



Action Plan

Case number: 2022AM727495

Name Organisation under review: Brusov State University

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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 * | 438 |
| Of whom are international (i.e. foreign nationality) * | 3 |
| Of whom are externally funded (i.e., for whom the organisation is host organisation) * | 45 |
| Of whom are women * | 415 |
| Of whom are stage R3 or R4 = Researchers with a large degree of autonomy, typically holding the status of Principal Investigator or Professor. * | 142 |
| Of whom are stage R2 = in most organisations corresponding with postdoctoral level * | 157 |
| Of whom are stage R1 = in most organisations corresponding with doctoral level * | 41 |
| Total number of students (if relevant) * | 4398 |
| Total number of staff (including management, administrative, teaching and research staff) * | 618 |

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

Brusov State University (BSU) is a non-profit organization that provides higher education in the sphere of Humanities and Social Sciences in Armenia. The main goal of BSU long-term development plan is to continually promote the quality and relevance of education and research delivered at the university and diversify, academic programs, keeping up with the demands of the society and the labor market, as well as the tendencies of global developments. The mission is to prepare and train competitive and competent specialists in Linguistics, Social Studies, Pedagogy, Public Administration/Management and other fields of Humanities and Social Sciences, continuously promoting personal development.

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.

Ethical and professional aspects *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

STRENGTHS

1. Functioning of Ethics Committee under the Scientific Council responsible for monitoring plagiarism cases, anticipated progress in the investment of Armenian version of Plagiarism Detection System
2. Research freedom (the opportunity to freely choose research topics, directions, methodology, and free expression of will) of BSU researchers
3. Developed and revised regulations on Publication Ethics (Code of Conduct for Publication), Academic Integrity, Guide to Requirements on Publication of Articles in BSU "Banber" Periodical
4. Scientific journals of the University involved in the list of journals approved by the RA Supreme Certifying Committee (SCC), which guarantees the validity and ethical aspects of the University's research outcomes
5. Rich scientific-educational practice in the fields of Linguistics, Intercultural Communication, Pedagogy, Foreign Language Methodology
6. Institutional knowledge and practice in publishing scientific research works in peer-reviewed journals
7. Functioning of BSU Professional Council 059 of the SCC of the Republic of Armenia
8. Involvement of BSU stakeholders in publication of scientific research outcomes in both national and international journals (including Scopus & Web of Science), in scientific seminars, international conferences, mobility and trainings
9. BSU Strategic Development Plan 2019-2023 which clearly reflects the scientific research priorities, directions and action plans
10. Open access to BSU publications and data (e.g. open access to BSU "Banber") on the official website of the University
11. Prohibition of any discrimination relating nationality, gender, age, etc.

WEAKNESSES

1. Need for improvement of Key Performance Indicators for more efficient evaluation of mid-term and long-term outcomes reached in the scientific research by the University
2. Vague perception and unclear delineation between public domain and IP protected objects among the majority of the university's stakeholders, which may hinder the full protection of Copyright and academic & research integrity

3. Lack of scientometric tools at the institutional level
4. Lack of institutional and coordinated antiplagiarism mechanisms and other credentials which weakens the sense of safety and privacy protection among researchers to publish OS-based scientific research works
5. Decrease of interest towards Doctoral education especially in the field of Humanities and low number defense of PhD dissertations

Recruitment and selection *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

STRENGTHS

1. Involvement of field specialists, experts and scientific supervisors providing trainings and expertise to BSU researchers, teaching staff, students and other involved parties in specialized fields of research
2. Institutional Regulation on Competitive Selection of Candidates for the Positions of Academic staff and Appointment to the Positions of Academic staff, based on Regulation on Admission to Postgraduate (PhD) Education, formation of Application and Enrollment of PhD Full-time and Part-time Studies at BSU
3. Encouragement of BSU alumni to be involved in PhD education
4. Transparent recruitment and selection tools for vacant positions through the official website and social media pages of the University
5. Engagement of young researchers based on Procedure on Conduction on Internal Competition for Application-Based Funding of BSU Research Topics,

WEAKNESSES

1. Need to improve regulation for recruitment of academic staff and to modernize the respective toolkit
2. Lack of a systemic approach for promoting research and innovation activities of academic staff
3. Lack of possibilities for talent young researchers to be involved in long-term mobility projects due to limited partnership of BSU, thus leading to decrease of researcher retention indicators
4. Scarce of human resources coordinating the recruitment and selection of researchers as well as scientific research activities at the University
5. Reduction of state funding allocated to research grant projects in Humanities and Social Sciences, reinforcement of requirements for fulfilling scientific research which impedes the attractiveness of the scientific research field and limits the involvement of foreign researchers

Working conditions *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

STRENGTHS

1. Developed and reviewed documentary basis regulating the scientific research activities of the University
2. Interdisciplinary national and international cooperation with universities, scientific research centers and other institutes in the field of education and scientific research which ensures favourable research conditions and development opportunities
3. Short-term and long-term strategic planning and financial allocation to the field of scientific research
4. Establishment of Doctoral School in the field of Applied Linguistics at BSU, based on the European model of PhD Education, which will trigger the development of interdisciplinary directions and mobility as well as will activate the cooperation with national and international partners and the private sector
5. Availability of a structural unit of the University in charge of coordination of scientific-research activities at BSU
6. Availability of some mechanisms (such as reports, analyses) reflecting the outcomes of BSU stakeholders in the field of scientific research

WEAKNESSES

1. Backward infrastructure supporting the investment of open data at BSU and activating the networking of the university with research institutes and laboratories of organizations
2. Limited financial resources as a hinder for the full remuneration of all scientific research works
3. Poor promotion & award system for researchers
4. Overload of academic staff which limits scientific research time of academic staff
5. Lack of visibility of research outcomes at different scientific, research and academic platforms

Training and development *

Strengths and Weaknesses (max. 800 words)

STRENGTHS

1. Investment of new incentives (new procedures, mechanisms and toolset) for promoting scientific research among academic staff and learners, which promotes the development of scientific research field of the University
2. Fulfillment of internal and external research grant projects with the involvement of internal and external stakeholders
3. Involvement of new field specialists for increasing the quality and activating the field of scientific research
4. Conduction of internal training courses to equip researchers, learners, academicians and librarians with necessary expertise and research skills (necessary for Open Access publishing, research data management and sharing, research integrity, etc.)
5. Regularly conducted in-house trainings and awareness raising meetings for academic staff and other stakeholders by responsible departments of the University

WEAKNESSES

1. Lack of regular training programs for young researchers of BSU for fostering scientific research activities
2. Low level of involvement of BSU teachers and researchers in trainings and activities directed to the professional development in the field of scientific research
3. Lack of human resources proficient in OS, OA and related ad-hoc knowledge which limits the best practice dissemination among internal stakeholders
4. Lack of funding for sustainable development of academic staff (including researchers) at international level in the field of scientific research
5. Lack of statistics based on regular gap analysis on the needs of research staff

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 organization's Action Plan/HR Strategy dedicated webpage(s): https://brusov.am/en/page_list/euraxess/#sthash.d5DxzJUV.dpbs

Please fill in the list of all individual actions to be undertaken in your organisation's HRS4R to address the weaknesses or strengths identified in the Gap-Analysis. The listed actions should be concise, but detailed enough for the assessors to evaluate the level of ambition, engagement and the expected implementation process. The institution should strive to provide a detailed plan, not just an enumeration of actions.

Note: Choose one or more of the principles retrieved from the GAP Analysis.

Proposed ACTIONS**Principles:**

- () 1. Research freedom () 2. Ethical principles () 3. Professional responsibility () 4. Professional attitude () 5. Contractual and legal obligations ()
6. Accountability () 7. Good practice in research () 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results () 9. Public engagement () 10. Non discrimination()
11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems () 12. Recruitment () 13. Recruitment (Code) () 14. Selection (Code) () 15. Transparency (Code)
- () 16. Judging merit (Code) () 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) () 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)
- () 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) () 20. Seniority (Code) () 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) () 22. Recognition of the profession() 23.
- Research environment () 24. Working conditions () 25. Stability and permanence of employment () 26. Funding and salaries
- () 27. Gender balance () 28. Career development () 29. Value of mobility () 30. Access to career advice () 31. Intellectual Property Rights
- () 32. Co-authorship () 33. Teaching () 34. Complains/ appeals () 35. Participation in decision-making bodies () 36. Relation with supervisors
- () 37. Supervision and managerial duties () 38. Continuing Professional Development () 39. Access to research training and continuous development()
40. Supervision

SELECTED ACTIONS TO BE IMPLEMENTED IN 2023-2024

| GAP Principle(s) | ACTION | Timing (at least by year's quarter/semester) | Responsible Unit | Indicators/Target(s) |
|--|---|--|--|--|
| (+/-) 1. Research freedom (+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (-/+) 4. Professional attitude (++) 6. Accountability | Develop BSU Research Policy and Guidelines and mandate those documents to become mandatory reading for all permanent and temporary, full-time and part-time academic and non-academic staff and researchers who engage in research. | 2 nd and 3 rd quarters, 2023 | Division of Science Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs Legal Department Head of Staff Management and Development Department | Developed BSU Research Policy and Guidelines |

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|--|--|---|---|--|
| <p>(+/-) 2. Ethical principles (-/+) 4. Professional attitude (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (++) 9. Public engagement (++) 10. Non discrimination</p> | <p>Update BSU Code of Ethics to ensure full compliance with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, e.g., regarding collaborative working and co-authorship principles. All BSU faculty and staff members will receive mandatory training when the Code and practices are updated</p> <p>Review and adjust individual employment contracts and job descriptions as well as collective labor contract to incorporate provisions for research outputs</p> | <p>2nd and 3rd quarters, 2023</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Legal Department</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> | <p>All BSU academic and non-academic staff members, as well as researchers will receive mandatory training when the Code and practices are updated.</p> <p>Revised individual employment contracts and job descriptions as well as collective labor contract</p> |
| <p>(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (-/+) 4. Professional attitude (++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++) 10. Non discrimination (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code)</p> | <p>Increase professional responsibility awareness among faculty, staff and researchers to reconcile faculty and non-faculty views</p> | <p>3rd and 4th quarters, 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Chairs</p> <p>Faculties</p> | <p>All BSU academic and non-academic staff members, as well as researchers will receive mandatory training when the Code and practices are updated</p> |
| <p>(+/-) 3. Professional responsibility (-/+) 4. Professional attitude (++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) (++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (+/-) 23. Research environment (+/-) 28. Career development (+/-) 30. Access to</p> | <p>Develop different trainings/awareness activities that will improve BSU's academic staff and researchers' communication skills so that they are better prepared to convey the economic and social impact of their research</p> | <p>2nd and 3rd quarters, 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Chairs</p> <p>Faculties</p> | <p>All BSU academic and non-academic staff members, as well as researchers will undergo these trainings</p> |

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| career advice (+/-) 33. Teaching | | | | |
| (+/-) 5. Contractual and legal obligations (-/+) 16. Judging merit (Code) (-/+) 24. Working conditions (-/+) 25. Stability and permanence of employment (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals | Conduct awareness activities and trainings for all researchers to increase the familiarity with the current national legal requirements regarding data protection and confidentiality protection requirements | 2 nd , 3 rd and 4 th quarters, 2024 | Division of Science Legal Department Head of Staff Management and Development Department Chairs Faculties | Integrated training topics on Copyright, data protection, scientific research literacy and other related issues in trainings for researchers, increased awareness among university stakeholders on the above mentioned fields Activated cooperation with stakeholders (ministries, NGOs, the RA Scientific Committee, field experts, etc.) in the field of science & research |
| (++) 6. Accountability (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (++) 19. Recognition of qualifications (Code) (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (-/+) 39. Access to research training and continuous development | Develop accountability /transparency tools for monitoring and evaluating the accessibility, take-up and effectiveness of existing training and career development opportunities | 1 st and 2 nd quarters, 2024 | Division of Science Legal Department Head of Staff Management and Development Department Chairs Faculties | Developed accountability /transparency tools for monitoring and evaluating the accessibility |
| (-/+) 7. Good practice in research (++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (+/-) 15. Transparency (Code) (-/+) 22. Recognition of the profession (+/-) 23. Research environment | Organize trainings for all BSU academic and non-academic staff members on how to apply for grant programs Provide targeted researchers/ scientists with information on research financing funds searching, as well as awareness-raising services thus supporting | 2 nd - 4 th quarters, 2024 | Division of Science Chairs Researchers | Increased level of awareness among academic & research staff members on applying for grant projects Increased number of academic & research staff members involved in grants (improved number |

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| <p>(-/+) 24. Working conditions (+/-) 28. Career development</p> | <p>their professional advancement</p> <p>Develop a best-practices document that should be distributed among all staff members</p> <p>Promote research initiatives (collaborations) related to the dissemination of research outputs/scientific results to members of civil society (e.g. during Open Days at BSU, mass media) and identify new ways of promoting science and research at BSU</p> <p>Create a Q&A section on BSU website of for best practices and HRS4R</p> | | | <p>of grant applications, granted projects)</p> |
| <p>(++) 9. Public engagement (++) 21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code) (+/-) 23. Research environment</p> | <p>Start public engagement initiatives, as junior researchers/ scientists</p> | <p>4th quarter, 2023</p> | <p>Start public engagement initiatives, as junior researchers/scientists</p> | <p>Increased number of junior researchers involved in public engagement activities</p> |
| <p>(++) 8. Dissemination, exploitation of results (++) 9. Public engagement (-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code) (-/+) 14. Selection (Code) (+/-) 28. Career development</p> | <p>Promote research initiatives (collaborations) related to the dissemination of research outputs/scientific results to members of civil society (e.g., during Open Days at BSU, mass media) and identify new ways of promoting science and research at BSU</p> | <p>2nd – 4th quarters, 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs Legal Department Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> | <p>Increased number of cooperation agreements, memoranda and contracts signed in the scientific research field, both nationally and internationally</p> |
| <p>(+/-) 2. Ethical principles (++) 9. Public engagement</p> | <p>Develop evaluation practices in research by executing the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE)</p> | <p>1st and 2nd quarters 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science Chairs</p> | <p>Developed toolset for evaluating the efficiency of performance of researchers (published scientific research outputs)</p> |

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| (+/-) 11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems (+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights | Develop evaluation indicators of societal impacts of research and practices of reporting Prepare a document on the evaluation system for assessing non-tenure track researchers | | Faculties Legal Department | |
| (-/+) 12. Recruitment (+/-) 33. Teaching (+/-) 40. Supervision | Discuss the level of involving foreign, including invited (native-speaker) lecturers and foreign researcher staff among the BSU academic staff list and their involvement in the teaching processes is low | 1 st and 2 nd quarters 2023 | Division of Science Chairs Faculties Legal Department | Increased awareness and higher level of involvement of foreign researchers |
| (-/+) 13. Recruitment (Code) (++) 20. Seniority (Code) (+/-) 27. Gender balance | Develop the institution's OTM-R policy and its commitment to valuing openness, transparency and merit during the recruitment process Improve and modify the guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers | 2 nd quarter, 2024 | Scientific Affairs Legal Department Head of Staff Management and Development Department Chairs | Developed OTM-R policy Improved and modified guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers |
| (++) 18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code) (++) 20. Seniority (Code) (-/+) 29. Value of mobility | Revise the Code and develop guidelines for different academic staff groups regarding: a. hybrid work (including remote work) b. international assignments (research exchanges, secondments abroad | 2 nd and 3 rd quarters, 2024 | Division of Science Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs Legal Department Head of Staff Management and Development Department Chairs | Revised Code and developed guidelines for different academic staff groups |
| (-/+) 24. Working conditions | Review the rules and develop conditions for sabbatical leave | 1 st and 2 nd quarters, 2024 | Division of Science | Developed regulation or clearly defined |

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| <p>(-/+) 35. Participation in decision-making bodies (++) 36. Relation with supervisors (-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties</p> | <p>Develop an onboarding procedure for newly appointed academic staff</p> <p>Identify and ensure working conditions for disabled researchers for successful research performance</p> | | <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Legal Department</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> <p>Chairs</p> | <p>provisions/rules (in respective existing internal document) reflecting the conditions for sabbatical leave</p> <p>Developed procedure reflecting new rules and conditions for onboarding newly appointed academic staff</p> <p>Needs assessment-based developed provisions/rules defining working conditions for disabled researchers</p> |
| <p>(++) 17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code) (-/+) 26. Funding and salaries (+/-) 28. Career development</p> | <p>Integrate, update and distribute a document on career development strategies for all researchers at all stages of their career</p> <p>Define a specific career development strategy for academic staff members</p> | <p>1st and 2nd quarters, 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> <p>Chairs</p> | <p>Document/Strategy on career development strategies for all researchers at all stages of their career</p> <p>Increased awareness</p> |
| <p>(-/+) 24. Working conditions (-/+) 29. Value of mobility (+/-) 30. Access to career advice</p> | <p>Create conditions for mobility of PhD students</p> <p>Strengthen international mobility programs for researchers</p> <p>Organize information sessions for wider group of participants</p> | <p>3rd and 4th Quarters, 2023</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> <p>Chairs</p> | <p>Improved mechanisms of ensuring awareness on international mobility programs for researchers</p> <p>Increased number of PhD researchers who participated in mobility projects</p> <p>Improved awareness among PhD students/researchers on mobility opportunities</p> |

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| <p>(+/-) 31. Intellectual Property Rights (+/-) 32. Co-authorship</p> | <p>Introduce the anti-plagiarism system within the framework of academic integrity by implementing anti-plagiarism software and provide access to all researchers and PhD students of the BUS</p> <p>Convene an institutional committee on intellectual property rights that would bring in different stakeholders</p> <p>Create an info sheet on intellectual property issues, including important bullet points such as the distinction between property rights and Copyright</p> | <p>3rd – 4th quarters, 2023</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> <p>Chairs</p> <p>Legal Department</p> | <p>Operationalized anti-plagiarism system</p> <p>Number of anti-plagiarism reports generated</p> <p>Wider access to anti-plagiarism software for all researchers and PhD students of the BUS</p> <p>Created info sheet, distributed and displayed on the website</p> |
| <p>(-/+) 24. Working conditions (+/-) 34. Complains/ appeals</p> | <p>Design and distribute a document with information on the guidelines and procedures to deal with complaints/ appeals for all BSU academic and non-academic staff members, as well as researchers</p> <p>Improve in awareness on appeals procedure, policy for scientific integrity among researchers (based on results from annual survey)</p> | <p>2nd and 3rd quarters, 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> | <p>Document on the guidelines and procedures to deal with complaints/ appeals for all BSU academic and non-academic staff members, as well as researchers</p> <p>Increased awareness on complaints and appeals procedure and policy for scientific integrity</p> |
| <p>(-/+) 37. Supervision and managerial duties (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development (+/-) 40. Supervision</p> | <p>Develop guidelines on how to establish a structured and regular relationship between supervisors and students. These guidelines, listed also in section 36, will clarify the tasks and methods for supervision and mentoring</p> | <p>2nd - 3rd – 4th quarters, 2024</p> | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> | <p>Guidelines and records of all research findings, accordance with agreed schedules, milestones, deliverables and/or research outputs</p> <p>Conducted training courses</p> |

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| | <p>Conduct workshops and meetings for supervisors regarding the different guidelines for supervision, topics of common interest, etc.</p> <p>Conduct training courses for Associate Professors recently hired on dissertation supervision issues/ research projects</p> <p>Expand current internal courses on transferable skills for PhD candidates, as measures for junior researchers both inside and outside the university</p> | | Chairs | <p>for Associate Professors recently hired on dissertation supervision issues/ research projects</p> <p>Increased number of events on supervision</p> <p>Increased numbers of internal courses on transferable skills developed and organized for PhD candidates and supervisors</p> |
| (+/-) 38. Continuing Professional Development | <p>Conduct awareness-raising activities and trainings about the significance of lifelong professional development for researchers</p> <p>Implement a monitoring protocol on the quality of the personal development program and the satisfaction of researchers</p> <p>Implement regular need assessment of researchers for further improvement of the career development process</p> | 2 nd - 3 rd quarters, 2024 | <p>Division of Science</p> <p>Vice Rector for Education and Scientific Affairs</p> <p>Head of Staff Management and Development Department</p> <p>Chairs</p> | <p>Increased number of organized trainings and awareness-raising activities</p> <p>Effective balanced workload regulation in use for research and lecturing</p> |

Note: Add as many actions as needed.

The establishment of an Open Recruitment Policy is a key element in the HRS4R strategy. Please also indicate how your organisation will use the Open, Transparent and

Merit-Based Recruitment Toolkit and how you intend to implement/are implementing the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit- Based Recruitment. Although there may be some overlap with a range of actions listed above, please provide a short commentary demonstrating this implementation. If the case, please make the link between the OTM-R checklist and the overall action plan. (max. 1000 words) *

The main provisions of the OTM-R policy are reflected in the BSU strategy, different charters and regulations of the university. However, the University plans to develop a separate OTM-R policy which will clearly reflect the OTM-R principles. In general, the University makes selection and recruitment based on professional background, recognized qualifications and degrees, skills and competences and other respective criteria which also serve as a basis for the competitive selection. BSU also takes into consideration teachers and researchers' participation in academic and scientific research activities such as conferences, scientific seminars, professional trainings held at both national and international levels. Among related regulations, the Regulation on Admission to Postgraduate (PhD) Education, Formation of Application and Enrollment of PhD Full-time and Part-time Studies at BSU, Regulation on the competitive selection of candidates, for the positions of academic staff and appointment to the positions of academic staff can be mentioned. The recruitment and selection policy is reflected in OTM-R checklist.

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:

URL: <http://www.yoursite.com>

4. Implementation

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

BSU carries out a number of activities to contribute to the development of an attractive, favorable and open scientific research environment and conditions for researchers to fulfill productive activity. The activities as well as respective action plans and perspectives of improvement of the University are based on HRS4R Principles which BSU has undertaken to adopt and to ensure their long-term application in the field of scientific research. Emphasizing the main areas of the mentioned principles, i.e. ethical and professional aspects, recruitment and selection, social security and working conditions, as well as training and development, BSU ensures necessary obligatory and supporting documentary bases which are revised on a regular basis. Among the fundamental documents, the BSU Charter, Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2023, a number of documents developed within the scope of the Erasmus+ MINERVA (e.g. gap analysis, action plan, OTM-R policy, etc.), and other international projects can be mentioned. Moreover, as it was specified in the gap analysis, the University has developed respective guidelines and regulations (BSU Research Policy and Guidelines, Code of Ethics, BSU Code of Conduct/Integrity/, Publication Ethics, etc.) that will significantly enhance the scientific research management, will increase the efficiency of the university's scientific research field, will foster the modernization and internationalization of the scientific research.

At the same time, BSU realizes the necessity to continuously revise all of its aspects and practices that will promote fully efficient application of HRS4R principles in the long run. In this respect, the University ensures both centralized and de-centralized approaches to the management of its scientific research activity by means of: respective structural unit (Division of Science) the functional framework of which covers the coordination and management of scientific activities of BSU; respective documentary basis that serves for the unified, coordinated and efficient implementation of scientific research activities at the levels of chairs and scientific-educational centers of the university; teaching staff at levels of each chair and scientific-educational center, whose professional scope of activity necessarily includes scientific research (along with teaching); regularly organized scientific conferences, seminars, trainings and other activities directed to the career development and research capacity building of both young and senior researchers; etc.

With the aim to ensure efficient implementation of the 40 principles of the Charter & Code, BSU has specified a number of actions in the action plan, most of which were already launched in the previous year, some of them are currently being implemented, revised and some will be taken in a prioritized sequence. In addition to the above

mentioned and as specified in the action plan, BSU:

has developed Code of Ethics and will be consistent in ensuring its efficient application and full compliance with the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity, e.g., regarding collaborative working and co-authorship principles. All BSU faculty and staff members will receive mandatory training when the Code and practices are updated; has reviewed and will continue to adjust individual employment contracts and job descriptions as well as collective labor contract to incorporate provisions for research outputs;

will expand the scope of dissemination and will increase professional awareness among faculty, staff and researchers to reconcile faculty and non-faculty views; this will be accompanied with diverse trainings and workshops that will improve BSU's academic staff and researchers' research skills, will enhance their preparedness to field related challenges; will enrich their professional background and knowledge in applying to grant projects, in searching research financing funds, etc.;

will revise in-use internal documents reflecting the core aspects of scientific research, including recruitment and selection of researchers, promotion of research, internationalization of scientific research outcomes, accountability and transparency of activities in scientific research, etc.

will activate the application of newly developed documents reflecting different core aspects of scientific research and research management (including HRS4R, OTM-R policy, current action plan, OS strategy, etc.);

in cooperation with partner universities and other involved stakeholders, will function anti-plagiarism system within the framework of academic integrity by implementing anti-plagiarism software and provide access to all researchers and PhD students;

will develop/improve evaluation practices in research by applying respective measurement tools and evaluation mechanisms, including indicators, surveys, reports, round-table discussions, which will serve for the quality control and monitoring, will enhance the quality of researchers' activities, will evaluate their satisfaction with respective procedures, will enable to regularly identify current institutional problems and will track researchers' performance dynamics.

The implementation of the above enumerated activities and others envisaged in the action plan will include early/young and senior researchers, PhD students, different structural units, including Division of Science, chairs and scientific-educational centers, and they will be supported and managed by BSU's management, QA Center and other involved internal and external stakeholders.

Make sure you also cover all the aspects highlighted in the checklist below, which you will need to describe in detail:

How will the implementation committee and/or steering group regularly oversee progress? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

The composition of the Committee will involve different stakeholders, both internal and external, who will be engaged in scientific research activities of the University. This approach will allow to regularly and consistently control the progress in the scientific research area of the University.

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

BSU encourages the active and targeted involvement of its main internal and external stakeholders in core aspects of its activity, including the field of scientific research. This is reflected in the regulatory framework of the University which defines the mandatory participation of BSU internal stakeholders (e.g., representatives of student body, academic staff members, etc.) in governing processes. Likewise, it is of high importance for the University to also ensure its main stakeholders' involvement in the scientific research are with specific focus on the necessity to walk in line with current requirements set by the European Research Area and other educational-research fields. BSU strives for continuous improvement in its core activities, hence, such an approach implies that it should regularly improve its academic programs, enhance the platform for dialogue among its main stakeholders, to enhance the scientific research, taking into consideration the primary needs, interests and requirements of the main stakeholders.

Through active round-table discussions and meetings with its main stakeholders, BSU will share its values stipulated in the scientific research area, will accumulate valuable information and opinions of its stakeholders and will implement respective mechanisms for more efficiently involving them in the development and improvement activities. Suchlike involvement will be coordinated and managed by the Department of Science, based on its primary function of fostering the development of BSU's scientific research area.

Besides, BSU through targeted involvement of representatives of the research community, the University will have larger opportunities for grant projects and will diversify the sources of funding for its scientific research and educational services, taking into consideration the fact that the decreasing state funding to the RA HEIs.

How do you proceed with the alignment of organisational policies with the HRS4R? Make sure the HRS4R is recognized in the organisation's research strategy, as the overarching HR policy.

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

BSU has developed a Development Strategic Plan (SP) 2019-2023 which reflects the scientific-research directions of the University. Based on the mentioned SP, the University will ensure the fulfillment of the following main actions:

develop a comprehensive program of BSU research activities, priorities, goals and objectives for the development of BSU academic and research activities, their comparability and competitiveness with the research activities in foreign competitor universities,

develop and introduce innovative mechanisms, technologies and methods promoting BSU research activity, effectively utilizing the University's scientific, research and innovative potential, contributing to the development of students' scientific and innovative activity and creative initiatives and the development of knowledge-based economy at the national level,

ensure internationalization of BSU research activities and comprehensive development of international scientific and educational cooperation, aimed at promoting scientific and educational innovation at the University,

Enhance the effective use of BSU fundamental and applied research outcomes in the educational process.

The intended outcomes of the above-mentioned strategic goals are as follows:

A complex program of BSU major scientific and research activities, goals, objectives and measures aimed at the solution thereof, innovative mechanisms, technologies and methods promoting BSU scientific and research activity,

indicators to increase the efficiency of the use of scientific, research and innovative potential,

prerequisites for the development of scientific and innovative activity and creative initiatives of the academic staff and students,

improved culture of introducing BSU fundamental and applied research results in the educational process,

indicators of the development of BSU international scientific and educational complex cooperation.

In addition, it should be mentioned that from the point of view of the definition of relevant areas and directions in the scientific research area, it should be noted that BSU Scientific Council is competent to address a broader range of issues related to the university's operation, so the latter makes decisions about the research and scientific-educational activities, and these decisions are binding on all BSU units and Faculty councils as well as for students. This means that the alignment of organizational policies will

also be ensured at the top management level of the University and, on the other hand, all respective units of the University will take the institutional responsibility of ensuring the alignment of their functions with the BSU HR and research policies and strategies.

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Based in the experience of practicing the PDCA (plan-do-check-act) cycle of quality management and based on the approach of regular improvement of its core activities and the strive for excellence in the higher education and scientific research areas, BSU will implement the proposed actions at each stage of the PDCA cycle. The implementation and monitoring processes will be also supported by the BSU Quality Assurance Center, in accordance with the BSU SP strategic directions stipulated in the scientific research field.

How will you monitor progress (timeline)? *

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Based in the experience of practicing the PDCA (plan-do-check-act) cycle of quality management and based on the approach of regular improvement of its core activities and the strive for excellence in the higher education and scientific research areas, BSU will implement the proposed actions at each stage of the PDCA cycle. The implementation and monitoring processes will be also supported by the BSU Quality Assurance Center, in accordance with the BSU SP strategic directions stipulated in the scientific research field.

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

Detailed description and duly justification (max. 500 words)

Taking into consideration the fact that the BSU's long-term strategic programs stress the importance of becoming a research, educational and cultural center and the importance of expanding the scientific and research potential of the University in the Humanities and Social Sciences, in terms of improving the KPIs of the academic staff and the more effective use and implementation of the University's scientific potential the above-mentioned indicators show total compliance with the expected and actual results of BSU in the field of research. In terms of measuring the progress registered in the scientific research area, BSU will act on the basis of the KPIs which, in a separate section, were developed to measure the performance of the University in the mentioned field.