

HR Excellence in Research

Action Plan

Action Plan

Case number

2024RO204268

Name Organisation under review

Institutul National de cercetare dezvoltare pentru metale neferoase si rare

Organisation's contact details

B-dul Biruintei, Pantelimon, Romania

1. Organisational Information

*Please provide a limited number of key figures for your organisation. Figures marked * are compulsory.*

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD. students either full-time or part-time involved in research *	56
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) *	2
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation) *	0
Of whom are women *	22
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	14
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	12
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	9
Total number of students (if relevant) *	1
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	92
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	2901006.03
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	0
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	2410865.19
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	0

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

IMNR operates in accordance with Government Decision no. 2115 /2004, designs and implements innovative solutions in the non-ferrous and rare metals field through scientific and technical research, aiming to answer to the innovation and business needs of its partners.

Our goal is to be a regional, national and an European competitiveness pole in the field of material science and engineering focused on non-ferrous and rare metals, promotes eco-efficient technologies in the context of the circular economy. Innovation, knowledge transfer, and attention to our clients' needs are all at the core of our research and development activities

2. Strengths and weaknesses of the current practice

Please provide an overview of the organisation in terms of the current strengths and weaknesses of the current practice under the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code at your organization.

Note:Click on the name of each of the four thematic headings of the Charter and Code to open the editor and provide your answer.

Ethical and professional aspects* **Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****Strengths**

- institutional culture oriented towards performance, scientific quality and permanent development;
- strong openness towards the establishment of partnerships and for internal and international cooperation activities;
- strong connection with institutes and universities in European and Non-European countries, for developing research projects;
- research directions and thematic profiles appropriate to current national and international trends, regarding societal challenges and market requirements in the environmental field;
- permanent concerns for the development of the institute as a pole of scientific and technological innovation in the field of material science and engineering focused on non-ferrous and rare metals, promotes eco-efficient technologies in the context of the circular economy. Innovation, knowledge transfer, and attention to our clients' needs are all at the core of our research and development activities
- ability of the research team to produce applicable and relevant scientific results for the national and international community;
- freedom to carry out research and development activities, to initiate and submit proposals for research projects and to approach new research topics;
- programmatic documents such as: Ethics Code of Conduct, Methodology for periodic professional evaluation, the Individual Labor Contract, the Internal Regulation, GDPR Procedure, System Procedure– Ethics and Integrity, System Procedure – Audit Missions.
- performance evaluation system in research activities that is applied in the institute, which includes aspects related to the number and quality of scientific publications, research performance, the ability to manage research projects, the experience and the ability to coordinate research teams;
- researchers' access to the main national and international scientific platforms and access to IMNR repository of scientific publications and patents.

Weaknesses

- antiplagiarism software,
- lack of participation of all researchers who hold the Ph.D. title in national/international project proposals as project director/responsible;


- scientific communication to the public can always be improved

Recruitment and selection* **Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****STRENGTHS:**

- recruitment and selection process follow the legal provisions specific to the research sector
- procedural framework in the recruitment and selection of the institute's staff, made up of regulations and carried out by commissions appointed at the institute level: Methodology for research personnel recruitment and hiring;
- steps of the recruitment process are public, transparent and merit-based, respecting the conditions required by the personal data protection regulations at the European level;
- compliance with the principles of transparency, non-discrimination, equal opportunities, in accordance with the internal regulations within the institute and in accordance with national legislation, for the recruitment and selection process of the institute's staff;
- IMNR has simplified procedures for submitting candidate files, as far as this is possible, through electronic means of communication.
- existence of strong connections with relevant universities in Romania and Europe in order to recruit and select young staff.
- recruitment and promotion procedures in agreement with OTM-R requirements, with job specific conditions designed for each specialization (chemists, physicians, biologists etc.);
- available positions at international level, especially on platforms such as <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/> (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>);
- promotion in the online environment (especially on the institute's website) of the possibilities of staff mobility;
- candidates are individually informed after selection process about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications;

WEEKNESSES:


- lack of attractiveness of a career in the field of research for young university graduates, mainly due to the relatively low level of remuneration compared to other fields;
- there are big differences between the financing guides of the research programs, or new directions appear, so it is hard for the researchers to apply on short notice

Working conditions* **Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****STRENGTHS:**

- Technology Transfer Centre, that provides support to researchers in order to promote the results obtained;
- open access database for researchers from the institute, an institutional repository that includes information, results and research data
- representative framework for researchers (there are information, consultation and decision-making bodies at the institute level - such as the Scientific Council, or through the representatives of employees who take part in the meetings of Scientific Council);
- high interest within the institute for matchmakings, workshops and round tables on topics of interest or for the dissemination of the results of research projects;
- risk factors are constantly monitored (from the point of view of safety and health at work, protection against unforeseen situations, environmental protection) and measures are taken to prevent possible situations that may endanger the integrity of employees through periodic information/training, by equipping with authorized and verified prevention and protection equipment;
- promoting and maintaining sustainable activities in terms of environmental protection, both through internal work procedures and through ongoing research projects;
- possibility of developing a flexible work schedule, adapted to the specifics of the research activity carried out within the laboratories as well as to the scientific requirements (collection, processing, analysis and interpretation of data).

WEEKNESSES:

- working conditions can be improved, the institute need to upgrade the building and facilities; acquisition of new equipment, finding new financing sources; improving the salary/working conditions package such as paid transportation to and from headquarters, meal tickets, vacation tickets, medical extended insurance, gym membership/sport equipment discounts, vouchers for protection glasses, teambuilding, bookster – read and roll for companies, cafeteria and relax room, coffee and snacks machines, cash machine.

Training and development* **Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)****STRENGTHS:**

- IMNR is host institution for its PhD students, which have a PhD coordinator;
- vast scientific expertise of the institute's staff that helps develop the skills of young researchers;
- monitoring the need for professional training by processing the annual evaluation results; following annual evaluation, an upgrade of the plan for professional training at Institute level is elaborated.
- carrying out professional training programs both within the institute and outside it (through accredited and internationally recognized bodies);
- transparent internal promotion/career advancement process, based on clear, fair criteria and encouraging internal competition between individuals or work groups;
- encouraging training internships through flexible work schedules, access to academic contacts, externally funded research projects, mobility programs etc.;
- permanent information to employees on professional training/personal development opportunities as well as on the levers through which such programs can be accessed;
- researchers are supported to participate to scientific events, trainings, workshops

WEEKNESSES:

- lack of a section on the institute's website dedicated to mobility opportunities;
- strict regulation (by legislation, internal regulations) can make difficult the access to the promotion process for some employees;
- insufficient financing for participation in external training programs;
- fluctuating financing for researcher training, dependent on the budget of the projects won by competition;

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HR Excellence in Research strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s). Multiple links must be comma separated.

<https://imnr.ro/wp/hr-excellence/> (<https://imnr.ro/wp/hr-excellence/>)

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HR Excellence in Research to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

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

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 1

Creating a section on the institute's website dedicated to information on research freedom, limitations and opportunities

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

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

Semester 2/2026

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Scientific

Number of documents available within section / 1

Council IT

new or updated document per year Number of users

Department

per year / 80 users per year

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2

Supporting researchers to perform research activities in other domains that those specific to their department

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 1. Research freedom

(++) 22. Recognition of the profession

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

Semester 1/2026

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Scientific
Council

Number of researchers

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3

permanent update regarding the changes in Romanian and international legislation, relevant for our activity field

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 5. Contractual and legal obligations

(++) 10. Non discrimination

(+/-) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems

(++) 12. Recruitment

(++) 13. Recruitment (Code)

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

permanent

(++) 15. Transparency (Code)

(++) 16. Judging merit (Code)

(++) 20. Seniority (Code)

(++) 34. Complains/ appeals

Responsible

Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
------	--------------------------

Legal office, HR, Scientific Council	Number of upgraded documents
-----------------------------------------------	------------------------------

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4

acquiring an antiplagiarism program

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 2. Ethical principles

(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility

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

Semester 2/2026

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

Acquisition

Ethics

Comision

1 testing program Tests of the scientific production

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5

training

GAP Principle(s)

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

(+/-) 4. Professional attitude

(++) 6. Accountability

(+/-) 7. Good practice in research

(++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience
(Code)

(++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)

(++) 28. Career development

(+/-) 29. Value of mobility

(++) 30. Access to career advice

(++) 31. Intellectual Property Rights

(++) 33. Teaching

(++) 37. Supervision and managerial duties

(+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development

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

(++) 40. Supervision

permanent

Proposed ACTIONS

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HR, Scientific Director, Head of Laboratories Innovation Manager IPR Specialist Economic compartment Scientific Council Technology Transfer Centre	Number of training programs Experience exchanges

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6

dissemination/ promotion

GAP Principle(s)

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

(++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

(+/-) 9. Public engagement

permanent

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

HR,
Scientific
Director,
Head of
Laboratories
Innovation
Manager IPR
Specialist
Economic
compartment
Scientific
Council
Technology
Transfer
Centre

Number of events Number of publications

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7

recruiting issues

GAP Principle(s)

(++) 13. Recruitment (Code)

(++) 14. Selection (Code)

(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

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

permanent

(++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

(++) 27. Gender balance

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

HR,
Scientific
Director,
Head of
Laboratories
Scientific
Council

Recruitment procedures

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8

upgrade work conditions

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

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 23. Research environment

(+/-) 24. Working conditions

(++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment

permanent

(++) 26. Funding and salaries

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

HR,
Scientific
Director,
Head of
Laboratories
Innovation
Manager IPR
Specialist
Economic
compartment
Scientific
Council
Technology
Transfer
Centre

Employees fluctuation Benefices for the employees
Headquarter upgrades New equipment

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9

information

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

GAP Principle(s)

(+/-) 32. Co-authorship

(++) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies

permanent

(+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors

Responsible

Unit

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

HR,
Scientific
Director,
Head of
Laboratories
Innovation

Manager IPR
Specialist
Economic
compartment

good practices extended number periodic
information sessions a more flexible calculating
formula for individual activity score.

Scientific
Council
Technology
Transfer
Centre

Unselected principles:

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HR Excellence in Research strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) *

The recruitment and selection process of the research personnel is respecting national legislation and internal regulations, taking into consideration transparency, non-discrimination, equal opportunities principles and quality standards specific to the job position.

GAP analysis identified the need to revise the Methodology for research personnel recruitment and hiring due especially to the recent legislative changes of the Romanian Research Law.

Our evaluation/appraisal system is used for assessing the researcher's professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner.

Our HR Strategy is in line with OTM-R mandatory requirements.

We are permanently concerned about aligning our strategy to the best practices on the market in order to achieve our goals, have the best available team and register important scientific results.

If your organisation already has a recruitment strategy which implements the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment, please provide the web link where this strategy can be found on your organisation's website. Multiple links must be comma separated:

URL:

<https://imnr.ro/wp/hr-excellence/> (<https://imnr.ro/wp/hr-excellence/>)

4. Implementation

General overview of the expected overall implementation process of the action plan: (max. 1000 words)

The analysis made within this process led to the conclusion that there is a need for improvement in various areas. Based on GAP analysis and OTM-R checklist an Action Plan was developed, proposed actions representing the main vectors for achieving compliance with Charter & Code requirements.

The Steering Committee will be responsible for coordination and assessment of Action Plan implementation. Members of Working Group involved in the initial phase will constitute the core team for implementation of specific actions since working group includes representatives from top management, information consultation and decision-making bodies, research departments and administrative departments.

The research personnel will also be involved in the Action Plan implementation: representatives of researchers are part of Steering Committee. Persons that worked during the initial phase will continue to fulfil the role of main vectors for action plan implementation at research departments level, they will disseminate and provide feedback from research personnel to implementing structures;

The process of HRS4R strategy implementation and its outcomes will be disseminated through various dissemination events at IMNR level. The obtained results will be analyzed by Steering Committee. Should any deficiencies appear in the process, the implementing team will propose corrective actions.

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

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

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The Steering Committee will periodically review implementation process of the Action Plan, calculate indicators and identify issues that may arise during implementation. Working Group will be responsible for development of Progress Report and its submission to Steering Committee. Steering Committee is responsible to discuss with relevant stakeholders (such as Scientific council) obtained results and to facilitate Action Plan implementation.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Steering Committee and Working Group include representatives from top management, information consultation and decision-making bodies, research departments and administrative departments. Working Group will oversee the Action Plan implementation and report to Steering Committee. The composition of Steering Committee and Working Group will be analyzed at the beginning of implementation process and on a six months basis and will be improved by involving at least 1 representative for each organizational structure of IMNR.

The research personnel will be involved in the Action Plan implementation in the following ways:

- representatives of researchers are part of Steering Committee. Persons that worked during the initial phase will continue to fulfil the role of main vectors for action plan implementation at research departments level, they will disseminate and provide feedback from research personnel to implementing structures;
- researchers' community will significantly influence implementation process through its representatives to information consultation and decision-making bodies, such as Scientific Council;
- implementation process will be periodically (yearly) assessed by surveys among research personnel.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.

*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

IMNR already aligned its HR Strategy to OTM-R and will keep on supervising the permanent upgrades necessary in this area. All new employees will be trained about the Principles and Code, also be supported to act in obtaining the Strategic goals.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Proposed Action Plan is supported by the IMNR top management. Steering Committee and Working Group include representatives from top management, information consultation and decision-making bodies, research departments and administrative departments, as well as Technology Transfer Centre.

Implementation process will involve regular meetings or discussions with relevant stakeholders (such as Scientific Council, research personnel). Members of Working Group involved in the initial phase will constitute the core team for implementation of specific actions.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

In order to monitor action plan, implementation progress the following monitoring tools will be used: common template for assessment of each action progress or calculation of indicators to be used by each responsible unit; regular meetings of Working Group (one per quarter) on actions implementation; regular common meetings of Working Group and Steering Committee (one per quarter) on actions implementation progress; periodic briefing to IMNR top management.

Working Group will report (one report per quarter) to the Steering Committee on progress made in actions implementation. Steering Committee is responsible to adopt decisions to mitigate negative effects, to control implementation risks and eliminate problems that may arise during implementation process.

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



Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Indicators are individualized for each planned action. Working Group will periodically (one time per quarter) calculate the indicators and submit them to the Steering Committee. Steering Committee will be responsible for decisions taken in order to achieve proposed objectives and to implement the actions in accordance with the proposed Action Plan.

Furthermore, the mid- and long-term general impact of this process will be assessed by the general level of attractiveness for external candidates and the satisfaction level of the internal stakeholders.

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

HRS4R is a mandatory condition for the IMNR Horizon Europe and Resilience and Recovery National Plan projects until the ending of their implementation period (the earliest project to finish is in 2026).