HR Excellence in Research

Action Plan

Action Plan

Case number

2024RO236122

Name Organisation under review

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu

Organisation’s contact details

10 Victoriei Blvd., Sibiu, Sibiu, 550024, 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 *	1146
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 *	375
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. *	273
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level *	285
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level *	91
Total number of students (if relevant) *	14586
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) *	1124

RESEARCH FUNDING (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	62818194
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	572868
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	6448365
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	457695

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

Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu is a public comprehensive higher education and research institution located in Sibiu, Romania. It has 9 faculties covering a broad range of disciplines, and offers Bachelor, Master and Doctoral (PhD) programmes. ULBS provides several programmes in foreign languages (especially English), as well as some double/triple degree programmes. It engages in numerous national and international research projects via its 23 research centres. ULBS is a member of the FORTHEM Alliance, one of tLucian Blaga University of Sibiu is a public comprehensive higher education and research institution located in Sibiu, Romania. It has 9 faculties covering a broad range of disciplines, and offers Bachelor, Master and Doctoral (PhD) programmes. ULBS provides several programmes in foreign languages (especially English), as well as some double/triple degree programmes. It engages in numerous national and international research projects via its 23 research centres. ULBS is a member of the FORTHEM Alliance, one of the top 17 European Universities, and of Universitaria, Romania's most prestigious HEI consortium.he top 17 European Universities, and of Universitaria, Romania's most prestigious HEI consortium.

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:

- Strong emphasis on research freedom, ethical principles, and professional responsibility, with clear regulations in the LBUS Charter and Ethics Committee supporting academic autonomy, non-discrimination, and integrity.
- Established mechanisms for accountability, dissemination of results, and public engagement, including events like European Researchers' Night, Sibiu Innovation Days, and projects like COCERC and EPICS, which promote societal relevance and collaboration.
- Robust internal audit and compliance with national laws ensure transparency in contractual obligations and evaluation systems, with annual rewards for excellence in research outputs.
- Active promotion of non-discrimination through policies like the Gender Equality Plan and Bureau for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, alongside recognition of intellectual property via dedicated procedures.

Weaknesses:

- Partial implementation in areas like research freedom and professional responsibility due to lack of mechanisms for reporting violations, mentoring procedures for young researchers, and constraints on certain research topics.
- Gaps in public engagement and dissemination policies, with limited structured outreach beyond project-based activities, and insufficient training on obligations like intellectual property.
- Accountability and evaluation systems rely heavily on national laws but lack institutional Open Science policies and comprehensive dashboards for project transparency.
- Limited focus on broader societal dissemination beyond academic channels, and no formal policy for handling constraints in ethical reporting.

Recruitment and selection*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

- Transparent and merit-based processes aligned with national legislation, including public announcements on multiple platforms (e.g., Monitorul Oficial, EURAXESS), standardized evaluation via GRADIS/SIEPAS, and appeals mechanisms.
- Recognition of diverse career paths, mobility experience, and qualifications obtained abroad, with automatic procedures for doctoral degrees and supervisor status.
- Inclusive eligibility criteria without barriers based on seniority or institutional prestige, and support for disadvantaged groups through positive discrimination measures.
- Competitive selection with external experts for grants and emphasis on both quantitative and qualitative merits in CVs and career plans.

Weaknesses:

- Exclusions in methodology for part-time/hourly teaching and grant-funded research positions, limiting consistency and transparency.
- Job ads and documentation primarily in Romanian, reducing international accessibility and visibility; no mandatory inclusion of external/international evaluators or flexible bibliography options.
- Lack of systematic feedback for all candidates (only on rejection) and no structured strategy for international dissemination beyond national platforms.
- Potential unconscious bias in evaluating non-linear careers, with no mandatory unconscious bias training for committees.

Working conditions*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

- Recognition of researchers as professionals per national laws, with stable indefinite-term contracts for most positions, competitive salaries (up to 50 EUR/hour for seniors), and full social security coverage.
- Supportive research environment with upgraded facilities via donations (e.g., Hasso Plattner Foundation), 23 research centers, and emphasis on innovation, interdisciplinarity, and technology transfer.
- Gender balance initiatives via the Gender Equality Plan and Bureau for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion; career development through COCERC counseling and mobility programs like Erasmus+ and FORTHEM.
- Clear policies on intellectual property, co-authorship (encouraged via evaluation systems), and participation in decision-making bodies, with representation for staff and students.

Weaknesses:

- Limited flexibility in working conditions, such as no explicit policies for remote work, part-time arrangements, or ergonomic/mental health support tailored to researchers.
- Project-based nature of some services (e.g., COCERC) lacks permanence; uneven visibility of gender initiatives and low awareness of IP rights among early-career researchers.
- Complaints/appeals handled ad-hoc without an ombudsman; teaching duties may overburden early researchers without structured mentoring or qualitative evaluation focus.
- Participation in decision-making exists but marginalizes early-career researchers; no formal IP training or comprehensive harassment prevention methodology aligned with recent laws.

Training and development*

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

Strengths:

- Open relationships between supervisors and researchers, with regular meetings, office hours, and support for new/young staff; mandatory training for doctoral students in ethics, methodology, and professional development.
- Access to continuous professional development via legal mandates (e.g., annual plans, paid time off), workshops through research centers, and COCERC activities like debates, science cafés, and career counseling.
- Encouragement of mobility and external training, with no major impediments and integration into evaluation systems like GRADIS.

Weaknesses:

- Lack of formalized programs for supervisor training, workload management, or mentoring (e.g., pairing experienced with new staff); supervision quality varies without standardization or evaluation surveys.
- Training is often project-based or voluntary, with no centralized platform for coordination, monitoring, or mandatory engagement beyond doctoral levels.
- Uneven accessibility across faculties; no inclusion of key skills like grant writing or networking in core offerings, and reliance on external/in-house initiatives without impact indicators.

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://cercetare.ulbsibiu.ro/hrs4r/ (https://cercetare.ulbsibiu.ro/hrs4r/)

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	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Develop internal procedure and policy for protecting academic freedom, including anonymous reporting mechanism	(-/+) 1. Research freedom (+/-) 27. Gender balance	Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Ethics Committee / Rectorate	Approved institutional policy on academic freedom by Q3 2026. Anonymous reporting mechanism launched and functional (minimum one online and one offline channel). ≥ 70% of staff informed through internal communication campaign.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 2	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Enhance mentoring program for doctoral/postdoctoral researchers with focus on integrity and good practices	(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (+/-) 36. Relation with supervisors	Q2 - Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Doctoral School / COCerc	At least 2 structured mentoring sessions per semester. ≥ 50% of doctoral/postdoctoral researchers enrolled in the program. Feedback survey: ≥ 80% satisfaction rate regarding usefulness of mentoring.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 3	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Organize yearly training on funding opportunities, project management, and intellectual property	(+/-) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development	Q2 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
RDI Office / HPI ULBS	Minimum 2 training sessions annually. ≥ 100 participants/year. ≥ 80% participants reporting improved knowledge in post-training evaluation.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 4	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Translate key regulations (e.g., ethics, contracts) into English and create informational process for researchers	(+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations	Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Legal Department / International Office	100% of key regulations available in English by Q3 2026. Dedicated webpage with downloadable documents. ≥ 500 visits/month to the information portal within 6 months of launch.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 5	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Create public online dashboard for research projects and annual training on accountability/ethics	(+/-) 6. Accountability (+/-) 9. Public engagement (+/-) 27. Gender balance	Q4 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
RDI Office / IT Department	Online dashboard fully functional by Q4 2026, updated quarterly. ≥ 90% of ongoing projects included. ≥ 2 annual training sessions held, with at least 50 attendees each.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 6	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Adopt institutional Open Science and public engagement policy	(+/-) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 9. Public engagement	Q1 2027

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
RDI Office	Policy document officially adopted by Senate by Q1 2027. ≥ 2 dissemination events for researchers and stakeholders.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 7	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Integrate part-time and grant-funded positions in unified recruitment methodology	(+/-) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (+/-) 27. Gender balance	Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HR	Revised recruitment methodology published and applied to 100% of new positions starting Q3 2026. At least 3 training sessions for HR staff on new procedures.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 8	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Publish all job ads in English and on EURAXESS systematically	(+/-) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (++) 16. Judging merit (Code) (+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)	Q1 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
RDI Office / HR	100% of research positions advertised in English. 100% of positions uploaded on EURAXESS starting Q1 2026.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 9	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Provide unconscious bias training for committees	(++) 10. Non discrimination (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q2 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HR, Bureau for Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	≥ 80% of committee members trained by Q2 2026. ≥ 2 training sessions/year. Post-training assessment: ≥ 75% awareness improvement

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 10	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Develop OTM-R policy aligned with C&C, including recognition of mobility/qualifications	(+/-) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 13. Recruitment (Code) (+/-) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (++) 16. Judging merit (Code) (+/-) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (+/-) 29. Value of mobility	Q1 2026 - Q2 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
HR / Senate	OTM-R policy adopted and published by Q2 2026. ≥ 80% of recruitments monitored under new OTM-R framework within 6 months.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 11	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Attracting funding for the further development of ULBS's research and development infrastructure.	(+/-) 24. Working conditions (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to career advice (+/-) 39. Access to research training and continuous development	Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
RDI Office	Creation and establishment of at least 2 coworking spaces. A minimum of 2 sessions per academic year, with a minimum of 100 participants, organized by the RDI Office.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 12	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Establish Ombudsman office for researchers	(-/+) 34. Complains/ appeals (+/-) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies	Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Ethics Committee / Rectorate	Ombudsman appointed by Q3 2026. Office fully operational (with dedicated contact channel). Annual report published with at least 10 cases reviewed in the first year.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 13	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Develop and adopt an institutional Guideline on Co-authorship and Contribution Recognition, aligned with international best practices	(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (+/-) 33. Teaching	Q2 - Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
RDI Office/ Senate / Ethics Committee	Guideline approved by Q3 2026. ≥ 70% of researchers reached via dissemination workshops. Annual compliance check integrated into publication review.

Proposed ACTIONS

Action 14	GAP Principle(s)	Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)
Provide supervisor training and evaluate supervisory quality	(+/-) 37. Supervision and managerial duties (+/-) 40. Supervision	Q3 2026

Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target(s)
Doctoral School / COCerc	At least 2 supervisor training sessions/year. ≥ 70% of supervisors trained by Q3 2026. Supervisor evaluation system implemented, with ≥ 80% positive feedback from doctoral students.

Unselected principles:

(++) 2. Ethical principles (++) 7. Good practice in research (++) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems

(++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) (++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (++) 20. Seniority (Code)

(++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (++) 22. Recognition of the profession (++) 23. Research environment

(++) 25. Stability and permanence of employment (++) 26. Funding and salaries (++) 32. Co-authorship

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 establishment of a comprehensive Open Recruitment Policy and the full-scale integration of the Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles within the institutional framework of Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (ULBS) signify a major step forward in the university's ongoing alignment with the values and objectives of the European Research Area (ERA). These actions reaffirm ULBS's long-term commitment to promoting fairness, inclusiveness, excellence, and integrity in all dimensions of its academic and research activities.

By systematically embedding OTM-R principles across recruitment and selection processes, ULBS aims to create a research environment that is both accessible and competitive at an international level. The institution recognizes that a transparent and merit-based recruitment system is not only a compliance measure but also a powerful strategic instrument for attracting, developing, and retaining the most talented researchers and educators, irrespective of their nationality, gender, or career trajectory. This policy directly contributes to enhancing institutional excellence, diversifying the academic community, and strengthening scientific output through the integration of new perspectives and experiences.

The implementation of these principles ensures that recruitment at ULBS is open to all qualified candidates, transparent in its procedures, and grounded in merit and fairness. The adoption of English-language communication for recruitment materials enhances international visibility and inclusivity, while the introduction of external and international evaluators in selection committees reinforces impartiality and credibility. Furthermore, by incorporating structured feedback mechanisms and standardized evaluation grids, the university fosters continuous professional development and a culture of accountability among both candidates and evaluators.

Equally significant is ULBS's recognition of the diversity of research careers. Through initiatives to mitigate unconscious bias, the introduction of training for selection committee members, and the inclusion of non-linear or interdisciplinary career pathways within evaluation frameworks, the university fosters a more inclusive and human-centric recruitment culture. This aligns with the HRS4R's vision of valuing the full spectrum of researchers' experiences, including career breaks, international mobility, and intersectoral transitions.

The implementation of the OTM-R Toolkit serves as a cornerstone of this transformation. ULBS employs the Toolkit as a practical and analytical framework to evaluate progress, identify gaps, and ensure consistent application of best practices across faculties and research departments. Regular internal audits, annual reporting in the Rector's Report, and periodic data-driven assessments enable the university to measure key indicators of success such as international participation rates, gender balance, candidate satisfaction, and the timeliness and transparency of recruitment cycles.

Beyond procedural reform, the Open Recruitment Policy reflects a deeper cultural transformation within ULBS. It represents a shift from compliance to commitment — from adhering to formal requirements to genuinely embodying the values of transparency, equality, and excellence in every aspect of institutional governance. The integration of OTM-R principles contributes not only to fairer

recruitment outcomes but also to building trust within the research community, enhancing institutional reputation, and fostering a stronger sense of belonging and purpose among staff.

Ultimately, ULBS's strategic approach ensures that its human resources policies fully support the creation of a vibrant, diverse, and internationally competitive research ecosystem. This environment encourages collaboration across disciplines and borders, cultivates ethical and responsible research conduct, and enables researchers to reach their highest potential. By continuously evaluating and refining its recruitment procedures in accordance with European standards, ULBS positions itself as a forward-looking institution that champions open science, human-centric values, and sustainable academic development.

In conclusion, the Open Recruitment Policy and the embedded OTM-R framework are not merely administrative instruments but expressions of ULBS's institutional ethos — one that places people, transparency, and excellence at the heart of its mission. Through these efforts, ULBS strengthens its role as a key contributor to the European Research Area, affirming its dedication to creating a fair, inclusive, and globally connected research and academic environment that inspires innovation, nurtures talent, and advances knowledge for the benefit of society as a whole.

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:

4. Implementation

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

The implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu (ULBS) is coordinated at a strategic level by the Rector, together with the Vice-rector for Research, Innovation and Internationalization and, the Vice-rector for Students and Community Relations. The Administrative Council provides executive support (prioritisation and resources), while the Senate approves revised policies and procedures. At operational level, an HRS4R Implementation Committee brings together representatives of the leadership, the doctoral structure, the human resources directorate, the international relations department, the research and projects service, the university library (with roles for open access and the institutional repository), the legal service, the information technology service, the ethics committee and the internal audit. Each faculty appoints an HRS4R contact person who organises local delivery and submits periodic reports to the Committee.

The process unfolds over 24–36 months in four phases:

1. Initiation and alignment (months 0–3). Governance structures are confirmed, the Action Plan is approved by the Administrative Council and the Senate, measurable result indicators are agreed, clear responsibilities for each action are set, together with a calendar and a risk register. An HRS4R webpage is published, showing mandate, composition, calendar and key documents. Common reporting templates are adopted.

2. Co-design and launch (months 3–6). The Committee consults the research community (early-stage researchers, experienced researchers, research group leaders, doctoral candidates) and the support services (human resources, international relations, research, library, legal, information technology) to refine deliverables and deadlines. Operational templates are finalised: bilingual vacancy notices with criteria and weightings published in advance, standardised evaluation grids, the candidate feedback form, the guidance for recognition of mobility experience, the public section with contractual and legal rules for research, and the specifications for the public platform for research results.

3. Wave-based implementation (months 6–24). – Phase I (months 6–12): transparency in recruitment (criteria and weightings published ex ante, balanced selection committees, written feedback to all candidates), a dedicated procedure for project-based recruitments, the guidance on recognising mobility (Erasmus, regional networks, university alliances, European projects), and the public section with rules and model contracts for research. – Phase II (months 12–18): the public platform for dissemination and exploitation of results (publications, patents, prototypes, projects), the institutional clause that career breaks shall not disadvantage candidates in assessments, and a guidance for committees on how to fairly weigh seniority and achievements; a template for postdoctoral calls and the launch of a postdoctoral mentoring track. – Phase III (months 18–24): consolidation of policies for transferring results and protecting creative works, standardisation of reports and annual thematic reviews (recruitment, recognitions, dissemination, data protection and research integrity).

4. Monitoring and continuous improvement (throughout). The Research, Development and Innovation Office (RDI) collects progress data monthly; the Committee meets quarterly to review action status (on time, at risk, delayed), identify risks and decide corrective measures; semi-annual reports are presented to the Administrative Council, and an annual synthesis goes to the Senate. An internal dashboard with indicators and a public evidence register (approved procedures, guidance, forms, webpages) allow anyone to follow and verify progress.

Cross-cutting principles are: transparency, fair treatment in recruitment and evaluation, recognition of mobility and non-linear careers, academic and research integrity, open access to results and responsible research data management. Sustainability is ensured through formal approvals in the governing bodies, by including actions in the annual plans of services and by collecting indicator data automatically wherever possible.

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 HRS4R Implementation Committee, chaired by the Rector and the Vice-Rectors, oversees progress with the support of the RDI, which acts as a single point of contact. The committee includes representatives of the doctoral structure, the human resources directorate, the international relations department, the research and projects service, the university library, the legal service, the information technology service, the ethics committee, the internal audit, researcher representatives, and the HRS4R contact persons from faculties.

Mechanism and rhythm:

· Monthly, the RDI Office consolidates measurable result indicators from all involved services and updates the internal dashboard.

· Quarterly, the Committee holds a formal meeting to review the status of each action (on time, at risk, delayed), analyse causes, set corrective measures and update the change log.

· Semi-annually, a progress report is submitted to the Administrative Council, emphasising observable results (published procedures and guidance, active forms, updated webpages) and measurable effects.

· Annually, a Senate synthesis follows the exact path “diagnosis from the GAP, action from the Plan measurable result and public evidence”.

Quality and compliance assurance: The internal audit performs thematic reviews (open and transparent recruitment, candidate feedback, recognition of mobility and qualifications, dissemination, research data management), while the ethics committee checks compliance with ethical principles and integrity rules. For actions processing personal data, data protection rules are embedded from the design stage. All meetings have minutes with decisions, responsible persons and deadlines, communicated to those involved and archived. Delayed actions are escalated to the Administrative Council together with a remediation plan (responsible persons, extra resources, new deadline).

Justification: Regular oversight, measurable indicators, a fixed reporting rhythm, linkage to internal audit and ethics, and publication of evidence together secure real control over implementation and timely corrections when needed.

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

ULBS will involve researchers and stakeholders systematically through: formal representation, recurrent consultation, co-design, piloting and public feedback.

Representation. The committee includes all career stages (early-stage, experienced, research leaders), doctoral leadership, research centres and consortia, human resources, international relations, the research service, the library, legal and information technology.

Consultation: Semi-annual surveys will cover open and transparent recruitment, post-selection feedback, recognition of mobility and qualifications, dissemination and research data management. Quarterly “open meetings” (onsite and online) will share progress; the RDI Office offers monthly office hours; draft policies and guidance are exposed to public comments, with a public change log.

Co-design and piloting. Sensitive measures (for example, the candidate feedback form, the guidance on recognising mobility, the results platform) will be tested in one or two faculties with focus groups of researchers and administrative staff. Lessons learned will then be scaled university-wide.

Inclusion and internationalisation. Documents and surveys will be bilingual. International researchers, equality specialists, doctoral candidates and representative organisations will be involved. Scheduling will consider teaching periods and mobility windows.

External stakeholders. For transfer, protection of creative works, mobility and dissemination, industry partners, professional networks, non-governmental organisations, alumni and European project partners will be invited to thematic workshops.

Justification. Representation, consultation, piloting and transparency increase the quality and acceptance of measures and the speed of corrective action when necessary.

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)

Alignment proceeds in three steps:

1) Anchoring in strategic documents. The University’s Research, Development and Innovation Strategy will state explicitly that HRS4R is the overarching human resources policy for research, with reference to the European Charter and Code. Objectives from the Action Plan will be transposed into annual plans for vice-rectorates and services, and, at revision points, reflected in the University Charter and relevant regulations.

2) Integration into procedures. A compliance matrix is used to connect each HRS4R principle to internal policies and flows:

· open and transparent recruitment (bilingual notices, criteria and weightings published ex ante, balanced committees, written feedback to candidates, public archives of competitions);

· ethics and integrity (unitary flows for ethical approvals and reporting, periodic training);

· assessment and career development (recognition of mobility, non-penalisation of career breaks, postdoctoral pathways);

· open science (policies for open access and research data management);

· knowledge transfer and protection of creative works (policies, model contracts, support for patents);

· externally funded projects (clear procedures for project-based selections, consistent with funder guidelines).

For each area, operational procedures, guidance and templates are issued or updated, approved by the governing bodies and published in Romanian and English.

3) Governance and quality assurance. The Implementation Committee tracks measurable results in an internal dashboard. The internal audit checks compliance, while the ethics committee ensures value coherence. All policies and evidence (approved procedures, guidance, forms, webpages) are published in an HRS4R section and reflected on the European recruitment portal for external visibility.

Justification. Mentioning HRS4R in strategic documents, embedding it in binding procedures and monitoring with measurable results ensure coherence, compliance and durability.

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Each action has a clear owner (directorate, service or faculty) and a sponsor in the leadership (the Vice-Rectors). For every action there is a responsibility sheet specifying: persons responsible, persons approving, persons consulted, persons informed, the timeline, dependencies and required resources. Resulting policies are approved by the Administrative Council and the Senate and thus become mandatory.

Planning and deliverables. Actions are grouped in waves and quarterly work periods, each with clear deliverables (for example: publication of the candidate feedback form, the guidance for recognising mobility, launch of the public platform for results). Critical dependencies, such as legal input or information technology developments, are scheduled in advance.

Measurement and evidence. Each action has one or more measurable result indicators with data source, collection frequency, target and place of publication. Progress is shown in an internal dashboard, while evidence (approved procedures and guidance, active forms, webpages, archives of competitions) is gathered in an easy-to-verify register and published for transparency.

Monitoring and intervention. The RDI Office collects data monthly; the Committee decides quarterly on corrective measures; the Administrative Council receives a semi-annual report and the Senate an annual report. Any delayed action is accompanied by a remediation plan (responsible persons, additional resources, new deadline). Changes of scope or deadlines are recorded in a change log approved by the leadership.

Quality and compliance. The internal audit performs focused reviews (recruitment, candidate feedback, recognitions, open access, research data management, transfer of results), while the ethics committee verifies compliance with ethical and non-discrimination principles. For actions involving personal data, data protection requirements are built in from the design stage.

Resources and training. Actions are included in the annual plans of directorates and faculties. Time is allocated for information technology developments and maintenance, and training is organised on topics such as open and fair recruitment, unbiased evaluation, research data management, open access, protection of creative works and collaboration with the socio-economic environment. Where appropriate, external projects are used to fund specific deliverables.

Justification. The combination of formal mandate, clear responsibilities, progress measurement, publication of evidence and independent reviews ensures a predictable, fair and durable implementation of the Action Plan.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)?*

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Progress will be monitored through a single, coherent framework with a clear rhythm for data collection, periodic reviews, reports to the governing bodies, and publication of evidence.

1) Timeline and review rhythm

· Monthly: The RDI Office gathers progress data from all responsible services (human resources, international relations, research and projects, library, legal, information technology, doctoral structures). For each action, it updates the status (on time / at risk / delayed), the deliverables achieved, encountered difficulties, and the next steps.

· Quarterly: The Implementation Committee holds a formal meeting to review each action, validate achievements, decide corrective measures where needed, update the change log and the risk register, and confirm the next calendar milestones.

· Semi-annually: A progress report is submitted to the Administrative Council, summarising what has been delivered, the observable effects (for example: approved procedures exist, forms are live, webpages are published, a given number of competitions apply the new rules), and the proposed adjustments.

· Annually: A synthesis is presented to the Senate, clearly mapping “diagnosis from the GAP → action in the Plan → measurable result → public evidence”. This synthesis underpins the timeline update for the following year.

2) Staged delivery (“waves”) The plan is implemented in six-month waves (months 6–12, 12–18, 18–24), each with mid-term checkpoints at three months. At the start of each wave, mandatory deliverables are confirmed; mid-phase, a checkpoint validates progress; at the end of the wave, deliverables are closed and the next wave is prepared. This structure creates predictability and allows timely corrections.

3) Monitoring instruments

· Internal tracking board: for each action, measurable results are defined together with the data source, collection frequency, and short- and medium-term targets.

· Evidence register: links to verifiable deliverables (approved procedures and guidance, forms, webpages, competition archives, bilingual vacancy notices).

· Risk register: with responsible person, likelihood, impact, and response measures.

· Change log: any change of deadline, scope, or responsibility is recorded and approved.

4) Transparency and justification A public summary of progress (orderly list of approved documents, active webpages and forms) is published on the HRS4R website. The monthly–quarterly–semi-annual–annual rhythm, combined with public evidence and independent checks (internal audit, ethics committee), ensures real control over the timeline, timely corrections, and full traceability from plan to result.

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Progress will be measured through a set of clear indicators, numeric or well operationalised, defined for every action in the Plan. For each indicator we set: a precise definition, unit of measurement, data source, frequency of collection, baseline value, short- and medium-term target, the person or unit responsible, and the place where the results will be published.

1) Measurement areas and sample indicators

· Open and transparent recruitment (items 15–16).

o Share of vacancy notices with criteria and weightings published in advance.

o Share of competitions where written, standardised feedback was provided to all candidates within the agreed deadline.

o Average time from application deadline to final decision communication.

o Number of competitions published and archived with full documentation (notice, grids, outcomes).

· Recognition of mobility experience (item 18).

o Existence of an institutional guidance for recognising mobility, published and kept up to date.

o Share of assessment files where mobility is considered according to the guidance.

o Annual number of reported mobility periods (teaching, training, research) and the proportion recognised in assessments.

· Dissemination and exploitation of results (item 8).

o Operation of the public platform for results (annual number of uploaded outputs: publications, prototypes, patents, projects).

o Share of academic units active on the platform within an academic year.

o Average time to make accepted results visible on the platform.

· Recognition of qualifications (item 19).

o Existence of an internal recognition guidance (ULBS + CNRED links) publicly available.

o Average processing time for recognition files within the university.

o Share of files submitted and tracked online.

· Seniority and fair assessment (item 20).

o Existence of a public clause stating that career breaks do not disadvantage candidates.

o Share of vacancy notices that include this clause.

o Number of selection committees that completed training on fair assessment of non-linear careers.

· Postdoctoral appointments (item 21).

o Existence of an institutional template for postdoctoral calls and a mentoring framework.

o Annual number of postdoctoral positions advertised and filled.

o Number of active mentor–postdoctoral researcher pairs and their annual progress reports.

2) Collection, validation and publication

Data are collected by the responsible services (human resources, international relations, research and projects, library, legal, information technology, doctoral structures) on a monthly calendar and are validated quarterly by the Implementation Committee. Semi-annual summaries are published on the HRS4R webpage (ordered list of approved documents, active pages and forms, essential statistics), and the annual synthesis to the Senate maps each indicator explicitly to the corresponding action and GAP point.

3) Justification

This indicator system covers all key areas of the Plan (recruitment, recognitions, dissemination, career), relies on existing data sources, enforces a regular collection and publication rhythm, and enables timely corrections. The traceability “diagnosis - action - indicator - public evidence” supports the next external assessment.

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

The implementation process of the HRS4R Action Plan at Lucian Blaga University of Sibiu is designed to ensure coherence, participation, and sustainability. It combines strong governance, inclusive consultation, and evidence-based monitoring to achieve lasting institutional change.

Strategic oversight is provided by the Rector and Vice-Rectors, while the HRS4R Implementation Committee coordinates delivery. Regular reporting, transparent documentation, and digital dashboards ensure accountability and traceability of progress.

Researchers at all career stages actively contribute through consultations, surveys, and pilot activities, while external stakeholders (industry, NGOs, and European partners) are engaged in dissemination and knowledge transfer initiatives. This participatory model ensures the plan reflects real needs and enhances ownership within the research community.

Implementation follows a phased, measurable approach, supported by automated data collection and regular audits. Each action has defined indicators, responsibilities, and deliverables, with quarterly reviews and annual reporting to the Senate. Continuous improvement is embedded through feedback loops, public transparency, and regular ethical and compliance checks.

Sustainability is ensured by integrating HRS4R principles into ULBS’s strategic documents, recruitment practices, and training frameworks. The result is a coherent system promoting open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment, responsible research conduct, and international competitiveness.

Overall, the proposed implementation process reinforces ULBS’s commitment to the European Research Area, transforming the institution into a more inclusive, transparent, and excellence-driven university that values people, integrity, and innovation.