



## What is the HRS4R?

In 2016, the University of Granada (UGR) received the **HR Excellence in Research Award** from the European Commission in recognition of its continued commitment to adopting the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. These key EU documents establish the guidelines for European universities and institutions to improve the recruitment and working conditions of researchers, making research careers more attractive and **HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH**

Specifically, the **European Charter for Researchers** outlines the functions, responsibilities and rights of researchers and their employers. The aim is to ensure that the relationship between these parties contributes to a successful performance in the generation, transfer and shared use of knowledge, as well as the professional development of researchers from the early stages of their contracts.

The European **Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers** was drawn up to improve selection procedures, ensuring that they are fair and transparent. The researcher's merit should be measured not only by publications, but also by a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as education and teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management experience, and public awareness-raising activities.

As the principles of the Charter & Code are fully in line with UGR's strategic goals and ongoing development plans, in April 2016 the University of Granada signed the Declaration of Commitment, formally adhering to them.

To help research institutions to adapt to the principles of the Charter & Code, the Commission set out a procedure through which institutions interested in fully adhering to these principles could design and implement their own Human Resources Strategy.

### **This procedure is made up of five main steps:**

1. The research institution or funding organisation carries out an internal analysis (i.e. Gap Analysis) according to a standard template, grouping all 40 Charter & Code principles into 4 areas ('Ethical and professional aspects', 'Recruitment',

'Working conditions & social security' and 'Training').

2. The research institution or funding organisation publishes its "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers" on its website in an easily-accessible place and also in English. It should summarise the main results of the internal analysis and present the actions proposed to ensure and/or improve alignment with the Charter & Code principles.
3. Provided that the above steps are formally respected and both the Gap Analysis and the Action Plan are submitted within set cut-off dates, the European Commission "acknowledges" that the participating research institution or funding organisation has adopted a Human Resources Strategy for researchers.
4. The research institution or funding organisation implements its HR strategy and conducts a self-assessment within the framework of its existing internal quality assurance mechanisms. This self-assessment should be undertaken regularly, at a minimum every second year after the HR award.
5. External evaluation: at least every four years after the HR award the research institution or funding organisation drafts a short report, showing the progress made towards the objectives of its HR Strategy for Researchers and its compliance with the principles of the Charter & Code.

## **Our progress at the UGR so far**

The granting of the prestigious HR Excellence in Research Award to the UGR not only lends support to our proposals to secure funding and attract talented individuals to our University; it also raises our international profile and demonstrates our commitment to providing a favourable working environment for researchers.

In accordance with the European Commission's HRS4R guidelines, the University of Granada is currently implementing its own **HR Excellence in Research: Strategy and Action Plan**. This Action Plan comprises over 30 steps which, once complete, will contribute substantially to the University's aspirations towards fully adopting the principles of the Code & Charter. We are confident that this ongoing process will reap major benefits for our entire research community.

We are currently at stage 4 of 5 of implementing our Strategy and Action Plan and are conducting an internal self-assessment to evaluate our compliance with the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R). In 2019, our Working Group implemented a number of key proposals in this Strategy and Action Plan, including; our Code of Good Practice in Research, our Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) Policy

<http://www.ugr.es/en>

, and our Guide for International Researchers. Collectively, these resources serve to reflect the ethos of the University in areas such as recruitment procedures, professional development and ethical considerations. Moreover, they provide researchers with a comprehensive overview of working conditions, support services, and training opportunities at our University. These actions, along with the self-assessment procedures, will enable us to draft an updated and improved version of our Strategy and Action Plan over the coming months.

It is also worth mentioning that the process we are undertaking is essential to fulfil article 32 of Grant Agreements of projects within Horizon 2020, which establishes the obligation to take measures to implement the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. If it is not fulfilled, the measures stipulated in article 6A of the Grant Agreement regulating the eligibility of costs can be applied. Accordingly, we expect the utmost involvement and consensus on behalf of the university community with the process that is being carried out to adapt our conditions to the European guidelines.