Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)

at German Sport University Cologne

Revised Strategy 2025

Deutsche
Sporthochschule Köln
German Sport University Cologne

Content

Introduction

In December 2022, the German Sport University Cologne (GSU) submitted its application for participation in the EU's *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers* (HRS4R) - on this basis the University was awarded the *HR Excellence in Research Award* by the European Commission in spring 2023. This distinction is given to research institutions that are committed to implementing the principles of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*. It signals that they offer researchers high-quality working conditions, transparent and fair recruitment processes, and a supportive, stimulating research environment.

By receiving this quality label, GSU has taken a decisive step toward the European Commission's aims of strengthening the research culture within institutions and promoting the implementation of the principles of the *European Charter for Researchers*. Thus, the award also highlights GSU's commitment to developing high-quality human resources management, improving working conditions for researchers and further professionalizing of the research career.

The University has consistently advanced the implementation process, continuously developed its internal structures and revised the associated Action Plan in preparation for the upcoming Interim Assessment.

In doing so, GSU reaffirms its commitment to the 40 principles of the HRS4R, which span the thematic areas of

- Professional and Ethical Aspects
- Recruitment and Selection
- Working Conditions and Social Security
- Training and Professional Development

Through the HRS4R process, the University is strategically bundling, expanding, and sharpening these topics – with the goal of further enhancing the attractiveness, transparency, and international visibility of GSU as a research institution and employer.

Looking ahead, GSU will align its activities with the revised *European Charter for Researchers* (2023), which now serves as the central reference document for HRS4R. The updated Charter lately comprises 20 instead of 40 principles structured around key areas such as ethics, integrity, gender equality, researcher assessment, recruitment and career development, working conditions and procedures as well as talent development. This new framework will in future guide GSU's continued commitment to fostering an excellent, fair and future-oriented research environment.

German Sport University Cologne

The German Sport University Cologne is the only university in Germany that has the prerequisites to provide scientifically sound teaching, research and transfer services on all aspects of sport and exercise. It offers an unrivalled breadth of research, ranging from philosophy to molecular medicine. It has become part of the [Global Sport University Network](#), a global network of the world's best institutions for sport science research. In the latest Shanghai World Ranking, it is one of the 27 best sports science institutions in the world. And in the CHE ranking published in 2024, it was placed in the top group not only in teaching but also in the research categories.

The mission of the German Sport University Cologne is to create the conditions for sport and exercise to realise their strong social problem-solving competence through outstanding university education, excellent research and a committed transfer of its own research results, technologies and findings to society. At the centre of all efforts in research, teaching and transfer of sport and exercise is the goal of contributing to improving the quality of life of all citizens in our society.

The focus is on the key topics of performance, education and health. The key topic of *Performance* encompasses all aspects associated with the recording, assessment and management of physical, mental and interpersonal performance in relation to all performance levels. The guiding theme *Health* refers to the physical, psychological and social aspects of illness, risk of illness, well-being and age-appropriate functioning, insofar as they are related to sport and physical activity, as well as research into the influences of physical activity on maintaining and restoring health. The guiding theme of *Education* refers to the socio-theoretically embedded research and teaching of the normative, personality-building, educational, didactic, historical and representational aspects of sport, play and exercise. A comprehensive understanding of these core topics requires continuous attention to the social and material environments that influence how people experience and engage in sport and physical activity.

Aligned with its University Development Plan 2020–2025 and with a view to the evolving plan for 2025–2031 (as of summer 2025), GSU is pursuing the strategic goal of consolidating and expanding its position as a leading institution in sport science. It lays the foundation for sport and physical activity to fully realize their societal impact—through excellence in education, research, and knowledge transfer. Its overarching aim is to contribute to improving the quality of life for all people. In pursuing this mission, the university embraces future-readiness as a guiding principle. It actively responds to ongoing societal, scientific, and technological developments and takes seriously its social, economic, and ecological responsibilities. Efficient use of resources, financial stability, and coherent structural development are essential cornerstones of this approach. Above all, the university regards its staff as its most valuable resource—and as the key to innovation, excellence, and long-term impact:

Thus, making the university visible as an attractive employer that strengthens and develops its academic staff and promoting a culture of appreciation, cooperation and anti-discrimination are also integral components of the upcoming University Development Plan 2025-2031. Consequently, the continuation and further integration of HRS4R play a key role and are firmly anchored in GSU's institutional strategy and vision. GSU is also further actively involved in

national networks for HRS4R implementation, including the working group of the German Rectors' Conference and a nationwide community of HR developers at higher education institutions, where it contributes to knowledge exchange and the identification of best practices.

Implementation

Strategic Focus and HRS4R Integration at GSU

Since May 2024, GSU has been led by a new President´s Office which is continuing the previous strategic direction while also setting new priorities. The main focus is on further developing the quality of studies and teaching, expanding the leading position in research and further raising the profile of the transfer culture and the corresponding increase in impact. A central goal is to position GSU as the leading *social voice* of sport, making the university's contribution to solving societal challenges even more visible. Despite ongoing financial constraints and cost-cutting measures, GSU remains committed to HRS4R, which is firmly anchored in the new *UDP 2025–2031*. The university's commitment to an attractive and future-oriented working environment for researchers remains unchanged, and new measures in HR development—such as a greater priority on the topics regarding good leadership—are driven forward. Recent initiatives, like the rapid development of an AI guideline (*Guidelines for the use of generative artificial intelligence at GSU*) and the strengthening of the appointment management processes to even more include gender-sensitive recruitment, reflect this dynamic approach. The university's key strategic documents emphasize the importance of HRS4R, and cross-sectional topics such as HRS4R and CoARA are to be systematically integrated into future strategies.

HRS4R-Process, Participation and Monitoring

The core HRS4R working group established during the initial phase also assumed responsibility for managing and integrating the process throughout the implementation phase, actively supporting all planned measures. Its efforts were complemented by contributions from numerous academic and administrative units, as well as the active involvement of internal university bodies, including staff councils and the University Commission for Research and Transfer. This ensured broad participation in the university.

To inform the development of the revised action plan, the core HRS4R working group also conducted an online survey to identify the specific needs of academic staff concerning *working conditions, career development*, and *professional growth opportunities*. Based on this survey and its results, a virtual whiteboard was subsequently set up to give researchers the opportunity to discuss specific topics in more depth and in more concrete terms – this led to a fruitful initiation of a dialogue with the researchers at GSU. This format, which was initially declared as an experiment, proved to be a good platform for in-depth discussions on individual topics and as a platform for exchange. It also provided the researchers the opportunity to actively participate in this design process. Further information and the results of the survey and the whiteboard can be found in the survey report (to be published in the course of the

year 2025). The University Commission Research and Transfer, with representatives from all researcher status groups, discussed and further developed the action plan. Regular surveys and workshops are planned to foster continuous engagement and to monitor the effectiveness of the implemented measures.

The core HRS4R working group oversees the process, drives the implementation of actions, and ensures ongoing monitoring — supported by flat hierarchies and efficient communication channels within the university. Monitoring is carried out using an excel-based management tool and a professional project management platform, which allows transparent tracking of responsibilities, deadlines, and progress. Regular coordination meetings with stakeholders provide feedback and enable agile adjustments to the action plan. This combination of technical documentation and personal dialogue ensures effective project monitoring and supports the dynamic development of the HRS4R process at GSU.

In summary, GSU continues to pursue its strategic goals with a strong commitment to HRS4R, even in the face of financial and personnel challenges. The integration of HRS4R into the university's strategy, the adoption of OTM-R principles, and the participatory approach to staff development underscore GSU's future-oriented HR policy.

Strengths and Weaknesses

As mentioned above the 40 principles of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* refer to four different areas: *Professional and Ethical Aspects, Recruitment and Selection, Working Conditions and Social Security* and *Training and Professional Development*. This structure enabled a thorough evaluation of key strengths and weaknesses as part of the Interim Assessment.

Ethical and Professional Aspects

In summer 2025, GSU set out ambitious goals in its *UDP 2025-2031*, focusing on the social relevance of sports science and sustainability. Key progress has been made in Open Access and research data management, despite challenges with funding and access due to new DEAL contracts. GSU has secured internal funding for Open Access through 2028, launched a dedicated information website, and developed an Open Science Policy including quality standards (see also Main Action II).

A research data policy is to be published within 2025 and at the same time a comprehensive website with recommendations for handling with research data at GSU will be available. In addition, GSU is contributing to the development of national recommendations in the field of sports science. To facilitate FAIR data practice regarding the administration, documentation, saving and archiving of research data, GSU will join the *Coscine* platform in 2025 as an additional platform service for our researchers (see Main Action I).

To promote diversity, GSU organized and hosted until now two Diversity Summer Schools, participated in annual Diversity Weeks, and initiated the development of a comprehensive

diversity strategy (to be published shortly). New anti-discrimination measures were introduced, including the establishment of a dedicated contact point on campus and ongoing development of a protection framework against sexualized violence. In addition a [Section for Diversity Research](#) was founded to promote interdisciplinary collaboration and strengthen inclusion across the university. GSU also safeguards scientific integrity through clear guidelines, the work of appointed [ombudspersons](#), and regular workshops tailored to doctoral researchers.

Recruitment and Selection

In the area of recruitment and selection, GSU formally adopted and published an [OTM-R policy](#). However, GSU has fallen behind schedule, and the associated training, information and general implementation of the policy are still pending. These measures, along with the introduction of an e-recruitment tool, are scheduled for completion within the next 18 months (see Main Action III).

The planned introduction of university-specific requirement profiles (Action #21) was not pursued further for strategic reasons. Although GSU developed academic requirement profiles in 2018, limited staffing prevented a comprehensive update. As part of the HRS4R process, GSU decided to streamline these profiles in line with EU recommendations, making them more accessible and transparent, especially for external applicants. Detailed job requirements remain in individual job postings. To further improve awareness and integration of requirement profiles and competencies (*ResearchComp*), this topic will be addressed in the new Action #29.

The evaluation of the internationalization module of the university's internal research funding program will be carried out in the context of a broader review of all institutional funding instruments (Action #27 and new Action #31).

In 2024 GSU signed the Agreement on Reforming Research Assessment (ARA) and is committed to advancing in this area. As part of a large-scale [project](#) funded by the *Volkswagen Foundation*, tools for the implementation of ARA at universities are to be designed and made available to other institutions.

Training and Professional Development

Several training and development initiatives have been launched at GSU, though some still remain incomplete. Various training and advisory services were introduced as part of the postdoc program, as well as the option of participating in the [NRW certificate programme "Qualification for Professional Fields in Business and Society"](#). A permanent counselling service for postdoc career issues could only be set up temporarily at the university due to limited resources. However, based on the recommendation of EU experts and a staff survey, the measures for networking, career development and counselling will be extended to all academic groups from 2025 (new Action #29 and Main Action IV).

Annual appraisals for academic staff and a training program for managers have been implemented; however, survey feedback highlighted the need for stronger leadership development, now prioritized in a new action (Action #28 and Main Action V). Training opportunities for both academic and non-academic staff continue to be developed by a dedicated working group.

A new application tool has streamlined doctoral program enrolment, and supervision agreements will be reviewed to ensure quality and accountability, with supervisors required to address career planning and job market challenges.

The above-mentioned staff survey among researchers with a pleasing response rate of 41% provided valuable input, identifying needs for leadership training, career counselling and networking opportunities. Results were discussed constructively via a virtual whiteboard and will be further explored in a workshop later in 2025. These formats—survey, whiteboard, and workshop—will be used regularly to encourage dialogue, participation and to monitor progress as they all have proven that they provide constructive comments out of the scientific community.

Working Conditions and Social Security

The new Presidential Office (term of office 2024–2030) at GSU places a strong emphasis on staff development. Accordingly, a guideline for good leadership will be published in 2025, followed by a revised personnel development concept for 2026–2030. GSU continues to promote equal opportunities and diversity, with ongoing initiatives to increase the representation of women in leadership, enhance work-life balance, cultivate a respectful working environment, prevent discrimination, and these topics more deeply into the university's structures. In addition, GSU is committed to make all these topics more visible and better integrated within its institutional structures, firmly anchoring embedding these values into strategic planning. GSU Family Service continues to support staff and students with caregiving and counselling services, workshops and networking opportunities.

Due to limited resources, continuous career counselling for postdocs has yet to be fully established, but efforts are underway to expand this support across all career stages. While not all intended measures—such as a permanent training program for female postdocs—have been realized, networking events and a mentoring pool for female researchers (R1–R3) are currently being developed (new Action #29).

GSU is seeking to participate in the NRW Female Professors Programme to increase the proportion of women in professorial and leadership roles. Appointment procedures have been revised to actively encourage female applicants, with preferential consideration given under the State Equal Opportunities Act (Action #38).

Main Actions

During the initial phase, GSU decided to define Main Actions for larger, overarching challenges through multi-faceted measures that span several thematic. These typically entail broader and more complex changes. This approach has been maintained throughout the implementation phase and for the interim assessment. Some Main Actions have been fully completed (Main Action II) while others are still in progress (not yet fully implemented, Main Action I and Main Action III). Main Actions IV and V have been modified and extended in terms of scope and strategic goals and have therefore been renamed. With Main Action VI, a new Main Action has also been introduced to especially address research and internationalization strategies.

Main Action I Support Structures for Research Data Management

Current status: To be completed in 2025

As an initial step, GSU has drafted a comprehensive research data policy scheduled for publication in June 2025. In parallel, GSU is involved in the development of a national subject-specific guideline for managing research data in sports science. GSU´s research data policy will provide practical recommendations for handling research data throughout the research cycle. Upon adoption of GSU´s policy, an extensive range of information will be made available on the GSU website. Advisory services for creating data management plans are already operational, alongside regular workshops and informational events. GSU also intends to join the Coscine research data platform, which supports FAIR data management, sharing, and archiving for researchers in NRW.

Main Action II Open Access Support Structure and Strategy

Current status: Completed

GSU has established an Open Access Working Group that regularly discusses relevant topics and makes recommendations to the President`s Office. An Open Access Officer at GSU is also linked to other NRW universities and higher education institutions and regularly takes part in networking meetings and further training courses offered by the state of NRW. GSU has decided to take a closer look at the topic of Open Science. For this reason it has drawn up an Open Science Policy, which also contains a section on Open Access. In order to improve the quality of publications and data, a publication guideline has also been drawn up and an ORCiD iD has been set up for GSU. Access to literature and the ability to publish at low cost is essential for researchers at GSU - GSU 2024 faced major challenges here, as the new DEAL contracts were accompanied by significantly higher costs for GSU's central budget. Despite major cost-cutting measures, GSU has developed a stable financing concept in a complex process, thus enabling researchers to have access to literature and at the same time favourable publication conditions until 2028. Extensive information on the subject of Open Access has been set up on GSU website and information events and workshops on the subject are held regularly.

Main Action III Recruitment and Selection

Current status: To be completed in 2026

Staff shortages and personnel changes have delayed progress on this action, thus this main action has not yet been fully completed. However, the OTM-R Policy was finalized and approved in 2025. The introduction of an e-recruitment system has also experienced a delay due to resource constraints, however it is scheduled for completion within the next 18 month. For strategic reasons, it was decided not to develop GSU's own requirements profiles. The President´s Office and the HRS4R team considered it more sensible and effective to keep the requirement profiles general so as not to artificially narrow the field of applicants. Job advertisements naturally contain detailed requirement profiles and are designed according to international standards. In addition, the appointment management was updated as planned in the action plan (Action #19) and also expanded to include even more the aspect of gender-sensitive recruitment and management.

Main Action IV Career development R1-R4

Previous designation: Postdoc Programme
Current status: Extended

The plan to establish a permanent career advisory service for postdocs could not be fully realized due to financial limitations. Nevertheless, GSU participates in the NRW certificate programme "Qualification for Professional Fields in Business and Society" which helps postdocs prepare for academic and non-academic careers. Participants receive individualized guidance on competencies and career paths. The revised action plan places greater emphasis on researchers' skill development, using the *ResearchComp* tool to tailor events and trainings and to identify specific needs through counselling and workshops.

Survey results indicate a broader need for structured career guidance across all researcher levels. Accordingly, the scope of this action has been expanded to include all career stages (R1–R4). From 2025 onward, career counselling for researchers will resume (Action #29), HR will offer more advice regarding fixed-term academic employment contracts (WissZeitVG), and supervisors will be more involved in doctoral researchers' career planning (Actions #29, 30, 36). The survey also revealed a strong interest in improved networking opportunities. Initiatives such as matchmaking events and informal gatherings aim to strengthen internal and external collaboration.

Main Action V Leadership Culture

Previous designation: Leadership Development
Current status: Extended

In the implementation phase, important groundwork was laid to foster a forward-looking and values-based leadership culture—an ambitious process that has been initiated with visible commitment and is now set to be expanded with renewed momentum. Alongside targeted training programs and individual coaching for managers, annual staff reviews were introduced for academic staff, supported by a comprehensive information package, including a guideline and a dedicated intranet site designed to promote clarity and orientation. These efforts were further complemented by training sessions for both managers and staff, as well as university-wide information events (Actions #2, 3).

Over the next twelve months, this transformative process will gain further traction. As part of this Main Action, a university-wide leadership framework will be developed—one that not only sets standards but also fosters a shared identity. At its core will be a GSU-wide guideline for effective leadership, developed collaboratively, embedded sustainably, and supported by an expanded portfolio of training opportunities for all staff levels (Action #28). The renaming of this action reflects its broadened scope and the conviction that a strong leadership culture must not only be promoted but truly lived—across all departments, by all members of our university community, and with a clear vision for the future.

Main Action VI International Research Strategy

Current status: New

GSU aims to enhance its appeal to international researchers and increase its acquisition of EU and international third-party funding. A strategic workshop with *EU Liaison Office of the German Research Organisations (KoWi)* in January 2025 helped identify new opportunities in this regard. GSU plans to strategically leverage various European Commission frameworks to generate institutional benefits and demonstrate leadership in the evolving research landscape.

The EU Charter and HRS4R principles continue to guide these efforts. In particular, the redefinition of *researcher* in the new *European Charter for Researchers (2023)* to encompass intersectoral mobility and diverse career paths aligns well with CoARA principles. Although CoARA is not yet reflected in the 2005 *European Charter for Researchers* and thus not directly included in the Action Plan, GSU is implementing a suite of measures in this area through a [project](#) funded by the *Volkswagen Foundation*. *ResearchComp* is also recognized as a key element in bridging academic and non-academic sectors, enhancing mobility, and fostering the recognition of varied professional experiences. It supports researchers in articulating competencies and planning career steps in a targeted and structured way—further enriching GSU's emerging transfer and internationalization strategy (Actions #29, 32, 34).

GSU strategically combines the principles of HRS4R and the *European Charter for Researchers* with the forward-looking approaches of CoARA and *ResearchComp*, leveraging these frameworks to foster researcher mobility, support diverse career paths, and enhance its international profile, while simultaneously strengthening its research strategy and institutional leadership within the evolving European research landscape.

Revised Action Plan

Abbreviation:

StAPS = Stabsstelle Akademische Planung und Steuerung = Department of Academic Planning and Management

FwN = Abteilung Forschung und wissenschaftlicher Nachwuchs = Department for Research and Young Academics (until 2024) = FwQ = Abteilung Forschung und wissenschaftliche Qualifizierung = Department for Research and Scientific Qualification (since 2024)

D2 = HR Department

HR Development = Personalentwicklung

HR Development Working Group = Arbeitsgruppe "PE-Austausch" (Extended)

HRS4R Working Group = (Erweiterte) Arbeitsgruppe EU-Charta

Personnel Marketing = Arbeitsgruppe Personalmarketing

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status

Area: Training &Development

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status
1	Further development and finalization of a Postdoc programme, e.g. including trainings and mentoring and a structured supervision system for postdoctoral researchers (Main Action IV)	37,38	Q2 2023	FwN (PostDoc Office)	• Programme is finalized and communicated • Programme is rolled out • Programme components are evaluated by participants (Q2 2024)	A postdoc advice center ran until fall 2024 but couldn't be permanently staffed due to funding. A lasting certificate programme with consultations was launched, with seven participants so far. A website, training, and networking events—including with other Cologne universities—are ongoing. The initiative continues under Action #29 due to high demand.	Extended
29	Career development R1 to R4 (Main Action IV): #1 Initiate internal and external networking (R1 to R4) #2 Offer career advice (R1 to R3) through advice offer (again) #3 Initiate advice an career prospects/opportunities from supervisors (R4) (see also Action #28) #4 Establish ResearchComp as a tool and requirements profiles (R1 to R4) #5 Mentor pool for female researchers (R1 to R3)	21,28,30, 37,38	Q2 2026	FwQ + Equal Opportunity Office	#1 Aprrox. 1-2 matchmaking events per year internally; 1 networking event per year externally (with UzK and TH}; postdoc lunch table once a month; networking meeting for female researchers once a semester; promote internal collaboration within the framework of HIFF -> number of joint applications per round increases; #2 Career advice offer can be and set up internally and for an initial consultation; an external service is provided for more intensive and complex advice #3 Inclusion of the topic in the doctoral supervision agreement #4 Convert ResearchComp into a digital and interactive tool and make it available; integration into advice sessions, information events and GSU websites on the topic of careers #5 A mentor pool and an associated program are to be set up with the Female Professors Program 2030 in the event of approval (see Action #38)		New
2	Discussion of scope for annual interviews between employee and supervisor including aspects of career development	28, 37, 40	Q1 2023	HR Development / internal management and decision boards	• Scope is discussed • If applicable: Guidelines are developed and changes communicated	After introducing annual appraisals for non-academic staff in 2021-2022, comprehensive resources, guidelines, and intranet information were provided to academic staff. Training and information sessions were also held. As a result, this HRS4R action is now considered completed, but regular evaluations and possible further improvements are planned for the future.	Completed
3	Development and implementation of an internal training concept for supervision and management/ leadership competences (including outcomes of mental risk assessment 2021 and health as one topic) (Main Action V)	24, 37, 40	start in Q2 2023	HR Development	• Concept is developed • Requirement profiles are reflected after finalization • Offers are communicated and rolled out • Offers are evaluated (Q3 2024)	A formal training concept for managers has not yet been finalized, as it will be part of a broader "leadership culture" initiative. Since 2023, various training courses, workshops, and coaching for managers have been offered. The future training concept will align with the new HR development strategy (Action #35) and consider the results of the upcoming mental risk analysis, including leadership and mentoring aspects.	Extended

28	Development of the leadership culture at DSHS (Main Action V) '#1 Development and introduction of the "Guidelines for Good Leadership" #2 Further Development of leadership qualification and training offers for all management target groups, e.g. junior managers and female managers in science and administration.	24, 37, 40	Q2 2026	HR Development	#1 New guidelines have been developed, agreed upon and communicated. They are also embedded in all management development measures, activities and offers (such as training content, coaching, onboarding (see Action #14), management tools). #2 Training offers are developed, coordinated and communicated. For each target group, one training program for researchers is offered per half year.		New
4	Further development of existing qualification and development opportunities in the area of HR including a broader range of academic and non-academic issues; alignment of different offers through the recently established human resources development working group	2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 21, 28, 31, 38, 39	Q2 2024	HR Development Working Group	• Offers are aligned (no duplicates!) • Offers are finalized and communicated	In order to achieve coordination between the various stakeholders with personnel development offerings, a working group has been set up in 2023 that meets once a month to discuss current offerings, key topics and developments. A joint website make this networked personnel development and its offerings easier for employees to find and plan.	In Progress
5	Standardization of registration, general needs assessment and evaluation procedures throughout all units regarding internal qualification and development offers	39	Q3 2024	HR Development Working Group (IT if necessary)	• Central registration and evaluation tool/platform is rolled-out and in use	After evaluating the Moodle platform, a more resource-efficient alternative must be found for technical reasons. Standardized registration will continue, with internal or external solutions being considered. The consideration process aims to be completed by Q4 2025. Additionally, a needs analysis of GSU's continuing education was conducted and stakeholder collaboration strengthened.	In Progress
6	Needs assessment regarding further qualification of professors and development of respective offers (Main Action V)	38	Q4 2024	HR Development / FwN	• Needs are assessed • If applicable: Offers are developed, communicated and rolled out	A highly participated survey of academic staff on training needs, career opportunities, and working conditions was conducted. A virtual whiteboard for in-depth discussions was also introduced. Both tools, along with workshops, will be regularly used to monitor and assess the effectiveness of implemented measures.	Completed
7	Reflection and evaluation of new forms of qualification, e.g. job shadowing, intervision, peer teaching etc.	33, 39	Q2 2025	HR Development Working Group	• New ideas are reflected and discussed • If applicable: Offers are extended or adjusted and communicated	A toolbox with a first range different new forms of „Training on the job" to improving one's own experience learning and promoting a learning culture in teams has been published. It can be used as a guidance for managers and employees as well. It presents and compares various new "on-the-job" forms and formats of learning and recommends their use.	Completed
30	Evaluation of doctoral training programme including evaluation of supervision agreement (Main Action IV)	28, 36	Q3 2026	PhD Office	Significant response rate in the survey and in order to obtain meaningful information and data to maintain quality with appropriate adjustments		New
31	Evaluation of the university's internal research funding programmes (research funding, graduate scholarships, junior research awards) by collecting quantitative and qualitative data (evaluation of applications/funding and online survey of applicants) with consideration of the internationalization module (see Action #27); if necessary, adaptation of the offers; expansion of the funding offer with regard to transfer funding	18, 28	Q1 2028	FwQ	Significant response rate in the survey in order to obtain meaningful information; revised funding offer after evaluation; increase in applications with collaborations (see also #29)		New

	and cooperation (internal and external).					
35	New edition/revision of the overall HR development concept (2026-30) incl. a concept to develop the leadership culture and training concept for management target groups (former Action #3) (Main Action V)	28, 39	Q4 2025	HR Development	New HR development concept has been drawn up, adopted and announced		New
36	Development and introduction of an information format on the topic of the WissZeitVG (Main Action IV)	25, 28, 30	Q3 2025	D2 / HR Development	The format(s) has (have) been developed and is available as information for all relevant target groups; Annual information sessions are offered for the relevant target groups		New

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status

Area: Ethical & Professional Aspects

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status
8	Needs assessment in the areas of anti-discrimination and diversity and development of respective information and training content etc.	10	Q1 2023	Diversity	• Diversity Summerschool (September 2022) is evaluated and reflected • If applicable: Actions are developed	Two diversity schools were held to raise awareness of the topic of "diversity" (needs assessment) and a fundamental diversity concept was then developed in a participatory manner; it shows that GSU is committed to promoting diversity and a coexistence characterized by respect and appreciation. Diversity is understood to mean differences between people that influence and potentially jeopardize their opportunities to participate in a social system, such as a university. The measures taken by GSU aim to ensure full participation for all.	Completed
9	Revision and communication of the internal Open Access Strategy and implementation of support structure for OA-processes (Main Action II)	8	Q2 2023	FwN	• OA Strategy is released	GSU has launched an Open Access information website, appointed a contact person, and adopted an Open Science Policy and publication guidelines to support authors. Despite financial challenges from new DEAL contract conditions, a complex funding and incentive system has secured continued access and funding for Open Access publications until at least 2028. GSU has also joined the ORCiD consortium.	Completed
10	A more structured onboarding process for new researchers has been partially implemented and should be extended to the professors' level including transfer of relevant knowledge regarding academic structure and internal processes and policies	4,5	Q2 2023	StAPS /FwN	• Onboarding concept is extended • Meeting with new professors are offered and information about internal academic structures, processes and policies is provided	Due to significant cost-cutting measures and thus lack of personnel resources, this action has not yet been completed. However, we assume that the action will be completed in Q4/2025.	In Progress
11	Standardized information sessions and/or (web- based) material for (new) German and non-German speaking researchers on relevant (new) internal and external policies and regulations (e.g. good research practice, data security)	2,3,5,7,31	Q3 2023	StAPS /FwN	• Relevant content is developed • Content is implemented in curricula (Master, PhD and PostDoc programmes) and sessions are offered regularly	Due to significant cost-cutting measures and thus lack of personnel resources, this action has not yet been completed. However, we assume that the action will be completed in Q4/2025.	In Progress
12	Creation and communication of guidelines for dealing with research data and implementation of support structure for research data management (Main Action I)	2,3,7	Q4 2023	FwN	• Guideline is written and published • Guideline is communicated amongst researchers • Support structure is established	A research data policy is about to be published at GSU, along with a website offering information, guidance, and contacts. Data management advice and training are already available. GSU plans to join the Coscine platform for secure research data management, with researcher access expected by March 2025.	In Progress
13	Implementation of mentoring or buddy programmes for new employees	4,5	Q1 2025	Personnel Marketing	• Buddy or mentoring programme is developed and rolled-out • Programme is evaluated (Q2 2026)	A "create it yourself" guide for team-specific buddy programmes is available, allowing supervisors or team members to support new colleagues during onboarding. The programme focuses on social and organizational integration rather than professional training. A centrally organized, cross-departmental buddy programme is not feasible due to limited capacity.	Completed

14	Structured onboarding event/information sessions for supervisors/managers on internal leadership tasks and expectations (Main Action V)	5,6,7	Q4 2023	HR Development	• Content is created (based on action 3) • Onboarding event / information sessions espe- cially for new supervisors/managers are organized	GSU offers an annual "Welcome Day" for new employees to provide information and networking opportunities. Additionally, new managers can participate in a structured onboarding meeting to discuss leadership guidelines and development needs, as well as network with peers, mentors, or coaches. Both onboarding options are voluntary.	Completed
15	Translation of important strategic documents and regulations and target group-specific distribution (to new researchers, e.g. University Development Plan, Knowledge Transfer Strategy)	2,4,8,31	Q4 2023	Responsible units and/or external translation office	• Relevant documents are translated and communicated	Strategically important documents were translated into English. New documents are now translated almost always and with the relaunch of the GSU website at the end of 2025, all content will be automatically available in English via an AI translation interface.	Completed
37	Creation of a concept for protection against discrimination and sexualized violence (also for the area of research (e.g. studies, dealing with test persons) and sport-specific)	10, 24	Q3 2026	Equal Opportunity Office	Protection concept has been drawn up, adopted and announced		New

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status

Area: Working Conditions & Social Security

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status
16	Inclusion of postdoctoral female researchers in the existing mentoring programme TEAMWORKScience for female PhD students (Main Action IV)	27,38	Q2 2023	Equal Opportunity Office / FwN (PostDoc Office)	• Postdoctoral female researchers are included in next mentoring cohort • Programme is evaluated by postdoctoral female researchers after participation	Due to the extensive cost-cutting measures at GSU, it has not yet been possible to fully implement this action. However, some events for female postdocs have been offered (e.g. workshop "Women lead differently"), but it has not yet been possible to offer a permanent programme. The action will therefore be included in the new Action #29, in which a mentoring pool for female postdocs is to be set up.	Extended
17	Creation of exchange and networking opportunities for women	27	Q2 2023	Equal Opportunity Office /HR Development	• Information session is organized on International Women's Day to inform about internal offer • Specific networking events for women are organized and rolled out	Some fruitful networking events/meetings for female postdocs have been offered (e.g. Diversity Week, Women´s Day), but it has not yet been possible to offer a permanent programme especially for female Postocs. The topic of networking is integrated into the new Action #29, which also takes into account the needs of female researchers.	Completed
18	Establishment of trainings and consultation for postdoctoral researchers on different career options, e.g. career coaching/counselling and career development advice (Main Action IV)	21,28,30	Q1 2023	FwN (PostDoc Office)	• Existing concept is finalized and rolled out	An advisory service for Postdocs could only be set up temporarily and could not be made permanent. However, there will be an offer for all researchers as part of the new Action #29 (see also Action #1).	Extended
19	Update of the Statutes for the Appointment of Professors and Junior Professors (Berufungsleitfaden) in order to attract more female candidates	27	Q3 2023	Equal Opportunity Office	• Finalization of the revised Statutes for the Appointment of Professors and Junior Professors • Feedback from and approval by Senate	As part of this original action, the entire appointment management (with the new President since May 2024) was optimized and partially redesigned, so this action was modified and finalized by mid-2025 at the latest. Increasing the proportion of women in research and teaching is one of the university's strategic goals; qualified female academics are therefore expressly encouraged to apply, a gender-sensitive appointment management system has been set up. Women are given preferential consideration in accordance with the State Equal Opportunities Act.	Completed
20	Development and implementation of a management programme for women (or extension of an existing programme with exclusive modules)	27,37	Q3 2023	FwN (PostDoc Office) / Equal Opportunity Office	• Management programme for women is developed, communicated and rolled out • Programme is evaluated when finished	Due to extensive cost-cutting measures at GSU, it has not yet been possible to fully implement this action. Some events for female Postdocs have been offered (see Actions #16 and #17), but it has not yet been possible to offer a permanent programme. The action will therefore be included in the new Action #29, in which a mentoring pool for female postdocs is planned.	Extended
32	Development of an EU/internationalization strategy (including topics such as increasing EU funding and mobility, increasing the attractiveness for international scientists, integration of the cross-cutting topics CoARA and HRS4R) (Main Action VI)	23, 29	Q1 2027	FwQ	Strategy with package of measures has been drawn up and adopted		New

33	Development of a concept for sustainable research infrastructure (cooperative use of laboratories and equipment) to save space, energy and financial resources	23	Q1 2026	FwQ	Recording of all equipment/laboratories in the research information system; setting up a usage regulation; offer is used by scientists, resources are saved		New
34	Development of a revised transfer strategy (Main Action VI)	31	Q2 2026	Transfer	Revised transfer strategy has been drawn up, adopted and announced		New
37	Participation in the Female Professors Program 2030 (funding program of the state of Northrhine Westphalia to increase the number of female professors at universities and to set up equality concepts for parity at the university) (Main Action IV)	27	Q4 2025	FwQ + Equal Opportunity Office	Application with a concept for achieving gender parity and a plan for female professors has been submitted (including a mentoring program for female researchers, see Action #29)		New

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status

Area: Recruitment & Selection

No.	Action	GAP Principle(s)	Proposed Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicators/Target(s)	Remarks	Status
21	Discussion and finalization of internal requirement profiles for researchers (based on R1-R4) including the consideration and definition of teaching skills and leadership (Main Action IV)	12,13,21, 28,31,33, 36,37,40	Q1 2023	FwN (PostDoc Office)	• Profiles are finalized and approved by President's Office • Profiles are communicated and reflected in different recruitment and selection processes and training and development programmes	Requirement profiles for academics at GSU were created in 2018, but planned changes were not implemented due to limited staff. During the HRS4R process, GSU shifted strategy, deciding that detailed profiles were a barrier for external applicants. To promote openness and mobility, GSU now uses more the general requirement profiles based on EU recommendations, available on the GSU careers website. Detailed requirements are still listed in job advertisements. Additionally, the topic of requirement profiles and competencies (*ResearchComp*) will be more widely promoted and integrated as part of new Action #29.	
22	Implementation of an e-recruitment tool (including call for tender) (Main Actions III)	13	start in Q4 2023	D2	• Tool is implemented • Users are trained • Additional support material is developed and accessible	The first formal steps have been taken: including specific coordination with IT (specifications), digitization management (project management) and the purchasing department (call for tender). These preparatory steps are expected to be completed in Q3, so that after the offer and selection phase of the external providers in Q4, implementation will start in Q1 2026. The implementation of the tool is expected to be completed in Q3 2026.	In Progress
23	Definition of a recruitment process including the appointment and composition of selection commit- tee members, development and implementation of recruitment and selection guidelines (including e.g. checklists and best practices) for non-professorial teaching and research staff, assessment templates in order to hire based on skills and competencies to avoid biases and unconscious discrimination against candidates (Main Actions III)	12-18,20	Q3 2023	D2 /Extended HRS4R Working Group	• Process is reviewed • Guidelines are developed • Euraxess is used for job posts • Guidelines are communicated and content is explained in trainings for selection committee members if needed	For the recruitment process, a checklist for personnel requirement positions has been drawn up, which offers support to hiring institutes and organizational units in the formal process. Guidelines for recruitment and selection as well as for the selection process are currently being developed. Euraxess will be used as an additional platform for job advertisements as standard from May/June 2025. This action is expected to be completed in Q2/Q3 2025.	In Progress
24	Development of a monitoring and quality system for recruitment including complaints mechanism and means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply (Main Actions III)	12	Q4 2023	D2 /Extended HRS4R Working Group	• "most suitable researcher" is internally defined • Monitoring and quality system is developed and in use	As part of a quality management system for application procedures, complaints are recorded and evaluated at regular intervals. The introduction of an e-mail address for this purpose has further improved the process. Finding the most suitable applicants in the form of active sourcing or active recruitment can only be carried out as part of appointment procedures. For reasons of time and resources, this is not possible in the usual recruitment procedures.	Completed
25	Development and communication of an internal OTM-R Policy (Main Actions III)	12,15	Q3 2024	Extended HRS4R Working Group	• Policy is published on website	The policy is developed, approved by the president´s office and the committees, and then communicated both internally (intranet) and externally (internet, careers page). Further communication measures will be developed in accordance with Action #26.	Completed

| 26 | Training/information of selection committee members in the area of OTM-R including the awareness of biases e.g. due to gender or the reputation of an institution (Main Actions III) | 14,17,20 | Q2 2024 | D2 | • Training content is developed
• Selection committee members are trained | The OTM-R policy was adopted and university-wide published in April 2025. Training and information on bias and selection is provided internally and also in English as an e-learning offer to all university members (e.g. unconscious Bias). More information/training is developed/offered if necessary, according to complaints or on demand of the members. | Completed |
| 27 | Evaluation of the new internationalization module as part of the GSU internal research funding programmes in order to further promote and acknowledge mobility experiences | 18 | Q4 2024 | FwN | • Funded projects and their outputs are evaluated | The internationalization module has not yet been evaluated because there are not yet enough completed projects. The university's internal funding programmes are now to be evaluated as a whole and adjusted if necessary. The internationalization module will also be considered in the course of this evaluation. The action has therefore been extended and is now part of Action #31. | Extended |