

# CIC bioGUNE

MEMBER OF BASQUE RESEARCH  
& TECHNOLOGY ALLIANCE

## Action Plan

HR Excellence in Research



Versión 0

Derio, May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2025

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## 1. CASE INFORMATION

CASE NUMBER: 2024ES229159

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PHASE: Initial

LETTER OF COMMITMENT SENDING DATE: April 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024

LETTER OF COMMITMENT CONFIRMATION DATE: May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The bioGUNE Research Centre (hereinafter referred to as **CIC bioGUNE**), a member of the Basque Research & Technology Alliance (BRTA), whose headquarters are in the Bizkaia Science and Technology Park, is a biomedical research organisation that carries out cutting-edge research at the interface between structural, molecular and cellular biology, with special emphasis on the study of the molecular basis of disease for use in developing new diagnostic methods and advanced therapies.

Our core mission is to conduct excellent research in the field of life sciences, covering the entire value chain of R&D&I, including technology transfer and the commercial exploitation of scientific results.

The cornerstone of the Centre's strategy is its commitment to specialisation and excellence. Its strategic challenges are:

- Excellence in research
- Technology transfer
- Collaboration with stakeholders in the Basque Science, Technology and Innovation Network (RVCTI)
- International recognition
- Training and retaining talent

- Communication and outreach
- Excellence in management
- Attracting and retaining talent

With regard to competitiveness, CIC bioGUNE is outstanding not only in its state-of-the-art infrastructures, technical and administrative support, attractive salaries and target-based incentives, but also in its human capital.

All this highlights how important selection processes are to CIC bioGUNE, in which it consistently guarantees its commitment to principles such as:

- Openness
- Transparency and
- Merit

### 3. BACKGROUND

The European Commission has developed a Human Resources strategy in the field of research, based on the 40 principles in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, with the aim of contributing to the development of a more attractive European labour market for research staff.

The label grants recognition to institutions that align with this strategy, allowing them to highlight their commitment to fair and transparent recruitment and evaluation procedures in the field of research.

It is a voluntary process requiring long-term commitment from institutions, which involves coordinated, joint efforts among various internal and external stakeholders.

Aware of the importance of these good practices in the field of Human Resources, CIC bioGUNE has initiated the process for obtaining the HR Excellence in Research label in order to continue improving and growing as a Centre. The aim is to obtain the accreditation in the first half of 2025.

This document contains the Action Plan drawn up by CIC bioGUNE which includes the different activities, derived directly from both the Gap Analysis and the OTM-R Policy, that must be carried out in order to advance from the current state to the target state in relation to the 40 principles of the Charter and Code.

## 4. ACTION PLAN

Divided into four sections, this Action Plan lays the basis for a process of management by objectives of the HR Excellence in Research and presents a strategic vision in terms of priority areas and actions to be implemented in the next 2 years.

### 4.1. Organizational information

First, a number of data from the Centre are shown, which serve as a frame of reference for this Plan:

Organizational information	
Staff and students	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research	164
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	39
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	5
Of whom are women	90
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor	36
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	64
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	64
Total number of students (if relevant)	0
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	245
Research funding (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	19.734.000
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	5.384.000
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	10.486.000
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	3.864.000

### Organizational profile

CIC bio GUNE, a member of the Basque Research and Technology Alliance (BRTA), is one of the main research institutions in Spain, recognised worldwide for its contributions to Life Sciences.

Its activity focuses on conducting pioneering multidisciplinary research at the intersection of chemistry, mathematics, biology and biomedicine, and its mission is to advance precision medicine by exploring the molecular mechanisms of disease.

The scientific and technical staff are organised into 19 research groups and six technology platforms, developing more than 120 projects a year.

#### 4.2. Strengths and weaknesses of current practice

Secondly, it provides an overview of CIC bioGUNE's strengths and weaknesses of current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and the Code:

### Strengths and weaknesses of current practice

#### Ethical and Professional Aspects

The average satisfaction rate was 7.74 on a scale of 0 to 10, above the overall average score for the Centre (7.40). This was the most highly rated heading, considered one of its greatest strengths.

Strengths: Of particular note in the staff survey as the most highly rated principles, above the company average, were *Good Practice in Research (principle 7)*, with a rating of 8.56, *Non-discrimination (principle 14)*, with 8.41, and *Dissemination, Exploitation of Results (principle 8)*, with 8.16.

The main conclusions obtained from the Working Groups' analysis of the above principles are:

- *Good Practice in Research (principle 7)*: Research staff are aware of the good research practice and familiar with the related information on the intranet/extranet, including the Safety Plans and Protocols. Its implementation is therefore correct.
- *Non-discrimination (principle 14)*: This principle is included in the CIC bioGUNE Equality Plan and is published on its website, hence its implementation is considered adequate. However, an issue with a Lactation Room arose, as its existence was not known to all members of the Working Group. For this reason, it is considered necessary to inform all staff officially of this space and include its location, access conditions, etc. in a document accessible to all interested parties.
- *Dissemination, Exploitation of Results (principle 8)*: Although the Centre has the technical and human resources to manage knowledge transfer and the manuals are published on the intranet/extranet, compliance with this principle requires constant monitoring. There is room for improvement with regard to commercialising results and training researchers in patent management and intellectual and industrial property rights.

Information is available on the subject, but it does not reach the research staff, which means better internal communication is required.

Weaknesses: The lowest rated principles in the staff survey, all below the company average (7.40), were *Evaluation/Appraisal Systems (principle 28)*, with 6.56, *Contractual and Legal Obligations (principle 5)*, with 6.88, and *Accountability (principle 6)*, with 7.15.

After the study by the corresponding Working Group, the following reflections are highlighted:

- *Evaluation/Appraisal Systems (principle 28)*: The principal investigators, subject to a three-year evaluation system by the *Scientific Advisory Board (SAB)*, and the Centre's management have a more or less approximate understanding of the aspects that may be covered in the assessment and the rating criteria. However the rest of the professional categories do not feel this evaluation system is clearly defined. They are unfamiliar with the objectives that can be achieved in each evaluation or the evaluation methodology. There is also no publicity regarding the three-yearly evaluations, which are linked to a rise in salary, nor the salary levels that are achievable in each case.
- *Contractual and Legal Obligations (principle 5)*: The Centre's staff often sign legal documents without paying much attention to their content (such as the Code of Ethics or the Annex to their employment contract), hence a lack of attention has been noted in this regard. In addition, information overload sometimes makes it difficult to discern and focus on important legal issues. There is also concern about keeping up to date with substantial changes in regulations that could directly affect the Centre's staff (such as doctoral regulations and the use of AI tools).
- *Accountability (Principle 6)*: Two areas were identified in the analysis of this principle: accountability on the part of the Administration and daily resource management by the laboratories. With regard to the first issue, proper financial management, in line with principles the Code of Ethics and the Code of Conduct, by the Administration was acknowledged. This is clearly shown by the Transparency Portal on the Centre's website, which is publicly accessible. With regard to daily laboratory management, this was thought to depend on the idiosyncrasies of each group, with the ethical criteria of each one having an influence on this point. Specifically, the poorer rating of this principle by technical staff and predoctoral researchers may be due to their lack of knowledge on these issues, which indicates a problem in communication and a need for awareness-raising work on the part of laboratory and/or platform managers (e.g. prudent use of laboratory resources when conducting experiments).

### Recruitment and Selection

The average satisfaction rate was 7.15 on a scale of 0 to 10, below the overall average for the Centre (7.40). This was the lowest rated heading, and is thus considered the most important area for improvement.

Strengths: Of particular note in the staff survey as the most highly rated principles, above the company average, were *Judging Merit (principle 35)* and *Recognition of Mobility Experience (principle 37)*, both with a score of 7.53.

The main conclusions obtained from the Working Groups' analysis of the above principles are:

- *Judging Merit (principle 35)*: This is a global assessment criteria for the Centre based on the Emaitek compliance indicators, which means the principle is fully implemented. In this regard, after adopting the DORA scientific assessment systems, publication metrics alone are no longer used; they also require a qualitative assessment, allowing for greater objectivity (both in form and content). In addition, all types of contributions are assessed in a researcher's individual assessment.
- *Recognition of Mobility Experience (principle 37)*: Since mobility is enriching, this principle is correctly fulfilled. Currently, mobility can even be reconciled with maternity and other forms of leave, accepting placements for shorter periods. Whatever the case, the recognition given to this aspect in each specific case depends on the terms and conditions of each grant.

Weaknesses: The lowest rated principles in the staff survey, all below the company average (7.40), were *Selection (principle 33)*, with 6.43, *Variations in the Chronological Order of CVs (principle 36)*, with 6.75, and *Seniority (principle 39)*, with 6.94.

After the study by the corresponding Working Group, the following reflections are highlighted:

- *Selection (principle 33)*: Selection processes are not carried out by a single selection committee, as the practice varies among the Centre's groups and services: in the laboratories, selection is carried out by the Principal Investigator, while the process is usually outsourced in the general services. With regard to the procedure, the Human Resources Management Procedure Manual is published on the CIC bioGUNE intranet/extranet, although it is largely unknown to staff as it has not been sufficiently disseminated. Furthermore, the latest version, which has not been updated on the intranet/extranet, includes a new Annex II, containing the "Document for Assessing Received Applications" to be completed by the staff members responsible for documenting the selection process. As it has not been updated, this new feature was not known until it was recently reported to those responsible for completing it. However, the manual does not include the assessment methodology or evaluation criteria used in staff selection. Finally, there is no training for managers in recruiting staff, so monitoring by an HR representative from the Centre is required before and during the selection process.
- *Variations in the Chronological Order of CVs (principle 36)*: Chronological variations in CVs are not penalised (CV versions in general, especially those based on professional qualifications, are standardised), hence, in general, this principle is met. The poor ratings may be due to problems with a certain maternity and paternity leave periods.
- *Seniority (principle 39)*: Firstly, with regard to the need for qualifications to match the position, there is a problem with over-qualification in some positions, an aspect that could have led to the poor ratings for the principle. Secondly, with regard to the need to ensure

fairness in selection while prioritising personal achievements over other criteria (such as bias based on coming from a particular training institution or research centre), although this is generally observed in the scientific area, in practice, it cannot always be avoided (e.g. Ramon y Cajal contracts give equal weight to placements in centres of excellence in Spain and abroad, which in effect introduces a prioritisation in the selection process). Finally, with regard to recognising seniority at the practical level, there is a general feeling that this is insufficient, in both financial and Career Plan terms.

### Working Conditions and Social Security

The average satisfaction rate was 7.28 on a scale of 0 to 10, below the overall average for the Centre (7.40). This is the second lowest rated heading and is thus also considered an area for improvement.

**Strengths:** Of particular note in the staff survey as the most highly rated principles, above the company average, were *Working Conditions (principle 16)*, with 8.16, *Recognition of the Profession (principle 13)*, with 8.04, and *Intellectual Property Rights (principle 24)*, with 7.93. The main conclusions obtained from the Working Groups' analysis of the above principles are:

- *Working Conditions (principle 16)*: There is a document on the intranet/extranet that contains the different measures for flexible working hours (including remote working) offered to staff by the Centre, which aim to balance employees' work, family and personal interests. However, it was noted that other documents with additional information have been drawn up that are not available on the intranet/extranet.
- *Recognition of the Profession (principle 13)*: The Centre recognises the profession of researcher at all stages and treats them accordingly, so the principle is correctly fulfilled.
- *Intellectual Property Rights (principle 24)*: A seminar on intellectual property rights is regularly organised to explain what it involves and the existing types. In short, it provides a general overview of the most relevant concepts and aspects of the subject. However, there is no specification of how the benefits are to be shared. All this is contained in the clauses of the Annex to the Employment Contract signed by new staff at the Centre. However, as this document is signed when joining CIC bioGUNE, it is not thought to be sufficiently well known, as people forget about it over time.

**Weaknesses:** The lowest rated principles in the staff survey, all below the company average (7.40), were *Career Development (principle 20)*, with 6.37, *Participation in Decision-making Bodies (principle 30)*, with 6.45, and *Access to Career Advice (principle 23)*, with 6.81.

After the study by the corresponding Working Group, the following reflections are highlighted:

- *Career Development (principle 20)*: There is a document that contains the career development for the various positions in the Centre, although its actual implementation is questioned. Likewise, there are numerous documents on the web which staff are unaware of, as they have either not been disseminated or only sparsely. For its part,

although there are mentors for Predoctoral Researchers – a figure known as Back Up Supervisor within the TAC (Thesis Advisory Committee) – the perception of this figure is that it is a scientific/technical support that does not offer personal advice in other fields (professional development, doubts about the functioning of the Centre, etc.). Finally, the professional career of technical staff is less well developed than that of research staff. However, work is being done in this area and various measures can be implemented (e.g. defining training plans, with special emphasis on languages, such as English), although the field is more limited.

- *Participation in Decision-making Bodies (principle 30)*: Staff are unaware of all the Centre's committees and their functions, despite most of the information being available on the intranet/extranet (still to be included are the Management Committee, the Company Committee and the Scientific Calculation Committee), which may lead to some groups thinking they are not represented in the decision-making bodies. In addition, staff members may occasionally think that their ideas or proposals do not reach the decision-making bodies, which makes them feel they are not being heard.
- *Access to Career Advice (principle 23)*: There is no systematic practice in this regard, as actions are isolated (such as: meetings with management and recently contracted principal investigators to exchange expectations; welcome breakfasts/coffees organised by the Training Committee (TC) for predoctoral researchers; and reports to be completed by the predoctoral researchers with a section on their professional future).

## Training and Development

The average satisfaction rate was 7.45 on a scale of 0 to 10, above the overall average for the Centre (7.40). This was the second most highly rated thematic heading and is thus a strength. Strengths: Of particular note in the staff survey as the most highly rated principles, above the company average, were *Relation with Supervisors (principle 10)*, with 7.80, and *Supervision (principle 26)*, with 7.70.

The main conclusions obtained from the Working Groups' analysis of the above principles are:

- *Relation with Supervisors (principle 10)*: The principle is fully implemented, thanks to the previously mentioned figure of the *Back-up Supervisor* in the *TAC (Thesis Advisory Committee)*. These are persons with the position of Principal Investigator or equivalent who act as mentors or advisors, monitor the theses of predoctoral staff and hold yearly meetings for this purpose. In addition, the predoctoral researchers must complete various reports and return them to the TAC/TC, leaving a record on a variety of issues. Finally, each laboratory has a Lab Notebook with each person's name. This provides a regular, detailed record of the results, the degree to which objectives are met and the progress made in order to monitor the work carried out.
- *Supervision (principle 26)*: This refers to the previous principle, *Relation with Supervisors (principle 10)*, as both principles are closely related, so everything discussed in the analysis is applicable.

Weaknesses: The lowest rated principles in the staff survey, all below the company average (7.40), were *Access to Research Training and Continuous Development (principle 22)*, with 7.10, *Continuing Professional Development (principle 12)*, with 7.31, and *Supervision and Managerial Duties (principle 11)*, with 7.33.

After the study by the corresponding Working Group, the following reflections are highlighted:

- *Access to Research Training and Continuous Development (principle 22)*: The different departments/and or laboratories try to promote training in their teams, although there is no systematic practice in this area. However, the courses provided are insufficient and take too long. It is important to note that, in the case of predoctoral researchers, all training aspects are highly regulated, thanks to the Training Committee (TC) responsible for their management. For its part, each year the Centre offers language courses, available to all staff members. Outside this field, other types of training may also be requested, although staff members are unaware of this.
- *Continuing Professional Development (principle 12)*: Despite offering regular seminars and lectures for staff in the Centre, mentioned was made in the previous principle on *Access to Research Training and Continuous Development (principle 22)* of formal training and online learning, as it is closely related and everything discussed in the analysis is applicable here.
- *Supervision and Managerial Duties (principle 11)*: In each department and/or laboratory the principal investigators organise regular meetings with their teams, including the predoctoral researchers. By doing so, they aim to build strong teams with positive relations that help achieve optimum results, while promoting knowledge transfer. Although the meetings are not regulated, they are necessary under the previously mentioned conditions, as otherwise the groups would not function and this would be reflected in the results, as measured by the various indicators. In this sense, the principal investigators fully realise that part of their work as team leaders involves acting as supervisors, mentors, professional advisors and communicators. These aspects are made clear from the start of their working relationship. If any of these functions are not carried out, the Centre has various ways for raising staff complaints.

## 4.3. Actions

Before starting with the list of actions, it should be noted that all HR Excellence in Research documentation has been published in an easily accessible place on the CIC bioGUNE website:

<https://www.cicbiogune.es/hr-excellence-research>

Now, thirdly, all the actions to be undertaken in the field of HR Excellence in Research within CIC bioGUNE to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap Analysis are listed.

The actions listed are concise and detailed, reflecting the ambition and commitment of the Centre, as well as the envisaged implementation process.

Actions				
Proposed Actions	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s)/Target(s)
- Redefine and design an evaluation system for all professional categories that will be shared with the entire workforce	- Evaluation/Appraisal Systems (principle 28)	Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026	- Scientific Management - People Management Department	- Assessments made - Publication of criteria
Addressing this principle first requires implementing the aspects established in the principle on Career Development (principle 20), as staff members need to know and understand their professional development in the Centre. Once the	- Access to Career Advice (principle 23)	Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026	- Scientific Management - Training Committee - Predoctoral Committee - Postdoctoral Committee	- Inquiries received - Conferences held

<p>above aspects have been completed, the following measures are proposed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a channel/space for dialogue, accessible to all groups, aimed at the professional development of research staff</li> </ul>		<p>Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From the Human Resources department, emphasise to new employees the need to carefully read the legal documents they accept/sign and those available on the intranet/extranet with regard to the other legal areas, after which Human Resources can answer any questions or doubts that arise (1)</li> <li>- Send legal communications via email to share new information and subsequently post it in a dedicated, visible repository on the intranet/extranet, thereby making it available to staff for future reference (2)</li> </ul>	<p>- Contractual and Legal Obligations (principle 5)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 (1) (2) Q3 2025 (1) (2) Q4 2025 (1) (2) Q1 2026 (1) (2) Q2 2026 (1) (2) Q3 2026 (1) (2) Q4 2026 (1) (2) Q1 2027 (1) (2) Q2 2027 (1) (2)</p>	<p>- People Management Department - Legal Area</p>	<p>- Emails - Onboarding packs for new staff</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include the role and functioning of the selection committees in the Human Resources Management Procedure Manual published on the intranet/extranet (<a href="#">link</a>), to subsequently communicate and disseminate this new</li> </ul>	<p>- Selection (principle 33)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 (1) (3) Q3 2025 (1) (3) Q4 2025 (2) (3) Q1 2026 (2) (3) Q2 2026 (3) Q3 2026 (3) Q4 2026 (3)</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Revised manual - Selection Guide - Assessment of completed applications</p>

<p>version among staff, and publish it on the intranet/extranet (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw up a simple guide that includes information, suggestions and/or advice on how to address a selection process in a more practical way, with the aim of providing guidance for staff in this field and establishing appropriate guidelines (2)</li> <li>- Monitor selection processes by Human Resources staff, based on information such as CVs and candidate assessment documents (3)</li> </ul>		<p>Q1 2027 (3) Q2 2027 (3)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sort existing documents on the Centre's intranet/extranet by topic and include a simple index to raise their visibility and make them easy to find, and subsequently communicate and disseminate this improvement among staff (1)</li> <li>- Analyse possible levels of development for technical staff (2)</li> <li>- Create a complementary role for the back-up supervisor, termed buddy, and offer guidance to new staff in choosing both, making it clear that this is an open</li> </ul>	<p>- Career Development (principle 20)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 (2) Q3 2025 (2) Q4 2025 (1) (3)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- IT Department</li> <li>- Scientific Management</li> <li>- Training Committee</li> <li>- People Management Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Contents</li> <li>- Career Development</li> <li>- Training Committee Manual</li> </ul>

process, free of imposition, which can be modified at any time (3)				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw up general and specific yearly training plans by department and laboratory (1)</li> <li>- Draw up a document on the Centre's training request procedure, communicate and disseminate it among the staff, and publish it on the intranet/extranet. This will also serve as a reference for Human Resources and the Training Officer in delivering an annual information session (2)</li> <li>- Include a training criterion in the assessment forms so that staff members' efforts and dedication in this area are taken into account (3)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Continuing Professional Development (principle 12)</li> <li>- Access to Research Training and Continuous Development (principle 22)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q3 2025 (3)</li> <li>Q4 2025 (3)</li> <li>Q1 2026 (1) (2) (3)</li> <li>Q2 2026 (1) (2)</li> <li>Q3 2026 (1) (2)</li> <li>Q4 2026 (1) (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scientific Management</li> <li>- People Management</li> <li>Department</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Training plan</li> <li>- Training manual</li> <li>- Assessment forms</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw up a guide to good practices that includes various recommendations and guidance related to this area, but from a more practical perspective, for subsequent communication and dissemination among staff, and publication on the intranet/extranet</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ethical Principles (principle 2)</li> <li>- Accountability (principle 6)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q4 2025</li> <li>Q1 2026</li> <li>Q2 2026</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- General Management</li> <li>- Scientific Management</li> <li>- Administration</li> <li>- Legal Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Manual of Good Practices</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send out emails reminding staff of the existence of the Ethics Channel available</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Professional</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2025 (1) (2)</li> <li>Q3 2025 (1) (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legal Area</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ethics Channel emails</li> <li>- AI protocol</li> </ul>

<p>in the Centre (<a href="#">link</a>), which is governed by various documents published on the intranet/extranet, and the Code of Ethics (<a href="#">link</a>) and its operation manual (<a href="#">link</a>) as a means of channelling any non-compliance in this area, including reviewing authorship attributions (1)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Draw up a protocol on the use of artificial intelligence and authorised tools, to be subsequently communicated and disseminated among staff, and published on the intranet/extranet (2)</li> </ul>	<p>Responsibility (principle 3)</p>	<p>Q4 2025 (1) (2) Q1 2026 (1) (2) Q2 2026 (1) Q3 2026 (1) (2) Q4 2026 (1) Q1 2027 (1) (2) Q2 2027 (1)</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Establish a cycle of continuous information on the platforms involved from project managers to research staff.</li> </ul>	<p>- Professional Attitude (principle 4)</p>	<p>Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scientific Management</li> <li>- R&amp;D Office</li> <li>- Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communications on the progress of projects to participants</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Include brief information on these points in the yearly seminar and remind staff that the full document is available on the intranet/extranet</li> </ul>	<p>- Dissemination, Exploitation of Results (principle 8)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026 Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- R&amp;D Office</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Technology Transfer Seminars</li> </ul>

<p>- Strengthen and continue the outreach work carried out by the Centre, highlighting CIC bioGUNE projects and achievements</p>	<p>- Public Engagement (principle 9)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026 Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>	<p>- R&amp;D Office</p>	<p>- Outreach actions</p>
<p>- Draw up a template for job offers that includes all the necessary requirements, such as working conditions and rights, and the deadline for receiving applications</p>	<p>- Recruitment (Code) (principle 32)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Template for staff selection adverts</p>
<p>- Inform candidates of their career development prospects, albeit in general terms, as this depends on a number of factors, mostly related to the employee themselves, which cannot be known in advance (1) - Inform unsuccessful candidates of their strengths and weaknesses on request, based on the completed candidate assessment document (2)</p>	<p>- Transparency (principle 34)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 (1) (2) Q3 2025 (1) (2) Q4 2025 (1) (2) Q1 2026 (1) (2) Q2 2026 (1) (2) Q3 2026 (1) (2) Q4 2026 (1) (2) Q1 2027 (1) (2) Q2 2027 (1) (2)</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Information on the Career Plan - Information emails on the candidate selection process</p>

<p>- Draw up a document, respecting the limitations established by Law 14/2011, of 1 June, on science, technology and innovation, which clearly, fully and concisely sets out existing regulations for the postdoctoral researcher categories Along these lines, it would be advisable to do the same for the predoctoral researcher category</p>	<p>- Postdoctoral Appointments (principle 40)</p>	<p>Q3 2025 Q4 2025</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Information documents and dissemination</p>
<p>- Draw up a new document that clearly, fully and concisely sets out all existing measures in this area, for subsequent communication and dissemination among staff, and its publication on the intranet/extranet</p>	<p>- Working Conditions (principle 16)</p>	<p>Q1 2026 Q2 2026</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Information documents and dissemination</p>
<p>- Revise the recruitment, selection and hiring section in the Human Resources Management Procedure Manual, designing a better, more comprehensive process and that guarantees balance with regard to gender and other essential aspects. This new update should be communicated to and disseminated among staff, with special emphasis on people participating in the process, and published on the intranet/extranet</p>	<p>- Gender Balance (principle 19)</p>	<p>Q1 2026 Q2 2026</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Information documents and dissemination</p>

<p>- Include brief information on this point in the yearly seminar on this subject and remind staff that all the clauses are available in the Annex to the Employment Contract</p>	<p>- Intellectual Property Rights (principle 24)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026 Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>	<p>- R&amp;D Office</p>	<p>- Technology Transfer Seminars</p>
<p>- Send out emails reminding staff of the existence of the Ethics Channel available in the Centre (<a href="#">link</a>), which is governed by various documents published on the intranet/extranet, and the Code of Ethics (<a href="#">link</a>) and its operation manual (<a href="#">link</a>) as a means of channelling any non-compliance in this area, including reviewing authorship attributions</p>	<p>- Co-authorship (principle 25)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026 Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>	<p>- Legal Area</p>	<p>- Ethics Channel emails</p>
<p>- Add the missing committees to the intranet/extranet (1) - Draw up a short introductory presentation for the existing committees, describing their function and members, to be published on the intranet/extranet and included in the <i>Welcome Day</i> pack,</p>	<p>- Participation in Decision-making Bodies (principle 30)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 (1) (2) Q3 2025 (2) Q1 2026 (2) (3) Q3 2026 (2) Q1 2027 (2)</p>	<p>- Scientific Management - Legal Area - Biosafety - People Management Department</p>	<p>- Intranet/Extranet: information on committees - Welcome Day - Suggestions box</p>

<p>while providing a reference for an annual information session to staff (2) - Create a suggestions box addressed to Management (3)</p>				
<p>- Continue updating the documentation that ensure compliance with this principle</p>	<p>- Research Freedom (principle 1) - Good Practice in Research (principle 7) - Recruitment (principle 31) - Complaints/Appeals (principle 29)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026 Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>	<p>- IT</p>	<p>- Intranet/Extranet</p>
<p>- Continue updating and disseminating the documentation and promoting actions/measures that ensure compliance with this principle (e.g. availability of the lactation room)</p>	<p>- Non-discrimination (principle 14)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026 Q2 2026 Q3 2026 Q4 2026 Q1 2027 Q2 2027</p>	<p>- IT - People Management Department</p>	<p>- Intranet/Extranet</p>
<p>- Continue updating the documentation and promoting actions/measures that ensure compliance with this principle</p>	<p>- Judging Merit (principle 35)</p>	<p>Q2 2025 Q3 2025 Q4 2025 Q1 2026</p>	<p>- People Management Department</p>	<p>- Intranet/Extranet - Internal Communication</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognition of Mobility Experience (principle 37)</li> <li>- Recognition of Qualifications (principle 38)</li> <li>- Recognition of the Profession (principle 13)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2026</li> <li>Q3 2026</li> <li>Q4 2026</li> <li>Q1 2027</li> <li>Q2 2027</li> </ul>		
- Continue updating the documentation that ensures compliance with this principle, even strengthening it by specifically mentioning it in the Human Resources Management Procedure Manual	- Variations in the Chronological Order of CVs (principle 36)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2025</li> <li>Q3 2025</li> <li>Q4 2025</li> <li>Q1 2026</li> <li>Q2 2026</li> <li>Q3 2026</li> <li>Q4 2026</li> <li>Q1 2027</li> <li>Q2 2027</li> </ul>	- People Management Department	- Intranet/Extranet
- Continue applying the legal provisions established in the Collective Agreement and continue updating the documentation that ensures compliance with this principle	- Seniority (principle 39)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2025</li> <li>Q3 2025</li> <li>Q4 2025</li> <li>Q1 2026</li> <li>Q2 2026</li> <li>Q3 2026</li> <li>Q4 2026</li> <li>Q1 2027</li> </ul>	- People Management Department	- Salary audit

		Q2 2027		
- Continue promoting actions/measures that ensure compliance with this principle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Research Environment (principle 15)</li> <li>- Stability and Permanence of Employment (principle 17)</li> <li>- Funding and Salaries (principle 18)</li> <li>- Value of Mobility (principle 21)</li> <li>- Relation with Supervisors (principle 10)</li> <li>- Supervision and Managerial Duties (principle 11)</li> <li>- Supervision (principle 26)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2025</li> <li>Q3 2025</li> <li>Q4 2025</li> <li>Q1 2026</li> <li>Q2 2026</li> <li>Q3 2026</li> <li>Q4 2026</li> <li>Q1 2027</li> <li>Q2 2027</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Scientific Management</li> <li>- Research managers</li> <li>- Administration</li> <li>- People Management Department</li> </ul>	- Assessments

For its part, the establishment of an OTM-R policy is a key element of the HR Excellence in Research strategy. The following sets out how CIC bioGUNE will use the open, transparent and merit-based recruitment toolkit and how it intends to apply or is applying the principles of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment:

OTM-R
Use of the tools and application of the principles
<p>It is a priority for CIC bioGUNE to establish an OTM-R policy that ensures the application of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment practices, with the aim of making research careers more attractive while promoting mobility and equal opportunities among candidates. To this end, the main action undertaken by the Centre is the review and redefinition of the “P-16-04 Procedure Manual for Human Resources Management at CIC bioGUNE,” which governs this area, with the aim of aligning it with the document “The toolkit: a step-by-step guide to better OTM-R practices” produced by the European Commission.</p> <p>Among the adaptations and updates to be carried out by the Human Resources Department and Management, priority will be given to those identified as areas for improvement in the OTM-R Checklist.</p> <p>Below is a brief outline of the essential requirements the procedure must include in order to comply with the OTM-R policy and its principles:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <u>Advertising and application phase</u></li> </ol> <p>To ensure that job offers and their descriptions are as concise and consistent as possible, CIC bioGUNE will use a template that includes the following minimum elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Description of the organisation and unit and/or contracting laboratory</li> <li>- Job title, specifications and preferred start date</li> <li>- Career profile with the respective “necessary” and “preferable” skills and requirements</li> <li>- Description of the job, number of vacancies and related functions and/or tasks</li> <li>- Working conditions related to the position (type of contract, duration, opportunities for career development, etc.)</li> <li>- Deadline for receiving applications and information on the procedure</li> <li>- Job offer reference</li> <li>- A reference to both the organisation’s OTM-R policy and equal opportunities</li> </ul>

All vacancies will be published on EURAXESS in both English and Spanish, in addition to the CIC bioGUNE website, job portals and social media. Requests for supporting documents must be strictly limited to those that are genuinely necessary to ensure fair, transparent and merit-based selection of candidates.

All applicants will receive an automated email acknowledging reception of the application and providing further information on the recruitment process.

## 2. Evaluation and selection phase

Selection Committees will be set up to evaluate and select all the applications received. The size and composition of the committees may vary depending on the profile and type of contract. The appointment and designation process must be transparent and made public.

With regard to their characteristics, the Committees must be independent, their members must be free of conflicts of interest and their decisions must be objective and based on evidence, not personal preferences. The composition of the committee must be suitably diverse. To ensure this, the following aspects must be taken into account:

- a minimum of three members;
- balance between men and women, with no sex being less than one third in any Committee;
- when appropriate and feasible, it will be considered the inclusion of personnel who are external (unrelated to the organisation), international (proficient in the language in which the process is conducted) and from different sectors (public, private, academic, non-academic);
- and the Committee as a whole must have all the relevant experience, qualifications and competencies to assess the candidates.

Any exception to the above for specific positions, types of contracts or even particular disciplines must be clearly defined and justified.

The process may involve one or more steps, such as pre-selection to check eligibility, pre-selection of candidates for interviews, remote interviews by phone or Skype and face-to-face interviews.

All applicants must be treated equally.

The selection criteria should focus on both the candidates' past performance and their future potential, always in line with the job profile.

These criteria must be consistent with the requirements of the position regarding research, supervision and other skills.

Merits should be assessed both qualitatively and quantitatively, focussing on results within a diverse career path, taking into account career breaks, continuous professional development and the added value of non-research experience, among other aspects.

It is advisable for the Selection Committee to be involved in all stages of the process in one way or another, which must be transparent and made known to the candidates (e.g. specifying the stages).

Everyone involved in the process must be sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R and will receive the necessary training programmes.

### 3. Appointment phase

Although the Human Resources department will be informed throughout all the phases and will participate when appropriate, once the selection process is complete, the person responsible for the laboratory and/or department must notify the department and send the completed candidate evaluation document to proceed with the necessary administrative procedures for recruitment.

All candidates must be informed of the result of the process and have the right to receive more information if they request it (e.g. their strengths and weaknesses).

A procedure must be established to process complaints submitted by applicants who believe they have been treated negligently, unfairly or improperly. This procedure must be transparent and made public. It should include an indication of the timeframe in which the applicant will receive an answer, which in theory should not exceed one month.

#### 4.4. Implementation

Fourthly and finally, it describes how this Action Plan will be implemented and monitored over the coming years:

Implementation
General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan
<p>The purpose of this Action Plan, which will be executed over the next two years, is to align international work processes with the principles established in the Charter and Code.</p> <p>With the aim of prioritising actions efficiently and effectively, implementation will begin with those associated with the lowest rated principles in the diagnosis conducted during the initial phase. However, as this is a dynamic and constantly evolving process, the other principles will also be progressively addressed as those considered most urgent are consolidated.</p> <p>With regard to the action plan, it is worth stressing that all the principles, with the exception of Teaching, which is not applicable, are associated with at least one of the defined actions, thereby permitting gradual development of all the thematic headings. It should also be noted that some of the actions cover several principles, giving them a certain transversality.</p> <p>This document and all the others prepared during the initial phase have been published on the Centre’s website.</p> <p>The timeframe has been set as 2025-2026, during which the above actions will be executed in line with the established prioritisation.</p> <p>Implementation will be monitored internally by the existing C&amp;C Committee, as it is the balanced, collegiate, decision-making body responsible for regularly and periodically overseeing and guiding the HR Excellence in Research process at the Centre, ensuring that it is carried out in accordance with both the Centre’s needs and the requirements of the European Commission. All this will include quarterly meetings to review progress on the defined actions.</p> <p>An internal audit will be conducted in early 2027 to verify the full implementation of each of the planned measures To do this, the questionnaire used in the first phase will be reissued and Working Groups will be reorganised to analyse the staff’s assessments and observations. All of this will culminate in the preparation of an internal review report, which will serve as the basis for updating the Action Plan for the next period and will be sent to the European Commission for review.</p>
How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?
<p>As previously stated, the C&amp;C Committee will meet each quarter to review progress in carrying out the defined actions.</p> <p>Specifically, at these meetings the person responsible for each action will report on its progress and, if deviations are detected, propose corrective measures for evaluation and approval by the body itself.</p> <p>All this will provide continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan, correcting any anomalies that might arise during execution.</p>

### How do you intend to involve the research community, your main stakeholders, in the implementation process?

Obtaining the HR Excellence in Research has been organised as a voluntary process requiring long-term commitment from institutions, as well as joint and coordinated efforts among various internal and external stakeholders. For this reason, the entire initial phase was participatory and collaborative, and included the opinions and general needs of the parties involved.

Firstly, a quantitative analysis was conducted by sending a completely anonymous and confidential questionnaire to all staff members, asking them about the implementation of each of the 40 principles at the centre. Secondly, a qualitative analysis was conducted, in which the two Working Groups studied, examined and reflected on the results obtained from the questionnaire, prioritising the actions to be addressed in the short/medium term under the supervision and validation of the C&C Committee. Each Working Group was made up of eight people, representing various professional categories within the Centre and respecting, as far as possible, the principle of gender equality.

In addition to enriching the process through the diverse profiles involved, this diversity in both stages helped identify areas for improvement at the Centre and address them through multiple actions defined from the perspective of the stakeholders involved.

Since the stakeholders have been involved throughout the entire process, even serving as the cornerstone in both identifying areas for improvement and proposing actions, their involvement in implementing the action plan is inherent, and efforts will therefore be made, as far as possible, to engage all staff in its execution.

Likewise, this participation will be strengthened by the ongoing work of the C&C Committee in monitoring the implementation of the actions, as well as the launch of the new staff survey and the re-establishment of the Working Groups to prepare the aforementioned internal review report. This diverse composition, which has also been structured for the HR Excellence in Research implementation phase, continues to ensure the participatory nature of the process, thus fostering greater commitment and involvement from the Centre's entire community.

### How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HR Excellence in Research?

As previously mentioned, all documentation prepared in this initial phase will be published on the Centre's website, thus informing and disseminating it among all the stakeholders in the process, both internal and external.

Likewise, the implementation of all the actions defined in the plan will facilitate improvements and updates to the Centre's various Human Resources procedures, achieving full alignment with HR Excellence in Research recognition.

**How will you ensure that the proposed actions are implemented?**

The Centre is firmly and robustly committed to the HR Excellence in Research, driven primarily by Management and the Human Resources department. All of this guarantees compliance with the defined Action Plan.

As previously established, a person is assigned as responsible for each action, and a timeframe has been defined for its implementation. The C&C Committee will meet each quarter to monitor the progress of the Plan, assess its development and, if necessary, define appropriate corrective measures.

All this will provide continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan, correcting any anomalies that might arise during execution. The end result will be reflected in the preparation of an internal review report, which will serve as the basis for updating the Action Plan for the next period and will be sent to the European Commission for review.

**How will you monitor progress (timeline)?**

As stated in previous sections, the C&C Committee will meet each quarter to review progress in carrying out the defined actions.

Specifically, at these meetings the person responsible for each action will report on its progress and, if deviations are detected, propose corrective measures for evaluation and approval by the body itself.

All this will provide continuous monitoring of the implementation of the Action Plan, correcting any anomalies that might arise during execution.

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

A specific indicator or objective has been defined for each action. In addition to supervising implementation of the actions, during the C&C Committee meetings, these indicators and/or objectives will be evaluated in order to determine whether the impact meets expectations, so that, where appropriate.

**Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process**

N/A