HRS4R

Human Resources Strategy
for Researchers

2021
REVISED
ACTION PLAN

University
of Cologne

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1 ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE

One of the oldest and largest universities in Europe, the University of Cologne (UoC) is part of an international network of partners and a member of the Coimbra group of European universities. Our mission is to create, preserve and impart knowledge, to offer our students and early career researchers outstanding education, to promote cutting-edge research and to drive innovation while focusing on the constantly changing needs and challenges of today's societies. Aiming to be an outstanding and attractive place to study and research, the UoC continues to boast excellent working conditions alongside first-rate HR development services for all our members.

2 STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE CURRENT PRACTICE

2.1 ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL ASPECTS

Our *Policy for Safeguarding Good Academic Practice and Dealing with Academic Misconduct* was revised in 2020 at the occasion of new guidelines to ensure good academic adopted by the German Research Foundation (Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft DFG) late in 2019. All German research institutions had to implement this new Code in a legally binding manner by 31 July 2021 in order to continue receiving DFG funding. The UoC took the opportunity to clarify some existing regulations, e.g. on responsibilities.

In 2019, the *Cologne Competence Center for Research Data Management (C³RDM)* was established to raise awareness among researchers for the importance of Open Science and the sustainable handling of research data (see new Action 20).

Enjoying high management attention, the *"Change Programme"* of the UoC central administration was further professionalized since its establishment in 2014/2015 and has proven very effective. The standards and processes for project portfolio management have been expanded, with ongoing further development. Current activities are increasingly aligned with the digital transformation of the UoC. The goal of permanently installing a "Change Programme" for the administration as a management tool has thus been achieved. On the whole, the "Change Programme" continues to ensure an up-to-date, professional and service-oriented further development of the support processes for researchers at the UoC.

An overarching framework directive on compliance for the UoC is currently underway (see new Action 22). At present, a great multitude of regulations and guidelines cover a variety of compliance-relevant aspects, including integrity in business transactions, transparent and due process as well as compliance in research. Further topics include risk management, fair dealings in the workplace and personnel compliance as well as contracting and purchasing, compliance in construction and in reporting procedures. The projected framework directive will bundle these, with an accompanying web portal providing links to all existing documents. Moreover, the web portal will enable dynamic adaptation and expansion of compliance-relevant content for the UoC at any time, thus ensuring that the framework directive on compliance is always up-to-date. Ultimately, the aim of the new web portal is to provide accessible information to all staff on essential principles guiding professional action at the UoC. It will enhance transparency, raise awareness and strengthen our commitment.

The UoC has been committed to promoting start-ups for many years. This includes the sustainable promotion of entrepreneurship culture at the UoC, the support of university members with spin-offs and the development of a start-up ecosystem in the region. All our previously existing structures as well as new elements of support were successfully united in our *GATEWAY Excellence Start-up Center* (GATEWAY ESC). Plans for a new building are underway (see Action 11). Extending our originally planned action, the UoC has developed specific "Compliance Regulations for Start-ups at and from the University of Cologne". Tying in with the aforementioned framework directive, the purpose of this guideline is to ensure compliance with legal requirements in the area of promoting and supporting start-ups. Beyond the strictly legal requirements, these regulations ensure fair dealings with founders at the UoC.

2.2 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Recruitment and selection continue to be crucial fields of action at the UoC.

As one concrete measure regarding our further internationalization, the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, the Head of Division 7 Research Management and the Director of our New York Office participate regularly in the annual conference of the German Academic International Network and the European Career Fair, offering workshops to participants on individual career paths in research as well as funding opportunities, for instance. In individual consultations, our representatives advise early career researchers on a variety of topics, both UoC-specific and more general, e.g. our programmes for the promotion of R1-R3 researchers, dual career, gender equality and family support concepts as well as on all internal and external funding opportunities for a transfer to the UoC. Regular participation in these conferences has proven very effective, efficiently serving our interest to present the UoC as a most attractive location for early career researchers in North America.

The implementation of the Tenure Track Programme of the German Federal Government and the Federal States (WISNA) is coordinated by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities in close collaboration with several administrative units. Our WISNA coordinator keeps close ties with the Faculties and the funding agency in order to ensure optimum communication and implementation. With a view to the WISNA-intended overall culture change regarding academic career paths at German universities, the Vice-Rectorate takes part in an active exchange with a number of other institutions partaking in WISNA. In some respects, WISNA has proven a testing ground for new impulses at the UoC, with very successful faculty-specific quotas for the recruitment of women and the recognition of systematic delays in CVs due to parenting and caregiving times (see Action 1).

Gender-sensitive appointment procedures remain in the focus at the UoC. The Gender Equality Officer and a person delegated by the Rectorate participate in every professorial appointment procedure. The faculties are supported in the process of active recruitment of suitable female candidates by a newly created position that is equally located in the Staff Unit Recruitment Management and the office of the Gender Equality Officer.

Open, transparent and merit-based recruitment procedures (OTM-R) are currently being implemented even more intensively. The *Guidelines on Attracting and Recruiting Staff* represent our current OTM-R policy for R1 to R3 researchers. For the professorial level (R3 and R4), the *Appointment Regulations* define the basic procedure with a focus on OTM-R principles. Based on the *Strategic Guidelines for Career Paths in the PostDoc Stage* (2017) and the faculty policies on permanent positions for researchers, our new *Guidelines on Permanent Employment Opportunities for Academic and Artistic Staff* at the UoC also include general principles of staffing procedures for permanent positions (see Actions 2 and 3). All these regulations follow OTM-R principles. Yet, the coexistence of several guidelines is increasingly perceived as inexpedient at the UoC. Therefore, a new overarching OTM-R policy will bring together the existing regulations, covering all stages from R1 to R4 (see new Action 21).
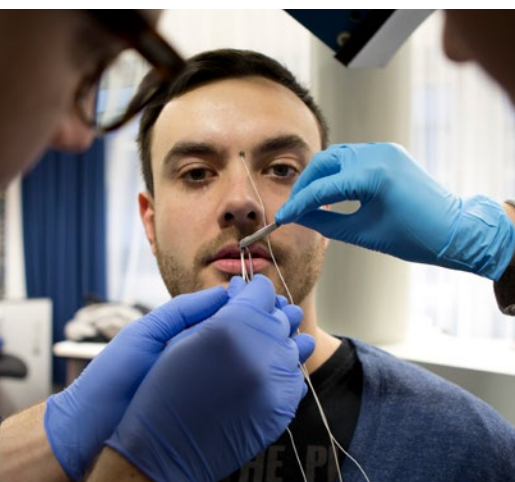
2.3 WORKING CONDITIONS

The UoC has fully implemented the *Contract on Good Employment Conditions*. The state's Standing Commission for the Evaluation of the Contract commissioned an external evaluation thereof, aiming to assess whether its objectives have been achieved. The results are expected in Q III 2021. As an active member of this Commission, the UoC has taken on a lead role in the evaluation as one of four pilot institutions. In addition, the UoC *Guidelines on Good Employment Conditions for Early-Stage Researchers* will be evaluated in 2021 (see new Action 23).

R1 to R3 researchers are covered either by the Collective Agreement of the States or the Civil Servant Remuneration Law, both of which provide binding rules for salaries, thus assuring fair remuneration. R4 researchers are covered by the Civil Servant Remuneration Law. While basic salaries are fixed for R1 to R4, performance-related additional payments are possible for all staff within the legal bounds set by the state of North Rhine-Westphalia (NRW). The UoC is currently preparing a Guideline for Special Payments for R1 to R3 researchers. Additionally, a revision of the UoC Guideline for Performance Remuneration is underway, which applies to R4 professorial positions only (see new Action 19).

Every three years, the NRW Network for Women's and Gender Studies produces the Gender Report on NRW universities. In 2019, it focussed on the gender pay gap. This report confirmed our internal analysis that a significant gender pay gap for performance-related pay exists at the UoC for W3-professors, i.e. full professors at R4 level. In NRW, the UoC is currently in last place in this respect. In 2020, the Ministry of Culture and Science requested university comments on the gender pay gap. The Senate immediately commis-

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sioned a working group led by the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities to analyse the problem and develop countermeasures, which were presented to the Senate in Q II 2021 (see new Action 18).

The UoC developed highly innovative procedures for mobile work in a Working Agreement on Mobile Work (formerly: Teleworking). Acting as a catalyst to this already envisaged action, the pandemic created unforeseen openness towards new ways of working on the part of both staff and UoC management (see Action 10).

We attach great importance to communication with our staff on working conditions. In 2020, for instance, the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities organized a series of talks. All R3 researchers were invited to share their ideas on the UoC. Some preliminary findings include a pronounced need for more effective information transfer as well as an ambivalence as to the size and diversity of the UoC, which is variably considered an advantage or a challenge. In Q I 2021, all teaching staff were surveyed about digital competences and the digital ecosystem at the UoC. The results are used to better manage digitization in teaching. As of 2021, the UoC participates in the National Academics Panel Study (NACAPS), a Germany-wide longitudinal study of doctoral candidates and graduates on doctoral conditions, backgrounds and career paths.

2.4 TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Systematically aligning our offers and services to the EURAXESS research profiles (R1 to R4), HR development opportunities for researchers continues to be a prime focus of the UoC (see Actions 4 to 6 and new Action 17). Our new Guidelines on Permanent Employment Opportunities for Academic and Artistic Staff dedicate great attention to this issue (see Action 2).

As a central hub integrating all graduate schools and programmes of the UoC, the *Albertus Magnus Center for Early Career Researchers (AMC)* focusses on R1 to R3 researchers, encompassing the entire lifecycle from advanced Master students to postdoctoral researchers. Providing a wealth of services to all early career researchers, the AMC effectively supports the pivotal transition periods between individual career steps as well. It was instrumental in the registration of all doctoral candidates (R1) in "Docfile". This enables not only the formal recognition of all doctoral students, but has also substantially improved our internal data-based monitoring of doctorates. On this basis, we now wish to fully digitize doctoral administration, expanding the doctoral registration system with a digital workspace for coordinators of graduate institutions. The ultimate aim is an electronic graduate file (see Action 16). Comprising members of each faculty, the AMC Steering Committee was instrumental in the appointment of the first UoC ombudsperson for early career researchers in 2019 (see Action 7).

Given the AMC success story for R1 to R3, the UoC is currently developing a similar communication strategy and platform for offers and services targeted at R4 researchers (see new Action 17).

Providing extensive support in the application phase, project and contract management for external grants, *Division 7 Research Management* further improved its support services for UoC members in acquiring third-party funds. The seminar series "Fit for Research Funding" aims to introduce researchers to the consulting services offered by the division in compact individual workshops. As of 2020, an email service entitled "Research, International Affairs, Tranfer – FIT" offers targeted and tailor-made information on research funding for UoC members. Also in 2020, a novel online planning tool for large-scale coordinated projects such as the Collaborative Research Centers and Research Units funded by the DFG was launched.

The UoC Excellent Research Support Program (ERSP) consists of five competitive internal funding programmes to support outstanding research both on an individual and a collaborative level. In 2021, an additional funding line, the new Cluster Development Program, was initiated to support UoC research initiatives in preparing proposals for Clusters of Excellence funded by the DFG. An ERSP web portal was established in 2020, which covers all phases of funded grants, starting with a fully digitalized grant application, evaluation of grant applications and reporting of funded projects.

To increase the permeability of the various employment sectors for academically highly qualified persons, the UoC has committed to becoming a founding member of PERMEA, a regional cooperation platform founded by the TH Köln/University of Applied Sciences together with various stakeholders. Federal funding for this association was secured by the TH Köln in Q II 2021.

2.5 THE UoC DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Ethical and professional aspects of pandemic management at the UoC

In February 2020, the UoC set up a crisis management team to deal with the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic for our students and staff. Comprising members of the university leadership and the administrative management, this team assesses the current situation, evaluates applicable state and federal requirements and develops proposals on how to address any upcoming issues. Also coordinating the UoC's infection control measures, the team meets weekly in order to always provide up-to-date advice to the Rectorate on the further course of action, after consulting with other relevant units if necessary.

Effective communication being of the essence particularly in such crises, a number of additional regular meetings have been installed between representatives of the UoC leadership and relevant university bodies and office holders. The offices of the deans are in regular contact with the university management. Furthermore, the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities meets the vice deans responsible academic staff and equal opportunities on a monthly basis. In the area of teaching and learning, there is an additional regular exchange between the Vice-Rector for Teaching and Studies and the student representatives, the deans of studies, the representatives of the examination offices, the central institutions and the administration of the UoC. Members of our Staff Councils for Academic and Artistic and for Non-Academic Staff meet on a weekly basis with the Head of Division 4 Human Resources, in which the latter informs the former on current challenges and solutions as discussed by the crisis management team.

The Rectorate regularly informs all staff via email on all changes in the UoC pandemic management and has set up an information office that is available for questions and, if necessary, establishes contact with the crisis management team. A central and permanently updated website on the pandemic provides all relevant information to students and staff, providing links to websites by individual units offering specific services during the pandemic.

In accordance with the Corona Occupational Health and Safety Ordinance of the Federal Government, working from home has been the rule at the UoC since March 2020. Face-to-face work is permissible only to the extent that it is absolutely necessary for official business. In consultation with their respective superiors, presence work is also permissible at the request of staff members if they are significantly restricted in their work at home, e.g. due to a lack of quiet or limited ergonomic working possibilities. Compliance with the UoC Hygiene and Protection Directive must be ensured in all circumstances.

By amending the relevant legal provisions, federal and state legislators have taken into account the fact that qualifications cannot be completed as planned due to the Corona pandemic, allowing for up to twelve months' extensions of contracts. The UoC fully complies with these provisions in a highly unbureaucratic and employee-friendly manner.

Working conditions during the COVID-19 pandemic

Working conditions were profoundly affected by the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. While this is true for all staff, the pandemic has hit certain groups of staff harder than others.

Our Dual Career & Family Support offers regularly updated information for all students and employees with children or care responsibilities. Offering very hands-on support like finding a suitable babysitter, this department also compiled recommendations for superiors on family-conscious management during the Coronavirus pandemic.

As a direct response to requested support to cope with the demands of simultaneous child care and home schooling, research and teaching from home, our HR Development for Researchers offered continuous group coaching to junior professors (R3) in 2020. Very well received, this offer will be renewed in 2021.

The UoC has established a programme for female R2 and R3 researchers with family obligations entitled "*Kopf frei!*" ("Clear your head!"), aiming to improve the career prospects of female researchers with family responsibilities by relieving them of routine teaching tasks. This is intended to create scope for research activities, particularly in connection with the COVID-19 pandemic. Funds are granted for the employment of a teaching substitute or a research assistant.

Moreover, the UoC has created an emergency fund for early career researchers (R1 to R3) struggling with ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic. This emergency fund offers speedy support for short-term extensions of employment for researchers who are not able to pursue their qualification due to travel bans, for instance, or who are under high pressure due to their personal situation, for example home schooling their children.

Training and development during the COVID-19 pandemic

In order to fully realise the COVID-induced rapid transition to the virtual teaching and learning space, additional hardware was swiftly procured and, after legal review, software and tools for digital teaching were purchased to be used for interactive digital teaching/learning phases and collaborative virtual formats. This expansion of the IT infrastructure was accompanied by a training and support programme for teaching staff and students. Components included basic training for synchronous and asynchronous teaching concepts, in-depth training for interactive teaching concepts as well as individual advice on the development of subject-specific formats. The training took place digitally in the form of webinars and interactive online meetings. General information on digital teaching was also made available on the *central digital education website*, which provides information on digital teaching scenarios and names central and decentralised contact persons. The *UoC Competence Center E-Learning* advised and supported teaching staff in the creation of comprehensive online examinations.

2.6 CHANGED PRIORITIES FOR THE SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM

In Q III 2019, given their large thematic overlap, the Vice-Rectorate on Academic Staff and Early Career Researchers and the Vice-Rectorate for Gender Equality and Diversity were merged into the new *Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities*, to which the *Department for Gender & Diversity Management* is tied. The merger having released synergies, there is an ever stronger focus on equal opportunities at the UoC, with many practical services like dual career support and childcare maintained or even expanded.

The objective of the diversity audit "*Vielfalt gestalten*" was to further strengthen the inclusion of people with disabilities, equal opportunities in education and non-discrimination. The new UoC *Directive on Discrimination, Sexualised Violence and Bullying* and the UoC *Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities* serve this purpose (see Action 9). In addition, the UoC now boasts new *Gender and Diversity Action Plans for 2020 to 2024* for each faculty and a *Framework Action Plan on Gender Equality* (see Action 8).

Further activities include the establishment of the network "Shaping Educational Equity" and a variety of anti-discrimination campaigns utilizing different media like posters, websites or social media. Collecting personal experiences from roughly 60 UoC members, the campaign #unboxingdiscrimination looked at exclusion and prejudice at the UoC. The wide range of different experiences helps us to continually improve our counselling services and measures in the area of anti-discrimination in order to further reduce structural discrimination.

Moving beyond our originally planned action 9, the UoC has recently seen an increase in anti-racism activities. These include a great variety of bottom-up initiatives by students – in particular the General Students' Committee – and staff as well as activities initiated by the Department for Gender & Diversity Management in close cooperation with the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, like an initial event in Q IV 2019 entitled "Let's Talk about Racism in Science". The UoC *Centre for Higher Education Didactics*, inter alia, offers courses for teaching staff on how to deal with everyday racism. Additionally, our *Department 43: HR Development for Researchers* began offering awareness trainings for all (leading) staff members on unconscious bias in 2020.

A long-term institutional change process at the UoC has been started as of Q I 2021 with a workshop entitled "The Critique of Racism in Research, Teaching and Studies". Bringing together 40 internal experts, university officials and students, this workshop included a status quo analysis and general stock-taking. Participants discussed current challenges and formulated demands for the future. On behalf of the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, the Department for Gender & Diversity Management is currently defining the further process on this basis. External experts will be asked to review the resultant institutional strategy. On this basis, the UoC will define measures that are bound to influence our HR Strategy for Researchers in the future. In advance of these future actions, the UoC will establish BIPoC representatives in all faculties right away, thus closing a newly identified gap in our counselling structures (see Action 9).

2.7 CHANGED CIRCUMSTANCES WITH AN IMPACT ON OUR HR STRATEGY

In 2020, the UoC founded the *European University for Well-Being (EUniWell)* together with six partner universities (Birmingham, Florence, Leiden, Linnaues, Nantes and Semmelweis) and 102 associated partners from society, politics and industry. EUniWell was selected for funding as a European University by the European Commission, the UoC being the coordinating institution. EUniwell's mission is to enhance well-being in social, environmental, economic and cultural terms through research and education. This mission also includes the promotion of the internal well-being of the students and staff of the participating universities to ensure that the way we work is aligned with EUniWell's vision. To achieve this, EUniWell will implement a set of HR-related measures. These include, for example, the development of joint well-being oriented HR policies and programmes that address the needs of R1 to R4 researchers and foster academic leadership, inclusion and diversity, collaboration and co-creation within academia as well as with society, support cross-sectoral career paths, equip early career researchers with future and well-being skills and explore new evaluation and rewarding schemes. We will integrate the mission and vision of EUniWell into UoC strategies and align our internal processes accordingly. Participation in a European University thus enables the further integration and deepening of a European dimension in the future HR strategy of the UoC.

Currently boasting four Clusters of Excellence funded in the framework of the German Excellence Strategy, the UoC continues to be a leading research institution in Germany. As of Q IV 2019, however, the UoC is no longer funded as a University of Excellence. Many measures of the Excellence funding period from 2012 to 2019 were consolidated and are now part of the core of the

UoC, like our HR development for researchers, the AMC or our Excellent Research Support Program.

In Q IV 2019, changes to the Higher Education Act of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia became effective. Substantial alterations and clarifications affect the area of tenure track. As a result, our *Regulations for Quality Assurance in Tenure Track Procedures* and our *Appointment Regulations* had to be adapted quickly and were implemented in Q IV 2020. A working group coordinated by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities prepared these changes after close consultation with all relevant university bodies. This same group is currently reworking the Regulations for Quality Assurance in Tenure Track Procedures in a more in-depth manner into all-encompassing Evaluation Regulations for all limited-term professorships (see Action 1).

In Q II 2020, the UoC and the NRW Ministry for Culture and Research signed the Zukunftsvertrag "Studium und Lehre stärken" (Future Agreement "Strengthening Studies and Teaching"), which is permanently and jointly financed by the federal and state governments. Aiming to improve the quality of studies and teaching, inter alia, the universities and the Ministry also agree on the objective to reduce the proportion of fixed-term contracts for staff involved in teaching to a perceptible extent. Negotiations as to the future share of fixed-term employment at the UoC are currently underway (see Action 2).

2.8 UPCOMING STRATEGIC DECISIONS INFLUENCING THE ACTION PLAN

Having lost the status and funding of a University of Excellence in 2019, the UoC was nevertheless able to sustain the main measures and structures established within the Excellence funding phase, particularly regarding HR development and support, and is currently undergoing a broad process of revisiting its strategic overall development. This goes hand in hand with the adoption of the new *University Strategy Plan (USP)* for the next ten years, with a revision planned after five years. As the strategic framework for the development of the UoC, the USP specifies our mission, vision and values by defining strategies in the fields of action and performance dimensions of the UoC. It is interlinked with sub-strategies and other planning instruments of university development – e.g., the target agreements and evaluations. Open to all members of the UoC, this is a two-step process.

In the first phase, ideas are developed in a series of thematic workshops in Q II and III 2021, which are organized as open and participatory platforms of discussion and exchange about the participants' perspectives and ideas. All interested UoC members may register via a specially created website. There will be two workshops on HR issues, namely "People: attracting – supporting – developing" and "People: ways of working". Other workshop themes

include research, education and third mission as ways of the UoC to create impact.

In the subsequent phase, the new USP is developed, taking the results of the workshops as well as existing plans and strategies into account. Finally, the USP will be adopted via the regular decision-making processes and university bodies by Q IV 2021.

Given this overall strategic reorientation, the UoC is also revising its target agreements with the faculties in terms of both process and content to ensure an even more performance-oriented distribution of funds in the future. The new agreements are scheduled to be finalized in 2022, taking into consideration the new USP.

A separate in-depth strategy process in the area of teaching and learning has been taking place at the UoC since Q II 2020. Actors from all areas of the UoC collaborate in participatory, co-creative arenas, thus contributing directly to the development of the UoC study and teaching strategy. In the Study and Teaching Strategy Arena, participants developed the Study and Teaching Mission Statement. Currently being prepared for resolution by the responsible university bodies, the mission statement stipulates that all actors in teaching commit to their own and joint professionalization in studying and teaching, with the UoC creating the institutional prerequisites. It also aims to promote lifelong learning at the UoC, from which all teaching staff will benefit directly. Within the framework of the Arena Digital Education, a further education concept was developed for all actors at the UoC in order to promote competences in digital education. For this purpose, the digital competences of students and teaching staff were surveyed according to the EU framework DigCompEU in order to optimally target our further education offers. The implementation of this further education programme is currently being prepared.

3 ACTIONS

No.	Proposed Action	Responsible Unit	Timing (in quarters)	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Status
GOAL I: MORE RELIABLE AND TRANSPARENT CAREER PATHS					
1	Extend tenure track as career path for R3 researchers » Establishment of tenure track in all faculties » Refinement of the tenure track procedure	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities / Faculties	Continuous Q II 2021 Q III 2021 Q IV 2021	Up to 20 % of all new professorial appointments with TT with participation of all faculties Evaluation of TT procedures via workshops Adoption of new Evaluation Regulations Tenure Track Tool in Use	*Extended*
2	Policy on permanent positions (university level)	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities	Q II 2021 Q I 2021 Q II 2021 Continuous Continuous Q II 2026	Adoption of a policy Pilot review process of personnel matters Implementation Further development and revision Indicator: reduced rate of temporary employment for positions financed through direct government funding Evaluation	*Extended*
3	Revision or adoption of policies on permanent positions (faculty level)	Dean's offices of the six faculties	Q III 2019	Revision or adoption of the policies	*Completed*

No.	Proposed Action	Responsible Unit	Timing (in quarters)	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Status
GOAL II: BETTER SUPPORT FOR PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT					
4	Guidelines on responsibilities of academic staff in leadership positions	Dep. 43 and 42	Q I 2022 Continuous Q II 2025	Adoption of a policy Implementation Evaluation	*Extended*
5	Regular personnel development reviews for academic staff	Dep. 43	Q IV 2019 Q I 2020 Q IV 2020 Starting Q II 2021 Starting Q II 2026	Templates for personnel development reviews Testing in a pilot phase Evaluation of the pilot phase Implementation Evaluation	*Extended*
6	Trainings on leadership and management skills for academic staff	Dep. 43	Continuous Q III 2019 Q I 2020 Q III 2021	Revision of course format to better suit the different groups of participants Introduction of obligatory participation for all newly appointed professors Adaptation of course format: remote leadership Evaluation of obligatory participation	*Extended*
7	Ombudsperson for researchers in the postdoc-phase	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities	Q IV 2019	Installation of an ombudsperson and communication to academic staff	*Completed*
(17) *New action*	UoC Leadership Academy	Dep. 43	Q II 2021 Q IV 2021 Continuous	Development of a new marketing strategy for leadership offers Launch of website Increased participation rate	*New*

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No.	Proposed Action	Responsible Unit	Timing (in quarters)	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Status
GOAL III: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES					
8	Continue to enhance gender balance: » Performance Agreements with the faculties » Gender & Diversity Action Plans for the overall university and for the faculties and administration	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities; Department for Gender & Diversity Management; Equal Opportunities Officer	Continuous	Increased no. of female postdocs and professors according to the "cascade model"	*In progress*
9	Specific actions resulting from the diversity audit "Vielfalt gestalten": » Action Plan for the Inclusion of Handicapped Persons » Non-discrimination Guidelines » BIPoC representatives in all faculties » Unconscious bias trainings	Department for Gender & Diversity Management	Q I 2019 Q I 2020 Q I 2020 Q II 2022 Continuous	Reform of existing guidelines Adoption of an action plan and Beginning of the implementation phase BIPoC representatives in all faculties Unconscious bias trainings	*Extended*
10	Development of a Work Agreement on Teleworking for all employees	Division 4: Human Resources	Q I 2021 Q II 2021 Q IV 2023	Adoption of the Work Agreement Implementation Evaluation	*Extended*
(18) *New action*	Gender Pay Gap	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities	Q III 2021 Q IV 2021 Annually	Ombudsperson Measures to increase transparency and fairness in negotiations Annual report	*New*
(19) *New action*	Establishment of systematic and transparent performance-related payments	Division 4: Human Resources, Staff Unit 03: Recruitment Management	Q II 2021 Q I 2023	Adoption of the Guideline for Special Payments (R1 to R3) Revision of the Guideline (R4)	*New*

No.	Proposed Action	Responsible Unit	Timing (in quarters)	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Status
GOAL IV: BETTER DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS					
11	Innovation and Start-up Centre and extension of the GATEWAY incubator	GATEWAY ESC	Q IV 2020	GATEWAY ESC as a central operating unit	*Extended*
			Q I 2021	Adoption and implementation of Compliance Regulations for Start-ups	
			Q IV 2021	Appointment of eight professorships in the context of digitization and entrepreneurship	
			Q IV 2021	Establishment of a sponsoring association	
12	Review of the Patent and Exploitation Strategy	Dep. 75	Q I 2022	Formulation of a third mission strategy	*In progress*
			Q III 2022	Revision of the policy and implementation	
13	Establish a pool of science communicators	Dep. 81	Q III 2019	Train science communicators across all faculties an establish a network structure	*Completed*
(20) *New action*	Raising awareness and enhancing expertise for Research Data Management (RDM) and Open Science	C³RDM	Continuous	RDM training and consultation	*New*
			Q I 2022	Implementation of a reference database for UoC research data	
			Q III 2022	Expansion of the RDM expert network on campus through event series (experience reports, coffee lectures)	
			Q II 2023	Renewed survey of RDM demands of UoC researchers	

No.	Proposed Action	Responsible Unit	Timing (in quarters)	Indicator(s) / Target(s)	Status
GOAL V: PROCEDURAL INNOVATIONS IN VIEW OF THE OTM-R PRINCIPLES					
14	Job advertisements on the EURAXESS website for research positions	Dep. 41	Q III 2018	Increased interest from applicants from abroad	*Completed*
15	E-recruitment tool for all academic positions	Dep. 41	Q III 2019	Pilot phase of e-recruiting tool	*Completed*
			Q IV 2019	Implementation	
16	Officially acknowledge the status of all doctoral students and introduction of the electronic graduate file	AMC	Q IV 2020	Registration of all doctoral students in "DocFile"	*Extended*
			Q III 2022	Pilot project with two faculties: Analysis of administrative processes, definition of requirements for the software provider	
			Q IV 2022	Implementation of the electronic graduate file	
			Q IV 2023	Evaluation of the pilot project	
(21) *New action*	OTM-R Policy	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities	Q II 2023	Adoption of framework OTM-R policy	*New*
GOAL VI: INCREASING TRANSPARENCY AND COMMITMENT					
(22) *New action*	Framework directive on compliance	Division 1: University Strategy and Academic Affairs	Q III 2021 Q IV 2021	Adoption Directive Web portaly	*New*
(23) *New action*	Evaluation: Good Employment Conditions for Early-Stage Researchers	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities	Q IV 2021	Evaluation of guidelines	*New*
(24) *New action*	Communication Concept for the UoC HR Strategy for Researchers	Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities	Q IV 2021	Revision of our communication concept	*New*
			Q I 2022	Implementation	

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE REVISED ACTION PLAN

The following section explains the aims, procedure and timeline of the actions listed in the Revised Action Plan.

GOAL I: MORE RELIABLE AND TRANSPARENT CAREER PATHS

1) TENURE TRACK AT THE UoC
STATUS: EXTENDED

Originally, the appointment of the WISNA professorships was to be completed by November 2020. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a deadline extension was granted to all universities. Appointments at the UoC will have to be completed by the end of May 2021. At present, 25 of 27 additional professors have been successfully appointed, 14 of whom are female. Two of the original appointees have since been appointed at other institutions. This speaks for the high quality of the candidates, on the one hand, and of our selection processes at the UoC, on the other. The respective faculty is currently recruiting successors for these newly vacant positions.

The faculty-specific quotas for the share of female appointments have been met in all but one faculty. The faculty in question had undertaken specific measures to attract qualified female applicants like directly approaching suitable candidates.

In order to further develop the tenure track procedures at the UoC and to enhance their quality, a number of additional measures were taken, thus substantially extending this action: Three of four planned workshops with representatives from all faculties took place in 2020, the fourth is planned for Q II 2021. The aim of these highly participatory workshops is to develop strategies and measures to alleviate problems identified in the current practice in close cooperation with the faculties. One issue is the timing of the procedures, where a balance must be kept between an appropriate reporting period for the candidates, the processes in the faculties and the Rectorate's room for manoeuvre. Other points of discussion include the comparative classification of performance and the evaluation criteria.

In order to increase planning security for researchers and to attract highly qualified early career researchers, junior professorships at the UoC are usually tenure track. Currently, our existing Regulations for Quality Assurance in Tenure Track Procedures are transformed into all-encompassing Evaluation Regulations for all limited-term professorships including those with a tenure track. This process is also coordinated by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities and it involves the Rectorate Tenure Commission as the responsible university body. The results of the aforementioned workshops are also taken into account in this process. The new regulations are targeted to be in place by Q III 2021.

Finally, a new Tenure Track Tool is under development, which will tap into the existing Academic Job Portal for professorial positions. This digital tool will enable automated process support and greater transparency for all parties involved in the tenure track procedure. Additionally, the tool will simplify monitoring these procedures. Use of this platform is targeted for Q IV 2021.

2) & 3) POLICIES ON PERMANENT POSITIONS: UNIVERSITY AND FACULTY LEVEL
STATUS ACTION 2: EXTENDED; STATUS ACTION 3: COMPLETED

The overall aim of these actions is to create prospects for permanent employment opportunities beyond professorships and university lectureships. Adhering strictly to OTM principles in the recruitment processes for all permanent positions (see also new Action 21), the UoC strives to improve the compatibility of family, health and career sustainably and at the same time enable career development.

Five of six faculties had already developed policies on permanent positions for academic staff. The Faculty of Medicine adopted its policy on permanent positions for academic staff in Q III 2019. All faculty policies were presented to the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff between 2017 and 2019, where they were subjected to a detailed comparative analysis as to their similarities and differences.

On this basis, university-wide Guidelines on Permanent Employment Opportunities for Academic and Artistic Staff at the UoC were prepared by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities. These were broadly discussed within the UoC via the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff and the Deans' offices, within the central administration as well as with the Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Representative of Persons with Special Needs. This way, faculty-specific interests and particularities could be taken into account. Accounting for the delay in the completion of this milestone, this comprehensive participatory process culminated in the Senate recommendation of the guidelines and their subsequent resolution by the Rectorate in Q II 2021.

The implementation of these guidelines will also be overseen by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities. A pilot review process of all pending permanent personnel measures is already underway. In the next five years, annual reports on the implementation with case studies of typical CVs will be presented to the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff and the Rectorate. In addition, the Vice-Rectorate plans to involve the faculties as well as the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff in the further development of these guidelines, which will –in turn – impact the faculty-specific policies on permanent positions. Five years after entry into force, the guidelines and their implementation will be evaluated by the Rectorate. The Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff, the Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Representative of Persons with Special Needs will be involved in this evaluation.

A reduced rate of temporary employment for positions financed through direct government funding continues to be considered a valid indicator for the successful implementation of these guidelines. Negotiations with the Ministry for Culture and Research are currently underway as to the future share of fixed-term employment at the UoC. This is part of the Zukunftsvertrag "Studium und Lehre stärken" (Future

Agreement "Strengthening Studies and Teaching"), which will be monitored closely by the ministry.

GOAL II: BETTER SUPPORT FOR PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT

4) GUIDELINES ON RESPONSIBILITIES OF ACADEMIC STAFF IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS
STATUS: EXTENDED

This action was extended in terms of content and process. The results of a mental risk assessment undertaken by our Occupational Health Management at the UoC identified the stress field "leadership and cooperation". Thus, as a countermeasure, the UoC is developing precise leadership guidelines for all staff with managerial tasks, not only academic, but also administrative. In addition, a comprehensive concept to ensure the day-to-day implementation of these guidelines is underway. The latter includes a thorough information and communication policy.

It was deemed fruitful to involve representatives of academic and administrative staff with managerial tasks from all units of the UoC in a broad participatory development process. The processual change to a bottom-up approach is meant to assure broad approval and implementation of the new leadership guidelines within the UoC. Decided by the HRS4R steering group in Q III 2020, this change of process affected the timeframe considerably.

In addition, given its relevance, the project and its status has been and continues to be presented regularly to all relevant university bodies, e.g., the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff, the Committee on HR Matters of Technical and Administrative Staff, the Senate and the Rectorate.

5) REGULAR PERSONNEL DEVELOPMENT REVIEWS FOR ACADEMIC STAFF
STATUS: EXTENDED

After extensive prior experience with mandatory annual personnel development reviews in the central administration and in two of the central institutions of the UoC, the Rectorate decided to also introduce such reviews for academic staff within the framework of a pilot. In this pilot phase, five of the six faculties at the UoC put newly developed templates for this regular, structured and confidential dialogue between supervisors and their staff to the test. For this purpose, the existing templates originally aimed at administrative personnel had been adapted to the specific needs of academic staff.

This practice-oriented pilot was accompanied by workshops with the participants. A reflection team acted as a sounding board to this process. This team was made up of members of the HRS4R steering group and of representatives from various organisational units and status groups, e.g. professors and academic staff (R1-R4) from all faculties participating in the pilot, as well as Staff Council representatives. The team met after project milestones had been reached to reflect on the status

quo, discuss questions from the pilot participants and formulate proposals for the further course of the project.

The COVID-19 pandemic additionally affected the time frame considerably. Most of the originally planned workshops for participants in the pilot phase had to be re-organised and were conducted via video conferencing in smaller groups.

In Q I 2021, the results of the pilot phase were presented to the Rectorate, which decided to implement mandatory personnel development reviews for all staff in all six faculties. For this purpose, the existing Working Agreement on personnel development reviews for administrative staff will be extended to incorporate all staff.

In order to keep all interested staff informed on the project status at all times, a website dedicated to monitoring its progress was set up.

6) TRAININGS ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT SKILLS FOR ACADEMIC STAFF
STATUS: EXTENDED

The revision of course format was completed according to schedule. The renamed LEAD programme of the UoC is primarily aimed at R4 researchers. However, specific courses for other target groups are offered in order to begin imparting leadership skills at an earlier stage. The "Leadership Starter Kit" is aimed at R1 researchers preparing for future management positions. The course on "Intermediate Leadership" targets R2 and R3 researchers, "Professional Leadership" is aimed at R4. These courses are offered in English to enable participation for our international staff. Additionally, LEAD offers further networking, coaching and courses for R4, e.g. the Lead & Lunch series combining talks with networking, seminars on remote leadership, personnel selection, labour law and (difficult) communication.

In addition, as of Q IV 2019 (Q I 2020 for the Faculty of Medicine), all newly appointed professors are currently required to participate in the LEAD programme. This measure and its impact will be evaluated in Q III 2021, after which the Rectorate will decide on its further course.

In addition to the existing course format, the Coronavirus pandemic has brought the specific needs of remote leadership to the fore. As early as April 2020, the UoC has reacted to this need by offering trainings on remote leadership. This has been continued since and has been extended to include other formats, e.g. a best practice exchanges on the topic.

Given the conclusion of our highly innovative Working Agreement on Mobile Work (see Action 10), remote leadership will continue to be of prime interest for our future ways of working during and beyond the pandemic. Therefore, such offers will be incorporated into the core of our course format.

7) OMBUDSPERSON FOR RESEARCHERS IN THE POSTDOC-PHASE
STATUS: COMPLETED

The first ombudsperson for early career researchers at the UoC was appointed by the Rectorate in Q IV 2019.

Prior to this appointment, the Steering Committee of the Albertus Magnus Center

for early career researchers (AMC) and the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff were involved in this appointment process in Q III 2019, both endorsing the establishment of this new office as well as the appointment of its first holder.

Furthermore, in extension of the original action, the AMC Steering Committee addressed the problem of potential bias among ombudspersons for doctoral researchers within the UoC faculties. R1 to R3 researchers should be free to contact either the ombudsperson of their own faculty or that of another faculty or the ombudsperson for early-stage researchers. This has been communicated accordingly via the AMC website, the network of our graduate schools as well as all relevant university bodies, e.g. the Senate.

GOAL III: EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

8) CONTINUE TO ENHANCE GENDER BALANCE
STATUS: IN PROGRESS

The new Gender and Diversity Action Plans for 2020 to 2024 were adopted by the Senate in Q II 2020. They include target agreements for gender representation on all qualification levels for each faculty, based on the cascade model, for a period of three years (2020 – 2022). The Framework Action Plan on Gender Equality (2020 – 2024) is based on the Gender Equality Concept, which was developed for the "Female Professorship-Programme" of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, which generated 1.5 M€ for a period of 5 years (2019 – 2024) to support various actions for female careers in academia at the UoC. The main goals are the expansion of structures promoting gender equality and systematic integration of all genders in gender equality work, the reduction of the "drop-out" rate of women after the R1 stage, an increase of the number of women in full professorial positions, the expansion of a family-friendly university and academic culture, the comprehensive protection against discrimination, the strengthening of Gender & Queer Studies at the UoC and, finally, we aim to raise awareness via public relations.

Our internal target agreements between the Rectorate and the Faculties, which were introduced in 2006, are currently restructured. Specific gender-related targets coupled with financial incentives will be part of the new agreement between the Rectorate and the faculties.

The UoC continues its monitoring via an annually published Gender Data Report. At present, the UoC boasts a high proportion of women at almost all qualification levels, especially among students. The continuous increase in the proportion of female professors in the past ten years from 19 % in 2009 to 31% in 2019 is a success. However, the most recent figures also show that women continue to be underrepresented in four of six faculties as well as in specific subjects, with stagnation or decline in some areas. This is particularly true from the R2 level onwards and in management positions. Since gender balance has not yet been achieved, the UoC considers this a continuous task with strong ties to our OTM-R policy and its implementation (see section on OTM-R).

9) SPECIFIC ACTIONS RESULTING FROM THE DIVERSITY AUDIT "VIELFALT GESTALTEN"
STATUS: EXTENDED

The UoC successfully completed the process of the diversity audit "Vielfalt gestalten" in Q I 2019.

The results of this auditing process include the adoption of a new UoC Directive on Discrimination, Sexualised Violence and Bullying by the Senate in Q I 2019. Furthermore, the UoC Action Plan for the Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities was adopted by the Senate in Q I 2020. Their ongoing implementation is coordinated by the Department for Gender & Diversity Management.

Further activities since 2018 include the implementation of unconscious bias trainings for all staff, currently with a focus on student counsellors. In a joint project between the Department for Gender & Diversity Management and the Department for HR Development for Researchers and supported by other institutions like the Centre for University Didactics, the UoC is implementing an overarching "unconscious-bias"-training scheme for all levels of staff in research and administration, starting with the first trainings in Q IV 2020. These trainings address different target groups, e.g. newly recruited professors, established professors, research staff, teaching staff as well as administrators. The training-programme includes face-to-face-seminars as well as blended-learning and e-learning-modules.

In Q I 2021, the workshop entitled "The Critique of Racism in Research, Teaching and Studies" brought to light a hitherto unnoticed gap in our counselling structures. While the UoC offers broad counselling for students and staff on a whole range of problems, currently only white people act as counsellors on all levels. To immediately bridge this gap, the Department for Gender & Diversity Management commissions external counselling for cases of racist discrimination for 2021 as an interim solution.

Given the urgency, the establishment of UoC BIPoC representatives in all faculties is addressed right away. They will act as confidants for students and staff alike. Training them on existing university structures and regulations, for example our Directive on Discrimination, Sexualised Violence and Bullying, is underway.

In view of the very good experiences at the UoC with central contact persons on the university level, the UoC is currently considering to install a university spokesperson for this issue as well. Analogous to our Representative for Students with Disabilities, for instance, this spokesperson could represent the interests of BIPoC at university level in all relevant bodies.

10) DEVELOPMENT OF A WORK AGREEMENT ON TELEWORKING FOR ALL EMPLOYEES
STATUS: EXTENDED

Initially, the completion of this action was delayed due to the revision of two other UoC Working Agreements. These addressed other pressing staff needs, namely our operational integration management and addiction prevention at the workplace.

Since the preparation of this agreement therefore coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic, this delay actually gave tremendous impetus to this agreement, which was retitled Working Agreement on Mobile Work and signed by both Staff Councils and the Rectorate in Q I 2021.

In the ongoing pandemic, working from home is the rule at the UoC. Therefore, we gained extensive experience with mobile work in all units of the university, with staff appreciating the flexibility and the personal responsibility of working from home as well as the greater compatibility of family and career. We surveyed this experience with staff in our central administration, which showed – inter alia – that general job satisfaction was high even during the pandemic. On the whole, this in-depth experience has led to a much greater openness towards the possibilities of both alternating mobile work and occasion-related, situational mobile work on the part of staff and the UoC management, resulting in a much more advanced concept than originally envisaged.

As is habitual at the UoC, the concept behind the Working Agreement was developed in close cooperation with representatives of our Staff Councils, the Central Equal Opportunities Officer and the Representative of Persons with Special Needs as well as the faculties and the central administration.

The result is a most innovative Working Agreement, which allows greater flexibility for all staff – both academic and administrative – and is expected to play a significant role in future recruitment processes. Importantly, the Working Agreement provides overall guidelines and does not micromanage any details. This is meant to ensure its applicability to a great diversity of work contexts at the UoC. The day-to-day implementation will be in the hands of our staff and their respective superiors, with whom much of the responsibility lies. Our HR Management Department supports the application process, which is kept as unbureaucratic and as lean as possible. The implementation process includes the launch of a new website with checklists, sample agreements and FAQs.

In order to assess the actual practicability, an evaluation is scheduled for 2023 already. However, given pending legislative procedures at the federal level as well as expected relevant case law, the UoC expects inevitable changes to this Working Agreement even within the next two years.

GOAL IV: BETTER DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESEARCH RESULTS

11) GATEWAY EXCELLENCE START-UP CENTRE
STATUS: EXTENDED

The project builds on the UoC's pre-existent GATEWAY Start-up Service, which has supported UoC start-ups since 2015. After the acquisition of up to 23 M€ additional funding over the next five years for our Innovation and Start-up Centre and the extension of the GATEWAY incubator early in 2019, the GATEWAY Excel-

lence Start-up Centre (ESC) was established as a central operating unit of the UoC in Q IV 2020. This included the transfer of 25 positions from the central administration, namely Division 7: Research Management, to the GATEWAY ESC. The application for the building permit for the centre was submitted to the City of Cologne at the same time. The university received a 20 M€ donation for this purpose.

Using a holistic approach to promote start-ups from within the university, the GATEWAY ESC cross-faculty qualification programme aims to raise awareness among students and staff regarding entrepreneurship, innovation, transfer and the support of start-up ideas and transfer projects. The overall objective is the creation of a culture of entrepreneurial thinking and action. For this purpose, the appointment of eight professorships in the context of digitization and entrepreneurship was planned, but has been delayed until Q III 2021. Due to the pandemic, the appointment procedures have taken significantly longer than foreseen. Another key element is transfer scouting. Throughout 2020, the six designated transfer scout positions in the faculties could be filled. Systematically screening research results, the transfer scouts raise awareness to the possibilities of transferring research into practice in their respective faculties. Results may be spun off from the UoC as a company, opening up additional professional options for researchers and students. In addition, the programme includes tailor-made teaching and workshops, start-up consultations as well as an incubator and accelerator programme.

All of this raises the innovation potential at the UoC. The resulting start-up projects are supported by GATEWAY's broad network within the regional and national start-up and investor scene. A joint project with other institutions of higher education in Cologne called "Fit for Invest" enables international networking or market entries abroad. Under the leadership of TH Köln/University of Applied Sciences, the project is being supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy as part of the EXIST-Potentials funding programme with around 4M € over a period of four years starting in 2020. The institutions involved in "Fit for Invest" plan to tighten their collaboration in the field of entrepreneurship by using the name "Gateway" for each start-up service as well as the network formerly known as "Hochschulgründernetz Cologne".

The Rectorate and Senate adopted "Compliance Regulations for Start-ups at and from the University of Cologne". These come into force in Q II 2021.

Finally, the UoC plans to establish a sponsoring association for the GATEWAY ESC. With planning underway, a first draft was already presented to the Rectorate. The foundation of the sponsoring association is targeted for Q IV 2021.

12) REVIEW OF THE PATENT AND EXPLOITATION STRATEGY
STATUS: EXTENDED

In order to strengthen its third-mission activities, the UoC had an external audit carried out as part of the Stifterverband's transfer audit in 2017/2018. For this purpose, the UoC's previous third-mission activities were systematically surveyed for the first time by means of questionnaires and the UoC's own research. At a subsequent transfer conference in October 2018, in which the faculties and central institutions were involved, the main findings of the internal review were discussed

with stakeholders across the UoC. The Rectorate then dealt intensively with the recommendations of the Stifterverband and commissioned the development of a university-wide strategy for third mission activities by Department 75: Transfer. Currently under development, this strategy is taken into account by the University Strategy Plan of the UoC. It is expected to come into force in Q I 2022.

In this context, work on the patent and exploitation strategy had to be temporarily put on hold to allow for the UoC to firstly reposition itself. Work will be taken up again once the overall strategy has been defined. The revised patent and exploitation strategy will be adopted by Q III 2022.

In the meantime, the UoC has already strengthened its third mission activities by appointing a Rectorate Officer for Innovation and Research Infrastructure in Q I 2021. In addition, an Advisory Board for Innovation and Research Infrastructure was established. In the future, it will advise the Rectorate with regard to the UoC's third mission strategy and activities.

13) ESTABLISH A POOL OF SCIENCE COMMUNICATORS
   STATUS: COMPLETED

While this action is completed as a project to introduce a pool of science communicators at the UoC, the activity itself has been redefined as a permanent and continuous task of Division 8: Communications and Marketing.

In particular, the Head of Division 8 as well as the Head of Department 81: Press and Communication, as the UoC press spokespersons, offer communication consultations for researchers on a very regular basis. These are done both individually and in groups. The scope of these consultations depends essentially on the wishes of the researchers and may cover topics like dealing with the media in general, adequate language and self-marketing. They may also address research and teaching topics of particular interest to the public, crisis communication, social media and hands-on website advice.

Upon their wish, these researchers are included in the UoC pool of science communicators. They may subsequently be approached in case of specific press enquiries, to which they will respond competently and comprehensibly for the benefit of the UoC.

GOAL V: PROCEDURAL INNOVATIONS IN VIEW OF THE OTM-R PRINCIPLES

14) JOB ADVERTISEMENTS ON THE EURAXESS
   WEBSITE FOR RESEARCH POSITIONS
   STATUS: COMPLETED

In Q III 2018, the UoC started to publish academic positions on EURAXESS, firstly R3 to R4 positions and subsequently all positions for researchers (R1 to R4). In addition, a cooperation agreement was concluded with Academic Media Group in

Q III 2019. Since then, all academic positions published in English have additionally been distributed on academicpositions.com. Web analytics show that within the last year, our own application portal has received traffic from 96 countries

15) E-RECRUITMENT TOOL FOR ALL ACADEMIC POSITIONS
STATUS: COMPLETED

The electronic application portal has been officially rolled out Q IV 2019 and is steadily gaining users. Since the official rollout, 95 job advertisements from technology and administration, 16 vocational training (and dual study) job advertisements and 83 job advertisements for research positions have been distributed. This amounts to roughly 60% of the job advertisements in the area of technology and administration, 100% of the trainee job advertisements and already just under 40% of the job advertisements for research positions. While the use of the application portal is optional so far, there is an increasing tendency to use it. The application portal also enjoys a very high level of acceptance among candidates: Almost 8,000 applications were submitted via the system in 2020.

16) OFFICIALLY ACKNOWLEDGE THE STATUS OF ALL DOCTORAL STUDENTS AND INTRODUCTION OF THE ELECTRONIC GRADUATE FILE
STATUS: EXTENDED

With a slight pandemic-induced delay, the registration of all doctoral candidates in "Docfile" was successfully completed in Q IV 2020. Thus, all our doctoral candidates are now officially and centrally registered. This already improves our internal data-based monitoring of doctorates substantially and enables us to target our offers and services more precisely to R1 researchers at the UoC. Surveys like the NACAPS study addressing R1 can also be carried out easily.

The action has been considerably extended in the context of the digitization of administrative processes at the UoC. In the future, the UoC plans a complete conversion to digital doctoral administration in the doctoral offices of the faculties. This expansion revolves around the creation of a comprehensive electronic graduate file.

The electronic graduate file will expand the doctoral registration system with a digital workspace for coordinators of graduate institutions. With the additional integration of the software into the International Office and the Student Application and Registration Office, all doctoral students will have the opportunity to manage their doctorates digitally. The use of a single software application by all actors involved in the doctoral system at the UoC will significantly improve and internationalize the quality of our service and the dissemination of information. In addition, uniformly developed processes in the graduate institutions will further enhance quality assurance of doctorates at the UoC. Importantly, the extended collection of a valid data set of doctoral data will further improve our data-based monitoring of doctorates.

For this purpose, a pilot project of the AMC with two faculties will feature an analysis of the UoC's structured graduate programmes and their current admin-

istrative processes. This will lead to the joint development of target processes and overarching requirements. As usual, the AMC will closely cooperate with the central administration in this respect. On this basis, additional requirements for the software provider will be defined. This step will be concluded by Q III 2022. As of Q IV 2022, these additional requirements will be implemented, including a configuration of the software. Users will be trained accordingly. The pilot project will be evaluated after one year. On this basis, a decision on the further course of action will be taken.

NEW ACTIONS

17) UoC LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

At the UoC, all researchers from R1 to R4 have been targeted by our HR development offers in general and leadership training in particular. Nonetheless, in recent years, much attention was given to early-stage researchers (R1 to R3), with the establishment and further development of the Albertus Magnus Center for Early Career Researchers (AMC).

In light of the very successful strategy of the AMC to target R1 to R3 and attain utmost visibility, the UoC now wishes to develop a similar strategy and platform for R4 researchers as well as leading staff in research management.

An innovative "UoC Leadership Academy" (working title) is projected as an exclusive contact point for HR development offers aimed particularly at leading researchers. There will be some overlap with stage R3, namely junior professors, who have already developed a considerable level of independence.

In order to further bridge the already closing gap between academic and administrative staff on a managerial level, the upper management of the administration will also be targeted by this new programme.

The communication strategy will be similar to that of the AMC offers for R1 to R3 researchers, including an exclusive website. The aim is to improve visibility of our offers, a specification of the offers exclusively for this target group and thus an increased participation rate.

Approved by the HRS4R steering group in Q I 2021, this action will further align our offers to the different target groups with the EURAXESS research profiles.

18) GENDER PAY GAP

The UoC is strongly committed to close the gender pay gap for performance-related pay at R4 level to the disadvantage of female full professors.

The Senate gender pay gap working group undertook an in-depth analysis of data and processes. The working group comprised two members of each faculty (one R1-R3, one R4) as well as the Equal Opportunities Officer and representatives of the administrative management.

The data analysis shows that the issue is relevant in all faculties, being detectable both in faculties with an underrepresentation of female professors and in faculties without underrepresentation. Thus, it cannot be explained solely by gender proportions among professors or by subject specifics. It is particularly relevant for female professors who are 50 years of age and older. Through successful salary negotiations, women can only reach approximately the salary level of men without successful negotiations. Even controlling for year and age of entry, women earn significantly less than men. The gender pay gap is also promoted by the fact that the proportion of female full professors who receive only basic salary is significantly higher than that of men, particularly in those subjects in which the proportion of women among professors is higher than the UoC average.

The analysis of our processes shows that internal negotiation processes for salary negotiations and negotiations to stay in office as well as the awarding processes for special merit pay must be made more transparent, more oriented towards the average salary and more sensitive to discrimination. Performance criteria in the negotiation and awarding of special performance pay must be defined more broadly and transparently. The legal requirement of economic efficiency (i.e. the basic orientation towards the previous salary) is recognised as a problematic basis for negotiation corridors, as it perpetuates the gender gap. The high importance of individual subject cultures must be taken into account, since, for example, persons in "small subjects" have significantly fewer negotiating options (e.g. fewer opportunities for retention negotiations) and the "market value" is also significantly lower, but women are represented to a greater extent in these subjects. The consequences of the current professorial pay system are felt here in a fundamental way, as it does not offer systematic and transparent prospects for advancement.

The very detailed catalogue of fields of action adopted by the Senate in Q II 2021 specifies potential steps necessary to reduce the existing gender pay gap, on the one hand, and to counteract a continuation of the gender pay gap, on the other. It covers four areas, namely overarching measures, performance pay in general, special merit pay and functional performance pay, e.g. for lead positions in the UoC

management like the positions of the deans. The Senate instructed the Rectorate to turn the fields of action into a prioritized action list with ensured legal status.

Fields of action include the development of integrated overarching UoC regulations on salary/retention negotiations, for special performance pay and functional performance pay as well as the establishment of regular and transparent salary advancement and pertinent processes (see new Action 19). Regular probationary advancement should be implemented for very good performance for individuals below the salary average and with few opportunities for retention negotiations. To institutionalise grievance mechanisms, an ombudsperson for R4 researchers who are disadvantaged by the gender pay gap will be installed as well. While our appointment processes have been honoured with the seal of approval for "Fair and Transparent Professorial Recruitment Processes" by the German Association of University Professors and Lecturers since 2014, the UoC plans to further increase transparency and fairness in negotiations via unconscious bias trainings for negotiators, i.e. deans and members of the Rectorate, for instance, and review the composition of negotiating groups.

In order to establish regular monitoring and evaluation of progress, a report on the data-based development of the gender pay gap and on the implementation status of the catalogue of measures will be presented to the Senate once a year. The gender pay gap working group as installed by the Senate will continue to exist in its current composition and prepare this annual report.

19) ESTABLISHMENT OF SYSTEMATIC AND TRANSPARENT PERFORMANCE-RELATED PAYMENTS

The UoC plans to establish more systematic and transparent performance-related payments for all staff, including R1 to R4 researchers. Given the different legal remuneration bases for public service employees and civil servants in general and professors (R4) in particular, two measures are currently underway.

A new UoC Guideline for Special Payments will address the issue for public service employees and civil servants. These staff members are covered either by the Collective Agreement of the States or the Civil Servant Remuneration Law, both of which enable such additional payments. Given the vagueness of the provisions therein, however, a university-internal specification is necessary to avoid inconsistencies and arrive at an entirely systematic and transparent basis for such performance-related payments. Since fixed basic salaries in the public sector are not competitive for all applicants, depending on subject area, this guideline will play a role in successfully attracting and retaining highly qualified staff.

The pending revision the UoC Guideline for Performance Remuneration for R4 researchers redefines performance criteria and the amount of special merit payments, especially factoring in criteria regarding teaching and HR development. It also sets up criteria in connection with academic age, taking into account relevant factors in the context of professional biography – like children, care-giving, chronic illness, disability – as well as a subject-specific performance component. As outlined in Action 18, this also ties in with reducing the gender pay gap.

Since performance-related payments play a role in the gender pay gap, the Equal Opportunities Office of the UoC in conjunction with our HR development services and the German Association of University Professors and Lecturers offer specific trainings for all female staff on "how to negotiate strongly and successfully" based on the current legal framework. This is another measure to reduce the gender pay gap in the long run.

20) RAISING AWARENESS AND ENHANCING EXPERTISE FOR RESEARCH DATA MANAGEMENT (RDM) AND OPEN SCIENCE AT THE UoC

In 2019, the UoC established the Cologne Competence Center for Research Data Management (C³RDM) as a central service project to raise awareness among researchers from all faculties for the importance of Open Science and the positive impact of open and sustainable handling of research data on their individual careers. With the combined expertise of the three institutions involved (University and City Library of Cologne, Regional Computing Centre, and Division 7: Research Management), C³RDM offers comprehensive support and advice on research data management in all phases of research projects for early-stage researchers and experienced professors alike. Services range from trainings, consultation on data management planning in the context of a funding proposal, advice on technical storage possibilities and RDM tools, to support in data publication.

Based on the needs of the UoC researchers, C³RDM identified central fields of action especially in the area of technical RDM service development as well as networking. In Q IV 2020, C³RDM presented a viable strategy for the years to come, has been evaluated successfully, and will thus be expanded as well as perpetuated from 2022 on.

21) OTM-R POLICY

Our new overarching directive will bring together all existing regulations, thus covering all stages from R1 to R4. This policy will further clarify UoC standards regarding advertisement of positions, the composition of selection committees, strictly merit-based selection, questions of (unconscious) bias and procedure, also specifying rules of active recruitment of women in areas of underrepresentation. Issues like the appreciation of variations in the chronological order of CVs as well as systematic delays in CVs due to parenting and caregiving times, inter alia, will be explicitly addressed.

22) FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE ON COMPLIANCE

The new framework directive on compliance of the UoC will bundle all existing compliance-relevant regulations and guidelines. An associated web portal will provide access to all documents, enabling adaptation and expansion of compliance-relevant content for the UoC. Involving stakeholders across the UoC, the project is scheduled for completion in 2021 with the adoption of the directive by the Senate in Q III and the launch of the web portal by Q IV 2021.

23) EVALUATION: GOOD EMPLOYMENT
CONDITIONS FOR EARLY-STAGE RESEARCHERS

In 2016, the UoC committed to the Contract on Good Employment Conditions. As part of the implementation of this contract, the UoC Guidelines on Good Employment Conditions for Early-Stage Researchers were adopted in 2018.

In accordance with the recommendation of the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff, the guidelines initially came into force for three years and shall be evaluated after this period. Coordinated by the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, this evaluation will take place in Q IV 2021. The results will be presented to the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff, the Senate and the Rectorate. Depending on the results, further measures will be developed and implemented.

24) COMMUNICATION CONCEPT FOR THE
UoC HR STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS

Internal communication has recently been considered in need of improvement in our talks to early career researchers. The implementation of our existing HR Strategy for Researchers continues to be highly participatory; though, it is currently very much focussed on existing university bodies and ad hoc action-related working groups installed, for instance, by the Senate. There is a strong need, however, to reach the 'grass-roots level' more sustainably, which is a challenge given the sheer size of the UoC. For this purpose, the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities will cooperate closely with experts from Division 8: Communications and Marketing to revise our communication concept for our HR Strategy for Researchers. We will incorporate a number of formats into this strategy, e.g. surveys and interviews as well as a relaunch of our HR Strategy for Researchers website and publications in the UoC's own media like the staff magazine.

OTM-R POLICY

The gaps identified in the application of OTM-R principles at the UoC in the initial phase were successfully closed in the first two years of the implementation period. All academic positions (R1 to R4) are published on EURAXESS (see Action 14) and a central electronic application portal for R1 to R3 research positions was launched, enjoying high levels of acceptance even though use is not yet mandatory (see Action 15). The entire recruitment process for R4 professorial positions could already be managed through the UoC Academic Job Portal.

Given the UoC's commitment to increase the share of female researchers, in particular at R3 and R4 level, the Gender Equality Officer and a person delegated by the Rectorate participate in every professorial appointment procedure. The faculties are supported in the process of active recruitment of suitable female candidates by a newly created position at the central level. OTM-recruitment procedures are currently being implemented even more intensively for faculties and areas with low performance. 27 recruitments for tenure track professorships within the WISNA programme were tied to high quotas for the recruitment of women, which were successfully met by all but one faculty (see Action 1). Unconscious bias trainings are another measure with a view to equal opportunities for all staff (see Action 9).

While we already have general guidelines in place for our selection processes and the composition of selection committees (R1 to R4), the faculty policies on permanent research positions and the new UoC Guidelines on Permanent Employment Opportunities for Academic and Artistic Staff specify additional basic rules for staffing procedures for permanent positions for academic and artistic staff (see Actions 2 and 3). Selection committees at the UoC take a holistic approach in the evaluation of candidates' competences and qualifications, including variations in the chronological order of CVs and systematic delays in CVs due to parenting and caregiving times, for instance.

The coexistence of a number of guidelines defining OTM-R principles at the UoC for different groups of staff is increasingly considered inconvenient. Our new framework OTM-R policy will remedy this (see new Action 21).

4 IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 GENERAL OVERVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Given the strategic value of the HR Strategy for Researchers for the UoC, we aim to embed all measures initially derived from the gap analysis as well as our newly developed actions into university structures and policies. Building directly on existing strategies and measures, a third of our initial actions were already successfully completed in the first two years of the implementation phase. Substantially extended, half of our originally planned actions are currently well underway, having reached important milestones. Based on our continuing efforts to further enhance career development and working conditions for researchers, the additional actions proposed at this stage are currently prepared or already in progress. Thus, the project structure as defined in the initial action plan has proven well suited to ensure a consistent and timely implementation of the HR Strategy for Researchers at the UoC and to foster continuous development of this strategy.

The UoC Rectorate defined clear responsibilities for the implementation of each projected action as well as for the supervision of the implementation and the monitoring of the overall process, with a view to optimum quality control as well as smooth and effective execution. Kept as lean as possible, the implementation process and our internal monitoring thereof has been integrated into university bodies and mechanisms already in place, with very few additional instruments. The experiences of the last two years have further strengthened our conviction that this is most conducive to our overall goal while conserving our resources and preventing an excessive number of ever new committees and advisory boards.

The Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities is responsible for all strategic developments pertinent to academic staff and to equal opportunities in connection with gender equality and diversity. Therefore, the supervision of the implementation of the action plan as the overarching UoC HR Strategy for Researchers as well as its continuous further development are core areas of the Vice-Rector's responsibilities.

Our HRS4R working group consists of four administrative representatives bringing together different areas of expertise relevant to HR matters, namely the head of Department 43 HR Development for Researchers, the head of Department 94 International Science, a member of staff of Department 12 Strategy & Evaluations and a member of staff of the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, with the latter acting as HRS4R coordinator for the UoC. The members of the working group interact in various contexts pertinent to the HR matters in their routine business. Under the leadership of the HRS4R coordinator, this team not only prepared the

internal review, but also continuously monitors progress and documents any developments with a view to the external review at the HR award renewal stage.

As the sole minor improvement to the original project structure, an HRS4R coordinator was officially created in the second year of the implementation phase after it had already proven expedient and practical in day-to-day business to assign the main responsibility for recurring monitoring tasks to a single member of staff instead of the entire working group. As personal advisor to the Vice-Rector, the HRS4R coordinator is constantly up-to-date on any overall strategic developments, future plans of the UoC management as well as on the progress of individual actions, making her the natural person in charge where all the threads converge. She monitors measure-related progress very closely on a routine basis, as the status of individual measures as well as any changes or extensions are discussed by the responsible units with the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities in regular meetings, which the HRS4R coordinator always attends. Bimonthly jours fixes with, for instance, the head of Division 4: Human Resources and the heads of the individual departments in this division play a crucial role in this respect. In addition, formal queries as to the progress of the measures are usually made on a six-monthly basis.

In regular consultations, the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities updates the Rector, the Chancellor and the Permanent Deputy of the Chancellor on the overall process as well as measure-related developments, thus enabling close supervision by the university leadership and providing the opportunity for adjustments if necessary. In addition, in the case of highly strategic measures or those which necessitate a Rectorate decision, individual measures are presented to the Rectorate in its regular sessions. Additionally, the Rectorate usually receives an overall HRS4R status report once a year.

The HRS4R steering group consists of members of the university leadership, i.e. the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, the Vice-Rector for International Affairs and the Permanent Deputy of the Chancellor. The head of Division 4 Human Resources is an advisory member of the steering group. As a rule, on behalf of the HRS4R working group, the HRS4R coordinator prepares brief reports on the process for the HRS4R steering group twice a year. In addition, the group members meet to discuss individual measures and their further course of action if necessary in view of the strategic relevance of individual actions.

The process of the HRS4R is monitored by the UoC's Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff, a high-ranking university body chaired by the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities. Acting as an advisory board to the HRS4R, it is composed of representatives of all status groups of the university: students, R1 to R4 researchers from all faculties and administrative staff. Furthermore, the heads of both Staff Councils advise the committee, which meets at least four times a year and discusses all HR-related policies and matters. At least once a year, the committee receives a detailed HRS4R

progress report. Furthermore, individual measures may be presented to the committee in more detail in order to allow in-depth discussion of their progress. This tightens the strong link of the HR Strategy for Researchers to the research community at the UoC. The overall oversight function of this committee assures that the process suits the needs of UoC researchers as the main stakeholders.

4.2 DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

PREPARATION OF THE INTERNAL REVIEW

Since the action plan represents the all-embracing UoC HR Strategy for Researchers, the supervision of its implementation, the monitoring its progression as well as its further development are the primary responsibility of the Vice-Rectorate for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities.

In the first two years of the implementation phase, it has proven most effective to assign the routine task of monitoring progress to the UoC HRS4R coordinator. As personal advisor to the Vice-Rector and head of the HRS4R working group, she is consistently informed on all strategic and measure-related developments in regard to HR matters. Accompanying the Vice-Rector to all pertinent meetings, she is well connected with all relevant UoC units and the university leadership, which enables her to be always up-to-date on the status of individual actions as well as any adjustments and newly envisaged measures. This demonstrates that the implementation of the action plan and its supervision are well integrated into existing UoC structures and procedures as core tasks, making an additional elaborate monitoring structure superfluous.

Nonetheless, as a rule, the HRS4R coordinator conducts additional bi-annual internal surveys involving all responsible units in order to formally monitor progress. Duly documented in the Office of the Vice-Rectorate, these responses have been included in any internal reports in the first two years of the implementation phase, for instance in the annual report to the Committee on HR Matters for Academic Staff. The HRS4R coordinator is supported in this task by the other members of the HRS4R working group.

This established internal monitoring process is the basis of the internal review at hand. The draft review was subjected to a broad discussion within the HRS4R working group, before being further discussed with the administrative units responsible for individual actions as well as relevant overall developments, i.e. with regard to UoC strategy on the whole. Coinciding with the regular annual HRS4R report, the contents of the internal review were subsequently presented to the Committee on HR Matters for Academic Staff, which doubles up as an HRS4R advisory board in the UoC implementation and monitoring structure. The Committee approved the review, and took the

decision to continue the annual reports combined with detailed presentations and discussion of individual actions throughout the year. Finally, the HRS4R steering group released the review and the revised action plan on behalf of the Rectorate.

Thus, all structures as defined in the initial UoC action plan were duly involved in the process, including the research community as the main stakeholders.

INVOLVEMENT OF THE RESEARCH COMMUNITY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS

Instead of installing an additional HRS4R advisory board, the existing high-ranking UoC Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff serves this function for the implementation and further development of the UoC HR Strategy for Researchers. It is well-suited for this function as it is made up of representatives of all status groups of the university, in particular researchers at all stages in their careers (R1 to R4). Habitually meeting four times per year, this committee is an advisory body to the Senate, in particular with regard to good employment conditions at the university. Chaired by the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, the committee also serves as a platform for direct exchange between the research community and the university leadership.

A comprehensive annual HRS4R report is presented to the committee. In addition, it has proven fruitful to present individual measures to the committee in an in-depth manner, for instance the Guidelines on Responsibilities of Academic Staff in Leadership Positions (see Action 4). Committee members are thus given more detailed insight into each presented action and its progress. Enabling more intense discussions, such an approach may lead to much more useful feedback from the research community to the units charged with the implementation of the measure in question.

In the case of UoC Guidelines on Permanent Employment Opportunities for Academic and Artistic Staff, for instance, the members of the committee were directly involved in a very hands-on manner in the drafting phase of this new policy, with further researchers in the faculties involved via the committee members (see Action 1).

In the first two years of the implementation phase, researchers beyond the members of this committee were also directly involved at action level, be it in pilot projects or in working groups; e.g., in the implementation of personnel development reviews for researchers (see Action 5) or in the development of the newly proposed action to close the gender pay gap for R4 professorial positions at the UoC (see new Action 18).

The ongoing process to devise and adopt a new University Strategy Plan (USP) with two workshops on HR issues is a prime example of how researchers from R1 to R4 level are involved in the definition of future UoC strategies. The output of these workshops will eventually also impact the further development of the UoC HR Strategy for Researchers.

In the next three years of the implementation phase, the communication concept for the UoC HR Strategy for Researchers will be revised in order to involve the 'grass-roots level' more sustainably, given that currently our focus is very much on existing university bodies, elected staff representatives and working groups installed for specific purposes. Since this will hinge on surveys and interviews, inter alia, we expect to gain further insights into the needs of the stakeholders. This may, in turn, impact our future strategy as well as our implementation structure and tighten the link between the UoC research community and the HR Strategy for Researchers.

HRS4R WORKING AND STEERING GROUPS

An HRS4R working group composed of key administrative staff in regard to HR matters and overall strategy was installed at the UoC in order to assure the implementation of the actions and to monitor progress. Headed by the HRS4R coordinator, it consists of the head of Department 43 HR Development for Researchers, the head of Department 94 International Science and a member of staff of Department 12 Strategy & Evaluations. The vast majority of the day-to-day tasks as to the supervision of progress fall within the responsibility of the HRS4R coordinator, with the other group members facilitating communication within their respective units and beyond, acting as multipliers of the HR Strategy for Researchers within the UoC administration. Also interconnected in their routine business with a view to HR matters, the members of the working group cooperate closely in order to prepare regular HRS4R reports.

Four high-ranking members of the university leadership form the small HRS4R steering group, to which the working group reports. In addition to the bi-annual meetings, the members of this steering group regularly discuss any HR matters of strategic relevance in their regular consultations, which the HRS4R coordinator habitually attends. Additional steering group meetings may be convened to discuss the status of individual actions and decide on adjustments necessitated by altered circumstances, for instance.

ALIGNMENT OF ORGANISATIONAL POLICIES WITH THE HRS4R

The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers is fully recognized at the UoC as our all-encompassing overall strategy in regard to all academic staff. Therefore, it plays a role in ongoing strategy processes like the definition of the University Strategy Plan, which will in turn impact the further development of the HR Strategy for Researchers in the future. In addition, the measures as defined in the initial Action Plan as well as the new actions proposed at this stage are integral tasks of the respective unit in charge.

Accessible to all stakeholders, the website dedicated to our HR Strategy presents the initial Action Plan as well as this internal review along with a process description and further information on HR policies at the UoC,

including our current OTM-R guidelines. It continues to function as a reference point for all planned actions and the overall HR strategy of the UoC.

With the Committee on HR Matters of Academic Staff acting as an HRS4R advisory board, a high-ranking advisory committee to the Senate of the UoC is directly involved in the process. This additionally ensures that any policies of the UoC are aligned with the HR Strategy for Researchers.

ENSURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROPOSED ACTIONS

The Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities supervises the implementation of the action plan in close cooperation with the Rector, the Chancellor and the Permanent Deputy of the Chancellor of the UoC. In addition to annual HRS4R reports to the Rectorate, the latter are regularly informed about the overall process and measure-related progress by the Vice-Rector. This enables rapid reaction and readjustments by the university leadership if required.

Not only has the Committee on HR Matters for Academic Staff proven an ideally suited advisory body, which may call for additional reports or distribute work assignments to different UoC units at any time. Acting as both participants and multipliers, its members are also directly involved in the HRS4R implementation process, for instance in regard to the UoC Guidelines on Permanent Employment Opportunities for Academic and Artistic Staff (see Action 1).

Defining specific strategic objectives, target agreements between the Rectorate and the faculties are commonly used at the UoC as a management tool. Therefore, they may also prove useful to ensure the implementation of the proposed actions in the faculties (e.g., Actions 1, 3 and 8). At present, the UoC is revising its process for target agreements. The new University Strategy Plan will have an impact here, too, as new objectives for the faculties may be identified. Aiming at an even more performance-oriented distribution of funds in the future, the new agreements will become effective in 2022.

MONITORING PROGRESS

Supervision of the implementation of the HR Strategy for Researchers and monitoring its progress are the responsibility of the Vice-Rector for Academic Career and Equal Opportunities, on whose behalf the HRS4R working group under the leadership of the HRS4R coordinator routinely documents all developments. An internal HRS4R monitoring and reporting system installed, which complements all previously existing structures and mechanisms to assure quality control. Given that the implementation as well as its supervision are core tasks of the units in charge as well as the Vice-Rectorate, the additional specific HRS4R monitoring instruments as defined in the initial Action Plan of the UoC could be kept to a minimum.

The HRS4R steering group, the Committee on HR Matters for Academic Staff as well as the Rectorate are informed in regular intervals on the progress, also in view of the defined timeline. While delays may occur, in particular in broad participatory processes involving the stakeholders, these must be duly explicated and justified to the aforementioned university bodies.

PREPARATION FOR THE EXTERNAL REVIEW

In the first two years of the implementation phase of the HR Strategy for Researchers at the UoC, it has become evident that the project structure as initially defined is very suitable to reach the aims of this HR strategy and to stimulate its further development. The UoC will therefore continue on this course and continue to regularly monitor and document any progress as well as further developments in the established manner, always with a view to preserve and even strengthen the link between the HR Strategy for Researchers and R1 to R4 researchers at the UoC as the main stakeholders. This will feed into the next external assessment of the HRS4R, the preparation of which will involve the university leadership on the one hand and representatives of the UoC research community on the other.

In a joint effort of the university leadership, the central administration as well as the faculties and centres, the UoC has successfully implemented the initially defined actions in the past two years, substantially extending about half of the original measures in our attempt to continually improve working conditions for researchers of all stages. Like the original, the revised Action Plan builds directly on our existing strategies and measures.

The project structure with its clear specification of responsibilities has proven very apt to ensure timely and consistent implementation, monitoring and supervision, while persistently providing a strong link to the research community. The principles of the EU Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers are thus further embedded into the core of the UoC, its strategies and guidelines.

HRS4R

Human Resources Strategy
for Researchers

2021
REVISED
ACTION
PLAN