



Universidad de Jaén



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

HRS4R Action Plan University of Jaén 2026–2028



Universidad de Jaén

Vicerrectorado de Investigación y
Transferencia del Conocimiento

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INTRODUCTION

The **University of Jaén (UJA)** maintains a **strong institutional commitment** to improving **working conditions, professional development, and the attraction and retention of research talent**, fully aligned with the principles of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the framework of the **HR Excellence in Research Award (HRS4R)**. Since obtaining the award, UJA has progressively integrated these principles into its institutional policies and practices, consolidating the **HRS4R as a strategic governance instrument** and a key driver for enhancing the quality of its research ecosystem.

This document presents the **set of HRS4R actions in force for the 2026–2028 period**, which will guide the **institutional human resources policy for research** in the coming years. It has a clear **institutional and communicative purpose** and is addressed to both the **research community** and **external stakeholders**, with the aim of highlighting the **strategic commitments** of the University of Jaén in the field of **research careers**.

The **institutional relevance of the HRS4R** is explicitly reinforced in the **Rector's Electoral Programme of the University of Jaén (2023–2029)**, which identifies the **maintenance and strengthening of the HR Excellence in Research Award** as a strategic governance objective. The programme underlines the need to promote **good practices in recruitment, professional development, and researcher evaluation**, as well as to advance towards **healthy, inclusive and internationally competitive working environments**. This **high-level political endorsement** ensures the continuity of the HRS4R as an **institutional priority** throughout the current rectoral mandate.

Likewise, the **III Strategic Plan of the University of Jaén 2021–2029 (2025 Revision)** provides a particularly favourable framework for consolidating the **Human Resources Strategy for Researchers**, as several of its strategic and transversal objectives are aligned with the principles of the *European Charter for Researchers*. In particular, the transversal axis **People** places **professional development, wellbeing, and talent attraction** at the centre of institutional action, while the **Internationalisation** axis reinforces the need to create **competitive conditions** to attract and retain researchers in a global context. In addition, objectives linked to **Digital Transformation** and **Governance** support the modernisation of human resources management processes, **transparency**, and **accountability**.

The actions included in this document are structured around the **four pillars defined in the European Charter for Researchers (2023)**, which coherently frame the institutional priorities of the University of Jaén in the field of human resources for research. Within the pillar of **researcher assessment, recruitment and progression**, UJA is advancing in the **digitalisation and harmonisation of selection procedures**, with the aim of reinforcing **fairness, traceability** and **trust** in recruitment processes. Complementarily, the pillar related to **ethics, integrity, gender equality and open science** is addressed through the promotion of **open science, scientific outreach and public engagement**, fostering **responsible research** aligned with societal expectations.

The pillar of **research careers and talent development** addresses one of the main challenges associated with peripheral contexts: the **retention of highly qualified research talent**. The actions foreseen strengthen **career support, advanced training, and mechanisms supporting professional progression** throughout the research career. Finally, the pillar of **working conditions and practices** places emphasis on the **researcher experience, institutional welcome and integration**, and the adoption of **organisational practices** that allow institutional policies to be adjusted to the real needs of the research community.

Overall, the **HRS4R actions for the 2026–2028 period** reflect the University of Jaén's determination to **consolidate an institutional culture aligned with European standards**, in which the **people-first approach** acts as a guiding principle for research human resources policy. Through the HRS4R, UJA articulates a **coherent framework** connecting **governance, career development, working conditions and institutional support**, reinforcing its **attractiveness as a research destination** and ensuring a **fair, inclusive and excellence-oriented professional environment**.



HRS4R ACTION PLAN – UNIVERSITY OF JAÉN 2026–2028

The HRS4R Action Plan of the University of Jaén for the period 2026–2028 brings together the set of actions that will be implemented during this cycle in order to further strengthen the institutional framework for researcher recruitment, working conditions, career development and talent management.

The actions included in this Plan are fully aligned with the four pillars of the European Charter for Researchers (2023) and respond to the University's commitment to fostering a people-first approach to research human resources. Through this Action Plan, the University of Jaén seeks to consolidate transparent and merit-based recruitment practices, promote responsible and open research, improve the researcher experience, and support sustainable and attractive research careers.

This Action Plan represents the operational dimension of the University's ongoing commitment to the HR Excellence in Research Award, translating strategic principles into concrete institutional actions that will be progressively implemented and monitored throughout the 2026–2028 period.

ACTION 16: Develop a Digital Platform to manage and Evaluate Job Offers and Calls

UJA is currently working on the development of a digital platform to manage and evaluate its job offers and calls. The objective is to streamline administrative processes and to make the processing times shorter. The platform will also serve to give feedback on the outcome of the evaluation process to applicants

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Digital platform to manage and evaluate job offers and calls

GAP Principles

11. Evaluation and appraisal systems
13. Recruitment
14. Selection

15. Transparency
16. Judging merit
34. Complaints / appeals

Timing (quarter)

Responsible Unit

Q1 2026 - Q4 2027

• Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer

ACTION 17: Open Science Empowerment Initiative at UJA

This initiative, which is conceived as a strategic action, seeks to embed open science principles into the institutional culture, everyday research practices, and career development of its research community. To achieve this objective, the action is articulated through a set of complementary and mutually reinforcing measures that address capacity-building, infrastructure, and incentives:

- **Open Data Training and Support** Develop regular workshops, seminars, and online resources for researchers and doctoral students on data management, FAIR principles and data stewardship.
- **Institutional Open Repository**. Strengthen UJA's institutional repository, ensuring that publications, datasets, software, and other research outputs are deposited in open-access formats.
- **Open Science Career Incentives**. Integrate open science practices into the research assessment and career progression criteria.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Number of new support actions, resources, improvements or services developed by the Library/Open Science Unit each year (e.g., new guides, updated procedures, DMP templates, FAQs, helpdesk workflows, webinars, technical enhancements of the repository) [Target: at least 2 new support actions per year]
- Number of researchers and doctoral students completing Open Science or FAIR data training annually [Target: at least 20 participants annually on average]
- Proportion of funded research projects that include an approved Data Management Plan (DMP) [Target: 20% compliance rate]

GAP Principles

7. Good practice in research	8. Dissemination, exploitation of results	9. Public engagement
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Timing (quarter)

Responsible Units

Q1 2026 - Q4 2028

- Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer
- Library Service
- Doctoral School

ACTION 18: Scientific Outreach and Public Engagement Strategy at UJA

Its purpose is to enhance the visibility, accessibility, and societal impact of research carried out at UJA by promoting structured, high-quality, and inclusive communication of scientific knowledge. This initiative seeks to strengthen the interaction between researchers and society, foster public trust in science, and support researchers in developing communication skills that are increasingly relevant for their professional development. To this end, the action is articulated through the following complementary lines of intervention:

- **Periodic Program of Public Science Events**
Design and implement an annual schedule of science outreach events,
- **Training in Science Communication for Researchers**
Offer workshops, courses and seminars on effective communication, media interaction, storytelling, audiovisual dissemination, and use of digital platforms aimed at improving researchers' public engagement skills.
- **Strengthening Digital Outreach Platforms**
Expand UJA's presence on digital platforms by creating or enhancing diffusion channels, such as video, radio, podcasts and social media campaigns.
- **Collaborations with Schools, NGOs, and Local Institutions**
Develop a structured program of partnerships with primary and secondary schools, and local governments to implement educational activities, collaborative projects, and science awareness initiatives.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Number of public science outreach events organized annually [Target: at least 10 events per year]
- Percentage of research staff participating in outreach activities [Target: 5% of academic and research personnel]
- Number of researchers completing science communication training each year [Target: minimum 20 participants annually on average]

GAP Principles

7. Good practice in research
8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

9. Public engagement

Timing (quarter)	Responsible Units
Q1 2026 - Q4 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communication, Scientific Dissemination, and Corporate Outreach Service ● Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer ● Doctoral School

ACTION 19: Integrated Framework on Equality, Inclusion and Non-Discrimination for the Research Community

The institution will develop an integrated institutional framework that consolidates existing equality, inclusion and non-discrimination measures and aligns them explicitly with HR processes affecting researchers (R1–R4). This action will enhance coherence, visibility and accessibility of **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**-related resources, reinforce bias-prevention mechanisms and ensure that equality principles are systematically embedded into recruitment, assessment, supervision and career development processes.

The coordination and monitoring of this action will be fully embedded within the HRS4R transversal group, ensuring alignment with the work carried out by the OTM-R and Welcome & Career Development groups.

In order to operationalise this framework, the action will focus on the following key lines of implementation:

- **Strengthen the institutional alignment** with the Charter & Code principles on gender equality, diversity and non-discrimination.
- **Improve the integration of EDI** criteria into HR and OTM-R procedures for researchers
- **Increase awareness**, participation and adoption of inclusive practices across research units.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Participation in EDI-oriented activities. [Target: at least 80 researchers participate in EDI-oriented activities]
- EDI content integrated into training activities [Target: 100% of mandatory training for R1 and at least 2 training actions for supervisors (R3–R4).]
- EDI criteria included in calls [Target: at least 50% of internal calls relevant to researchers include EDI criteria]

GAP Principles

10. Non discrimination	27. Gender Balance
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Timing (quarter)

Q1 2027 - Q4 2028

Responsible Units

- Vice-Rectorate for Equality, Diversity, and Social Responsibility
- Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer
- Doctoral School
- Vice-Rector for Lifelong Learning, Educational Technologies, and Teaching Innovation

ACTION 20: Integrated Strategic Framework for Career Development, Competitiveness and Internationalisation of Research Talent

The University of Jaén will implement an Integrated Strategic Framework for Career Development, Competitiveness and Internationalisation of Research Talent, conceived as an institutional instrument aimed at advancing research excellence, fostering professional development across all career stages (R1–R4), and consolidating the presence and long-term engagement of international research talent at the UJA.

This framework integrates two complementary strategic dimensions:

- **Career development and competitiveness**

The University will strengthen the capacity of researchers—particularly international R2–R3 profiles—to participate successfully in regional, national and European competitive calls (MSCA-PF, ERC, National Plans, etc.). The action includes advanced training, mentoring, specialised technical support, and institutional resources to enhance the quality and competitiveness of submitted proposals.

- **Internationalisation and talent retention**

Specific measures will be implemented to enhance the continuity and retention of high-potential international researchers, with priority given to individuals linked to MSCA Postdoctoral Fellowships. The framework includes instruments for short-term stabilisation, integration into research structures, co-financing of transition periods, and tailored career progression pathways supporting the transition from R2 to R3.

This action contributes to reinforcing the alignment of existing institutional measures with the principles and objectives of the HRS4R process, particularly in relation to researchers' career development and internationalisation pathways.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Increase the number of R&D proposals supported. [Target: 20% increase]
- Provide advanced training in the preparation of R&D project proposals. [Target: at least 25 researchers per year]
- Conduct individualised technical support sessions for competitive proposal preparation [Target: at least 40 sessions]
- Internal monitoring report summarising the outcomes, uptake and impact of the support services delivered under this framework [Target: One annual report]

GAP Principles

28. Career development	29. Value of mobility
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Timing (quarter)	Responsible Unit
Q1 2026 - Q4 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer

ACTION 21: Adaptation of the Welcome Center for the Reception and Support of International Research Staff

The University of Jaén will implement a targeted adaptation of the Welcome Center aimed at strengthening institutional support for international research staff across all career stages (R1–R4). This action seeks to ensure a coherent, accessible and researcher-centred reception framework that facilitates early integration into the research environment and supports international mobility in line with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers.

The adaptation focuses on the development of tailored resources and procedures for researchers, including specific information materials, structured onboarding itineraries, coordination protocols and harmonised information flows. These measures are designed to complement existing services for international students while addressing the specific administrative, professional and integration needs of incoming researchers.

Through this action, the Welcome Center will be consolidated as a single institutional reference point for international researchers, providing guidance on administrative procedures, access to research infrastructures, cultural and social integration, and awareness of the principles underpinning the European Charter for Researchers. The initiative represents a strategic evolution of existing practices, ensuring a more unified, sustainable and EURAXESS-aligned service for international research staff.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Materials for international research staff (guides, welcome pack, FAQs). [Target: Development or update of at least 2 materials]
- Update of the website section dedicated to researchers [Target: at least an annual update]
- Coordination protocol approved between Welcome Center, VR Research and VR Internationalisation. [Target: One coordination protocol]
- Welcome Center information upon arrival. [Target: 100% of incoming researchers receive information]

GAP Principles

28. Career development
29. Value of mobility

30. Access to career advice
39. Access to research training and continuous development

Timing (quarter)

Q3 2026 - Q4 2028

Responsible Unit

- Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer
- Vice-Rectorate of Internationalization
- Personnel (HR) service

ACTION 22: Progressive Development and Operational Deployment of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Innovation (CFID) for Academic, Research and Technical Staff

Following the institutional analysis carried out within the HRS4R framework, the University of Jaén identified the need to strengthen the governance, coordination and evaluation of training and career development activities across staff categories. While structured training offers already exist, this action addresses the transition from a fragmented model towards a more coherent and strategic framework for Continuing Professional Development (CPD).

This action focuses on the progressive development and operational deployment of the Centre for Teaching and Learning Innovation (CFID) as the institutional structure responsible for consolidating, coordinating and professionalising training governance. The CFID will act as the single institutional hub for structuring, aligning and monitoring training activities for academic, research and technical/support staff, ensuring coherence, quality and sustainability across career stages.

Within this framework, the existing Training Plan for Teaching and Research Staff 2024–2027 will be integrated as a core operational instrument, ensuring that its implementation, monitoring and future updates remain aligned with the principles of the HR Excellence in Research Award, European standards for researcher development and the European Framework for Research Careers (R1–R4).

To enhance transparency, awareness and accessibility, the action includes the development of short multimedia resources explaining institutional training services, competence-based pathways and career development opportunities. Overall, the action contributes to a more structured, evaluable and ERA-aligned approach to Continuing Professional Development.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Institutional Training Catalogue developed and expanded, including competence pathways aligned with R1–R4.
- Multimedia resources (short explanatory videos, guides, etc.) to support staff awareness of, and accessibility to, the University's training services, resources and competence-based pathways. [Target: at least 5–10 resources produced]
- Training offer in formats that ensure equitable access [Target: at least 60% of training offer in hybrid/online format]
- Updates of the Training Plan for Teaching and Research Staff explicitly including alignment with the HR Excellence in Research Award.

GAP Principles

33. Teaching

38. Continuing Professional Development

39. Access to research training and

continuous development

Timing (quarter)

Q3 2026 - Q4 2028

Responsible Unit

- Vice-Rector for Lifelong Learning, Educational Technologies, and Teaching Innovation
- Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer
- Doctoral School
- Vice-Rectorate of Internationalization

ACTION 23: Aligning and Updating the Regulation for Research-Funded Contracts to Enhance OTMR Compliance

The University of Jaén will carry out an OTM-R-oriented update of its Regulation governing the recruitment of staff funded by R&D projects and grants. This action represents a second-stage development following the 2022–2025 cycle, during which the institution focused on compiling and publishing existing recruitment regulations to enhance transparency, without undertaking a technical OTM-R-based revision of their content.

Building on the experience accumulated across recent research-funded recruitment calls, the updated regulation will address the need to modernise and strengthen what has become the central normative instrument for research recruitment at the institution. The revision will consolidate improvements already introduced in practice (e.g. broader profiles, inclusion measures, evaluation of outreach and fundraising activities), harmonise the regulation with the UJA OTM-R Guides (R1, R2 and technical staff), and incorporate explicit references to the R1–R4 profiles defined in the European Framework for Research Careers. Clearer evaluation scales and complaint mechanisms will also be introduced to reinforce procedural clarity and consistency.

To support international accessibility, an updated bilingual (ES/EN) version of the regulation will be prepared and systematically applied to research-funded recruitment calls. This focused approach avoids overlap with recruitment regulations affecting access to permanent academic staff (PDI), which are governed by national legislation, and concentrates on the area where the University has full normative competence and where enhanced OTM-R alignment can deliver the greatest measurable impact

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Diagnostic report identifying OTM-R improvement areas in the current regulation, validated by the Legal Office. [Target: 1 report]
- Updated bilingual (ES/EN) version of the Regulation for research-funded recruitment approved and published on institutional websites. [Target: One updated version]
- Recruitment calls applying the updated regulation and evaluation criteria. [Target: more than 90% of research-funded recruitment calls]

GAP Principles

12. Recruitment	16. Judging merit (Code)
13. Recruitment (Code)	17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)
14. Selection (Code)	
15. Transparency (Code)	18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

Timing (quarter)

Q1 2027 - Q2 2028

Responsible Unit

- Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer
- Personnel (HR) service

ACTION 24: Framework for Career Progression and Integral Accompaniment of UJA Researchers	
<p>The University of Jaén will implement a Framework for Career Progression and Integral Accompaniment of Researchers, conceived as a flexible and coordinated institutional approach aimed at aligning, articulating and strengthening a set of existing and evolving initiatives that support researchers throughout their professional trajectory. Rather than a single formal programme or policy document, the Framework functions as an organisational and operational reference that brings coherence, visibility and strategic orientation to diverse support actions within the HRS4R context.</p> <p>The Framework adopts a modular and adaptable structure that allows the University to respond to the heterogeneous needs of different research profiles while maintaining a shared strategic orientation. Although open to all researchers (R1–R4), it places particular emphasis on early-stage researchers, who benefit most from structured guidance during the initial phases of their careers.</p> <p>Within this approach, the Framework brings together four complementary dimensions: The Framework integrates four complementary dimensions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Institutional Onboarding and Orientation, providing newcomers with essential information on services, ethics and integrity, OTM-R principles, training opportunities and internal procedures. 2. Flexible Accompaniment and Thematic Support, through diverse formats (micro-mentoring, peer-support, thematic guidance sessions, expert dialogues) focusing on project development, funding opportunities, open science, mobility and research collaboration. This approach allows the coordination of existing initiatives within the University. 3. Competence Development, offering annual training pathways in transversal skills, research management, science communication, ethical research practice and digital competencies. 4. Communities of Practice and Networking Spaces, fostering interdisciplinary interaction and a collaborative research culture. <p>Overall, this action represents a qualitative evolution towards a more integrated, scalable and institutionally embedded approach to researcher support at UJA, enhancing coherence and sustainability without requiring the creation of a standalone formal framework document.</p>	
Indicator(s) / Target(s)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities organised annually within the Framework. [Target: at least 6 activities/year] • Researcher participation in activities [Target: at least 50 participants/year] • Attendance rate of newly incorporated researchers at the institutional onboarding session. [Target: at least 70% of new incorporations per year] 	
GAP Principles	
28. Career development	
Timing (quarter)	
30. Access to career advice	
Responsible Unit	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer • Doctoral School 	

ACTION 25: Gap Analysis and Institutional Perception System Aligned with the HR Excellence in Research Criteria

The University of Jaén will implement a dedicated HRS4R survey addressed to the research community (R1–R4), aimed at assessing levels of awareness, perceptions and perceived implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers (2023). The survey will be structured according to the four pillars of the Charter and will support the identification of institutional strengths, areas for improvement and priorities for action within the updated Action Plan.

To reinforce the robustness of the gap analysis, survey results will be complemented through a triangulation approach using consolidated institutional feedback mechanisms, particularly the annual Staff Climate, Leadership and Institutional Assessment Survey for academic staff (PDI). Although these instruments were not originally developed within the HRS4R framework, their maturity and scope provide valuable complementary evidence to validate trends and mitigate the impact of potential participation limitations.

The findings will be reviewed by the HRS4R Committee, integrated into the Action Plan and disseminated through targeted communication activities, ensuring transparency and institutional learning within the continuous improvement cycle of the HR Excellence in Research process.

Indicator(s) / Target(s)

- Participation rate of the research community in the HRS4R survey. [Target: At least 15% participation of researchers (R1–R4)]
- Institutional gap analysis report completed and validated by the HRS4R Committee. [Target: One gap analysis report formally validated]
- Identification and prioritisation of Charter principles showing lower levels of perceived implementation. [Target:] Priority areas for action identified and documented within the gap analysis report.
- Integration of survey findings into the updated Action Plan and dissemination of results. [Target: At least one set of communication outputs (e.g. infographic, institutional news item or presentation) disseminated]

GAP Principles

11. Evaluation and appraisal systems	
Timing (quarter)	Responsible Unit
Q2 2027 – Q4 2028	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vice-Rectorate for Strategy and Digital University • Vice-Rectorate for Research and Knowledge Transfer • Vice-Rectorate for Teaching and Research Staff

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

The following timeline outlines the **indicative implementation schedule** of the actions included in the **HRS4R Action Plan of the University of Jaén for the period 2026–2028**. The timeline is structured by quarters (Q1–Q4) and reflects a **progressive and coordinated approach**, aligned with the scope and nature of each action.

GOVERNANCE AND WORKING GROUPS

The implementation of the HRS4R Action Plan at the University of Jaén is supported by a structured governance and coordination framework, designed to ensure institutional oversight, coherence across actions and active stakeholder involvement.

At the strategic level, the Steering Committee provides overall institutional supervision and ensures alignment with the University's governance and decision-making structures. Operational coordination is carried out by the HRS4R Implementation Working Group, which oversees the deployment and monitoring of the actions included in the Action Plan.

Two specialised working groups operate under this framework. The Recruitment (OTM-R) Working Group focuses on open, transparent and merit-based recruitment practices, while the Welcome and Career Development Working Group addresses researcher onboarding, support and career development. Together, these bodies contribute to the coordinated implementation, continuity and sustainability of the HRS4R across the institution.

