seeking balance between work/private life

Area 4 – Developing innovative methods to improve QWL and monitor indicators

A specific effort has been made to improve communication with researchers about QWL issues through the implementation of a new web tool (currently being finalised).

A new expatriation guide for all researchers is being prepared. It will complete the module dedicated quality of work life (QWL) abroad included in the integration course for international Representatives.

Committed action for developing management skills

Researchers' awareness during management situations was strengthened by an added training module on QWL issues as part of the manager-training course (both superior and intermediary). A task officer for management development was recruited to work on strengthening the management chain and thereby improve researchers' working conditions.

Ensuring gender equality in the workplace

IRD has made considerable efforts of the 2019–2020 period to improve gender equality in the workplace. To achieve this goal, an action plan and measures were developed, establishing an institutional specialist, a monitoring team, and a steering committee. Measures are already being implemented, with a first assessment to be carried out at the end of 2022. A comparative situation report was published to provide more information on the gender equality data contained in the social audit.

Improving researchers' working conditions

In the implementation of its job and skill management initiatives (GPEC), the IRD has designed an action plan to improve the quality of support offered to researchers to carry out their tasks, by balancing out the distribution of human resources and aligning activities with those of other research institutions and providing better career guidance to staff in research assistance and support positions.

Remote working solutions such as those used during the COVID crisis have paved the way for the classic work-from-home model to evolve into something more ambitious in the coming years, allowing greater flexibility and better balance between professional and family life (with the possibility to go into work up to 3 days a week or work from another location).

WEAKNESSES

QWL communication centres still need to be completed and fine-tuned.

The issue of evaluating the impact that the different action plans undergoing implementation will have on researchers' working conditions (gender equality in the workplace, quality of work life, GPEC) is complex and much in-depth work remains to be done.

Training and professional development

STRENGTHS

Emphasis on career guidance for researchers

The capacity for welcoming newly hired personnel was strengthened and expanded thanks to the development of an online job integration process.

IRD wrote and circulated management guidelines detailing all of the rules and processes related to job mobility (internal, inter-institutional, and geographical, both inside and outside of Europe), conforming with national regulations and in line with the objectives of transparency and openness that the HRS4R label stands for.

The previous resources for career development and career pathway guidance has evolved into a 'career pathway support' task force in order to provide wider access to the HR department's job offers. The IRD also implemented a policy concerning job and skills management (GPEC) which has been overseen by a new HR task force since 2020. One of the goals of this process is to better anticipate and manage researchers' career paths, and offer support for professional mobility to provide more career opportunities while taking into account the needs of the Institute along with the wishes of its staff. Talent reviews have been implemented to help supervisors with this task.

A new and innovative training tool for researchers

A remote training platform has been set up to diversify training sessions offered (and also replace existing offers with new ones) and to adapt to researchers' need for flexibility. This platform will serve as a support in the implementation of many other current and future planned actions.

WEAKNESSES

Better coordination is still needed between HR, scientific departments and research units concerning issues of researcher mobility.

The implementation of a charter concerning temporary research staff was suspended while waiting for national regulations and guidelines to be published during the second semester of 2021.

2022-2024 Action plan

The results of the internal review as well as the 3-year projection work of the IRD's Human Resources Strategy for Research are clearly in line with the priority themes and objectives identified in 2019:

Themes	Objectives
Research and partnership ethics and	Facilitate individual ownership of ethical principles and professional responsibility

professional responsibility	Strengthen the support of researchers regarding accountability Increase efforts for the dissemination and transfer of research results
Recruitment	Strengthen the selection process Foster attractiveness at the European and international level
Working conditions/ Quality of life at work	Facilitate access to information and promote the "quality of work life" approach Strengthen the system for monitoring quality of work life Improve the researchers' working environment
Career development and supervision	Promote inter-institutional mobility in Europe as well as inter-sectoral mobility Strengthen the supervision and support of successful competitive application researchers Enhance and better support the professional development of researchers
Non-discrimination	Consolidate the Institute's non-discriminatory approach
Contractual staff	Improve the recruitment of contractual researchers Improve the supervision of PhD students

The 2022-2024 action plan presented in detail in the following chapter is therefore in line with the 2019-2020 plan while allowing adaptation to internal and external changes that have impacted the policy and activity of the institute over the past two years.

The IRD HRS4R 2022-2024 Action Plan



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

I. Research ethics and professional responsibility

Actions	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Facilitate individual ownership of ethical principles and professional responsibility			
1. Creation of a deontological task force attached to the Chairmanship with the appointment of three reference persons: deontological whistle-blower, scientific integrity referent and mediator	Beginning of 2022	Deontological task force leader	Scientific integrity and deontological roadmaps
2. Continuation of the Nagoya Committee and adaptation of the roadmap according to changes to the Nagoya Protocol, especially after the COP 15 on biodiversity	Fin 2024	MEPR	Continuation of a Nagoya ethics task officer, approval of the modified roadmap, Information circulated to department heads Number of training sessions carried out Revised website and internal communications pages
3. Strengthening communication concerning the Ethics Advisory Committee for Research in Partnership (CCERP), the deontological and scientific integrity reference persons, and the Committee on Ethics in Research Inrae-Cirad-Ifremer-IRD (C3E4).	End of 2023	MEPR	Number of presentation sessions organised for researchers by the CCERP
4. Promoting training offered on ethics, professional responsibility and partnered research	End of 2023	HR	Number of memos on available training Number of trainees enrolled (e-learning)
Strengthen the support of researchers regarding accountability			
5. Training for support staff and project investigators on technical and expenditure verification of research contracts, especially of European projects	End of 2022	Finance Department	Number of agents trained On-line training model created
6. Monitoring laboratory logbooks (or similar records) use and implementation of digital formats following CoSO (national Committee for Open Science) recommendations	End of 2024	Open Science Task Force	Number of research units involved in coherent laboratory logbook monitoring Evaluation by logbook inventory results Number of units taking first steps to digitise logbooks
7. Implementation of an operational tool for digital timesheets (especially for managing working hours for researchers involved in European projects)	End of 2023	Dep't for Development of Innovative	Number of research units using the tool

		Digital Use (DDUNI)	
Increase efforts for the dissemination and transfer of research results			
8 Implementation of the 2021–2024 Open Science action plan	End of 2024	Open Science Task Force	Intermediate assessments Reports from steering committee meetings
9. Researcher awareness and training concerning the use of the IRD's DataSuds open data repository	End of 2023	Scientific culture and technology task force (MCST)	Number of connections onto the on-line introduction to open science module Organisation of a complete training package (in-person and distance learning) including how to use the institution's archives Quantity of submitted data
10. Support for researchers concerning new open research activities (co-planning, co-design, co-production)	End of 2023	Science Division (SOC department)	Mapping open research activities in the Global South Number of guidance organisms for new open research activities receiving support (Colab, Fablab, etc.)
11. Researcher awareness and training concerning valorisation results transmission, and responsible innovation	Beginning of 2024	Dep't for Mobilisation of Research and Innovation for Development (DMOB)	Synchronisation and set-up of commercialisation valorisation training tools on the on-line platform Number of researchers trained Organisation of a webinar for researchers and task officers
12. Strengthening the scouting and local support process concerning research valorisation	Beginning of 2024	Dep't for Mobilisation of Research and Innovation for Development (DMOB)	Designation of valorisation referents in representative bodies Number of persons/projects supported

II. Recruitment

Actions	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Strengthen the selection process			
13. Implementation of an integrated Science/CSS/HR process which will allow to better evaluate the qualifications of competitive application candidates.	End of 2023	MEPR	Drafting a list of interdisciplinary skills to be given to the CSS Proposal of updated recruiting tools (application guidelines, report form and application portfolio to follow)

Foster attractiveness at the European and international level			
14. Improving visibility, transparency and circulation of job offers (including temporary positions)	Beginning of 2023	HR	Proposal of a new job offer format Systematic translation of competitive application offers Increase in number of offers published on the Euraxess List of new circulation channels for job offers
15. Promotion of the IRD's Marie Curie individual scholarship process and improvement of scholarship beneficiaries hosting conditions	Beginning of 2024	Dep't of Int'l and European Affairs (DRIE)	Training for post-doctorate early-career researchers on how to submit postdoc scholarship projects Guide and fact sheets Number of informational elements circulated via IRD Planet Number of projects submitted following the call for applications for individual Marie Curie scholarships
16. Optimise the researcher competitive application process	End of 2023	MEPR HR	Competitive application calendar revised Process for assigning researchers to a joint research unit revised
17. Test and optimise the junior professorship programme	Beginning of 2024	MEPR HR	Number of researchers recruited through the programme Implementation of an integration process
18. Work on aligning stipend policies with other public research institutions	Beginning of 2023	HR	Number of national working group meetings on research stipends

III. Working conditions/Quality of life at work

Actions	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Facilitate access to information and promote the "quality of work life" approach			
19. Communicating proper local practices on the dedicated QWL question page	End of 2022	HR	IRD Planet internal website updated
20. Expatriation guide update	End of 2022	HR	IRD internal webpage on expatriation developed and updated
Strengthen the system for monitoring quality of work life			
21. Integration of the social auditing tool within the steering of the QWL (quality of work life) policy	End of 2024	HR	Publication and analysis of gaps in results between three social audits
22. Strengthening Health and Quality of Work Life monitoring units	End of 2023	HR	New situation analysis tools for unit (absentee rates, surveillance of group issues)
23. Develop qualitative support for researchers and their families when working abroad	End of 2022	HR	Feasibility study

			(Benchmark, consultations with researchers) Number of communications on already existing resources Training modules offered
Improve the researchers' working environment			
24. Expand and relax remote working procedures	Beginning of 2022	HR	New remote working procedure
25. Co-construct and implement a charter on the right to disconnect	End of 2022	HR	Charter published and circulated
26. Implementation of a procedure for reporting violent, discriminatory, or sexist acts and harassment	Beginning of 2022	HR	Communication to staff as soon as the procedure is implemented

IV. Career, development and supervision

Actions	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Promote inter-institutional mobility in Europe as well as inter-sectoral mobility			
27. Getting researchers involved in opportunities for institutional or sectoral mobility (particularly in Europe)	End of 2022	DRH	Perspective on career development tools Link to the Euraxess site from the researcher career page Regular communication on researchers' career advancement through Zoom RH IRD tool (including the link to Euraxess)
Strengthen the supervision and support of successful competitive application researchers			
28. Optimising patronage for successful competitive application researchers	End of 2023	MEPR	Assessment of current procedure in connection with the CSS Revised and published patronage procedure
29. Implementation of follow-up procedures for newly hired successful applicants, carried out by HRMs (in conjunction with sponsors)	Beginning of 2022	HR	Number of follow-up interviews carried out by HRMs
Enhance and better support the professional development of researchers			
30. Developing career guidance tools for researchers	End of 2023	HR	Survey of researchers' needs Visual communication campaign on career development tools Set up a targeted communication plan on career path guidance for researchers
31. Consideration of the implementation of a professional interview upon request by researchers (professional interview different from peer review, within the parameters of the scientific commissions)	End of 2022	HR	Guideline memo

32. Promoting the distance training platform to researchers s	End of 2022	HR	Number of researchers who have participated in training via the platform
33. Develop researchers' HR and managerial skills in supervisory positions	End of 2023	HR	Recruitment of a task officer to guide management development Integration process implemented Forum for discussion of good practices implemented
34. Create a reference guide of key skills/cross-disciplinary skills for researchers	End of 2023	HR	Benchmark with other public research institutions Cross-disciplinary skill reference guide shared with scientific commissions
35. Optimise post-evaluation follow-up for researchers	End of 2022	HR MEPR Science Division	New follow-up procedure

V. Non-discrimination

Actions	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Consolidate the Institute's non-discriminatory approach			
36. Implementation of anti-discrimination training/awareness programme	End of 2023	HR	Implementation of an anti-discrimination module open to all staff Specific training for staff in hiring or evaluation positions Welcome process for a new employee with certified disability status
37. Increase hiring of disabled researchers	Beginning of 2024	HR	Drafting of procedure linked to article 27 Number of disabled researchers hired
38. Implementation of the workplace gender equality action plan	End of 2023	MEPR	Reports from steering committee meetings

VI. Contractual staff

Actions	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)
Improve the recruitment of contractual researchers			
39. Finalise the temporary staff charter and communicate with all relevant stakeholders (unions, leadership, and staff)	End of 2022	HR	Charter available on the internal website Number of internal communication actions Evaluation of the charter's implementation
40. Implementation of a minimum two-person interview system for all temporary research positions	End of 2022	HR	Update to the temporary staff charter New postdoc recruitment procedure

41. Secure recruitment for all doctoral candidates	End of 2022	HR	Systematisation of doctoral contracts Incorporation of a section dedicated to recruitment of doctoral students in the temporary staff charter
42. Strengthen collaboration between the HR department and project investigators financed by research contracts	End of 2023	HR	Fact sheets created
Improve the supervision of PhD students			
43. Promoting training to supervise doctoral students	End of 2024	HR	Incorporation of the action in the training programme Number of staff members trained
44. Optimisation of the recruitment and guidance process for scholarship recipients from the Global South (ARTS scholarship programme)	End of 2023	HR	Strengthening the educational environment and guidance for ARTS scholarship recipients Adjustment of the selection process Awareness of good practices (fairness and ethics) for early-career researcher supervisors