EXCELLENCE IN FOOD AND AGRICULTURE RESEARCH

INTERIM REVIEW

November 2020

1 CONTACT DETAILS

Name of Organization under review:	Fundació Centre de Recerca en Agrotecnologia-Agrotecnio
Organization's contact details:	Professor Dr. Vicente Sanchis Avda. Rovira Roure, 191 - 25198 Lleida (Spain) Phone: 00-34-973-702535 Fax: 00-34-973-702596 E-mail: vicente.sacnhis@udl.cat
Date of Charter and Code Endorsement:	12-07-2017
Web link to published version of organization's HR Strategy and Action Plan:	http://www.Agrotecnio.org/about-us/hra/
Web link to organizational recruitment policy (OTM-R principles):	http://www.agrotecnio.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/OTMR-Policys.pdf

2 ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION

2.1 Organizational profile

Agrotecnio is an international center of excellence that develops frontier research intended to have a major scientific and economic impact and to improve the wellbeing of societies and individuals. It belongs to the CERCA institutes network (Research Centres of Catalonia), and it is located at the ETSEA Campus of the University of Lleida (UdL). Its mission is to carry out top-level fundamental and strategic scientific research focused on well-defined translational objectives in three main areas: crop and environmental science, animal science and food science, and to disseminate the outputs of this research to the society and the private industrial sector.

2.2 Key figures for the organization

STAFF & STUDENTS	FTE
Total researchers = staff, fellowship holders, bursary holders, PhD students either full-time or part-time involved in research	162
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	32
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organization is host organization)	157
Of whom are women	75
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	83
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organizations corresponding to postdoctoral level	22
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organizations corresponding to doctoral level	55
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	2 (with the support of UdL offices)
Research Funding (figures for most recent fiscal year)	
RESEARCH FUNDING (figures form the most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organizational budget	2,795,878€
Annual organizational direct government funding (designated for research)	40,000€
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research obtained in competition with other organizations – including EU funding)	2,026,274€
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	729,604€

3. ACTIONS

TITLE ACTION	RESPONSIBLE UNIT*	CHRONOGRAM	– INDICATORS / TARGET	STATUS
Coordination with UdL working group.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q1 2018	– Coordination meeting performed.	In Progress
Strength awareness, commitment and implementation of the Charter & Code (C&C) criteria.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q1 2018 - Q4 2021	– Online documents, available on: HRS4R web page and Welcome Manual. – New members in the Working Group.	In Progress
Open the membership of Agrotecnio's Scientific Strategy and Management Committee (SSMC) to include R1, R2 and R3 scientists.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q1 2018	– Research Committee reformed with new responsibilities. – Research committee Guide defined and published.	In Progress
Publish Agrotecnio - UdL ethical code on the website.	Administration	Q1 2018	– Publish the ethical code on Agrotecnio website.	Completed
Write a guide for staff recruiting and selection process, including procedures, criteria and recruiter guidelines, in collaboration with a certain level of coordination with UdL.	Administration and Working Group	Q2- Q3 2018	– OTM-R working team selected. – OTM-R protocol defined and published online. – OTM-R Guide defined and published online. – Number of calls published at EURAXESS. – Number of Recruitment committees selected.	In Progress
All open calls for recruitment of researchers will be published at least on EURAXESS.	Steering Committee and Administration	Q3 2020	– Number of calls that appear in EURAXESS. – Number of CVs received from EURAXESS. – Number of EURAXESS candidates recruited.	In Progress

Facilitate R1 and R2 researchers to follow continuous development courses available.	Steering Committee and Administration	Q4 2018	– Number of courses identified. – Number of participants of these courses.	In Progress
Design and implement a mentorship support guide.	Steering Committee and Working Group	Q1 2019	– Mentorship norm written. – Number of mentors assigned. – Satisfaction survey by researchers mentored.	Completed
Write a Welcome Manual.	Administration, Working Group and Steering Committee	Q1- Q2 2019	– Agrotecnio Welcome Manual finished and published.	Completed
Design and implementation of a specific training plan for research staff in collaboration with UdL that includes relevant research management issues (such as exploitation of results, intellectual property, national and international funding, etc.)	VS TS WG	Working Group and Steering Committee	– Survey performed and analyzed. – Training Plan defined. – Number of training courses performed. – Number of training courses finished with a positive evaluation and number of certifications by scientists. – Training Plan available online and in the Welcome Manual.	In Progress
Define an Outreach Action Plan to be implemented.	Communicator officer	Q1 2020	– Agrotecnio Outreach Plan defined. – Outreach leader assigned. – Number of outreach activities performed.	In Progress

Design and then implement a scientific merits evaluation guide, in agreement with the Doctoral School of the UdL, (for R1).	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q2 Q3 2020	– Creation of a merits evaluation guide for R1 and R2. – Distribution of the guidelines among researchers not funded by external sources. – Implementation of the guide. – Number of evaluations performed based on these guidelines.	Extended
Write and send the most relevant Agrotecnio news or contributions to a mailing list, including both internal and external contacts (industrial, academic, etc.).	Administration and Communicator Officer	Q3 2020	– Benchmark analysis document presented. – Brainstorming session done. – Amount of news distributed. – Number of new subscribers.	Extended
Development of a guidance plan and professional support strategy for researchers at the end of the PhD and the beginning of the postdoctoral period	Admnistration	Q4 2020 Q1 2021	– Brainstorming session performed. – Number of unaddressed issues identified. – Actions provided to fulfill the gaps.	Extended
Define basic guidelines for the writing of research notebooks at the Institution.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q2 2021	– Writing of the basic recommendations for best practices in notebook-filling. – Distribution of the draft to the PIs. – Incorporate the document in a web repository until the Welcome Manual is ready. – Acceptance of the guidelines in each notebook.	Extended
Teaching will be facilitated to R1 and R2 researchers, setting, in addition, the maximum number of hours of this activity.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q2 2021	– Agreement Agrotecnio-UdL to allow young researchers to lecture at UdL for a determined number of hours. – Number of lecturing hours.	In Progress

Write a guide for staff evaluation, including procedures, criteria and evaluator guidelines in agreement with the Doctoral School of the UdL (for R1 researchers). This procedure will be applied provisionally, until Agrotecnio sets up its own Human Resources Department and differentiated recruitment and selection procedures are written.	Working Group and Steering Committee	Q3 Q4 2021	– Career Evaluation Process protocols defined. – Guidelines for the selection of independent evaluation committees written. – Career Evaluation Process available online and in the Welcome Manual.	Extended
The webpage should be updated and translated into Spanish and Catalan in order to make easier to our stakeholder know our activities	Administration and Communicator Officer	Q1 2022	– Webpage in Spanish and Catalan	New
Prepare on-boarding presentations	Administration and Steering Committee	Q1 2021	– On-boarding trainings for newcomers imparted – Update the Welcome Manual	New
Tell our researchers the possibility to assist to CERCA training about gender equality, group relationship and discrimination	Communicator Officer	Q3 2021	– Create a mailing list – Number of CERCA training assisted	New

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers

OTM-R Checklist for Institutions

	O	T	M	Answer: Yes *completely* / *Yes substantially* / *Yes partially* / *No*	Improvement actions	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system						
1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	Yes partially	Translate the policy to Spanish and Catalan	• Published in English
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	Yes substantially	Change the Recruitment Process when a Human Resources Department is created	• Recruitment guide following the OTM-R principles
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	Yes partially	Our involved staff might attend more training programs in OTM-R	• The Selection Committee components are always aware of OTM-R training programs to assist
4. Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x		Yes substantially	Strengthen the dissemination of our calls in our website and social networks	• Applicants number coming from online
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	Yes substantially	Continuous self-assessment of the recruitment process	• Research Fellows consolidated

6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	Yes completely		• Share external candidates
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	Yes completely		• Trend in the share of applicants from abroad
8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	x	x	x	Yes substantially	Not differenced but also not discrimined	• Tendency to share of applicants non discrimining any condition
9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	Yes completely		• Trend in the share of applicants from outside the institution • Overall satisfaction of our calls candidates with the process
10. Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				Yes completely		• Satisfaction with the results after the process
Advertising and application phase						
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	x	x		Yes completely		• Guidelines are clear with the recruitment policy based in the OTM-R system
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit?	x	x		Yes completely		• Guidelines are clear with the recruitment policy based in the OTM-R system
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		Yes completely		• Share of job adverts posted on EURAXESS

14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		Yes substantially	Explore social networks to increase visibility of our offers	• Social network diffusion
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?	x			Yes completely		• Overall satisfaction of our calls candidates with the process
Selection and evaluation phase						
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees?		x	x	Yes completely		• Statistics on the composition of panels
17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?		x	x	Yes completely		• Written guidelines, published in the web
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?		x	x	Yes substantially	Improve the gender balance in the SSMC	• Gender equality in the R4 positions that compound the SSMC
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?			x	Yes completely		• Written guidelines, published in the web
Appointment phase						
20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?		x		Yes completely		• Share of applicants who receive an answer
21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?		x		Yes completely		• Overall satisfaction of our calls candidates with the feedback given
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		Yes partially	Complaints procedure might be updated	• Statistics on complaints
Overall assessment						

23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?				Yes partially	Review assessment process	• OTM-R control panel

4   IMPLEMENTATION

Agrotecnio has engaged different groups of employees preparing the internal review, The Working Group created to develop the HRS4R seal actions includes 15 Agrotecnio staff members and all positions researchers; as well the Steering Committee, composed of the lidership and management of the center that has supervised the process. Several meetings have been conducted to analyze the current situation and to assess the progress made in implementing the Action Plan.

At the moment, the HRS4R seal of excellence is recognized in the organization's research strategy. With the support of the UdL, Agrotecnio will get a better performance of the seal and is going to carry out future collaborations and dissemination actions in the area of Human Resources. Being one of the Research Centers belonging to the CERCA institutions ((https://cerca.cat/en/, a public institution of the Government of Catalonia for supervising, supporting and facilitating the activities of the Catalonian research centers of excellence) we receive support on key common aspects, such as HR, Open Science, Code of Ethics, Communications, etc.) and we are regularly assessed in these areas.

The OTM-R policy is and will continue to be the base in Agrotecnio's recruitments.