

CeMM HRS4R Internal Review

CeMM

SCIENCE IS OUR MEDICINE



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

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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	174,5
Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality)	112,25
Of whom are externally funded (i.e. for whom the organisation is host organisation)	54,5
Of whom are women	98
Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor.	22
Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level	72
Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level	69
Total number of students (if relevant)	79,5
Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff)	299

Research funding (figures for most recent fiscal year)	€
Total annual organisational budget	23.834,000
Annual organisational direct government funding (designated for research)	13.033,000
Annual competitive government-sourced funding (designated for research, obtained in competition with other organisations – including EU funding)	5.337,000
Annual funding from private, non-government sources, designated for research	5.464,000

Organisational profile (a very brief description of your organisation, max. 100 words)
<p>The mission of CeMM is to achieve maximum scientific innovation in molecular medicine to improve healthcare. CeMM's research is based on post-genomic technologies and focuses on societally important diseases, such as immune disorders and infections, cancer, metabolic disorders and aging research. CeMM operates in a unique mode of supercooperation, connecting biology with medicine, experiments with computation, discovery with translation, and science with society and the arts. CeMM trains a modern blend of biomedical scientists to make great contributions. CeMM discovers and develops technologies to explore human biology with the purpose of defeating disease at its roots.</p>

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.

Thematic heading of the Charter and Code	Strengths and weaknesses
Ethical and professional aspects	<p>With 20 successful research groups, CeMM benefits from the experience and expertise of a diverse range of research scientists. CeMM offers a collaborative culture, according to which CeMM’s scientists contribute their expertise generously while accessing the expertise of all others in a modular fashion to lead multi-disciplinary projects efficiently and professionally. Scientists with different backgrounds such as computer scientists, medical doctors, life scientists, mathematicians, chemists or physicists work together at CeMM to solve complex scientific problems.</p> <p>CeMM is supported by a Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), a group of international top scientists who are visiting CeMM every 18 month to provide feedback on ongoing projects and discuss future research plans with faculty, postdoctoral fellow and predoctoral fellows. An excerpt of the written SAB reports can be found in the annual Research Reports of CeMM. CeMM is also member and from 2024-2025 Chair of EU-LIFE, an alliance of top European life science institutes. The EU-LIFE members operate with similar principles of excellence, external reviews, independence, competitiveness, and internationality. EU-LIFE contributes to European science policies and is sharing best practices in the organization and management of research institutes.</p> <p>CeMM is committed to public engagement and positioning science in society. This can be seen in CeMM’s annual Landsteiner Lecture which is given annually since 2007. The speakers, carefully selected by the faculty at CeMM, are prominent scientists whose molecular research are deemed to have had a significant impact on medicine. And the S.M.A.R.T. lecture series addresses contemporary challenges of science in an interdisciplinary manner. The lectures target the scientific community and the broader public. CeMM also regularly participates in initiatives such as the long night of research, daughter’s day, children’s university or the Vienna cancer run.</p> <p>CeMM’s administrative departments ensure compliance with many of the principles that are stated under ethical and professional aspects. The Intellectual Property and Tech Transfer Office assists our scientists in the topics of patenting and licensing as well as the establishment of spin-off companies, of which six exist today. In 2022 and 2023, CeMM has received the “Innovation Management Award” and achieved a top-5 ranking of patents in organic fine chemistry and</p>

pharmaceuticals, as well as a top-10 ranking in the biotechnology field by ÖGVS, the Austrian Society of Consumer Studies. The Public Relations & Communication department ensures the timely communication and dissemination of all relevant CeMM projects and activities and is also responsible for internal communication. In 2023 CeMM won the German Brand Award in the category Corporate Identity. This recognition is a testament to our approach to build a strong brand and corporate culture that reflects our commitment to excellent research and collaboration. The Finance and Grants team supports researchers with grant and fellowship applications and ensures accountability towards fiscal authorities, tax advisors and funding organizations. When it comes to data management, each research group at CeMM has an assigned data manager and their activities are supported by the Head of Data Governance. Additionally, the Data Privacy Officer at CeMM provides training on the topics of data privacy and protection as a part of the onboarding process at CeMM. CeMM has dedicated employees who are trained as safety officers, first aiders and fire protection officers. Furthermore, CeMM is supported on the topics of occupational health and safety, occupational psychology, lab safety, fire safety, waste management, technical alert systems and building security by external experts and companies. A dedicated day for health and safety trainings occurs for all staff at CeMM on a yearly basis. Following the Whistleblowing EU Directive of 2019, CeMM implemented a whistleblowing system that is also used by our mother institute (OEAW), as well as our sister institutes IMBA, GMI and AITHYRA. The system ensures the protection of whistleblowers and the financial transparency of our institute.

CeMM highly values diversity and understands that having employees from different international backgrounds leads to a clear advantage in research. CeMM has zero tolerance towards discriminatory behavior and demonstrates this by taking part in various initiatives. Chief among these is the LIBRA project, which aims to tackle the issue of gender imbalance in research, as well as “positivarbeiten” an initiative against the discrimination of people living with HIV at the workplace. CeMM aims to achieve gender balance in recruitment by monitoring gender metrics amongst candidates in all recruitment stages and makes sure to have a balanced hiring team or selection committee.

While CeMM presents a strong commitment to its employees in the area of ethical and professional aspects, there exists the potential for further improvement. One of the key projects in that regard is the implementation of a CeMM code of conduct beyond the regulations of the Medical University of Vienna campus and the Research Integrity Guidelines of ÖAWI, and a system for reporting abusive behavior. While this was indicated as an action in the initial action plan, the code of conduct is still a work in progress and is expected to launch sometime next year. Furthermore, the scientific community indicated the importance of transitioning to electronic lab journals, the Data Governance Head and the Data Managers started to work on a solution, together with the sister institute AITHYRA

<p>Recruitment and selection</p>	<p>CeMM prides itself on its strong recruitment culture. Human Resources aims to actively contribute to the strategic goals of CeMM, by attracting, recruiting and retaining the best candidates in science and administration in order to achieve the objectives of the institute and its training purpose. CeMM has clear internal standard operating procedures outlining the recruitment process that includes information on advertising positions as well as information on the selection and evaluation stage of recruitment. Furthermore, CeMM as part of the EU-Life alliance created the LIBRA recruitment guideline handbook, which includes recommendations on recruitment strategy, application, job advertisements, application management, selection and evaluation of candidates and job offers. The LIBRA guidelines form the basis of all recruitment processes. The LIBRA recruitment guidelines further include recommendations on how to improve the gender balance in the recruitment process and to create a fair and transparent recruitment process for underrepresented groups.</p> <p>CeMM aims to have an open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process for all positions. All researcher positions at CeMM are published in English on the CeMM website as well as on multiple international job advertisement platforms to ensure that it reaches a wide global audience. This is further supported by the relocation package and visa support it provides to all international applicants relocating to Vienna. All CeMM job advertisements are standardized and include information on the job description, required qualifications, the benefits package that CeMM provides, information about CeMM and the lab as well as information on the application process and deadline.</p> <p>For the selection process, hiring committees are usually composed of the hiring Manager (Principal Investigator or Facility Head), an HR representative, members from the lab who will be working together with the candidate and a senior member from a different lab, also the representatives of the PostDoc, PhD Student and Research Technician community are invited to take part in interviews for administrative or other CeMM-wide hirings. Care is also taken that the panels are gender balanced and represent the diversity present at CeMM. This ensures that different perspectives are considered when a hire is made and that all voices are heard. The gender diversity for shortlisted candidates as well as the gender diversity in the selection committee is monitored by the HR department. Candidates are informed in advance about the schedule of the interview day and the members of the selection committee. CeMM's training programs such as the PhD Program and the Pre-ERC Postdoc Program have their own dedicated recruitment and selection process that is outlined in internal operating procedures. Candidate evaluation is based on their competencies and fit for the advertised position.</p> <p>Recruitment training remains a key priority to implement at CeMM. The first round of recruitment training (which is composed of two modules) has already occurred in 2025. The first training module is recruitment essentials, covering the</p>

	<p>topics of legal and data protection aspects of recruitment and unconscious bias. The second module covers the topics of interviewing techniques and how to perform a competency-based assessment. While the first round was successful, the implementation still needs to be further improved to include all staff who regularly participate in recruitment. It is also planned to have the first module in an e-learning format and make it mandatory to all staff participating in recruitment.</p>
<p>Working conditions</p>	<p>Austrian labor law provides many benefits and rights to employees and governs most aspects of social security. This includes access to health insurance, parental leave, holiday allowance, sick leave, care leave, pension, access to unemployment services and severance pay. This is further enhanced by a collective bargaining agreement which sets standards on working time, flexible hours and minimum remuneration based on job level and years of experience. CeMM exceeds the minimum requirement set by law and also follows the recommendations set by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) for personnel costs. There is no difference to access to benefits or social services between employees with permanent or fixed term contracts. Furthermore, CeMM introduced ways to make working conditions flexible with the introduction of an optional 4-day work week as well as home office agreements to enable employees to work from home once a week, if the job profile allows.</p> <p>CeMM places a high value on its community and work culture. Employees are referred to as “CeMMies” and many events take place across the year to strengthen the community spirit, which fosters an environment that enables scientific collaborations and a strong Alumni network. The Alumni network was integral in launching the CeMM Mentorship program, which pairs CeMM employees with Alumni who help with professional development and career advice.</p> <p>The participation of the scientific community in decision making is further enhanced by the Research Technicians, PhD Students and Postdoc representatives, who are elected on a yearly basis. The representatives provide a voice to their cohorts to management and administration and provide support for internal projects. CeMM has a strong culture of collaboration which reflects in co-authorships and all contributions are recognized when publishing a paper or filing a patent.</p> <p>Intellectual property rights are of high importance at CeMM. The IP and Technology Transfer Manager supports scientists in the identification and protection of their inventions to further develop ideas, protect confidentiality, develop patenting strategies and publication strategies with the goal to create robust IP packages that support the transfer of CeMM inventions to society.</p> <p>CeMM offers a range of cutting-edge technological platforms for modern post-genomic methods that are accessible to all its employees via CeMM’s facilities: The Molecular Discovery Platform, specializing in Proteomics, Metabolomics and</p>

	<p>Chemical Screening as well the Biomedical Sequencing Facility. Furthermore, CeMM administration further supports in equipment and infrastructure needs. Facility Management is providing in the services required by the institute in terms of the management of spaces and access, infrastructure and maintenance of building and equipment. CeMM IT team provides sustainable IT solutions to meet the needs of the institute and ensures the security and integrity of all managed information and data. Purchasing manages CeMM's material resources and special orders. The Cafeteria of CeMM is an important place for interactions and communication of CeMM employees and neighbouring laboratories.</p> <p>In terms of areas of improvement, one issue CeMM faces is inconsistency in job titles. Some employees have had the same title for many years, despite taking on additional tasks and duties which can have a severe impact on their employability. A career path was introduced for technicians at CeMM, with clear indicators on the requirements to receive a promotion to the next level. This still needs to occur for Postdocs and admin staff as well.</p> <p>For common equipment used, there needs to be a more standardized and written process for maintenance to avoid the knowledge getting lost in case of turnover. A standard operating procedure for equipment used by all staff will be launch by the end of 2025.</p> <p>Lastly, it is important to maintain high resilience and a good work life balance when working in a scientific environment. CeMM will put more emphasis on supporting employees in reducing stress resulting from work as well improving overall feedback culture at CeMM.</p>
<p>Training and development</p>	<p>CeMM considers itself first and foremost as a training institute. As such, there is clear support from management and faculty for the development of researchers on all levels by special training programs for PhD Students and postdocs, by attending conferences to expand their knowledge, by inviting international speakers and experts. Researchers are able to receive feedback from their supervisors in the yearly feedback talk where future learning and development plans are also discussed.</p> <p>The CeMM PhD Program is a unique blend of practical training, lectures, and mentoring that builds on the guidelines of the Medical University of Vienna (Doctoral Program UN94). At CeMM, the PhD studies begin with a 3-month Introductory Program to prime the students for their research work, to develop the mindset of a critical and responsible researcher, and to form a peer network. The program includes basic seminars and propaedeutics in molecular medicine, cell biology, and ethics, dissertation seminars and regular Journal Clubs. CeMM is working on a better documentation and monitoring of the development of the individual PhD Students from the start of the PhD project to the successful PhD defence, and the career perspectives.</p>

In 2020, CeMM launched the Pre-ERC Postdoc program which is designed to prepare postdoctoral researchers for a successful ERC Starting Grant or comparable grant application and for an independent research career in top research organizations in Europe and around the world. As postdocs progress through the program, they receive more opportunities for teaching and providing supervision as well as special training for writing successful ERC Starting Grants to prepare them in the best possible way for an outstanding academic career in Europe.

Principal Investigators at CeMM receive training upon their start at CeMM that covers the topics of leadership, managing labs and different supervisory skills. Furthermore, starting principal investigators receive a mentor from faculty or CeMM Alumni who is able to provide support on topics related to starting a new lab.

The scientific exchange and development at CeMM are facilitated via different ways. The weekly Friday Seminars enable scientists to present their work and get feedback from faculty and the wider CeMM scientific community. The Strategic Collaborative Programs (SCPs) are informal meetings that researchers can be part in to learn, discuss and get feedback and prepare the ground for collaborations on the topics environmental and multi system molecular medicine, mechanisms of aging, therapeutic design, and computational biomedicine. These regular events are further bolstered by many impromptu seminars and lectures given by guest speakers.

In terms of improvement, access to training and attendance to conferences outside of CeMM can sometimes be limited due to the budget and third-party funds situation of the laboratory. For the next phase of the HR Excellence project, there will be more focus on training, including providing companywide training needs assessment and training, improving online resources (including the introduction of an e-learning platform). Furthermore, more focus will be given on developing the leadership training for both PIs and head of departments/facilities, and a redesign and improved follow-up strategy of the annual feedback talks

3. Actions

The Action Plan and HRS4R strategy must be published on an easily accessible location of the organisation's website.

Please provide the web link to the organisation's HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s):

*URL: <https://cemm.at/join-cemm/open-positions/hrs4r>

Please fill in a sum up list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis:

Proposed actions	GAP principle(s)	Updated Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester)	Responsible unit	Status	Indicator(s) / target(s)	Remarks
Area 1: Career progression, transition & job titles						
Action 1: Creation of job descriptions & standardized job titles for all positions at CeMM	-/+Career Development (28)	Q3 2023-Q4 2026	HR	Extended	-Job description available for each employee -List of approved job titles and job descriptions provided to Group Leaders for new hires - Contract amendments with new job titles signed by all employees	- Standardized job titles and career path for technicians established - Contract amendments done for technicians -Titles updated in the directory

					- Update of job titles on CeMM website directory	
Action 2: Introduce career development talks led by HR and the Group Leader with the employee following 2 years of employment and beyond	-/+Career Development (28), +/- Recognition of the profession (22)	Q1 2024-ongoing	HR	Extended	- Career development plan for all employees after being employed for 2 years at CeMM - Annual feedback talks include a career development section; files and plans are documented and stored within the HR department	- Career development talks held with technicians
Action 3: Assistance & advice on career progression and transition for all employee via the CeMM Mentorship Program and/or external career advising providers	+/-Access to career advice (30)	Q3/2023- Q4/2024	HR and CeMM Alumni Board	Completed	- Feedback survey from Mentors/ Mentees from the CeMM Mentorship Program - Each year the CeMM Mentoring Program will be opened to new Mentors/ Mentees at CeMM and within the Alumni Network	- Mentorship Program established
Action 4: Introduce a training & development program that enables HR, group leaders and employee to track agreed upon training and career development goals	-/+Career Development (28), Access to research training and continuous	Q2-2025-Q1-2028	HR	Extended	- Training & Development system introduced and implemented	-Project not yet started as it will require a lot resources from the HR department

	development (39)					
Area 2: Training & Development						
Action 5: Establish Working Group & analyse current process for requesting Training activities with a Working Group with representatives of all categories of scientists and admin staff.	+/- Supervision & managerial duties (37), +/- Access to research training and continuous development (39)	Q3 2023-Q4 2025	HR	Completed	- Updated training guidelines established	-Training survey held -Working group meeting held where results were analysed -Training guidelines established
Action 6: Publish internal training offer based on feedback talks and EU-Life benchmarking	-/+ Access to research training and continuous development (39)	Q3 2024-Q4 2025	HR	Extended	-Published internal training curriculum -Exchange of ongoing training opportunities on each level with befriended EU-LIFE institutes	-EU Life trainings are shared in the newsletter -Intranet section on training offer to be established
Action 7: Publish Pre-ERC Postdoc Program curriculum	-/+ Access to research training and continuous development (39), +/-	Q3 2024-Q2-2025	HR	Extended	-Training schedule further developed and published at CeMM intranet und newsletter	-Training schedule distributed to postdoc community via e-mail and -Intranet page to be established

	Postdoctoral appointments (code) (21)					
<p>Action 8: Increase the sustainability of the PI /Group Leader Leadership training by introducing follow-up measures</p> <p>Action 8.1: Assess content of current leadership course</p> <p>Action 8.2: Have experienced PI paired with young PI</p> <p>Action 8.3: Offer external coaching</p> <p>Action 8.4: Create a CeMM leadership program</p>	+/- Supervision & managerial duties (37)	Q1 2024-Q1 2027	HR	Extended	-Create proposal of new leadership program and deliver the first round	-Actions has been extended to also include group leaders
<p>Action 9: Increase offer for teaching/ supervision and provide training for teaching for predoctoral and postdoctoral fellows</p>	+/- Teaching (33)	Q3 2023-Q4 2024	HR	Completed	<p>-Teaching/ Supervision needs integrated as a part of the feedback talk</p> <p>-Annual general training on the topic of teaching/ supervision</p> <p>-Participation in Journal Clubs and Lectures of the Medical University of</p>	<p>-CeMM Postdocs are involved in journal clubs at the Medical University</p> <p>-More teaching supervision options are available for</p>

					Vienna, will be supported, but requires the official registration and commitment as qualified teacher	Predoctoral and Postdoctoral Fellows
Area 3: Feedback talks						
<p>Action 10: Update current annual feedback talk to include clear guidance on training needs, teaching needs and career development plans</p> <p>Action 10.1: Communicate and position the importance of the new feedback talk to all employees</p>	-/+ Evaluation / appraisal systems (11)	Q3 2023-Q2 2026	HR	Extended	-New feedback talk form shared with all employees -Communicate new feedback talk in different formats (faculty meeting/ Friday seminar/ newsletter /available all time in CeMM Intranet and as part of onboarding sessions)	-New feedback form developed with working group, to be shared in 2026
Action 11: Introduce a shorter form of the feedback talk that enables either the group leader and/or employee to receive more immediate feedback	-/+ Evaluation / appraisal systems (11) +/- Supervision (40)	Q3 2024-Q2-2026	HR	Extended	-Form for shorter feedback talks created as an additional discussion forum to the mandatory annual feedback talk, and shared with all employees	-New feedback form developed with working group, to be shared in 2026
Action 12: Train Group leaders on the feedback talk, including recognising biases and rating effects	-/+ Evaluation / appraisal systems (11) +/-	Q1 2024-Q2 2026	HR	Extended	-All group leaders, and all supervisors trained -Once a year HR will organize a mandatory feedback training for new	-will start as soon as the new feedback form has been established

	Supervision (40)				employees and new supervisors	
Area 4: Recruitment						
Action 13: Translate current HR SOP into English and include updated guidelines for recruitment process of researchers on all levels	OTM, +/- Recruitment (12)	Q4 2023	HR	Completed	-Update and publish HR SOP in English and distribute it to all staff (CeMM Intranet and newsletter, and document will be part of onboarding process) -Publish a description of recruitment processes on the CeMM website	-HR SOP translated into English Recruitment process for each position are published on the website
Action 14: Develop a process for applicants to give feedback related to recruitment process	OTM, +/- Transparency (code) (15)	Q3 2024-Q4 2024	HR	Completed	-Feedback process established	-Candidates who participate in interviews and are rejected are invited to give feedback to the recruitment process since beginning of 2025
Action 15: Deliver recruitment training covering the topics of bias, interviewing techniques and data protection	OTM, +/- Recruitment (12), +/- Selection (14),	Q2 2024-Q2 2026	HR	Extended	- All Staff involved in recruitment are trained (certified), especially group leaders, admin	-Pilot trainings were held in April and May this year. Rollout to

	+/- Variations the chronological order of the CV (17), +/- Recognition of mobility experience (18), +/- Recognition of qualifications of qualifications (19)				team leaders, postdocs, PhD Student and RT representatives	rest of CeMM planned for Fall 2025
Area 5: Diversity & inclusion						
<p>Action 16: Provide training on unconscious bias</p> <p>Action 16.1: Deliver diversity/ bias training for all team leaders and faculty to recognise bias in recruitment and when supervising employees</p> <p>Action 16.2: Create unconscious bias resources (example brochure)</p>	+/- Non-discrimination (10) , +/- Gender Balance (27)	Q1 2025-Q2 2026	HR	Extended	<p>- All group leaders trained on recognising bias</p> <p>- Unconscious bias resources and materials available to all staff (see recommendations of EU-LIFE unconscious bias and bystander trainings)</p>	-Two unconscious bias trainings offered and given to a mixed group of technicians, admins, postdocs and PhD students

<p>Action 17: Adapt current job ad template to make it more inclusive to underrepresented groups and part-time workers</p>	<p>+/- Non-discrimination (10)</p>	<p>Q2 2024</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>- New job template created</p>	<p>Job ad slightly adapted, use of gender decoder</p>
<p>Action 18: Improve resources for employees starting families</p> <p>Action 18.1: Adapt current parental leave booklet to include information on parental leave from father's side</p> <p>Action 18.2: Create an intranet page with information on pregnancy and Mutterschutz & parental leave</p>	<p>-/+ Working conditions (24), +/- Gender Balance (27)</p>	<p>Q1 2024</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>Extended</p>	<p>- Updated parental leave booklet - Parental leave intranet page created - Continue and update family champions section on CeMM website</p>	<p>Parental leave booklet has been updated, intranet page to be updated</p>
<p>Action 19: Increase flexibility of working conditions</p> <p>Action 19.1: Review current CeMM time models' structure to enable more flexible arrangements</p> <p>Action 19.2: Create home office guidelines</p>	<p>-/+ Working conditions (24)</p>	<p>Q3 2023-Q4 2023</p>	<p>HR and Admin Director</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>- Introduce new flexible time models - Implementation of home office rules (1 day per week) - Implementation of 4-days-week as alternative flex time option</p>	<p>4 day work week, flexitime agreements and home office agreements established</p>
<p>Area 6: Safety, sustainability & accessibility</p>						

<p>Action 20: Improve awareness on laboratory safety</p>	<p>-/+ good practise in research (7)</p>	<p>Q4 2023</p>	<p>Safety and Facility Officers, Admin Director</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>-All Staff informed on safety and security at CeMM - Mandatory onboarding process, Intranet page updated, every quarter a newsletter information sent to groupall, once a year a Friday seminar lecture on all safety and security topics -Once a year a common meeting of all internal and external safety officers, first aiders and fire protection officers</p>	<p>Safety day held in 2024 and planned for upcoming years for all CeMMies -Inspection of labs with external safety officer on a quarterly basis, reports are sent to CeMM Management</p>
<p>Action 21: Establish Data Management intranet page</p>	<p>-/+ good practise in research (7)</p>	<p>Q4 2023-Q1 2024</p>	<p>PR & Comm/ Data Management Chair</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>- Data management duties and support actions, as well as names and contact details of data managers established on Intranet page -Data Management part of onboarding process of researchers and technical personnel at CeMM</p>	<p>Data management page has been established</p>

Action 22: Create list of shared lab equipment between CeMM and partner institutes	+/- Research environment (23)	Q1 2024	Safety and Facility Officers/ TA Reps	Completed	-List created and published on intranet	Device database updated, and link published on the intranet.
Action 23: Create an SOP on equipment maintenance for basic infrastructural equipment used by all employees	+/- Research environment (23)	Q1 2024	Safety and Facility Officers/ TA Reps	Extended	- List created and published on intranet	List to be available at the end of 2025
<p>Action 24: Improve accessibility for non-binary employees</p> <p>Action 24.1: Evaluate cost and need for introducing gender neutral toilets compliant with building regulations</p> <p>Action 24.2: Implementation of gender-neutral toilet option based on the results of the feasibility study</p>	-/+ Working Conditions (24)	Q1 2024-Q1 2025	Facility Management	Cancelled	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Feasibility study conducted -Evaluation of costs and legal aspects with building owner -Decision on implementation of Gender-neutral toilets 	CeMM does not own the building so any changes done to the building need to be in coordination with the company owning the building. Following a meeting to review the feasibility, it was decided not to move forward with this action due to the high costs and space limitations
Area 7: Communication, transparency & recognition						
Action 25: Review contract prolongation policy for technical and scientific staff to make it more favourable for employees	+/- Stability & permanence of	Q1 2024 -Q4 2026	HR, Faculty	Extended	-Updated Contract prolongation policy	Policy discussed with HR and Management, not established yet

	employment (25)					
Action 26: Establish Concept for recognition of exceptional performance via nomination of other employees	-/+ Working Conditions (24), -/+ Funding & salaries	Q3 2024 - Q4 2024	HR	Cancelled	-Recognition concept established and first nomination received -More transparency on how bonus payments are made and additional ideas on recognition besides bonus payments and financial rewards	Following discussions with working group, it was decided that this action was not favourable.
<p>Action 27: Strengthen research integrity and ethical and legal aspects of research</p> <p>Action 27.1: introduce a CeMM code of conduct for ethical principles</p> <p>Action 27.2: Set up an intranet page with most common legal, IP and grants related questions (FAQs)</p> <p>Action 27.3: Discuss common legal & grants questions in the newsletter starting from 2024</p>	+/- Ethical principles (2), +/- Contractual & legal obligations (5)	Q3 2023-ongoing	Admin Director/ Admin Team Leaders/ PR & Comm	In progress	-Intranet page setup on common research integrity, ethical and legal aspects of research - CeMM internal code of conduct for ethical principles - Segment in newsletter established and published on a regular basis	Draft of intranet page with most common questions on research integrity finalized and to be published in 2025

<p>Action 28: Improve communication channels among cohorts of the same group</p> <p>Action 28.1: Inform the IT department about current researchers on the postdoc level with a different job title to add them to the correct mailing list and include this information when onboarding new postdoc level employees or project scientists moving forward</p> <p>Action 28.2: Create an overview of CeMM's main mailing lists and their purpose on the intranet</p>	<p>+/- Recognition of the profession (22)</p>	<p>Q3 2023-Q1 2026</p>	<p>IT, Postdoc reps</p>	<p>Extended</p>	<p>-Updated lists of all postdocs and project scientist level researchers who have different duties and responsibilities and career paths at CeMM - Process for onboarding new postdocs or project scientist level researchers established -Mailing lists updated -Intranet page established</p>	<p>- CeMM annual retreat dedicated to postdocs in July 2025</p>
<p>Action 29: Develop system for reporting abusive or harassing behavior</p> <p>Action 29.1: Develop process to deal with abusive or harassing behavior as part of the risk management process</p> <p>Action 29.2: Decide on trusted advisor, taking into consideration the (gender) diversity at CeMM</p>	<p>-/+ Complaints/ appeals (34)</p>	<p>Q3 2023- Q1 2026</p>	<p>HR</p>	<p>Extended</p>	<p>- Process established - Additional trusted advisor elected, and awareness created of existing representative of PostDocs, PhD Students and TA -Reminder of existing complaint boxes at CeMM sent -Regular invitations to EU-LIFE bystander trainings for all staff</p>	<p>-Three meetings held with working group, workshop with law firm held in September 2025. -Code of conduct to be launched by early next year</p>

Action 29.3: Make information on dealing with abusive behavior and the contact information of the trusted advisor available on internal communication channels (intranet, email, newsletter, announcement board)					-Intranet page established -All Staff informed	
Action 30: Implement whistleblowing system and inform employees about the system via the intranet and the newsletter	-/+ Complaints/ appeals (34)	Q3 2023	Data Privacy Officer / PR & Comm	Completed	- Whistleblowing system established -All staff informed	Whistleblowing system as per EU directive established and link published on intranet
Action 31: Implementation of quarterly Jour-Fix meetings of PostDoc, PhD and TA reps with CeMM Management	-/+ Complaints/ appeals (34), - /+ Participation in decision- making bodies	Q3 2023-ongoing	Admin and Scientific Director, Reps	Completed	-Jour-Fix established and held on a regular basis	-Regular meetings are held between institute directors and reps - Directors also took part at the intro and wrap-up of RT Retreat
New actions						
Action 32: Modernize the CeMM PhD Program	-/+ Access to research training and continuous	Q3 2025-Q4 2026	Faculty, HR	New	-PhD curriculum updated	- New PhD documentation and monitoring structure discussed with PhD Reps and Faculty in

	development (39)					Autumn 2025, to be implemented end of Oct 2025
Action 33: Improve data management at CeMM Action 33.1: Introduce data management during onboarding Action 33.2: Introduce electronic lab journals	-/+ good practise in research (7)	Q4 2025-Q2 2027	IT/ IP/ Data Management	New	-Data Management integrated in onboarding -electronic lab journals to be rolled out at CeMM	-work in progress
Action 34: Introduce companywide learning and development resources Action 34.1: Conduct a training needs assessment (TNA) survey Action 34.2: Introduce companywide trainings on topics relevant to the entire staff Action 34.3: Introduce a peer-to-peer training initiative Action 34.4: Introduce an e-learning platform with trainings on topics such as safety, data management and recruitment	-/+ Access to research training and continuous development (39)	Q1 2026-Q2 2027	HR	New	-TNA survey conducted -First round of companywide training held e-learning platform established	
Action 35: Introduce measures to reduce work stress and improve resilience	-/+ Working Conditions	Q1 2027-Q4 2027	HR	New	-Survey conducted to assess needs from CeMMies	

					-First measures established	
Action 36: Recruit technicians that work for multiple labs on each floor at CeMM	-/+ good practise in research (7)					- On request of the RT reps, a dedicated FACS technician was hired

Comments on the implementation of the OTM-R principles

Having open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment processes is important to ensure a fair recruitment process as well as matching the candidate with the best qualifications to the position. CeMM is an equal opportunity employer, and its strong intellectual environment stems from the international nature of its employees. We believe that diversity and different cultural backgrounds are a clear advantage to successful research, collaborations, and the day-to-day business. As part of the gap analysis process, the OTM-R toolkit and checklist were reviewed. While CeMM fulfils most of the recommendations given, the following were actions taken during the implementation phase to further improve the process:

Below is a summary of current OTM processes as well as the main areas of improvements, which are also covered as actions in the previous section:

Recruitment guidelines

CeMM together with the EU-Life network developed the LIBRA recruitment handbook to implement inclusive, transparent and unbiased recruitment processes to support the hiring of the most suitable candidate for the position and increase workplace diversity. These guidelines can be viewed under the career page of CeMM and provide recommendation from recruitment strategy and job advertisements to application management and assessment as well as interviews and contract negotiations. Furthermore, we translated the CeMM internal standard operating procedure to English during the implementation phase and published updated OTM-R policy on the website. Under the career section, Technicians, Predoctoral Fellows and Postdoctoral Fellows received their own dedicated page with a description of the recruitment process.

Recruitment training

Recruitment trainings have been introduced at CeMM with the first pilot taken place in 2025. Recruitment trainings will take place at least twice yearly.

e-Recruitment

CeMM uses an ATS for publishing all openings. Candidates receive an automated message when an application has been submitted, and all candidates receive updates on their application (including rejections) via the system. The system also provides important information and statistics as key performance indicators.

Candidate feedback

Candidates who have participated in recruitments are now able to submit anonymous feedback and complaints regarding their recruitment experiences

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:

<https://cemm.at/join-cemm/open-positions/hrs4r>

4. Implementation

General overview of the implementation process

CeMM received the award in August 2023 and has been actively working on delivering on all 31 actions stated in the action plan. While most of the actions have experienced significant progress, there were still actions that suffered delays. However, except for two actions that were cancelled we anticipate that all actions will be delivered prior to the next assessment.

How did CeMM prepare for the internal review?

During the last two years, each person responsible for an action was asked to give an update on the progress of their actions on a quarterly basis. This progress report was used as the basis for the evaluation workshop. An HRS4R evaluation workshop was held at the beginning of June 2025 to review progress on the different actions of the initial plan. Both administrative staff and scientists of all levels were invited to the meeting. Following reviewing the current actions, participants were also asked about possible new actions based on the needs of CeMM's employees and using the new European Charter and Code for researchers as the basis for their assessment. The results of the workshop were then presented to the Steering Committee of the project to inform them about the results and

to agree on which possible new actions should be more priority based on CeMM's current resources and strategy. Follow-up meetings were then held within the HR team as well as other key administrative tasks to assign key responsible for the new action as well as the timeline for the implementation of the new actions.

How did CeMM involve the research community in the implementation process?

From the start of the project, it was important for CeMM to integrate the research community. The implementation phase action plan was divided into 7 areas, and each area had a working group composed of admins, technicians and scientists. Whenever possible, the scientists were representatives of their respective group. The working groups met regularly during the first two years of the project. The role of the working group was to give input on different projects within the frame of the HR Excellence project. These included, but were not limited to, giving feedback on the new feedback forms or the new recruitment training courses.

Role of the Steering Committee

The Steering Committee is composed of Prof Dr Giulio Superti-Furga, Scientific Director at CeMM, Anita Ender, Administrative Director at CeMM, and Prof Dr Jörg Menche, Director of the LBI for Network Medicine and Adjunct Principal Investigator at CeMM. The Steering Committee received regular status reports on the project (3-4 times yearly) as well as having 2-3 meetings each year with Jean Paul Chidiac, Head of Human Resources and Memo Mokhles, Deputy Head of Human Resources and Project Manager for the HR Excellence Project. The Steering Committee gave input and suggestions on how to move forward with the different actions as well as allocated resources to ensure the successful delivery of the actions.

Alignment of organizational strategies with the HRS4R

The HRS4R action plan is an integral part of the overall HR Strategy. The plan was developed with input from scientists on what they believe is most needed at CeMM, and as such, the plan informs the focus and direction of the HR department and administration team. Furthermore, the Steering Committee is composed of the top management of the institute. This ensures that the action plan is in line with the overall organizational strategy and that the actions listed are delivered.

How has CeMM ensured that the proposed actions be also implemented?

The Steering Committee will continue in its role to ensure that resources are enabled for the actions and to ensure that the actions are considered for the overall organization strategy. The HRS4R Project Manager is responsible for monitoring overall progress of the project and liaising with the different action plan responsible to ensure that the different actions are moving forward.

How is CeMM monitoring progress (timeline)?

CeMM will follow the same process in the renewal phase as in the initial phase. Each action has a suggested timeline as well as key indicators and is assigned to be responsible from either the HR team or administration. Each action responsible will give an update on their actions on a quarterly basis to the HRS4R Project Manager who in turn gives a report and has regular meetings with the Steering Committee to discuss the progress of the project.

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

Each action has key performance indicators and timelines which will be used as the main way to monitor the progress of each action. The activities conducted for each action will be reviewed on a quarterly basis, with a bigger review occurring biannually. Also legal evaluations that are done by the work psychologists and occupational physician, and the feedback of the external safety officer are a point of measure, if actions have a positive effect. And a culture of trust and collaborative mindset in the institute helps a lot to get the support and understanding of the CeMM employees that the actions and their contributions to the working groups are to the benefit of the entire institute. We are very grateful for this commitment. Information on the HRS4R will be included in the annual CeMM research report which is also published on the CeMM website.

How will CeMM prepare for the external review?

The HRS4R Project Manager will be responsible for coordinating the tasks necessary for the external review and site visit. This will include handling the logistics of the visit, coordinating internally and providing needed documents to assessors.