



**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI
DI CAGLIARI**



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

HR Excellence in Research

Internal Review

Internal Review

Case number

2022IT861497

Name Organisation under review

Università degli Studi di Cagliari

Organisation's contact details

Via Università 40, Cagliari , Italy, 09124, Italy hrs4rstrategy@unica.it; <https://en.unica.it/en/hrs4r-strategy>

1. Organisational Information

Please provide an update of the key figures for your organisation. Fields marked with * are compulsory. Data @31.12.2025

| STAFF & STUDENTS | FTE |
|--|------------|
| Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research * | 2.712 |
| Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) * | 153,5 |
| Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is the host organisation) * | 1617 |
| Of whom are women * | 1378,5 |
| Of whom are R3 or R4 = established or leading researchers with a large degree of autonomy (e.g. holding the status of principal investigator or professor) * | 1076 |
| Of whom are R2 = recognised researcher (e.g. postdoctoral researcher, junior researcher) * | 239 |
| Of whom are R1 = first stage researcher (e.g. doctoral candidate, research apprentice) * | 1397 |
| Total number of students (if relevant) * | 25203 |
| Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching, and research staff) * | 3761 |
| RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for the most recent fiscal year) | € |
| Total annual organisational budget | 268144220 |
| Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research) | 137863191 |
| Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding) | 23654312 |
| Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research | 371103 |

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

UniCA is the largest public HEI in Sardinia, partner of the EDUC Alliance. UniCA offers 100 degree programmes, 19 PhD programmes, 31 specialization schools, encouraging multidisciplinary approaches. Research is organized into 15 Departments covering life sciences linked to the University Medical Hospital, STEM disciplines, social sciences and humanities. Research and innovation are supported by service centers and administrative divisions. CeSAR and Polilab are research service centers in biomed/natural sciences and engineering respectively; CREA promotes innovative entrepreneurship projects. The Euraxess center supports researchers' mobility. UniCA hosts CEING, an interdisciplinary research center on gender studies, and has adopted its second Gender Equality Plan.

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please review the strengths and weaknesses under the four pillars of the European Charter for Researchers, as provided by your organisation in the initial assessment phase. When doing so, you should do not only look back, but also consider new priorities, strategic decisions, etc. which may further influence the action plan. Please also provide a brief commentary in the 'Remarks' column if major changes have occurred versus the initial plan.

Note: Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the European Charter for Researchers to open the editor and provide your answers in the section dedicated to internal review for the interim assessment.

ETHICS, INTEGRITY, GENDER AND OPEN SCIENCE*

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)

Strengths.

UniCA strengthens research integrity and responsible research practices in line with its Strategic Plan.

The second Gender Equality Plan 2025–2028 was adopted recently. To address gaps of the initial phase, the following actions were completed, prioritizing Open Science (OS) researchers' empowerment.

Regulatory framework and transparency. Action 1

Key regulations are translated into English (Code of Ethics and Conduct, Statute, Patents Regulation, Missions regulation, and recruitment regulations). Research integrity is explicitly addressed in Article 6bis of the Code, reinforcing institutional commitment to ethical standards.

Open Science capacity building. Actions 2,8

Since 2023 UniCA delivers a 15-hour course for PhD students: "Scientific Research: Sources, Tools, and Evaluation", on the topics of scientific communication, copyright, OA/OS, and research evaluation. Within the project EDUC-WIDE, UniCA contributes to i) the Alliance OS Strategic Framework 2022-2026, ii) organizes a cycle of seminars addressing researchers at all career levels on FAIR data management, Diamond OA, Open Source and Science Diplomacy, and iii) launches the Calls for Access to Research Infrastructures, fostering an integrated R&I community. Since 2025, the "*Open Access Awards: call for applications*" allocates resources to support Gold Open Access publications by early-stage researchers.

Institutional OS governance. Actions 3a/b

The adoption of the "University Policies on Open Science" defines the mandate and monitoring role of the University Committee for Open Science. In compliance with Regulation (EU) 2021/821, Guidelines on Dual Use were issued as a framework for the Internal Compliance Programme to be drafted in 2026.

Research data management support. Action 4

The Progetta Horizon Office provides structured support for DMPs in line with FAIR principles.

Standardisation and monitoring. Action 5

Common reporting templates were introduced for PhD candidates and R2–R3 researchers to harmonise procedures and enhance progress monitoring.

Promotion of best practice. Action 6

A section was created to showcase institutional best practices (OS, sustainability, inclusion, technology transfer, HR Excellence, quality assurance), following consultation with the Researchers Focus Group.

Public engagement and knowledge valorisation. Actions 7, 9a/b

UniCA strengthened public engagement (PE) and knowledge valorisation by i) recruiting dedicated staff, ii) implementing initiatives, such as Innovibe equipping researchers with transversal skills through informal trainings (podcasts and videos) and the Bootcamp initiative to enhance transversal and entrepreneurial skills and lifelong-learning for researchers. UniCA joined "APEnet". Furthermore, to raise awareness of PE within the museums, in 2025 a 15-hour training course was organized. 17 researchers were trained. "UniCA Magazine" and "Selection" devote dedicated sections to PE activities.

WEAKNESSES

As for the consensus report, a survey administered to R1–R4, assessed understanding of ethics, research integrity, and HR process. Results highlight the need to strengthen awareness of: i) the HR process by the actions described ahead; ii) measures to prevent corruption and manage conflicts of interest. **ACTION 38**

In line with the first outcomes of the periodic evaluation conducted by ANVUR, UniCA needs to:

- improve PE and Third Mission monitoring system of the Departments and provide fundings to PE projects. **ACTION 33**
- reinforce training on research security and integrity. **ACTION 38**

Remarks (max 500 words)

With respect to the first pillar's principles and the initial phase action plan, UniCA completed the actions scheduled following the GANTT CHART and has already taken into consideration the transition to the 20 principles of the new Charter for Researchers.

RESEARCHERS ASSESSMENT, RECRUITMENT AND PROGRESSION*

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)

Strengths

Survey results confirm that UniCA ensures clear recruitment rules for researchers at all levels. Procedures are open, transparent and non-discriminatory; selection notices clearly outline required skills, working conditions, rights and obligations. Following recent legislative reforms, new research positions (research assignments and research contracts at postdoctoral level) were introduced nationally. UniCA adopted specific regulations defining eligibility criteria and selection procedures.

In 2024 a new regulation establishes a reward system to researchers participating in international competitive projects, establishing incentives and research consolidation funds for academic and administrative staff.

Internationalization remains a strategic priority by means of PhD positions reserved to international candidates, a compulsory 6-month mobility periods abroad during the doctoral programmes, the Young Researchers mobility program, the Visiting Professor programme and the UniCA Euraxess centre.

Mobility is also enhanced through MSCA, Erasmus and the EDUC Alliance.

To address the weaknesses identified previously, the following actions were implemented:

Regulatory alignment and internationalization. Actions 10, 11, 14

Main recruitment regulations, notices and dedicated webpages are now available in English. UniCA joined COARA and published its action plan. All updated recruitment regulations and notices refer to the European Charter for Researchers, applying OTM-R standards. Qualitative criteria such as international mobility, teaching, networking and research experience abroad are formally recognised in R2–R4 selection procedures.

OTM-R policy adoption. Action 12

In 2025 the Governing bodies approved the OTM-R policy, a step toward consolidating UniCA scientific reputation and enhancing its international competitiveness. A quality assurance system for Faculty recruitment and PhD enrolment was established.

Unconscious bias prevention. Action 13

Article 5 of the Code of Ethics was amended to include a commitment to prevent unconscious bias in selection committees. Members must formally declare compliance with the Code.

Weaknesses

Awareness of the limited capability to improve international recruitment by attracting external researchers as underlined in the consensus report. In its strategic plan, UniCA is committed to attracting external Faculty. Currently, the percentage of newly recruited external Faculty is slightly above 18%. UniCA will embark on a series of actions to improve attractiveness towards external Faculty and researchers (R3 and R4) according to measures ruled by Law 240/2010 (i.e. direct calls, appointment via mobility). To address this need, the guidelines for the "Direct Appointment of Professors and Researchers at UniCA" were approved in 2026. Newly hired researchers will be provided with a starting research grant over the first three years and a work environment suitable for the activities outlined in their onboarding project. **ACTION 30**

To pursue CoARA commitment and principles, UniCA will:

-apply the narrative CV to some selection procedures through a pilot project. **ACTION 31**

- for the transformation towards more qualitative evaluation of research assessment, join the Barcelona Declaration, aligning UniCA policies with the European initiatives for reforming research assessment and OS. **ACTION 36**

Despite the Euraxess Service Centre, the services to support the hosting of foreign researchers are not sufficiently clear to Departments. Communication and procedures to host foreign researchers should be improved. The development of comprehensive guidelines would enhance the effectiveness of this service. **ACTION 39**

Remarks (max 500 words)

The National Research Quality Evaluation system mainly relies on quantitative indicators. The adoption of qualitative evaluation criteria remains limited due to national constraints to the implementation of CoARA principles. The National Scientific Habilitation by the Ministry of University and Research and ANVUR is a mandatory, periodically renewed qualification, required for candidates to apply for Associate or Full Professor positions, based on scientific maturity, publications, and bibliometric indicators (citations, H-index). UniCA is actively engaged in CoARA national chapters as well in the HRS4R national working group along with other Italian HR awarded Universities to suggest new criteria in line with the European policy for recruitment and research assessment.

WORKING CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES***Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)****Strengths****Awareness of Rights, Recognition of Researchers. Actions 15,16**

The Charter for Researchers is provided to PhD candidates at the time of enrolment. UniCA assures transparency regarding the individual research budget assigned. Monitoring is conducted through a satisfaction survey, whose results are shared with doctoral bodies. All Departments dedicate webpages for R1 and R2 profiles.

Research environment improvement. Action 17

UniCA has developed Guidelines establishing a standard and transparent process for workstation allocation to newly recruited researchers, ensuring compliance with health and safety standards and equal treatment. The process has been tested and validated and will be published in late 2026.

Career Support and Competitive Funding. Action 18

UniCA reinforces support for R3 through competitive funding schemes (Call for the submission of biennial research projects, and Call for starting grants, applying anonymous peer review by independent evaluators, impartiality, and absence of conflicts of interest, according to OTM-R principles.

Professional Development, mentoring. Action 19

A pilot Personal Career Development Plan (PCDP) has been set for R1 and R2 in three Departments. Appointed mentors provide guidance. Within the Educ Alliance, the “*EDUC young researchers programme (EYRP)*” has been established for attracting talented scientists to develop their two-year projects in the Alliance Universities.

Participation in governance. Action 20

Departments Heads remind at least every 6 months R1 and R2 representatives to strengthen their responsibilities in updating colleagues on university decisions and strategies.

Employability of Early-Stage Researchers. Action 22

Career development initiatives for PhD candidates and recent graduates have been expanded through participation in UniCA Career Day, the national “forDoc” programme with 23 online recruiting events with HR and R&D managers from participating companies, promoting diverse career paths. To support career development, several actions have been launched. In 2025, the “Virtual Fair forDoc”, an online career day, structured as a full day of selection interviews between companies

and candidates was offered. In addition, 12-hour training course “After the PhD: tools and opportunities for building a professional career beyond academia” was organized for all PhD candidates.

Intellectual Property Rights Action 23

A formal provision has been introduced in art. 7 paragraph 2 bis of the Code of ethics ensuring researchers to publish their results independently, reinforcing academic freedom and professional responsibility.

Complaints/appeals. Action 24, 25

The figure of the Confidential Counsellor has been established in compliance with Recommendation 92/131/EEC. The Counsellor offers assistance to UniCA personnel experiencing or witness harassment, discrimination, or mobbing, collaborating with the CUG and the Ethics Committee.

The independent Student Guarantor competences have been extended to PhD candidates, strengthening mechanisms for conflict resolution, preventing discrimination.

Weaknesses

Researchers should be supported in dissemination and exploitation procedures through training and fundings. **ACTION 32**

The awareness of researchers on OS and Research Integrity and security is still low. **ACTION 38**

Lack of financial support for implementing PE projects. **ACTION 33**

UniCA needs to provide researchers with a digital platform to support services related to funds attribution, PE and Citizen Science. **ACTION 34**

The use of English in administrative contexts needs standardization. **ACTION 35**

Remarks (max 500 words)

RESEARCH CAREERS AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT*

Strengths and weaknesses (interim assessment)

UniCA has strengthened its institutional framework to support career development, and researchers'skills.

Supervision and career development. Action 26a/b

The Quality Assurance System for PhD programmes ensures supervision, transparent assignment of research topics and supervisors, annual training planning and formalised evaluation procedures.

Continuing Professional Development Actions 27a/b

After establishing a working group for the training needs of Faculty and Researchers, the “*Continue Discentia* programme” supports newly recruited academics in strengthening teaching, research and quality assurance competences. Training for Deans, Heads of Departments, degree course Coordinators and PhD Coordinators enhance leadership and supervisory skills, improving institutional capacity. A total of 11-hour courses were offered including modules on Quality Assurance System for education, research and innovation, administrative and management responsibility, privacy, waste management, and work environment security. The regulations of R1 and R2 have been updated to formally engage supervisors and co-supervisors in mentoring activities.

Access to training and continuous development Actions 28

Courses on OS, research evaluation and science communication reinforce responsible research practices and dissemination competences of early-stage researchers: the “Horizon Europe: How to Get Funds for Your Research and Innovation Projects”, combines a theoretical component with practical workshop sessions, offering guidance on how to identify funding opportunities, find suitable partners, and use key EU tools such as CORDIS, the Funding & Tenders Portal, and CrowdHelix. A customer satisfaction survey is distributed at the end of the course. Across 2024 and 2025, a total of 73 R1 enrolled in the course, with 52 completing it regularly and obtaining the certificate. The 6-hour course: “Scientific Research: Sources, Tools, and Evaluation” builds on good practice in OA/OS. In 2025 within the Erasmus +, UniCA has organized a blended intensive program for Librarians “**Advancing Open Science and Open Access in Academic Libraries**”. Within the European Alliance EDUC, an asynchronous online course is offered in English to all researchers on “International Entrepreneurial Mindset”, a comprehensive 27 hour programme designed to equip PhD students and researchers with transversal skills essential for successful career transitions, covering topics such as *Career Diversification in Research, Female Empowerment in Academia, Introduction to Science Communication*.

To foster entrepreneurial competences, the *Contamination Bootcamp training* couples researchers and entrepreneurs/start ups, with the goal to create collaborative interaction between academia and entrepreneurial ecosystems, provides career advisory, mentoring and support services to stimulate inter- sectoral, inter-disciplinary research. Starting from the international initiative “**InnovateHer – Women’s Empowerment Global Summit for Emerging Technologies**”, launched in 2024 for promoting female leadership, collaboration with global investors, and the creation of innovative women-led startups, UniCa in 2026 is implementing the project “**InnovateHer: Sardinia Talent & Innovation Hub – Women & Emerging Tech**”, to foster the attraction and retention of talents in STEM, as well as promoting the establishment of an ecosystem for innovative female entrepreneurship.

Weaknesses

Training offer to PhD candidates needs more effort as well as the agenda and visibility of PhD programmes are not well organized in UniCA portal. **ACTION 37**

Researchers need support to strengthen their intellectual property competences and to enhance the exploitation of research outcomes. **ACTION 32**

A standard form for KPI PhD programmes monitoring to facilitate data collection and analysis will be adopted. **ACTION 40**

Remarks (max 500 words)

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

Priorities basically remain the same. Although some actions were moved up and/or delayed, according to updated internal priorities, the implementation of action plan has been respected, and UniCA bodies and administrative divisions are engaged in the HR process.

Considering the results of the survey run in 2024, more efforts are needed to increase the awareness of the HR Excellence in research process across academic and administrative staff.

Moreover, following the entry into force of national law No. 79 /2025, and Decree-Law No. 45/2025, fixed-term academic positions such as postdocs and research fellows' positions have been changed into new profiles. In particular, new fixed-term positions such as post-doctoral appointments (Law 240/2010 Article 22-bis) and research assignments (Law 240/2010 Article 22-ter) have been introduced. This new discipline implied approval of new regulations for recruiting these figures and adaptation of the selection procedures. UniCA new regulations also in English, takes into account OTM-R policy and overall, the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

UniCA Strategic Plan has been updated and the HR Excellence in research process has been embedded into the institutional strategy 2025-2027, as a key action not only for the University internationalization but as transversal objective. This reflects UniCA commitment to implement the principles of the C&C and to improve the system of selection, hiring and working conditions of researchers; furthermore, medium-term priorities have been reinforced by the actions of the HRS4R integrated in the strategic plan. According to the 2025 budget, resources were specifically dedicated to implementing some of the actions (e.g. ACTIONS 8, 18). This is valid also for 2026.

As recommended in the consensus report by the EU, UniCA is committed to increasing international/external attractiveness, although there are some constraints due to the national regulations on the selection process. The new actions added to the action plan aim to recruit external researchers at different career levels.

Have any of the circumstances in which your organisation operates changed and, as such, have had an impact on your strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers? (max. 500 words)

UniCA commitment to the National Recovery and Resilience Plan (NRRP) has delivered significant economic and employment benefits in most cases. The total amount of NRRP funding obtained exceeded 96 million euros, demonstrating excellent capacity to attract external resources. Regarding human capital, 271 calls for fixed-term researcher positions have been launched (127 in 2022, 71 in 2023, 73 in 2024), supporting

generational turnover and the expansion of research groups in line with the University's priorities. Finally, thanks to NRRP resources, UniCA has been more attractive to young researchers, especially to R1 and R2 coming from abroad.

Four NRRP projects are specifically dedicated to Research Infrastructures (RI) (i.e.EMBRC-IT, ETIC, GeoSciences, MIRRI), demonstrating the strength of the technical and logistical expertise developed by the University. These RIs will support the Open Science policies development at UniCA. Furthermore, these efforts may help UniCA to further grow its international profile and be more attractive towards international talents, as well as highlight a strong and widespread competitive capacity among researchers, supported by effective administrative management system. In addition, UniCA has already secured almost 11 million euros from competitive European calls, with several positively evaluated and funded projects, including ERC grants. This overall success has cross-cutting effects on several indicators of the UniCA internationalization such as:

- increase in publications with international co-authors;
- recruitment of new research fellows and MSCA doctoral candidates and postdocs;
- increased researcher mobility, gender equity in career progression;
- collaborations with companies and foreign universities;
- new PhD scholarships;
- active participation to the Einstein Telescope project.

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

Definitely yes. Pursuant to Article 1-ter of Law 43/2005, based on the Ministry of Universities and Research's (MUR) general policy guidelines for the university system (issued every three years), MUR provides and allocates specific funds for the implementation of this programme. UniCA accordingly outlines strategic measures and objectives to improve its performance in its three-year plan to access public financial resources. These objectives provide an overall framework within which each university can exercise its autonomy in policies concerning internationalization, educational offers, services for the student community, and the development of personnel and research policies. The HRS4R process has been integrated and aligned with the three-Year Programme developed by UniCA. As reported in the "Recruitment and selection" section above, several actions are perfectly in line with the HRS4R strategy, as well as the new actions added to the internal review (ACTION 30).

Next, UniCA, within the regional funding programme, is working on the development of new Research infrastructures dedicated to data science, engineering, economic studies, which may require new strategic research objectives for the Institution. UniCA also collaborates with multiple stakeholders to foster innovation and technology transfer, playing a key role in developing research infrastructures such as Einstein Telescope.

Furthermore, considering the international scenario related to security in research, at national level, in 2025 MUR published the “National framework for the integrity and security of research”. This document will guide Universities to strengthening the national research system, soon providing tools and resources designed to raise awareness and to protect institutions and researchers against “malicious interference”, improper (dual) use of research results and “unwanted” transfer of knowledge. Universities and Research Bodies will be invited to adopt the measures required to safeguard their research, providing tools and adopting measures (e.g. training) and internal system (risk assessment units and bodies, regulations) for this purpose for a full awareness of the potential risks and to safeguard their research, and set mitigation plans. Based on those strategic measures, changes may occur to the HRS4R action plan.

3. Actions

Please consult the list of all the actions you have submitted as part of your strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. Please add to the overview the current status of these actions as well as the status of the indicators. If any actions have been revised or omitted, please provide a commentary for each action. You can also add new objectives.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles automatically retrieved from the gap analysis with their ratings.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| Action 1 | GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|-----------------------------|--|--|---|
| Update and translate into English the Code of Ethics and Conduct of UniCa, introducing the research integrity definition. | (+/-) 2. Ethical principles | S2 2024 | Ethics Committee; Governing Bodies; Manager for the prevention of corruption and transparency (RPCT) | I:Availability on UniCa website of the updated code approved and translated. I:Number of downloads of the updated document. |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Current Status**Remarks**

COMPLETED

The updated Code of Ethics and Conduct was approved by the Academic Bodies and published on UNICA portal. It is also available in English. Before the final approval by the Academic Bodies, the document was approved by the Independent evaluation board and the Ethics committee. Suggestions from internal stakeholders (scholars, administrative staff, researchers from R1 to R4, and students) were collected anonymously via public consultation. Art. 6 bis is dedicated to research integrity: the article also highlights institutional commitment to the DNSH principles in Departments research activities. The final version of the code of ethics and conduct has been provided to all academic and administrative staff by email. Number of downloads:788.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 2

Plan and organize training courses for all researchers (R1-R4) on research integrity, intellectual property rights, ethics, professional attitude, and data management to increase awareness over professional responsibility

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|--|--|--|
| (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations | S2 2027 | Personnel, Organization, Performance Division; Doctoral Advisory Council; Coordinators of PhD programmes; Departments; | Percentage of trained researchers especially R1 and R2 |
| (-/+) 6. Accountability | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| IN PROGRESS | The data are reported in the section 2 Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice. Timing was set S2 2027; currently additional training activities have been planned. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 3

a) Appointment @UniCa of the Open Science Committee in charge of the development and adoption of an academic open science policy
 b) Draft of guidelines for researchers on how to manage and store research data, in compliance with the GDPR, FAIR principles, responsible research and innovation principles, and societal engagement.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------------|---|---|--|
| (-/+) 6. Accountability | a)S2 2025 b)S2 2026 | Quality, Library services and museums Division; Research and Territory Division; Digital Infrastructures and Data Division; Privacy Office; | a: Appointment of the Open Science Committee and approval of the Open Science policy of UniCa b: Approval and publication on UniCa website of the guidelines |
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | a)With RD 208/2025 of 25/02/2025, UniCA has appointed the Open Science Committee. The "University Policies on Open Science", were adopted on 24 July 2024. b) UniCA gave priority to the draft of the dual use guidelines, which are already available. UniCA is currently drafting the "Guidelines on how to manage and store research data, in compliance with the GDPR, FAIR principles, responsible research and innovation principles, and societal engagement" with completion scheduled for S2 2026. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Action 4**

Provide administrative support to researchers in drafting the data management plans requested by European projects

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| (-/+) 6. Accountability | | | Number of Data Management Plans drawn up in collaboration with the competent office |
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | S1 2025 | Research and Territory Division | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | This action is now considered a good practice. The Progetta Horizon group has providing support in the preparation of project proposals. In 2024-2025 period, 14 proposals received structured support for the integration of research data management aspects. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Action 5**

Implementation of a common form for the intermediate and final reports of R1, R2, R3 researchers to be given to researchers at the beginning of the enrollment

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--------------------------|--|---|-------------------------------------|
| (-/+) 6. Accountability | S2 2024 | Personnel, Organization, Performance Division; Departments; PhD office; | Drawing up and adoption of the form |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | Common forms for intermediate and finale reports have been adopted by R1,R2, R3. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 6

Create a section of the UniCa website to emphasize good practice in research. After a survey among researchers for collecting expectations, the results will guide UniCa to publish the information relevant to good practice in research readily available in a dedicated section of the UniCa website also in English

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------------|--|---|--|
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | S2 2025 | Research and Territory Division; Quality, Library services and Museums Division; Communication, Students and general services Division; | Implementation of the dedicated website page/Publication of the contents regarding the information relevant to good practice |

Current Status

Remarks

| | |
|-----------|---|
| COMPLETED | Within the UniCA website, it has been created a section dedicated to Researchers, made available also in English. The website provides useful information on all the aspects of conducting research at UniCA, with particular focus on best practices, such us Open Science, Sustainability and Inclusion, Technology transfer and exploitation of results, HR Excellence in Research, and Quality Assurance. https://en.unica.it/en/international/hrs4r-strategy . |
|-----------|---|

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| Action 7 | GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| UniCa will organize initiatives (seminars, workshops) on the thematic of results dissemination and exploitation, and on public engagement to enhance the awareness of researchers | (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | S2 2025 | Research and Territory Division; Communication, Student and General Services Division; Quality, Library services and museums Division; | Number of initiatives (2 per year) on PE, dissemination and exploitation of research results |
| | (+/-) 9. Public engagement | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| Current Status | Remarks |
|-----------------------|--|
| COMPLETED | <p>Links to the initiatives are reported in section 2 of this document. As part of the Third Mission and Public Engagement, the InnoVibe project, managed by the Service Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (CREA) aims at promoting research, innovation, and business culture through the creation of high-value multimedia content. The project is structured around two main initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• InnoVibe: The Energy of Research – creation of at least 10 podcasts episodes produced by researchers from the University of Cagliari, with the goal of disseminating scientific research and its impact on the territory and society.• InnoVibe: The Energy of Innovation – production of 10 short videos on business and innovation, featuring experts and international entrepreneurs, aimed at spreading best practices and successful models. https://crea.unica.it/innovibe-lenergia-dellinnovazione/ |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 8

Increase the budget assigned to the Quality, Library Services and Museums Division with additional resources to support Open Access (OA) publications

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|--|---|--|
| (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | S1 2025 | Administration and Finance Division; Quality, Library services and museums Division; Research and territory Division; | Percentage increase of OA publications funded with the increased OA budget |

Current Status

Remarks

COMPLETED

The percentage of publications of junior researchers was increased by 12%. Results are published on UniCA website. The initiative has been launched also in 2026, and call is currently open for applications.

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 9

Reinforcement of PE activities by: a) Implement an integrated PE communication plan including the information regarding the public engagement and, more generally speaking, the third mission. b) Creation of a dedicated section in the new UniCa magazine to give evidence on activities of public engagement, classifying contents and making them more visible through SEO (Search Engine Optimisation) strategies and social media institutional profiles.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|----------------------------|--|---|---|
| (+/-) 9. Public engagement | a) S1 2025 b) S2 2026 | Communication, Students and General Services Division; Vice Rector for communication and visual identity; Governing Bodies; | a) Approval and availability on UniCa portal of the "Integrated PE Communication Plan" b) Creation of at least one release per year |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | a) Availability of the PE Communication Plan b) https://magazine.unica.it/ , https://magazine.unica.it/selection-online-la-rivista-di-ateneo/ | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 10

Translation into English of: - a) the recruitment regulations for R2, R3, and R4 positions and publication on the UniCa website to improve their visibility to foreign candidates. - b) both the recruitment calls for R3 and R4 positions and UniCa website pages where the same calls are published.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| (+/-) 12. Recruitment | S2 2024 | Personnel, Organisation, and Performance Division | a)Publication of regulations in English on the UniCa website, number of downloads b)Publication of recruitment calls in English on the UniCa website. English text in the website pages dedicated to recruitment procedures. |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | https://personale.unica.it/docric/public/en/ ; https://personale.unica.it/docric/public/en/regulations | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 11

Quote the reference to the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment (C&C) and to the European Framework for Research Careers in UniCa documents for the researchers' recruitment

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| (+/-) 12. Recruitment | S1 2025 | Personnel, Organisation, and Performance Division; Governing Bodies; | Reference of the C&C and European Framework for research careers in UniCa documents related to researchers recruitment |
| (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | All new recruitment regulations quote the strategy and the C&C. https://personale.unica.it/docric/public/en/normative | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 12

Draft of the OTM-R institutional policy based on the completion of the OTM-R checklist and setting up a quality control system.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|
| (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) | S2 2025 | Personnel, Organisation, and Performance Division; Quality Assurance Presidium; Governing Bodies; | OTM-R Policy approval and publication on the University website |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | https://sites.unica.it/hrs4rimplementation/files/2025/10/OTMR_policy-INGLESE.pdf | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 13

Update of the Code of Ethics and Conduct by including a commitment to prevent unconscious biases by members of selection committees, as requested by its GEP. Upon members' acceptance of the appointment within the selection committees, make them declare that they have read the Code of Ethics and Conduct and the articles of reference

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 14. Selection (Code)

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

S2 2024

Responsible Unit

Rector's Delegate for gender equality; Manager responsible for the prevention of corruption and transparency; Ethics Committee;

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Publication of the revised Code of Ethics and Conduct. Addition of the declaration of acknowledgment of the Code of Ethics and conduct in the selection committee meeting minutes.

Current Status

COMPLETED

Remarks

<https://web.unica.it/unica/protected/499240/0/def/ref/GNC313016/>

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 14

In all the recruitment regulations (from R2 to R4, where not already considered) and in the corresponding to the calls, according to the OTM-R standards, the following experiences and achievements will be properly considered: - Cooperation with foreign and international organizations and research centers. - Teaching at foreign Universities or highly qualified international research centers, even considering virtual mobility experiences. - Achievement of international awards. - Working experiences performed both in Italy and abroad, in the public as well as in the private sector when they enrich the CV for the specific position - Value of intersectoral mobility.

| GAP Principle(s) | | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| (+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) | | S2 2024 | Personnel, Organisation, and Performance Division; | Approval by the University Governing Bodies of the revised regulations and call contents to include the expected criteria. |
| (+/-) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) | | | Governing Bodies; | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | | |
| COMPLETED | https://personale.unica.it/docric/public/en/normative | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 15

Once doctoral candidates formalize their registration within the Institution, the PhD office provides electronically a full copy of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C) and the European framework for research career. As far as they are concerned, supervisors are instructed (by the Doctorate coordinators) to make their PhD candidates aware of the C&C principles and to contribute to their implementation inside the institution. Doctoral candidates will also be informed on the availability of the budget specifically assigned for research purpose to each of them within the PhD programme.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|--|--------------------------------|--|
| (+/-) 22. Recognition of the profession | S2 2024 | PhD Office PhD Coordinators | All Doctoral candidates receive the documents; the PhDs level of satisfaction regarding the availability of the budget evaluated through a questionnaire |
| (+/-) 26. Funding and salaries | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 16

Implementation of UniCa Departments websites with the creation of profiles of all the members of the Departments, including doctoral candidates and R2 researchers supervised by a faculty of the Department. It is mandatory that the Departments' website include the publication of the PhD candidates' and postdoc profiles, underlying their role as R1 and R2 researchers including an abstract of the thesis/research project they are working on.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|--|---|---|
| (+/-) 22. Recognition of the profession | S1 2025 | Departments; Communication, Students, and General Services Division; | All R1 and R2 researchers' profiles in the Departments' website |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | the Departments' webpage have dedicated a setion to R1 and R2. profiles. https://web.unica.it/unica/en/dip_ingmeccanica_s5.page , https://web.unica.it/unica/en/dip_fisica_s5.page ; https://web.unica.it/unica/en/dip_ingcivile_s5.page ; https://web.unica.it/unica/en/dip_ingelettrica_s5.page | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 17

Preparation of the guidelines to enhance the suitability of working spaces, and protection equipment to each newly hired researchers.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--------------------------------|--|--|--|
| (+/-) 23. Research environment | S2 2025 | Prevention and Protection Service; All Departments | Publication of the guidelines in the UNICA website |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| IN PROGRESS | the University of Cagliari established and implemented a standardized process for assigning workstations to newly recruited researchers. The process includes the development of bilingual data collection tools (IT and EN), consultation of datawarehouse of new recruits data, and the collection and analysis of responses from researchers. The action will be completed in the Q2 2026 | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 18

Where not foreseen within the funding of the position, provide a starting grant to R3 researchers. Add the provision to the regulation of R3 recruitment.

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 26. Funding and salaries

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

S2 2025

Responsible Unit

Personnel, Organization, Performance Division, Governing Bodies;

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Approval and publication of the amended regulation on UniCa website

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Current Status****Remarks**

COMPLETED

Approval and publication of the amended regulation on UniCA website The call for biennial projects is funding basic research, with a budget of € 3.200.000,00. In this call evaluation rewarded proposals having R3 researchers as PI. 62 projects out of 111 submitted have been funded. For the starting grant call, proposals must be interdisciplinary, submitted by a research group composed of no less than three members, considering also gender balance and interdisciplinarity. Budget allocated amounts to €450,000.00. 4 projects out of 10 proposals submitted have been funded. For both calls, anonymous peer review evaluation has been adopted by two reviewers for each project. Reviewers, selected on the basis of the ERC sectors and the keywords indicated by the Principal Investigator, meet the following strict independence requirements: (i) they must not be affiliated with Sardinian institutions and must not have co-authored research outputs with the participants in the past five years; (ii) the assignment of projects to reviewers complies with the principles of competence, independence, impartiality, and absence of conflicts of interest.

https://web.unica.it/unica/en/ricerca_s05_ss01_sss10.page

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| Action 19 | GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| <p>An initial pilot project will involve three UniCa Departments, on a voluntary basis, to test the mentorship programme by formally assign a senior researcher/expert to R2 and/or R3 researchers depending on Department's priorities. The mentors will advice them on career perspectives through the design of a personalized career development plan (PCDP), including training needs, research progress monitoring, mobility phases, etc..</p> | <p>(+/-) 23. Research environment</p> <p>(+/-) 26. Funding and salaries</p> <p>(+/-) 28. Career development</p> | S1 2026 | <p>Departments; Personnel, Organization, Performance Division;</p> | <p>Number of appointed mentors. Draft and adoption of the Personal Career Development Plan for R2 and R3 researchers of three candidate Departments.</p> |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| Current Status | Remarks |
|-----------------------|--|
| IN PROGRESS | <p>Within the EDUC Alliance, the “EDUC Young Researchers Programme (EYRP)” promotes scientific independence, skills development, networking, and international mobility (minimum three months), fostering interdisciplinary and intersectoral dimensions. Within the programme 2 cohorts of post-doctoral researchers in the years 2024 and 2025 (3 post-docs per cohort) were recruited, for which mentors are being identified and the personal career development plan drafted, also by the use of the ResearchComp Self-Assessment Tool. The programme foresees international mobilities of at least 3 months at a partner university, and intersectoral mobility is also encouraged. The programme will constitute the basis for an application to the next call MSCA COFUND postdoctoral coordinated by UNICA, which, if funded, will allow to recruit high quality post-docs from abroad. Please find attached the PCD plans.</p> |

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Action 20**

Departments encourage representatives of R1 and R2 in Department Council to pass on information and deliberations to those they represent to allow all researchers to be constantly informed about the strategies and decisions of their Departments

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-----------------------------------|---|----------------------------------|---|
| (+/-) 28. Career development | S2 2024 | Departments (Heads and Councils) | Number of complains by R1 and R2 received by the HRS4R UniCa structure. |
| (+/-) 30. Access to career advice | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | 1COMPLAINT | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 21

Foster communication activities on career development by: - Creating a mailing list system to receive in a structured manner (precise areas of interest) all new opportunities for employment or research funds. -Organizing periodical information seminars focused on the following contents: a) continuation of the career in the Italian academy and the reference legislation on recruitment and national scientific qualification b) functioning of the academic career in the countries of the European Union. c) functioning of the main tools for disseminating scientific results and research

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 28. Career development

(+/-) 30. Access to career advice

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

S1 2026

Responsible Unit

Research and territory Division; Vice-Rector for Research; Communication, Students and general services Division; Digital Infrastructures and Data Division;

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

I:Setting of the mailing list updates;
I:Number of seminars' attendees

Current Status

Remarks

IN PROGRESS

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Action 22**

Extend the existing service for Job Placement to PhD candidates (R1)

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-----------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--|
| (+/-) 28. Career development | S1 2025 | Research and Territory Division | Job placement service active also for R1 |
| (+/-) 30. Access to career advice | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | Activities were carried out in 2025 and a new programme has been approved for 2026. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Action 23**

Add a new article to UniCa Code of Ethics and Conduct to affirm researchers' right to publish their own research results independently from their supervisors

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| (+/-) 2. Ethical principles | S1 2025 | Personnel, Organization, Performance Division; Governing Bodies Ethics Committee | Amended Code published in UniCa website, number of downloads. |
| (+/-) 32. Co-authorship | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | Article 7 - Research, intellectual and industrial property paragraph 2 bis https://web.unica.it/unica/protected/499240/0/def/ref/GNC313016/ | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 24

By extending the principle 34 to other cases of misconduct (such as discrimination, mobbing, sexual moral o psychological harassment) the University Guarantee Committee (CUG) evaluates, upon Governing bodies approval, the introduction of the Confidential Counsellor as foreseen in the Commission Recommendation 92/131/EEC).

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--|
| (++) 24. Working conditions | S1 2025 | UniCa Guarantee Committee (CUG) | After CUG evaluation, appointment of the Confidential Counsellor |
| (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| IN PROGRESS | The action has been delayed due to the approval of the regulation. https://web.unica.it/unica/protected/523848/0/def/ref/DOC523847/ The call for selection is expected to be published at the end of march 2026. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS**Action 25**

Extending the competences of the Student Independent Guarantor Authority to disputes raised by doctoral candidates by using the best practices already consolidated for students

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------|---|---|--|
| (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals | S1 2025 | Governing Bodies; Student Independent Guarantor Authority; | Introduction in the Student Independent Guarantor Authority webpage of the clarification that the doctoral candidate as well can raise disputes. |

| Current Status | Remarks |
|-----------------------|----------------|
|-----------------------|----------------|

COMPLETED

<https://en.unica.it/en/university/organisation/promoting-and-supporting-bodies/student-council-and-student-guarantor>

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 26

Improving relation with supervisors by: a) Developing a standard procedure that applies to all doctoral programmes, which will focus on evaluating and monitoring the research progress of R1 researchers. b) Defining a standard procedure for evaluating and monitoring the progress of research outcomes for recognised researchers (R2).

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|--|---|--|
| (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors | A) S1 2025 B) S2 2025 | Quality Assurance Presidium; Research and Territory Division; Personnel, Organization, Performance Division; Education and Orientation Division; Governing Bodies; PhD Coordinators' Board; All Departments | Approval of the Standard Quality Assurance documents by Academic boards. |
| (-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| IN PROGRESS | The action has been completed for R1. The definition of a standard assessment and monitoring process for R2 has been delayed due to the new national provisions regarding recognized researchers R2. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 27

Supervision and managerial duties will be improved by: a) Training activities organized by a UniCa multidisciplinary team for the academic staff with managerial positions to develop management, organizational and mentoring skills. Participation in these activities should be mandatory for Faculty members in relevant management positions (e.g., department Heads, PhD coordinators, and supervisors) to ensure good supervision quality. b) Updating of the internal regulations for PhD candidates (R1) and Postdocs (R2) researchers to formally engage supervisors and co-supervisors in actions of support and supervision towards them.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|---|--|---|
| (-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties | | Departments; Personnel, Organization, Performance Division; PhD office; Quality Assurance Presidium; Research and Territory Division | a) Implementation of training activities by 2025 b) Update of regulations for the enhancement and recognition of tutorial activities/date of approval |
| (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development | a) S1 2025 b) S1 2026 | | |
| (+/-) 40. Supervision | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | https://web.unica.it/unica/en/ateneo_s11_ss08_s03.page | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 28

UniCa and its Departments will plan workshops and seminars tailored for researchers' training needs, according to seniority level and experience, as well as their continuity and refinement on the basis of audience participation and feedback.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|---|---|---------------------------------|
| (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development | S2 2026 | Quality Assurance Presidium Departments | Number of events per year |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| COMPLETED | List of seminars attached | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 29

UniCa will centralise the communication of existing activities by creating specific web content accessible to all the Departments in the UniCa portal dedicated to promoting professional training, workshops, EU and extra EU initiatives, and programmes for developing educational and managerial skills and e-learning activities.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|--|--|--|
| (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development | S1 2026 | Communication, Students and General Services Division; Research and Territory Division; Personnel, Organization, Performance Division; | I: Definition of a communication plan with the contribution of the web editor and interested structures/ drafting date I: Approval date |
| (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| EXTENDED | The project of the new University portal has caused the delay of the action. | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| Action 30 | GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|---------------------------------|--|---|--|
| <p>To strengthen the competitiveness, internationalization, and quality of the University's research and teaching, promote the attraction of highly qualified scholars, who have gained significant experience at foreign universities or research institutions. The action is in line with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and with the Ministerial three-year basis planning for the Italian universities, (provided for by Article 1-ter of Law 43 of 2005). Selection and appointment of professors and researchers through simplified procedures, for specific categories of scholars identified by current legislation and provide them with a starting grant.</p> | (++) 10. Non discrimination | Q4 2028 | Staff, Organization, Performance Division, Research Departments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •15 reserved calls launched until the end of 2028 resulting in the recruitment of 15 external scholars. • Granting a starting fund of euro 5000,00 over the first three years for each new position of the above recruited Faculty by the Department (if they have not already |
| | (+/-) 12. Recruitment | | | |
| | (+/-) 23. Research environment | | | |
| | (++) 29. Value of mobility | | | |
| | (++) 33 Teaching | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-------------------------|---|-------------------------|--|
| | | | external research fundings) for all scholars selected by direct calls of scholars from international Universities. |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| NEW | Data will be monitored at the end of each year, Q4 2026- Q4 2027- Q4 2028 | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 31

Drafting and implementation of the narrative CV for selected recruitment procedures as pilot project in line with COARA principles.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | Q4 2026 Design the model for | | |
| (++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems | narrative CV, design the pilot project within the selection process | Research and territory Division, | |
| (+/-) 12. Recruitment | Q2 2027 | Staff, Organization, | N 3 selection procedures |
| (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) | Application to 3 selection procedures Q4 2027 | Performance Division, Departments | completed with the application of the narrative cv. |
| (++) 15. Transparency (Code) | Outcomes/ Reporting activity of the application of the narrative CV | involved in the Pilot project | |
| (++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) | | | |
| (+/-) 28. Career development | | | |

Current Status Remarks

NEW

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 32

Support for the intellectual property of discoveries of particular interest made by researchers through several measures: 1) Proof of concept fundings, 2) training offered to researchers (mainly early-stage researchers) for knowledge valorization and exploitation of results, intellectual property, licensing, and relations with businesses.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|--|--|---|
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | | | 1) Publications of the call to support PoC and at least 7 PoC projects |
| (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | | Research and Territory Division, Coordinators of PhD programmes; Departments, Staff Organisation, Performance Division | funded per year. 2) Organisation of 1 training course per year on intellectual property, licensing research valorization. First training course to be delivered within Q4 2026; total number of trainees at least 50 % of PhD students and 50% of R2 and R3 UniCA researchers |
| (+/-) 23. Research environment | 1) Q4 2026 2) Q4 2026-Q4 2027 | | |
| (+/-) 28. Career development | | | |
| (++) 31. Intellectual Property Rights | | | |
| (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| NEW | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 33

Support Public Engagement in UniCA research Departments: a) appoint PE representatives in each Department b) development of a monitoring/reporting system; c) call for application for researchers to implement PE projects.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|--|--|--|---|
| (+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results | | | a)Rectoral Decree of appointment of the 15 PE representatives b) Platform active and collection of data c) at least 1 funded project per Department |
| (+/-) 9. Public engagement | a) Q4 2026 b) Q4 2027 c) Q2 2027 | Research and Territory Division, Departments | |
| (++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| NEW | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 34

Development of a digital platform for researchers support system to provide researchers with several services related to funds attribution and support for PE and Citizen Science activities

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(+/-) 9. Public engagement

(+/-) 23. Research environment

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Q4 2027

Responsible Unit

Systems, infrastructure, data Division, Research and Territory Division

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Number of registered and active researchers on the digital platform - Degree of user's satisfaction (survey to be implemented after 6 months from the launch of the platform)

Current Status

Remarks

NEW

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 35

English Glossary of terms related to regulations, Institutional Bodies and Structures, recruitment

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | | | |
| (++) 15. Transparency (Code) | Q1 2027 | Research and Territory Division | Availability on UniCA website of the English Glossary and implementation. |
| (+/-) 23. Research environment | | | |

| Current Status | Remarks |
|-----------------------|----------------|
|-----------------------|----------------|

| | |
|-----|--|
| NEW | |
|-----|--|

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 36

Join the Barcelona Declaration on Open Research Information and formally endorse its principles within institutional research governance policies.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|---|
| (+/-) 7. Good practice in research | | | I) Formal adhesion completed; II) Awareness on Open Research principles among UniCA's researchers and staff III) Declaration referenced in institutional policies |
| (++) 16. Judging merit (Code) | Q2 2027 | Research and Territory Division | |
| (+/-) 23. Research environment | | | |
| | Current Status | Remarks | |
| | NEW | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 37

New training, recruiting and coaching opportunities offered to a) PhD candidates focused on career development and professional opportunities. b) in collaboration with the PhD Council, organize the “UniCA PhD Day” celebrating the European Doctoral Day

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

a)Q4 2026 b) Q2 2026

Responsible Unit

Staff,
Organisation, performance Division, Research and Territory Division, PhD office, Coordinators of PhD programmes

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

a)1 training course; minimum 10 recruiting events and ; 4 coaching events offered to PhD candidates. b) Organization of the European Doctoral Day.

Current Status

Remarks

NEW

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 38

Training courses for all researchers on Open Science, research integrity and research security, conflict of interests, prevention of corruption

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| (++) 1. Research freedom | Q1 2028 | Staff, organisation, performance Division Research and Territory Division, Quality management, library services and museum activities Division | 70% Percentage of researchers trained |
| (+/-) 2. Ethical principles | | | |
| (++) 3. Professional responsibility | | | |
| (++) 4. Professional attitude | | | |
| (++) 15. Transparency (Code) | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| NEW | | | |

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 39

Support the Departments in hosting procedure for foreign/incoming researchers (all level from R1 and R4) providing them with the guidelines mapping the administrative steps to follow and the services provided by the UniCa Euraxess service centre

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 3. Professional responsibility

(++) 15. Transparency (Code)

(++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

(++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment

(++) 29. Value of mobility

Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)

Q1 2027

Responsible Unit

Research and Territory Division, Staff, Organization, Performance Division

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

1Approval of the guidelines. 2 Number of incoming cases which are not coherent with the guidelines.

Current Status

Remarks

NEW

PROPOSED ACTIONS

Action 40

To improve the QA system for PhD programmes after its first year of application, the Presidium Quality Assurance, with the commitment of the PhD Boards, will define a standard form for the annual monitoring of the KPI of the PhD programmes that meets all the requirements of the HR Excellence process to alleviate the burden of data collection and analysis. The improvement is fully compliant with the already approved and implemented procedures of the PhD QA system developed within the initial action plan.

| GAP Principle(s) | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicator(s) / Target(s) |
|-----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|---|
| (++) 16. Judging merit (Code) | | | |
| (+/-) 28. Career development | a)Q3 2026 b)Q4 2026 | Quality Assurance Presidium | a) Definition of the form b)adoption rate of the form by the PhD programmes |
| (+/-) 30. Access to career advice | | | |
| (+/-) 40. Supervision | | | |
| Current Status | Remarks | | |
| NEW | | | |

Unselected principles:

(++)20. Seniority (Code) (++)27. Gender balance (++)33. Teaching

The extended version of the reviewed strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers in your organisation over the next three years, including the OTM-R policy, must be published on your organisation's website.

Please provide the link to the dedicated webpage(s) on your organisation's web site. Multiple links must be comma separated. *:

URL *:

<https://sites.unica.it/hrs4rimplementation/actionplan/?lang=en> (<https://sites.unica.it/hrs4rimplementation/actionplan/?lang=en>)

Please also indicate how your organisation is working towards / has developed an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment policy (OTM-R). Although there may be some overlap with the range of actions listed above in the action plan (as they emerged from the gap analysis), please provide a short commentary demonstrating the progress made.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (initial phase)

University of Cagliari has applied to the HR Excellence in Research award, fully conscious that is a long-term commitment driven by quality assurance, not only improving research working conditions/environment of enrolled academic staff but also increasing attractiveness towards external researchers at any level of career development. UniCa in its regulations and selection notices for recruiting R1, R2, R3 and R4 researchers' profiles applies open, transparent and comparable procedures for both recruitment and career progression, inserting in the calls clear and objective information on the modalities and timing of the selection, the criteria for the evaluation of candidates, in line with the provisions of Law 240/2010. The latter, at national level, already promotes an OTM-R recruitment system, requiring all positions calls to be available publicly on Universities website, on the Ministry's portal and on the Euraxess jobs portal. However, UniCa has not a unique and comprehensive OTM-R policy covering all the aspects for recruiting and selecting researchers. As reported in the gap analysis, the policy will be drafted during the implementation phase with the development of a quality control system. Several offices and University bodies will be involved: primarily the Personnel, Organization, Performance Division with the support of the PhD office, the Ethics Committee and the manager responsible for the prevention of the corruption and transparency; then it will be approved by the Governing Bodies, published in Italian and in English on UniCa website and shared with UniCa Academic community. The Quality assurance Presidium will be involved for the development of the quality control system.

The completion of the OTM-R checklist has supported UniCa to self-assess and better focus on its weaknesses and strengths, in relation to the three phases of the recruitment and selection procedures as reported in the toolkit document.

With reference to the three phases of the recruitment process, UniCa has detected the following:

Weaknesses:

- Lack of a document explicating the University policy on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of researchers at any stage.
- No reference to the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for their recruitment (C&C) as well as to the European Framework for Research Careers are present in the documents for the researchers' recruitment and selection.
- Regulations for R2, R3 and R4 profiles recruitment are currently available only in Italian. The planned actions overcome the gap increasing attractiveness towards foreign candidates.

- Not well defined internal policies to attenuate the limitations from the national law affecting the attractiveness of available positions for researchers from abroad, in particular with respect to R3 and R4 positions.
- Lack of approved templates for advertising positions.
- Elements of the toolkit for OTM recruitment are not all covered.
- A quality control system for OTMR is not in place.

Strengths:

- For R1 candidates both regulations and annual calls are already in English. Calls are published on Euraxess portal.
- E- tools for recruitment are already adopted by UniCa practice for all researcher profiles, allowing also for smooth administrative procedures.
- Non-discrimination and equal treatment are envisaged as fundamental principles in the Statute and in the Code of Ethics and Conduct.
- Mechanisms governing the appointment and composition of selection committees are detailed in all UniCa regulations.
- Implementation of the Gender Equality plan has led to gender balance in all selection committees with specific attention to women's rate of representation. The regulations for the recruitment of R1 R2, R3 and R4 profiles, prescribe that no more than 2/3 of the selection committee are represented by members of the same gender.
- Qualification of the personnel involved in the recruitment procedures is prescribed.

Within the framework of the OTM-R Checklist and the action plan, the following actions have been identified:

- UniCA Code of Ethics and Conduct, recruitment regulations for R2, R3, and R4 positions will be translated in English along with the call for R3 and R4.
- Reference to the C&C and to the European Framework for Research Careers will be added to all documents for the researchers' recruitment.
- Based on internal recruitment regulations, calls, transparency documents, Code of Ethics and Conduct, draft the document of the OTM-R institutional policy also setting up a quality control system.
- Revision of UniCa Code of Ethics and Conduct to align it with the contents of UniCa GEP and with an article dedicated to the behavior of appointed members of evaluation committees to prevent unconscious biases.
- Revision of regulations and call contents of R3 and R4 to include the expected criteria as reported above.

Moreover, great attention will be paid to include the above-mentioned actions in the framework of UniCa institutional strategic plan 2022-2027 revision.

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles (internal review for interim assessment)

UniCA has approved the document of Open Transparent Merit-Based recruitment policy in September 2025. The policy supports research career at the University, as a reference for researchers, ensuring an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process in compliance with the European Charter for Researchers. The document clearly defines research career positions at UniCA with a comparison to the European Framework for Research Careers, internal regulations, and recruitment procedures at all career levels. OTM-R documents also details three other key documents, namely: the i) Operational Guide for Publishing Calls for Applications for Professors, Researchers, and PhD Candidates ii) The Quality Assurance System for Faculty and Researchers recruitment and iii) The Quality Assurance System for Ph.D. students' enrolment.

The OTM-R policy embodies a cultural approach grounded in the principles of fairness, accountability, and merit, ensuring that every stage of the recruitment process is governed by clear, measurable, and accessible criteria. It requires that all recruitment calls (published in both Italian and English and disseminated through international platforms such as EURAXESS) be clearly drafted and easily accessible, providing all essential information: position description, contract type and duration, remuneration, required qualifications, and assessment criteria. This document, integrated within a Quality Assurance System consistent with both national (ANVUR) and European standards, allows not only for the regulation of recruitment processes but also for their continuous monitoring, review, and improvement. The methodological framework is based on the Deming Cycle (Plan–Do–Check–Act), which enables the planning, implementation, evaluation, and adjustment of procedures to ensure continuous and structural improvement. Finally as recommended by the European Charter for Researchers, UniCA OTM-R policy encourages the use of the researchers' framework references to the research profiles in all vacant positions, with the effort in aligning the European framework for researchers' career R1-R4 profiles to the available positions at UniCA.

UniCA in its regulations and selection calls for R1, R2, R3 and R4 researchers' profiles, applies open, transparent and merit-based procedures, inserting in the calls clear and objective information on the modalities and timing of the selection, as well as the criteria for the evaluation of candidates. Calls are available in both Italian and in English on university website, on the Ministry's and on the Euraxess portals.

The reference to the European Charter for Researchers as well as to the European Framework for Research Careers are present in the new regulations for recruitment. E-tools for recruitment have been adopted by UniCA practice for all researcher profiles, allowing also for smooth administrative procedures.

Non-discrimination and equal treatment are envisaged as fundamental principles in the Statute and in the Code of Ethics and Conduct and by the implementation of the Gender Equality plan resulting in gender balance in all selection committees with specific attention to women's rate of representation. The mechanisms governing the appointment and composition of selection committees are set out in all UniCA recruitment regulations. The regulations for the recruitment of R1, R2, R3 and R4 profiles, prescribe that no more than 2/3 of the selection committee are represented by members of the same gender.

Ideally, the extended version of the reviewed OTM-R policy and actions should be published on your organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the OTM-R dedicated web page(s) if it differs from the one where the reviewed strategy for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers is located. Multiple links must be comma separated.

URL:<https://sites.unica.it/hrs4rimplementation/actionplan/?lang=en>; <https://personale.unica.it/docric/public/en/normative>

4. Implementation process

General overview of the implementation process (max. 1000 words)

Considering HR Excellence in research process an opportunity to improve working conditions, increasing attractiveness towards talented researchers and advancing recruitment practices in line with OTM-R criteria, within the national legislation's framework, UniCA immediately began implementing the HRS4R strategic action plan even before receiving the outcomes of the assessment and recommendations of the consensus report, implementing several planned actions (e.g. Open Science awareness within the researchers' community by the appointment of the Open Science Committee, the development of an Open Science policy, translation of the main recruitment regulations).

In March 2024, after receiving the "HR Award", the assessment outcomes were shared with the Governing Bodies and the entire University community through the University website, mailing lists, social media, especially targeting UniCA researchers' community and particularly early-stage ones.

The HR process implementation has been carried out through a participatory approach, aimed at involving the entire academic and research community, governing bodies and the administrative divisions and units responsible for the implementation of the actions.

The Steering Committee has defined the actual composition of the revised HRS4R structure, building on the experience of the initial phase, ensuring continuity with the previous groups (5 Technical Working Groups and 4 Researchers' Focus groups for a total of 96 members between researchers and administrative staff and Governance representatives); a revised Task Force has been appointed, in charge of facilitating the communication and work-flow exchanges between offices, administrative divisions and academic bodies.

The coordination of the Task Force has been entrusted to the Vice-Rector for Research. The Task Force, with technical-operational functions, had the responsibility of formally assigning the actions to the responsible units as reported in the initial action plan approved by the Academic Bodies and the European Commission. Actions were officially assigned to the relevant internal units, with clear timelines, indicators, and expected outcomes. Moreover, in 2024 right after receiving the consensus report, a survey was launched to assess the overall institutional awareness on the HR Excellence process. In response to the low level of awareness of the HR strategy among researchers, several actions have been implemented to raise overall awareness:

- in 2024 and 2025, the Vice-Rector for Research along with the HR-award admin person presented the UniCA HR Excellence process and shared the objectives of the action plan in each of the 15 Department Councils and organized meetings within the PhD programme boards;
- the HR Excellence graphic has been added to UniCA official letterhead and to the seminar's flyers on topics coherent to the 4 pillars of the European Charter for researchers;
- researchers appointed within the Researchers' Focus Group of the internal structure for the implementation of HR Excellence in Research process have been appointed HRS4R ambassadors. Their role is to ensure the dissemination of the strategy and its implementation status within their respective Departments, and to monitor the progress of the actions assigned at departmental level;
- the release of a promotional video on the HRS4R strategy;
- the HR strategy has been embedded into the University strategic plan 2022-2027 within the University objectives, in the Ministerial three-year basis planning for the university system (one of the most important funding measures, provided for by Article 1-ter of Law 43 of 2005), and into the recruitment regulations.

UniCA established the OTM-R policy and its applications to the selection procedure for R1, R2, R3, R4.

According to the deadlines set for the actions, the Task Force has been responsible for monitoring the implementation of the proposed actions by setting a reporting system and providing e-forms to collect the level of implementation, the achievement of the identified objectives and the identification of constraints that required a revision/extension of the actions. The Task Force has provided detailed reports on the state of the art of the implementation process to the Steering Committee.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist, which you will need to describe in detail.

Note: Click on each question of the checklist to open the editor.

How have you prepared the internal review?*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

As stated in the initial action plan, immediately following the confirmation of the award by the European Commission, all Governing Bodies, administrative divisions, and the research community across the 15 Departments were informed of the positive outcome.

In May 2024 the new internal structure for the implementation of the HR Excellence process was established by Rectoral Decree. In the revised internal structure, the coordination of the Task Force is entrusted to the Vice-Rector for Research.

The Task Force supervises and monitors the progress in the implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan in accordance with the expected indicators and the stated timelines, also with respect to the recommendations of the Consensus report formulated by the European Commission. As recommended, a survey of 20 questions divided into 4 sections, addressing all University researchers was distributed to detect the academic awareness on the principles of the new "European Charter for Researchers" and to understand their awareness on ethics and code of conducts at UniCA. UniCA has joined the National Community of Practice of the Italian Universities awarded for the implementation of the Charter.

The present document was (i) initially drafted by the Vice-Rector for Research and the administrative officer responsible for the HR process, then (ii) shared within the institutional structure for the HRS4R strategy for the collection of suggestions and recommendations by the Task Force and the Researchers' Focus group and (iii) eventually approved by the Steering Committee. The document was finally approved on February 25, 2026 by the Governing Bodies.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

Representatives of the UniCA research community (faculty, researchers and administrative staff) are directly involved in the HRS4R internal structure as members, mainly in the Researchers Focus Group.

Senior researchers (R3 and R4) serve on the Steering Committee, Task Force and the working group responsible for the draft of the OTM-R Policy.

Members of the Researchers' Focus Group (RFG) represent researchers across all the R1-to-R4 career stages and reflect the full range of the 15 departments of UniCA. They are also appointed HRS4R ambassadors at UniCA to disseminate the HRS4R strategy and the implementation status within the respective Department Councils. The RFG is informed, involved and consulted in decision-making and in proposing new actions; their recommendations are collected and discussed during the Steering Committee and Task Force meetings.

The RFG composition considers gender balance and meets regularly as reported here (<https://sites.unica.it/hrs4rimplementation/hrs4r-internal-structure-unica/?lang=en>).

The natural career progression of R1 and R2 representatives allows for periodic updates to the group's composition, thereby enabling new early-stage researchers to participate in UniCA's internal HR structures and to gain experience in institutional decision-making.

Several measures have been carried out to involve the entire research community:

the Vice-Rector for Research and the Researchers Focus Group representatives have presented the HR strategy and the objectives inside the 15 Department councils to inform all researchers and administrative staff.

Evidence of the HR Award process has been carried out through the communication channels (Website, social media, seminars, events) of the University.

Dedicated budget has been assigned to several actions of the AP and have provided financial support to researchers, especially the early-stage ones. UniCA has guaranteed a dedicated budget for the implementation of actions supporting open access publications (action 8), starting grants (action18), or the ones for training activities.

Several communication activities have been planned:

- the HR Excellence graphic has been added to UniCA official letterhead and to the seminar's flyers on topics coherent to the 4 pillars of the European Charter for researchers.

-main academic bodies (Academic Senate, Administrative board, Coordinators of PhD programmes, Quality Assurance Presidium, Department Councils) have been regularly updated on the progress of the actions.

-a promotional video on HR process has been released (insert link) on website and social media channels.

-researchers, interested in submitting research projects to external funding, are constantly informed about the relevance of mentioning the HR Excellence award as UniCA good practice, institutional alignment to the principles of the European Charter for researchers, pursue best practices to foster a competitive and attractive research environment.

As previously reported, a survey was conducted to collect data on HRS4R awareness among all UniCA researchers.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

The UniCA structure for the HR Excellence process has been revised and published on the website (<https://sites.unica.it/hrs4rimplementation/hrs4r-internal-structure-unica/?lang=en>) starting from 2024.

Within the internal structure for the HR Excellence process, UniCA has appointed:

- - A Steering Committee, responsible for political direction, composed by the Rector, Vice-Rectors, divisions' managers and representatives of the UniCA bodies involved in the HR process.
 - a Task Force, coordinated by the Vice-Rector for Research.

The Task Force is in charge of:

- supervising and monitoring the progress in the implementation of the Action Plan in accordance with the expected indicators and the stated timelines;
- implementing the recommendations of the Consensus report formulated by the European Commission and in particular the preparation and administration of a survey addressed to all University researchers on Ethics issue and HRS4R awareness;
- drafting the "Internal Review for Interim Assessment"
- detecting new actions considering weaknesses;
- proposing for approval by the Steering Committee a plan for the integration of the HRS4R strategy within the University's strategic policies;
- scheduling meetings of the Researchers' focus group, Steering Committee, Working group for the draft of the Open, Transparent, Merit-Based Recruitment Policy.
- updating the University's HR Excellence in research internal structure for the replacement of researchers' representatives of the Departments within the Researchers' Focus Group especially PhD candidates who completed the doctoral programme.

Both have regular meetings to discuss/monitor the implementation of the HR strategy and share the strategy with the other "actors" of the HR strategy at UniCA.

Is there any alignment of organisational policies with the HR award? For example, is the HR award recognised in the organisation's research strategy or overarching HR policy? *



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

UniCA is committed to aligning the HR Excellence in Research process with its overall strategy at multiple levels. From the initial phase onwards, the following evidence can be highlighted:

-the University strategic plan 2022-2027 and the three-year plan (2024-2026) to access the financial resources made available by MUR (page 14 of this document) both refer to the actions of the HRS4R strategy.

-in 2025 performance objectives of the managers (e.g. Research and Territory division) were linked to the HR action plan and actions' completion and indicators were set according to those actions.

-UniCA has recently gone under the process of periodic assessment by the ANVUR, verifying quality assurance policy in research, education and third mission activities; the HR strategy has been extensively reported in the submitted documents and during the on-site assessment held last November.

- the code of conduct has been updated according to the actions and recalls the appropriate principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

- regulations relating to selection of researchers at different career levels refer to the principles of the European Charter of Researchers and the OTM-R policy.

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



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

At institutional level, HR Excellence in research process is considered a strategic means for internationalization and for improving the research environments. UniCA has ensured implementation by dedicating both human (FTE staff) and financial resources to support the actions.

The alignment of most of the proposed actions with UniCA's strategic documents proved crucial to achieving the expected results. The Vice-Rector for Research has been delegated for the implementation of the action plan, and he oversees the entire process with the support of the Task Force and regularly informs the Rector about its implementation.

The presence of the main representatives of university governance in the HRS4R UniCA structure represents the key tool able to guarantee the implementation of the process.

As reported in the section 3 "Actions" very few actions required extensions, and most of them will be repeated as good practices, especially the training opportunities for early-stage researchers.

How are you monitoring progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

The coordination of the Task Force is entrusted to the Vice-Rector for Research. The Task Force, with technical-operational functions, has been responsible for assigning the 29 actions of the action plan to the structures/divisions/units/Departments/bodies as approved by the academic bodies and the European Commission.

Right after the award confirmation, the Vice-Rector for Research formally assigned the actions to respective internal structures/units/divisions/bodies according to the timing set in the initial action plan and informing about the setting up of the monitoring system.

For each action, indicators and targets have been set out. Both Governance and Administrative Divisions, along with the involvement of the 15 Departments, were committed to implementing the actions and giving evidence of the HR Excellence process with newly hired researchers at different career levels.

The research and territory division oversees the monitoring process.

Then actions' implementation responsibility has been formally assigned to the administrative Divisions and to the University bodies identified in the action plan and based on the Administrative Board decision, a budget has been allocated to the implementation phase.

Each UniCA office/body participating in the implementation of the plan has been accountable for their assigned actions and monitoring activity on their progress to the Vice-Rector for Research and to the Task Force.

A monitoring system has been established, based on electronic forms completed by the responsible units and/or bodies. According to the deadlines reported in the initial action plan, the vice-rector for research has invited the responsible structures to fill in the monitoring forms, reporting about the activities done to achieve the actions results, providing evidence (links, annexes, webpages) or giving sound justification of delays or action's extension.

How will you measure progress (indicators) for the next assessment?*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

The updated action plan includes new actions identified on the basis of the weaknesses collected through the survey and the feedback of the RFG. As carried out during the implementation of the initial action plan, UniCA will assign each action to the respective divisions/bodies along with the related indicators, according to the information provided above for reporting purposes. Deadlines will be monitored: the offices involved will be constantly informed about timelines and activities and, in case of delay in implementation, will be invited to set up a contingency plan. According to the timing of the actions, the task force will organize meetings with the responsible structures to monitor progress. 3 months before each deadline, the task force will formally launch the reporting system and invite the responsible units to fill in the forms, reporting on the activities done to achieve the expected results, providing evidence (links, annexes, webpages) or giving sound justification for delays or extensions, and a contingency plan. To improve overall strategy awareness, additional meetings within the Departments will be organized.

How do you expect to prepare for the external review?*



Detailed description and justification (max. 500 words)

UniCA will take into account the outcomes of the interim assessment. The results will be shared across the University in order to inform both academic and administrative staff.

The Steering Committee and the Task Force will accordingly adjust the HR strategy in line with the European Commission's recommendations, taking into consideration the national research context. Where necessary, the composition of the internal HR structures will be updated ahead of the next external review, including an increased representation of academic departments.

UniCA is aware of the need to further increase:

-awareness of the HR process inside the institution not only at central level but also within each single research Department, as well as among the researchers' community, with particular attention to early-stage researchers joining for the first time UniCA as PhD candidates or postdoctoral fellows. This is a key element for the success of the renewal phase and site visit. Researchers Focus Group representatives, acting as ambassadors of the strategy within the Departments, will be responsible for further promoting the HR process and increasing awareness within the respective Department Councils.

- the level of ambition regarding the further actions to be undertaken over the next three years, followed by concrete measures for improving effectiveness of those actions aimed at the training of early-career researchers. New actions have been added to this purpose, and additional measures will be introduced to further strengthen HR process awareness.

Prior to the external review, UniCA will conduct a new institutional gap analysis to gather researchers' views on the organisation's performance with respect to the 20 principles of the European Charter for Researchers, with the aim of identifying barriers and areas for improvement. The new gap analysis will provide UniCA with a clear picture of its own weaknesses and the developments needed, setting its own strategy towards HR Excellence process objectives. Once the gaps are identified, it will be easier to prioritize the corresponding actions to be added to the revised action plan.

UniCA will schedule internal meetings and events with all stakeholders to inform them about the external review process. A shared programme and agenda will be drafted taking into consideration all relevant UniCA structures responsible for the implementation of the action plan.

According to the national law 240/2010 Rector's mandate in Italian Universities lasts 6 years. In 2027 UniCA will go through the election of the new Rector and governance and this may represent a challenge for the HR Excellence process and its strategy.

Additional remarks/comments about the proposed implementation process (max. 1000 words)