

HRS4R STRATEGY

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Organizational Information

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD candidates either full-time or part-time involved in research	6370
of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	1580
of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organization is host organization)	1633
of whom are women	3639
of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with substantial autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	540
of whom are stage R2 = in most organizations corresponding with postdoctoral level	1328
of whom are stage R1 = in most organizations corresponding with doctoral level	4502
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	10968
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	700,9 Mio €
Annual organizational direct government funding (designated for research)	
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organizations – including EU funding)	188,1 Mio. €
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	
ORGANISATIONAL PROFILE	

Ruhr-University Bochum (**RUB**) is one of the leading research universities in Germany. **RUB** owes its success in research to the close links between the disciplines of its 21 faculties, thanks to which it can react flexibly to current research questions. This approach makes **RUB** a place of top international research, integrated into the worldwide network of the most powerful scientific institutions in its focus areas. **RUB** stands for diversity, inclusion and equal opportunities.

Implementation of HRS4R at RUB

At **RUB**, the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) process serves as a valuable instrument for the implementation and integration of various projects, activities, and policies that aim to optimize our working environment for international researchers. It shall thus, become part of the daily business of **RUB**. This strategy shall not only cover new appointments, but also researchers already employed at **RUB**. The HRS4R process is anchored in the current university development plan and implementation will also occur in the context of as applications for the Bund-Länder-Programm zur Förderung des wissenschaftlichen Nachwuchses (Joint Federal Government-Länder Funding Programme for Junior Academics, WISNA professorships), which comprise a junior professorship instrument of **RUB**.

Some principles of our HRS4R strategy are already established in existing practices and structures of our university, thus, the HRS4R seal would reaffirm the importance of these.

Currently, various instruments already interlock with the HRS4R, such as those related to internationalization and the diversity audit. **RUB** has designed both an action plan and a strategy for its implementation based on a detailed analysis of working conditions in research and extensive feedback from researchers. In the course of this analysis, we have identified development goals as well as strengths to build on. Internationalization, flow of information, and diversity will be among the key fields of activities. The actions developed will address these goals and contribute to further enhancing **RUB**'s profile as an attractive employer and as a hub for excellent research.

New policies will recognize HRS4R, as well as an European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (these two serve as a basis for equal rights and obligations for researchers everywhere in Europe) and will apply university-wide. The focus in the first phase shall be on the development and implementation of an university-wide open, transparent and merit-based recruitment policy (OTM-R policy, ensures quality recruitment of researchers), which shall also include a more in-depth review of hiring practices, increasing the international visibility of calls for applications, and improving the aspect of bilingualism. Actions for this are foreseen in the action plan.

In regular meetings and consultations with the HRS4R core working group and the HRS4R project group, and in cooperation with the extended HRS4R working group (researchers) in the form of workshops, a feasible Action Plan, including a realistic timeframe and measurable outcomes has been developed and was approved by the HSR4R Steering Committee. The financial and human resources of the university were also considered. The Action Plan defines the schedule of the respective measures and presents targets and indicators showing the completion of the implementation of the measures.

Where possible, these measures are clear and quantitative. If the objective is more qualitative, it has been described as specifically as possible, in order to assess the measurability of the implementation with regard to the next assessment. During the conception of the Action Plan the focus was placed on the results of a gap analysis (an internal needs assessment or critical self-evaluation to ask where we stand and where action is needed with regard to the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers) survey, workshops, and interviews.

The implementation of the measures shall be checked and controlled by the project coordinator. In recurring meetings, the status of the measures shall be discussed within the HRS4R project group. For this purpose, the Action Plan shall be entered into a Gantt diagram, or equivalent, for better monitoring.

The implementation of the measures is the responsibility of the bodies named in the plan, most of whom are members of the former HSR4R working group. When the Implementation Committee considers a measure to have been successfully implemented, this shall be discussed with the HRS4R project group, or the project coordinator, for a final decision on whether the implementation has been fully completed. This will then be reported to the Steering Group and the Steering Committee, that make the final decision on whether the action can be considered to be completed.

In regularly occurring meetings (approx. every 3-4 months, and more frequently if necessary), the implementation committee shall report on the progress of the measures in meetings with the HRS4R project group. If required, the Action Plan can be adjusted in terms of timing, indicators, or other factors. Those responsible for the measures shall independently ensure that all relevant stakeholders of the university are involved.

The Action Plan shall be continuously updated and supplemented as new measures emerge. For quality control of the measures, the Steering Committee and the Steering Group will receive regular reports on the status of the measures, either in written form or verbally at specific events, such as a report at the Rectorate meeting. The details of this are currently being determined by the Steering Committee

The Action Plan will be published on the RUB website and service portal and shall be, thus, accessible to all stakeholders, staff, and the research community.

For the next phase of the HRS4R-process, the core working group (consisting of the Administrative Departments of University Development and Strategy, Human Resources and Legal Affairs, Organizational and Professional and Corporate Communications, as well as the International Office, the RUB Research School, the Equal Opportunities Officer, the Research Staff Council, the Disabled persons' representative, and the Senior Policy Advisor to the Rector for Internationalization) that developed the Action Plan, in cooperation with the extended working group consisting of the researchers and under the coordination of the HRS4R project group, shall become the Implementation Committee (IC).

The Steering Group remains the same and the Steering Committee will continue to oversee the process on a strategic level. At regular intervals, the steering committee shall be informed about progress in written form, through participation in rectorate meetings, or in coordination meetings in smaller groups. The HRS4R project group shall report to members of the steering committee at least every two weeks and shall meet regularly.

The project coordination shall regularly obtain reports from the Implementation Committee (IC) on the progress of the measures (either in written form or verbally, in meetings). In addition, there will continue to be regular working meetings (every 3-4 months) of the IC and the HRS4R project group, also with a view to the interim assessment and the further development of the

Action Plan. In this way, the project coordination will maintain close contact with the IC for controlling and monitoring of the process, and any difficulties that arise can be counteracted in a timely manner. If necessary, other persons or stakeholders can be invited to meetings. The responsible bodies for the respective measures, as noted in the Action Plan, must ensure that all bodies relevant to the implementation of the measure are involved. The Steering Committee will approve the Action Plan as revised by the IC and project group.

As the main stakeholder, feedback from, and involvement of, researchers comprise a key element in our HRS4R process. We shall consider whether it makes sense to form focus groups on individual topics. International and national RUB researchers at all levels (R1-R4) will be involved in this process. Workshops are planned to further develop the measures and provide feedback on the process as was the case during the development of our measures. Where applicable, surveys shall be conducted on particular aspects of the HRS4R process as deemed necessary to assess the implementation or impact of the measures.

During the implementation of the measures, the interim assessment that takes place after 24 months, and the subsequent revision and continuation of the Action Plan, will be used to identify further room for improvement and to develop novel measures, if applicable. The external review will be prepared by the HRS4R project group in close coordination with the Steering Committee and Steering Group.

Establishment of an Open recruitment Policy

RUB wishes to recruit the most qualified researchers in a transparent and fair process. During the implementation of the first phase of the HRS4R process, it became apparent that no OTM-R policy exists at RUB.

For professorial appointments, a relatively large number of legal regulations and guidelines need to be observed, most of which are publicly available. For the creation of job advertisements for each position, including advertisements for professorships, an internally accessible electronic assistant is available. Some contents of job advertisements for non-professorial appointments are not standardized, except for the introduction and conclusion of the announcement.

Although some points of the OTM-R checklist (a specific self-assessment checklist designed to determine the status of implementation of open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment policies and practices aimed at making research careers more attractive while promoting mobility and equal opportunities for all applicants.) can already be assessed as positive and implemented at RUB, weak points remain.

Some measures of the Action Plan already address OTM-R related values. An OTM-R policy will be developed as a standard for recruitment. This will be provided to all people dealing with recruitment. This policy will be developed by the Administrative Department Human Resources and Legal Affairs in collaboration with the HRS4R project coordinator to make sure that all aspects of OTM-R receive due consideration.

The OTM-R policy shall be publicly accessible on a RUB website and will be internally published in our service portal on pages relevant for recruitment. As part of the development of the policy, we shall check how the OTM-R policy can best be communicated to all relevant stakeholders. In conjunction with the OTM-R checklist, deficits regarding OTM-R will be examined. These shall be considered in the development of the OTM-R policy and counteracted.

The OTM-R Toolkit will be used as a reference for the development of the OTM-R policy in order to fulfil the requirements of Euraxess for an OTM-R.

The development of an OTM-R policy addresses gaps in the OTM-R checklist, such as revisions regarding the structure and content of job advertisements and the composition of selection committees for academic staff.

Currently, the university lacks clear guidelines or specifications for international job advertisements. This is evident in the OTM-R checklist to the extent that the current OTM-R policies are not in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad. Furthermore, the university still has deficiencies in the provision of clear guidelines and templates for the advertisement of positions. This deficit shall also be addressed in the development of the OTM-R policy. Knowledge deficits and other impediments for potential international staff will be checked to establish a positive recommendation culture.

As indicated in an OTM-R checklist, the issue of ensuring attractive working conditions has not yet been fully addressed by RUB. The Action Plan will implement measures that will increase the attractiveness of working conditions, such as the establishment of structured onboarding.

Even though the current OTM-R policy of RUB is in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups, there is still such as targeted recruitment of female researchers and the implementation of cascade models to improve female scientist representation at all levels of the academic hierarchy. RUB will develop a generally applicable OTM-R policy that shall examine where improvements an innovation can be made with regard to attracting underrepresented groups and improving gender balance.

An unconscious bias awareness campaign will be launched as part of the Action Plan. The campaign will address a wide variety of bias including gender bias. The further sensitization of appointment trustees and other disseminators regarding internationalization, intercultural perspectives, and non-discrimination in recruitment will be part of this campaign. This will be provided by on-site training and flexible online courses.

As mentioned in the OTM-R Checklist, the university is currently setting up a modern e-recruiting and efficient application management system called RUB4Talents (started in 2019, implementation planned in 2024). The project is focused on the development and introduction of a standardized, transparent, user-friendly as well as legally compliant digital job application process.

The goal is to implement a digital application management system (dBM for short) for all staff categories (public sector employees, professors, TV-L staff - scientific employees and employees in technology and administration -, trainees, auxiliary staff, and other staff categories). This will contribute to a standardized recruitment process.

For further information about the RUB HRS4R strategy, please find the link below:

<https://uni.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/en/hrs4r-process-ruhr-university-bochum-quality-development-promote-academic-careers>