HR Excellence in Research

GAP Analysis (Charter and Code Checklist)

GAP Analysis (Charter and Code Checklist)

Case number

2024RO200614

Name Organisation under review

INCDTIM

Organisation’s contact details

Donat, 67-103, Cluj-Napoca, CLUJ, 400293, Romania

Date endorsement charter and code

06/03/2024

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28/06/2026

GAP Analysis overview

The Charter and Code provides the basis for the Gap analysis. In order to aid cohesion, the GAP Analysis principles have been renumbered under the following headings. Please provide the outcome of your organisation's GAP analysis below. If your organisation currently does not fully meet the criteria, please list whether national or organisational legislation may be limiting the Charter's implementation, initiatives that have already been taken to improve the situation or new proposals that could remedy the current situation. In order to help the organisation's recruitment strategy, a specific self-assessment checklist is provided for Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment.

European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers : GAP analysis overview

- **Status** : to what extent does this organisation meet the following principles?
- **Implementation (++ , +/- , -/+, --)** :
  - ++ fully implemented
  - +/- almost but not fully implemented
  - -/+ partially implemented
  - -- insufficiently implemented
- **GAP** : In case of --, -/+, or +/-, please **indicate the actual "gap"** between the principle and the current practice in your organisation.
- **Implementation impediments** : If relevant, please list any national/regional legislation or organisational regulation currently impeding implementation.
- **Initiatives undertaken/new proposals** : If relevant, please list any initiatives that have already been taken to improve the situation and/or new proposals that could remedy the current situation.

Status
Ethical and Professional Aspects

Status

1. Research freedom

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Based on researchers' feedback, INCDTIM will explore measures to streamline administrative procedures, improve support services for project management, and encourage interdisciplinary research initiatives and collaborations.	The freedom of research is balanced with responsibility, ethics, and respect for the rights of individuals involved in research, such as confidentiality and safety within INCDTIM. Researchers are free to propose and develop new research directions, participate in national and international funding competitions, and establish scientific collaborations. The development of certain research topics may depend on the availability of competitive funding opportunities; however, the institute actively supports researchers in identifying and accessing funding through dedicated support structures. To support the development of new research directions and access to competitive funding opportunities, INCDTIM has established an International Projects Office, which provides researchers with assistance in identifying funding opportunities, building international consortia, and preparing project proposals. The Scientific Council provides strategic guidance and ensures alignment of proposed research themes with the Institute's scientific priorities and development strategy, while respecting researchers' academic freedom and initiative in proposing new research directions. Internal Regulations: The update of institutional regulations following the entry into force of Law No. 183/2024 provides an opportunity to further strengthen researchers' rights, academic freedom, and institutional support mechanisms Code of ethics https://en.itim-cj.ro/wp-content/blogs.dir/6/files/sites/6/2025/06/Code-of-Ethics_2025.pdf - Implementation of the Managerial Internal Control System (SCIM) SCIM Information - Regulation on Intellectual Property Rights Regulation on IP

Status

2. Ethical principles

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		At the institute level, ethics and research integrity are promoted transparently and made available to all employees on the INCDTIM website. Thus, the Code of Ethics is available for consultation on the institute's web page. Researchers conduct their activities by adhering to the following principles: - Responsibility to the scientific community; - Presenting research results honestly, without falsifying data or omitting relevant information; - Avoiding plagiarism and self-plagiarism; - Complying with data protection legislation (GDPR). Compliance with conduct standards is overseen by the hierarchical supervisor, with good conduct also monitored by the Ethics and Integrity Committee of INCDTIM. Deviations from the code of conduct are sanctioned in accordance with the provisions of Law 183/2024 concerning the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel. Internal Regulations: - Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct for the research and development staff at INCDTIM https://en.itim-cj.ro/wp-content/blogs.dir/6/files/sites/6/2025/06/Code-of-Ethics_2025.pdf - Regulation of the Ethics Committee (published on the internal portal) - Guide to Integrity in Scientific Research developed and adopted by the National Council for Ethics in Scientific Research, Technological Development, and Innovation (published on the internal portal) - Ethics Committee Complaint Form (published on the internal portal)

Status

3. Professional responsibility

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Researchers are aware that their research must be relevant to society and are obligated not to duplicate previous research. Plagiarism and self-plagiarism are prohibited by the INCDTIM Code of Ethical Conduct and are sanctioned in accordance with the provisions of the Statute of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel. Ensuring compliance with these principles at the institute level is the main responsibility of the ethics committee designated for this purpose. Additionally, doctoral supervisors and research team leaders are responsible for ensuring adherence to the aforementioned ethical principles. Special attention is given at the institute level to respecting the ethical principles regarding authorship/co-authorship for all researchers who made a significant contribution to the creation of a publication/technology/product/patent/service, and similar work, by including them in the author list in the order of each person’s contribution to the research outcome. INCDTIM hosts an accredited technology transfer center, the "Technology Transfer Center – CTT INCDTIM," which provides researchers with support for the commercialization of applied research results and ensures compliance with intellectual property rules. Technology Transfer Center - CTT

Status

4. Professional attitude

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		The strategic development plan of INCDTIM contains regulations and strategic objectives regarding: • Activities and priority research areas • Development of human resources, including research personnel. The strategic development plan and the National Research Strategy are communicated to researchers through publication on the institute's website at the following link: Strategic Guidelines. • The Project Management Office - Financial provides support to researchers for project submission and implementation. • The International Project Management Office offers specialized consulting and support in writing, submitting, and managing research, development, and innovation projects. The professional attitude of researchers is defined by a commitment to core values such as integrity, transparency, respect for fundamental rights, and involvement in sustainable development. Employees are aware of their duties and responsibilities according to their job description upon hiring at the institute. Job descriptions are updated in accordance with the activities performed and the applicable legislation. In this regard, a procedure has been developed regarding the creation, updating, and approval of job descriptions. Researchers' competencies are aligned with the strategic objectives of INCDTIM, thereby identifying training and professional development needs. Annually, training for staff is planned within the institute based on the allocated budget and training needs.

Status

5. Contractual and legal obligations

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		The contractual obligations of researchers within INCDTIM include: - Compliance with the provisions of the individual employment contract, which includes clauses regarding intellectual property rights; - Adherence to the deadlines stipulated in funding contracts; - The obligation not to disclose confidential information, as well as the obligation to comply with confidentiality clauses in employment contracts/funding contracts. Research results (theses, publications, patents, reports, development of new products, etc.) are delivered annually by researchers and can be found in the annual reports published on the institute's website: Annual Reports. Internal Regulations: - Current Status (2026): INCDTIM is currently implementing an internally developed IT system, designed entirely by the IT Department to centralize research outputs. Researchers input their individual achievements (publications, patents, projects) into the platform, and this data will be directly utilized in the institutional performance evaluation process. - A Research Results Validation Committee appointed by the General Director's decision - Regulation on Intellectual Property Rights, developed in the Pilot program, conducted with the assistance and support of the World Bank Intellectual Property Regulation (published on the internal portal of INCDTIM).

Status

6. Accountability

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The survey results indicate a high level of awareness among researchers regarding the professional and financial responsibilities associated with research activities.	The Managerial Internal Control System (SCIM) is an important component of organizational management, encompassing all structures and organizational procedures aimed at optimizing resources, improving the flow of information, monitoring the institute's performance, managing risks, and holding management and execution staff accountable. The Project Management Office - Financial supports researchers by verifying the financial compliance and accuracy of expenses both during the execution phases of research and at the time of reporting these expenses. The Legal Office ensures that contractual obligations are met and that the contractual clauses are compliant. Reports on project implementation (both financial and technical) are submitted to funding authorities at each stage of reporting results/progress stipulated in the project contract. Through the project funding contract, the project director and INCDTIM management assume performance indicators that are directly correlated with the funding received. Legislation / External Regulations: • Government Ordinance No. 119/1999 regarding internal control and preventive financial control, with subsequent modifications and completions. • Government Decision No. 600/2018 regarding the approval of the Managerial Internal Control Code for public entities. • Law No. 206/2004 regarding good conduct in scientific research, technological development, and innovation. Internal Regulations: • Quality Management System Quality Management Document • Guide to Integrity in Scientific Research Integrity Guide • Procedure regarding the organization and execution of the direct procurement procedure.

Status

7. Good practice in research

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	Researchers highlighted the need for the continuous development of IT infrastructure and data storage and processing capacities to better support research activities and the requirements associated with national and international projects.	Researchers at INCDTIM consistently adopt safe working practices in accordance with applicable national legislation, including occupational health and safety measures, personal data protection, and information security in research activities. Within the Internal Managerial Control System (SCIM), the institute applies risk management procedures ensuring the identification, assessment, monitoring, and control of risks associated with institutional and research activities, thereby contributing to the proper and continuous functioning of scientific and administrative processes. The Occupational Safety and Health Committee coordinates risk prevention activities and ensures the implementation of protection measures for employees by: - Identifying and assessing risks associated with research activities conducted at the institute; - Implementing safety measures (personal protective equipment, safety rules in the laboratory, protocols for handling hazardous substances); - Monitoring compliance with applicable legislation in the field of occupational health and safety. The Data Center unit coordinates activities to prevent technological disasters and implements necessary measures for data recovery and the restoration of IT infrastructure functionality by: - Backup and Secure Storage Strategies: Performing periodic data backups on local and external (offline/air-gapped) media, currently being expanded through the implementation of a secure cloud solution to ensure geo-spatial redundancy in compliance with NIS 2 requirements. - Business continuity plans – measures are in place to protect and restore data in the event of disasters; - Testing and validating data recovery plans – measures are in place to ensure the efficiency and rapidity of the data recovery process. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) supervises compliance with regulations regarding the protection of personal data, Regulation 679 of April 27, 2016, concerning the protection of personal data by: - Monitoring compliance with data protection regulations (GDPR); - Informing employees about data protection regulations; - Ensuring the implementation of data protection measures, including encryption and access control; - Assessing the impact on data protection in cases of high-risk processing activities. Internal Regulations: - Internal OHS Instructions, themes

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		for periodic training - Regulations specified in the job description and internal regulations regarding employee access to IT resources and internal platforms; - Processing of personal data Personal Data Regulations (Regulation published on the internal portal) - Procedure of the Internal Managerial Control System on Risk Management, published on the intranet network. Suggestions for Improvement: Organisation of periodic training sessions on occupational health and safety, data protection, and incident and emergency response; Development and implementation of an integrated IT systems administration and security procedure; Strengthening IT infrastructure and expanding external backup and recovery solutions; Continuous updating of GDPR-related procedures in line with evolving legislation and technological risks.

Status

8. Dissemination, exploitation of results

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Suggestions from Researchers: To improve the dissemination of research results to the public, INCDTIM could enhance the accessibility of information by using social media platforms, organizing educational and open events, and creating external partnerships.	Research projects conducted within INCDTIM involve, through the contractually assumed indicators, the obligation to disseminate research results through specialized publications, scientific communications, as well as through materials specifically intended for communication to the general public. Dissemination and exploitation of results are essential activities not only for promoting research but also for ensuring an efficient valorization of the scientific research results obtained within the institute. Generally, dissemination and exploitation activities include: - Publishing results in scientific journals, delivering presentations at international conferences, and participating in trade fairs and exhibitions; - Organizing and participating in workshops, seminars, and training sessions to facilitate knowledge transfer; - Communicating educational materials intended for the general public and publishing them in mass media and other social networks; - Establishing partnerships with industry entities, public authorities, universities, and other research institutes to facilitate the commercial or practical utilization of results. Disseminated research results are highlighted in the annual activity reports, available on the INCDTIM website. The Technology Transfer Center plays a crucial role in transferring knowledge and technology to the general public and industry, serving as a bridge between researchers and the economic environment. The monitoring of dissemination and exploitation activities is carried out through performance indicators defined in the institution’s HRS4R Action Plan. National Legislation / External Regulations: - Law 183/2024 regarding the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel - Accreditation Order for CTT – INCDTIM Accreditation Order Internal Regulations: - Development Strategy of INCDTIM Development Strategy - Internal Regulations of INCDTIM Cluj-Napoca Internal Regulations - Annual Reporting of CTT INCDTIM Annual Report - Seminars organized on various topics Seminar Archive - Instructions for Drafting a Patent Application Patent Application Instructions Improvement directions - strengthening participation in innovation clusters and international consortia; - encouraging researchers to develop results with patenting and transfer

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		potential; - expanding public science communication through digital channels and open events.

9. Public engagement

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		The institute's strategic plan includes objectives related to the widespread dissemination of research results to the public, with the aim of achieving goals that serve the general public through development and innovation, as well as informing the public. Actions aimed at achieving these objectives: - Disseminating research project results through research project webpages, the INCDTIM website, at national/international conferences, seminars, and exhibitions; - Promoting the institute's activities by participating in programs aimed at the general public to showcase the research conducted at the institute; - Guided visits for students and pupils to the institute, led by designated individuals as per the general director's decision. Media appearances are published on the institute's website News Section. Legislation / External Regulations: - Government Decision No. 933/20.07.2022 regarding the approval of the National Strategy for Research, Innovation, and Smart Specialization 2022-2027 - Clauses from the funding contracts for research projects Internal Regulations: - Strategic Development Plan of INCDTIM (2025 – 2029) - Annual Reporting of CTT Activities Suggestions for Improvement: - Organizing periodic thematic workshops aimed at the general public, such as open house days, researchers' night, etc.

Status

10. Non discrimination

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The survey results indicate that the majority of researchers consider that the principles of non-discrimination and equal opportunities are respected within the institute. At the same time, some respondents highlighted the need for improved information and communication regarding the institutional mechanisms for preventing and addressing discrimination	Researchers within the institute have equal opportunities to contribute to the research process, develop professionally, and benefit from the same rights and opportunities, which includes: - Impartiality in the recruitment, selection, and promotion processes; - Measures to prevent discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disabilities, etc.; Through the International Projects Office, researchers have equal access to information on funding opportunities, support for project development, and access to international collaborations, regardless of gender, age, nationality, or other personal characteristics. Furthermore, INCDTIM implements a Gender Equality Plan (GEP), which includes specific measures to promote equal opportunities, prevent discrimination, and ensure an inclusive and equitable working environment for all staff categories. This inclusive nature of the workplace is also reflected in the active participation of international researchers in the research activities and projects conducted within the institute. National Legislation: - Law No. 183/2024 on the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel; - Law No. 202/2002 on equal opportunities and treatment between women and men, republished. Internal Regulations: - Regulations for Organizing Promotion Competitions for Professional Ranks: Updated in 2026 to incorporate the provisions of Law no. 183/2024, Government Decision (HG) no. 1569/2024 (Methodological Norms for professional rank promotion exams), and the principles of the European Charter for Researchers. https://en.itim-cj.ro/regulations-for-recruitment-and-promotion-competitions/ - Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) Policy: Updated in 2026 to integrate the provisions of Law no. 183/2024 and the European Charter for Researchers' principles regarding equal opportunities, transparency, and merit-based evaluation. https://en.itim-cj.ro/hrs4r/ - International Projects Office International Projects Office - International Projects Office Action Plan for the period 2026–2027 - Gender Equality Strategy 2022 – 2025 Gender Equality Strategy Suggestions for Improvement: - Continuous updating of internal regulations to remain fully aligned with the provisions of the new Statute of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel (Law 183/2024). - Elaboration

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		and implementation of the Gender Equality Strategy for the 2026–2029 period, accompanied by continuous awareness campaigns to inform researchers about the application of this principle within INCDTIM. - Enhancing Transparency and Communication: Organizing periodic information and clarification sessions regarding the measures implemented to prevent discrimination based on gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, or other criteria.

Status

11. Evaluation/ appraisal systems

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	The evaluation procedure will be updated in accordance with the provisions of the new Status of Research and Development Personnel and aligned with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers by adhering to standards regarding transparency, fairness, objectivity, relevance, and flexibility. This approach will promote trust in the evaluation system, support team development for researchers at all levels, and improve the quality of research. The individual employment contracts of researchers will include clauses regarding the achievement of specific objectives related to research and development activities, as well as clauses regarding the sanctioning of the employee in case of non-fulfillment of individual objectives, in accordance with the provisions of Article 25, paragraph (3) of Law 183/2024 regarding the Status of	The periodic evaluation of the scientific performance of researchers has been carried out in accordance with the provisions of Law 319/2003 regarding the Status of Research and Development Personnel. The evaluation criteria for the professional activities of researchers were established according to the national legislation in force until the repeal of Law 319/2003 with the publication of Law 183/2024 regarding the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel. The periodic evaluation of the scientific performance of researchers now considers, in accordance with the new status, non-cumulative evaluation criteria adapted to the specific activities of research organizations and their individual objectives, prioritizing qualitative evaluation supported by the responsible use of quantitative indicators, such as: - Results obtained in the research activity and their impact; - Management and/or leadership/coordinating research activities; - Entrepreneurial activity/collaboration with the business environment and the applicability of obtained results in the economy/society; - Teaching activity, mentoring, and research supervision; - Continuous professional training; - Contributions to the development of science and the enrichment or promotion of global culture; - Services provided to society; National Legislation: - Law 183/2024 regarding the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel; Internal Regulations: - Current Status (2026): An internal electronic system, developed entirely in-house by the IT Department, is currently being implemented within INCDTIM to centralize research outputs. Researchers input their individual achievements (publications, patents, projects) directly into the platform. Suggestions for Improvement: - Updating the Institutional Evaluation Regulations: The regulations concerning the scientific performance evaluation of researchers are currently being updated to incorporate the provisions of the new Law no. 183/2024 on the Statute of Research,

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
	Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel.	Development, and Innovation Personnel. - Inclusion in the individual employment contracts of researchers of a clause regarding the achievement of specific objectives related to research and development activities and a clause regarding the sanctioning of the employee in case of non-fulfillment of individual objectives, in accordance with the provisions of Article 25, paragraph (3) of Law 183/2024 regarding the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel.

Recruitment and Selection - please be aware that the items listed here correspond with the Charter and Code. In addition, your organisation also needs to complete the checklist on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment included in a separate section, which focuses on the operationalization of these principles.

Status

12. Recruitment

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: Recruitment of research staff is carried out according to the needs arising from the implementation of funded research projects, without a fixed annual recruitment plan. However, the process is structured and governed by internal procedures aligned with OTM-R principles, ensuring transparency, competitiveness and equal opportunities. Recruitment and selection of research staff is carried out in accordance with applicable national legislation and the principles of OTM-R, based on transparency, competitiveness, and equal opportunities. Research positions are filled through open competition, regardless of contract type (fixed-term or permanent, including project-based positions). In 2025, the internal regulations governing the organisation of recruitment competitions were updated in accordance with Law No. 183/2024 on the status of research, development and innovation personnel and Government Decision No. 1568/2024 on the methodological norms for organising recruitment competitions. Job announcements are published on the institute's website, on the Ministry of Education and Research portal (jobs.research.gov.ro), and on the EURAXESS platform. The published information includes eligibility requirements, competition timeline, required documents, evaluation criteria, and job responsibilities, ensuring full transparency. https://ro.itim-cj.ro/cariera/ Competitions are open to all candidates who meet the specific requirements, with no discrimination. Internal Regulations: Open Recruitment Policy based on transparency and merit, updated in 2026 to incorporate the provisions of Law No. 183/2024 on the status of research, development and innovation personnel, as well as the principles of the European Charter for Researchers regarding equal opportunities, transparency, and merit-based evaluation: https://ro.itim-cj.ro/hrs4r/ Regulation on the organisation of competitions within INCDTIM (2026), aligned with Law No. 183/2024 and Government Decision No. 1568/2024: https://en.itim-cj.ro/careers/ Suggestions for Improvement: Continuous updating and periodic harmonization of recruitment procedures with the national and European legislative frameworks.

Status

13. Recruitment (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Internal recruitment procedures and regulations have been updated in accordance with Law No. 183/2024 on the status of research, development and innovation personnel and Government Decision No. 1568/2024 on methodological norms for organising competitions for vacant RDI positions. Additionally, the Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) Policy was updated in 2026, aligning it with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers, with a strong emphasis on transparency, equal opportunities, and merit-based evaluation. Recruitment notices are drafted in full compliance with the provisions of HG no. 1568/2024 and include: a detailed description of the job responsibilities, eligibility and participation criteria, the competition timeline, the exam topics and bibliography, working conditions, and the evaluation criteria. Application deadlines strictly adhere to the applicable legal framework. For positions funded through research projects, recruitment is carried out according to the specific requirements of the respective funding programs, including mandatory publication on dedicated platforms (e.g., EURAXESS) to guarantee transparency and open access. Internal Regulations: OTM-R Recruitment and Selection Policy (updated 2026, aligned with the European Charter for Researchers) https://en.itim-cj.ro/hrs4r/ INCDTIM Regulation on recruitment competitions (updated in line with Law 183/2024 and GD 1568/2024) https://en.itim-cj.ro/careers/ Improvement directions - further strengthening OTM-R monitoring through transparency and diversity indicators; - continuous development of scientific career pathways in line with national and European frameworks.

Status

14. Selection (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Selection of candidates is carried out through committees established in accordance with Law No. 183/2024, Government Decision No. 1568/2024, the OTM-R principles, and the INCDTIM Regulation on the organisation of recruitment competitions, ensuring transparency, impartiality, and merit-based evaluation. Selection committees are composed of experts with relevant competencies in the field of the position, including, depending on the specific requirements of the post, members from outside the research organisation and specialists from related disciplines, including the academic sector. An objective and balanced evaluation process is ensured through the involvement of evaluators with complementary expertise and the application of uniform selection criteria. Committee members operate under the internal procedural framework for staff recruitment and evaluation, aligned with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and OTM-R. The establishment of committees follows clear requirements regarding professional competence, independence, and the avoidance of conflicts of interest. Internal regulations INCDTIM Regulation on recruitment competitions (updated in accordance with Law 183/2024 and GD 1568/2024) OTM-R Policy (2026 update, aligned with the European Charter for Researchers)

Status

15. Transparency (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		The recruitment notice includes information regarding INCDTIM, the position title and specifications, the start date of employment, the career profile (R1–R4) and required competencies, the selection criteria, the number of available positions, and the working conditions. The perspective for scientific career development is ensured through the “scientific career development proposal” included in the Recruitment Regulation published on the institution’s website, in accordance with Government Decision No. 1568/2024 and Law No. 183/2024. After the completion of the selection process, each candidate is informed of the outcome through publication on the INCDTIM website. Upon request, candidates may receive information regarding the assessment of their application. The selected candidate is contacted directly to initiate the employment procedures and conclude the individual employment contract. Suggestions for Improvement: The scientific career development proposal, in accordance with Article 7(5) of Government Decision No. 1568/2024, is integrated into the Regulation on the organization of competitions for vacant positions within the RDI personnel, published on the INCDTIM website, thereby ensuring transparency regarding career development prospects from the recruitment stage. Clear and easy access to the scientific career development document is ensured within job announcements through a direct link to the regulation and its related annexes. The post-selection feedback component is strengthened so that candidates may receive, upon request, information regarding the strengths and areas for improvement of their application.

Status

16. Judging merit (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The selection criteria comply with national legislation regarding the evaluation and recognition of merit and performance in research. Both quantitative and qualitative criteria related to the professional and personal qualities of candidates are used. The new status of the researcher, namely Law 183/2024, is aligned with the new requirements of the European Union and introduces a number of significant changes: • The selection criteria are clearer and more precise, including publications, scientific impact, international reputation, and ethics. • External and transparent evaluation with international committees. • Advancement based on specific performances and objective evaluations. • A strong emphasis on international mobility and international collaborations.	Practiced Approach: The selection and evaluation criteria for the recruitment and promotion of research staff within INCDTIM are defined through separate internal regulations for recruitment and promotion, developed and updated in accordance with Law No. 183/2024 on the status of research, development and innovation personnel, Government Decision No. 1568/2024 on the organization of competitions for filling vacant positions, and Government Decision No. 1569/2024 on promotion to professional grades, as well as the principles of OTM-R and the European Charter for Researchers. Candidate evaluation is based on a balanced set of quantitative and qualitative criteria, adapted to the career level (R1–R4), including scientific performance, development potential, research impact, professional experience, international collaborations, mobility, innovation capacity, and, where applicable, knowledge transfer activities and application-oriented results. The regulations ensure transparency, equal opportunities, merit-based assessment, and the use of standardized recruitment and promotion procedures, in accordance with the national legislative framework and European standards in the field of human resources in research.

Status

17. Variations in the chronological order of CVs (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: Variations in the chronology of CVs are not penalized; they are considered opportunities for career development. Therefore, the evaluation of candidates by the competition committee is based on merit, provided that the employment/promotion criteria stipulated in national legislation are met.

Status

18. Recognition of mobility experience (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: INCDTIM promotes international mobility and knowledge exchange through participation in international conferences, European Info Days and Brokerage Events, collaborative visits, and professional training activities. The institutional strategy provides support for mobility opportunities, exchange of experience, and cooperation with partner institutions, with the aim of enhancing researchers' skills and strengthening international collaboration. Mobility experience gained through these activities is recognized as a valuable contribution to career development and is taken into consideration in the evaluation of professional performance, as well as in recruitment and career advancement processes. Internal Regulations / Supporting Documents: INCDTIM Strategic Development Plan 2025–2029 – includes measures supporting international collaboration, mobility, knowledge exchange, and professional development of researchers. OTM-R Policy on Recruitment, Selection and Employment of Personnel, aligned with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and merit-based recruitment. International research and innovation projects supporting researcher mobility, training activities, knowledge exchange, and collaboration with international partners.

Status

19. Recognition of qualifications (Code)

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	A comprehensive national legal and procedural framework is in place for the recognition of academic and professional qualifications, including qualifications obtained abroad. INCDTIM applies the relevant national legislation and internal recruitment procedures to ensure the objective assessment and recognition of candidates' qualifications and professional achievements.	Practiced Approach: The recruitment and selection of research personnel are carried out in accordance with Law No. 183/2024 on the Status of Research, Development and Innovation Personnel, the Regulation on Competitions for Filling Vacant Research Positions, and the OTM-R Policy on Recruitment, Selection and Employment of Personnel. Academic and professional qualifications obtained in Romania or abroad are assessed in accordance with the applicable national legislation on diploma and qualification recognition. Candidate evaluation considers both formal qualifications and the overall professional profile, including research achievements, scientific publications, project participation, mobility experience, professional competencies, and career development potential. Selection procedures include an interview stage, which enables the evaluation committee to assess candidates' scientific expertise, professional skills, motivation, and suitability for the position beyond the information provided in diplomas and curriculum vitae. The recruitment process is based on transparency, merit, equal opportunities, and objective assessment criteria, in line with the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and OTM-R. National Legislation: Law No. 183/2024 on the Status of Research, Development and Innovation Personnel; Law No. 200/2004 on the recognition of diplomas and professional qualifications for regulated professions in Romania; Order No. 5923/2016 regarding the recognition of doctoral diplomas and doctoral titles obtained abroad; Order No. 6121/2016 regarding the recognition of Bachelor's, Master's and postgraduate qualifications obtained abroad. Internal Regulations: OTM-R Policy on Recruitment, Selection and Employment of Personnel; Regulation on Competitions for Filling Vacant Research, Development and Innovation Positions, updated in accordance with Law No. 183/2024 and Government Decision No. 1568/2024.

Status

20. Seniority (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: Qualifications, professional experience, and seniority in research activities are assessed in accordance with national legislation and the institute’s internal regulations governing recruitment and promotion processes. The evaluation process focuses on recognizing candidates’ professional and scientific achievements, regardless of the institution where they were obtained, taking into account both acquired experience and future development potential. The required level of qualifications and experience is defined according to the specific requirements of the position and does not constitute an unjustified barrier to access. INCDTIM promotes equal opportunities and lifelong professional development. Early-career researchers are provided with opportunities to access research positions and professional development pathways based on their competencies, achievements, and potential, in accordance with the applicable evaluation criteria and professional standards. Candidate assessment considers the overall record of professional and scientific achievements, including research experience, participation in projects, mobility activities, innovation and knowledge-transfer activities, as well as relevant contributions to the development of the research field. National Legislation: Law No. 53/2003 (Labour Code), republished; Law No. 183/2024 on the Status of Research, Development and Innovation Personnel. Internal Regulations: Regulation on the Organization of Recruitment and Promotion Competitions for Research, Development and Innovation Personnel, available at: INCDTIM Recruitment and Promotion Regulations https://en.itim-cj.ro/regulations-for-recruitment-and-promotion-competitions/

Status

21. Postdoctoral appointments (Code)

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: At INCDTIM Cluj-Napoca, any graduate of a doctoral program can apply for available postdoctoral positions and, based on their skills and previously acquired professional experience, may fill the vacant position. The open positions within research projects are fixed-term, with the possibility of extension to an indefinite period in accordance with the procedure regarding the extension of individual employment contracts concluded for a fixed term. The experience requirements for postdoctoral staff are established through the methodology and internal regulations concerning the awarding of scientific researcher grades. Postdoctoral positions are associated with opportunities for continuous training and professional development, ensuring equal treatment and non-discrimination in the selection and promotion process. Employed researchers who meet the requirements for postdoctoral positions are supported and encouraged to submit project proposals in national and European calls, thus benefiting from opportunities for national/international collaboration and the expansion of their scientific careers. Internal Regulations: Regulation on the organization of competitions for filling vacant positions of R&D personnel; https://en.itim-cj.ro/regulations-for-recruitment-and-promotion-competitions/ Regulation on the promotion of research, development, and innovation personnel; https://en.itim-cj.ro/regulations-for-recruitment-and-promotion-competitions/ OTM-R Policy on recruitment, selection, and employment of staff https://en.itim-cj.ro/hrs4r/ Procedure on the extension of fixed-term individual employment contracts.

Working Conditions and Social Security

Status

22. Recognition of the profession

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: • Professional recognition begins at the postgraduate level through the employment of young talents and the appreciation of young researchers (graduates, master's students, doctoral students). Young researchers are involved in research and development projects and thereby benefit from professional status, gaining access to continuing education, mentorship, and adequate resources (financial, educational, and infrastructural). • Recognition throughout the career through the implementation of objective and transparent evaluation and reward systems to acknowledge the contributions of researchers at all stages of their careers (recognition of scientific achievements, innovation, project management, and development of research activities). • Support for continuous development through continuous training programs (participation in courses, workshops, conferences, international collaborations), mentorship, and guidance from seniors. Internal Regulations: • The International Project Management Office supports researchers by organizing training and mentoring programs (training, workshops, mentoring sessions for developing skills in writing and managing projects) International Project Management.

Status

23. Research environment

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		In accordance with the INCDTIM Development Strategy, the institute implements active measures to ensure a stimulating research environment focused on the quality and impact of R&D results rather than purely quantitative approaches. The major institutional objectives and their implementation mechanisms include: 1. Integration into the European and International Research Area Connecting researchers to major strategic consortia and world-class global infrastructures is achieved through large-scale projects: METROFOOD-RO (METROFOOD-RO Evolve): Modernizing the national infrastructure for food safety and integrating the Romanian node into the pan-European METROFOOD-RI network (currently transitioning to ESFRI status). RONanoLab: A national cleanroom platform included in the National Roadmap, aimed at ensuring adherence to the European EURONANOLAB consortium. RoNaQCI: A major project for the development of the Romanian National Quantum Communication Infrastructure, connected to the European EuroQCI initiative. Prestigious International Consortia: Active participation in global frontier experiments such as ATLAS (LHC@CERN) in particle physics, DarkSide-20k in astrophysics, and ELI (Extreme Light Infrastructure) in extreme-intensity photonic technologies. 2. Developing Partnerships and Socioeconomic Impact Assuming an active role as an expertise provider within the regional socioeconomic environment and diversifying funding sources through technology transfer platforms (PCIDIF): The ResilFood Project ("Enhancing the resilience of the food chain to the complex challenges of the modern world"): Utilized as a central pillar for developing public-private partnerships (https://www.itim-cj.ro/pocidif/resilfood/). This project allows for aligning research activities with the urgent needs of the market and supply chains, facilitating an open innovation framework where private companies directly benefit from the expertise of INCDTIM laboratories. National Platform for Semiconductor Technologies (PNTS): A large-scale strategic project (2024–2029) focused on revitalizing the national ecosystem and the semiconductor value chain (LVS), creating a high-performance work environment interconnected at the European level. Institutional Partnerships: Developing national and international consortia between institutes and universities, encouraging researcher mobility, and establishing interdisciplinary collaboration platforms. 3.

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		Institutional Visibility and Human Resources Continuous Enhancement of INCDTIM's Visibility: Intensifying and diversifying communication activities across three distinct levels: the scientific community, the business sector, and the general public. Human Capital Development: Supporting the participation of young researchers in specialized training programs, recruiting researchers with international experience, and fostering global collaborations. Sustainability of the Material Base: Continuous investments in modern equipment, renovation, and expansion of the institute's own research infrastructure, in parallel with the collaborative use of complementary technological facilities.

Status

24. Working conditions

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Most researchers are satisfied with their working conditions, but it is important to pay attention to the minority group of researchers who are not fully satisfied, in order to ensure a balanced and high-performance working environment for everyone. The results obtained for the question regarding flexibility in organizing the work schedule at all career levels are very positive, with 97% of respondents answering affirmatively ("yes"). This suggests that most researchers perceive there is significant consistency regarding work schedule flexibility, regardless of their career level. Flexibility enhances employee satisfaction and can contribute to reducing stress and professional burnout.	Practiced Approach: Workspaces are modernized to ensure adequate and safe working conditions for staff health. The employer pays special attention to employees returning after a work interruption, facilitating their smooth reintegration into research activities while adhering to the provisions of Government Emergency Ordinance No. 96/2003 regarding maternity protection in the workplace. INCDTIM guarantees equal opportunities and treatment for women and men in their careers, ensuring fair working conditions and a balance between professional and personal life, including maternity protection and parental leave, in accordance with the provisions of the institute's collective labor agreement, the gender equality strategy and plan, as well as applicable legislation. Additionally, INCDTIM annually reviews the financial and social conditions of the staff through meetings with management and employee representatives (the union), in accordance with the collective labor agreement, to ensure that the financial and social standards provided by the institute are met. National Legislation: • Law No. 183/2024 regarding the Status of Research and Development Personnel • Labor Code – Law No. 53/2003 • Law No. 202/2022 regarding equal opportunities and treatment between women and men • Government Emergency Ordinance No. 111/2010 regarding leave and monthly benefits for child care Internal Regulations: • Collective labor agreement • Individual employment contracts • Procedure regarding teleworking • Internal regulations Suggestions for Improvement: • Implementing a periodic feedback mechanism to allow researchers to express their concerns and suggestions for improvement.

Status

25. Stability and permanence of employment

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	The positive evaluation (62% and 26%) suggests a majority appreciation for the measures taken by INCDTIM. These high percentages indicate that most employees believe that the employer provides fair conditions and that actions are being taken to improve job stability, regardless of the type of contract.	Employees of the institute benefit from a high degree of job stability, with a significant proportion of research staff employed on indefinite contracts, depending on available institutional resources and the funding structure. Fixed-term individual employment contracts are primarily used for research activities funded through projects or for time-limited positions associated with their implementation. These contracts are managed in accordance with national legislation and internal regulations, ensuring equal treatment of employees regardless of contract type. The institute seeks, where possible and depending on financial sustainability and professional performance, to identify opportunities for the continuity of research activities, including the conversion of project-funded positions into institutional positions, when budgetary conditions allow. Internal mechanisms ensure the prevention of abusive use of successive fixed-term contracts and guarantee equal access to information, training, and career development opportunities for all research staff. National Legislation: Law No. 53/2003 – Labor Code, Article 86, paragraph (1) Internal Regulations: Procedure for modifying individual employment contracts Collective labor agreement Suggestions for Improvement: Analysis of the potential to convert project-funded positions into institutional positions, where these roles contribute to the institute’s strategic directions and where sustainable budgetary resources are available.

Status

26. Funding and salaries

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Researchers' responses indicate a lack of predictability and clarity regarding salaries, with frequent fluctuations and changes based more on financial considerations than on performance. The suggestion from researchers is to implement a more stable and transparent salary system where compensation is linked to merit rather than financial fluctuations.	Practiced Approach: Currently, the salaries of researchers at INCDTIM are determined based on the performances achieved in research project competitions. The salary system takes into account several factors: • Salary grids specific to each type of project – the salary grids vary depending on the nature and funding of the project, so researchers are awarded additional amounts based on their involvement in the project; • The salary grid from the Collective Labor Agreement (CLA) – the salary grid in the CLA establishes the minimum salary framework, ensuring that all researchers receive a base salary in accordance with legal provisions; • Individual scores of researchers – reflect the results and contributions of each individual, so individual performances are evaluated based on researchers' outcomes, scientific publications, contributions to research projects, and their impact; • The scientific degree of researchers – influences the salary level based on the scientific degree of the researchers; • Financial fluctuations hinder the implementation of a predictable salary system, as they can cause changes in the available funds, affecting the stability of the salary fund. Researchers benefit from social protection measures (payment of leave in case of temporary incapacity for work/maternity leave/paternity leave, payment of contributions to the pension and unemployment systems) in accordance with national legislation. National Legislation / Regulations: • Law No. 183 regarding the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel (updated) • Government Decision No. 1188 of 29.09.2022 (updated on 14.12.2023) • Legal regulations regarding the unified pension system, unemployment insurance system, child care leave and benefits, and health care leave and insurance. Organizational Regulations: • Internal Regulation of INCDTIM • Collective Labor Agreement • Individual Employment Contracts • Algorithm underlying the salary amount for R&D staff, CDI result recording sheets • Annual results assessment reports

Status

27. Gender balance

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: Gender balance is one of the fundamental objectives of INCDTIM's gender equality strategy for the period 2022-2025. It aims to ensure a balanced working environment where men and women have equal opportunities regarding recruitment, professional development, promotion, and participation in research and decision-making activities. The objectives related to gender balance within INCDTIM include: 1. Promoting gender balance at all hierarchical levels of the institute: o Ensuring a balanced number of women and men in leadership positions and in the institute's decision-making structures. o Creating an environment where both men and women have equal chances to access administrative and leadership roles. 2. Implementing measures to reduce gender differences: o Identifying and removing barriers that prevent women from accessing leadership positions or participating in administrative activities, such as work-life balance. o Supporting women in taking on additional responsibilities through supportive policies to ensure a balance between professional and family activities. 3. Promoting an inclusive and non-discriminatory environment: o Combating gender stereotypes and prejudices that may affect decisions related to recruitment, promotion, and evaluation. 4. Monitoring and evaluating progress: o Continuously reviewing policies and actions to ensure that the institution takes concrete steps toward achieving real and sustainable gender balance. By implementing these measures, INCDTIM is committed to ensuring a fairer research and working environment and promoting a climate in which all individuals, regardless of gender, have equal access to professional opportunities and can contribute to organizational success. National Legislation: - Law No. 202/2002 regarding equal opportunities and treatment between women and men - Law No. 53/2003 – Labor Code, Chapter II, Article 5 Internal Regulations: - Gender Equality Strategy and Plan Gender Equality Strategy and Plan - Collective Labor Agreement Improvement suggestion: Periodic update of the Gender Equality Strategy and Action Plan to ensure continuity and alignment with the new institutional planning cycle, as well as with relevant legislative developments and European best practices.

Status

28. Career development

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i…	Although the institution supports professional growth, there is a lack of a structured, formalized career development framework that offers clear, long-term progression pathways for early-career researchers ($R1/R2$). The integration of comprehensive Individual Development Plans (IDP) remains informal and is not yet uniformly applied across all research departments.	Practiced Approach: Upon recruitment, researchers are integrated into research units coordinated by department or group leaders, with professional objectives and training needs defined during the induction phase. The integration and career development process is adapted to career levels (R1–R4) and includes continuous training activities, informal mentoring, and participation in research projects. INCDTIM promotes career development through access to professional training programmes, involvement in national and international research projects, and active participation in dissemination and research valorisation activities. Scientific coordination is ensured by team leaders, who monitor researchers' professional progress and identify development needs. Competence development is supported through continuous training activities, including scientific writing, project management, dissemination, and knowledge transfer, while researchers are encouraged to progressively assume greater responsibilities within research projects. Suggestions for Improvement: Development and implementation of an integrated institutional researcher career development strategy, based on the systematic identification of institutional and individual needs and on the definition of structured career plans adapted to different career stages (R1–R4); Institutionalisation of a structured mentoring programme, through which senior researchers provide support, guidance, and knowledge transfer to early-career researchers; Strengthening competencies in research project management, scientific leadership, and coordination of research activities;

Status

29. Value of mobility

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: Within INCDTIM, professional mobility (geographic, intersectoral, virtual, and interdisciplinary) is recognized as an indispensable strategic pillar for researchers' career development, enhancing their flexibility and connecting the institute to global networks of excellence. The institutional support mechanism for mobility relies on two major components: 1. Operational, Administrative, and Technology Transfer Support: Structurally ensured through the close cooperation of two dedicated entities: The Project Management Office – Financial and The International Project Office, which operate across 5 main pillars: Identifying funding opportunities: Continuous monitoring of project calls (Horizon Europe, MSCA, COST, EEA Grants) and custom orientation for researchers. Training and mentoring: Organizing training sessions and workshops to develop competencies in project drafting and management. Tailored proposal support: Delivering technical guidance on Impact, Dissemination, Exploitation, Communication, and KPIs sections, alongside results popularization and the integration of gender balance and equal opportunities. Management assistance: Providing administrative and logistical support for the implementation of approved projects, ensuring financial and reporting compliance. Visibility promotion: Supporting research dissemination through international networks and active participation in scientific events. The Technology Transfer Center (CTT-INCDTIM): Serves as the operational interface for intersectoral (public-private) mobility, facilitating the secondment of researchers into the business environment, providing legal support for intellectual property rights in collaborative projects, and leveraging researchers' expertise through direct technological service contracts with the industry. 2. Integration into High-Impact Networks: Funding from national and international projects drives mobility, with the institute leveraging an extensive partnership ecosystem: Mobility in "Big Science" (Physical & Virtual): Researchers are actively integrated into major global infrastructures, including the ATLAS Collaboration at CERN (where the institute also holds the Industrial Liaison Officer role), the international DarkSide network (reuniting 88 global entities), and European consortia such as EGI, EOSC, and ESFRI-METROFOOD, involving remote data management and physical stays. Regional Intersectoral Mobility: Knowledge and

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		competency transfer to the private sector is achieved through active involvement in 5 regional clusters (Transilvania IT, TREC, Agrotransilvania, etc.), the presidency of the Smart Transilvania Association, and the opening of the 6 advanced laboratories registered on the EERTIS platform, with all activities logistically and commercially supported by CTT-INCDTIM. Attracting Excellence (Incoming Mobility): The implementation of 3 major PNRR I8 projects, led by renowned professors from Singapore and Turkey, has established the institute as an international hub of attraction and an accelerated training environment for young researchers from both Romania and abroad.

Status

30. Access to career advice

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Existing practices (situation at the time of the survey – 2025) At the time of the survey (2025), career advice within INCDTIM was predominantly delivered through informal mentoring at the laboratory level, with senior researchers providing guidance to early-career scientists regarding career paths, conference participation, mobility, and accessing fellowships or training placements. Although young researchers received support for national and international mobility, there was no dedicated institutional structure exclusively focused on career guidance, formal professional development, and strategic placement in international projects. The 2025 survey results indicated that only 31% of researchers were satisfied with the existing services, while approximately 41% remained neutral or dissatisfied, highlighting the critical need to strengthen counseling services and increase their visibility. Improvement Measures (Subsequent Implementation – 2026–2027): To strategically address the needs identified in the survey, INCDTIM has formalized and integrated its institutional career support through the combined action of two complementary structures: The International Project Office (Action Plan 2026–2027): Aimed at formalizing and expanding the academic and international career path of researchers through: Structured access to international funding opportunities; Support for developing international consortia and collaborations; Consultancy for project drafting and submission; Training in project management and research skills; Facilitating researchers' involvement in international networks and mobility. The Technology Transfer Center (CTT-INCDTIM): Directly completes professional orientation through the intersectoral and applied development pillar. Fully accredited since 2022 under Order 20039/19.01.2022, CTT serves as the official bridge between researchers and the economic environment, supporting career progression by: Leveraging applied research results through technology transfer; Stimulating and promoting transferable results to entrepreneurs, investors, and industrial partners; Expanding researchers' knowledge and skills in intellectual property rights and the management of intangible assets; Providing specialized expert support for R&D teams actively involved in the innovation clusters where INCDTIM holds membership. Through this dual approach (academic-international via the International Project Office and commercial-

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		industrial via CTT), INCDTIM ensures a comprehensive career guidance framework, diversifying professional pathways for researchers while significantly boosting their employability and impact within the European Research Area.

31. Intellectual Property Rights

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: At INCDTIM, there are clear policies regarding intellectual property rights, and researchers are informed about their rights and the ways to protect and exploit research results. The regulation concerning intellectual property rights is available on the institute's internal network, and a specific clause regarding these rights has been added to the individual employment contracts of researchers. The Technology Transfer Center, through the designated responsible person, provides support to researchers by offering advice on intellectual property rights to help them understand how to protect their results and manage their rights appropriately. National Legislation: • Law No. 83 of June 24, 2014 – Regarding service inventions • Law No. 64 of October 11, 1991 – Establishes the rights of inventors over an invention on the territory of Romania by granting patents by the State Office for Inventions and Trademarks Internal Regulations: • Regulation regarding intellectual property rights • Patent submission flow • Instructions for drafting a Patent Application for Invention to OSIM • Instructions for registering a European patent application/international application according to the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT) • Standard procedure for reporting transferable results

Status

32. Co-authorship

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Most researchers at INCDTIM agree that clear and fair actions regarding the recognition of contributions to publications and patents are promoted within the institute, with 65% of employees expressing full agreement and 32% expressing partial agreement. However, to further improve the process and reduce any confusion or dissatisfaction, it is important to clarify and better communicate the principles of recognizing contributions, ensuring that they are applied consistently and transparently across all research projects.	Practiced Approach The recognition of co-authorship within INCDTIM is regulated by internal ethics standards and professional best practices, in compliance with the Guidelines for Integrity in Scientific Research, which establish the principle of attributing authorship based on actual scientific contribution. To support the academic development of early-career researchers, the institution implements the following practices: Clear Conditions: The specific criteria under which early-career researchers are included as authors are clearly defined and communicated within the institutional framework through internal research integrity and ethics rules. Information Dissemination: Relevant information regarding the principles of recognizing scientific contributions is systematically disseminated to staff via internal communication channels, including the institutional intranet and official documentation. National Legislation / Internal Regulations Law no. 183/2024 on the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel. The Guidelines for Integrity in Scientific Research, developed and adopted by the National Council for Ethics in Scientific Research, Technological Development, and Innovation. The INCDTIM Code of Ethics, updated in 2025. Continuous Improvement & Future Development Continuous Improvement: INCDTIM actively promotes the transparent and consistent application of co-authorship principles across all research activities and ensures continuous communication of authorship attribution rules to maintain scientific fairness and institutional integrity. Directions for Development: The institute aims to strengthen awareness and ensure the uniform, standardized application of co-authorship principles across all research teams, in full compliance with institutional standards and national research integrity regulations.

Status

33. Teaching

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	Although the majority consider teaching to be essential or important, one-third of researchers are neutral or do not view these activities as an essential part of their careers. This suggests that, while education plays a role in the careers of many, there are also researchers who prioritize research and other academic activities over teaching.	Within INCDTIM, professional training, advanced mentoring, and public engagement are actively supported through dedicated programs and strategic infrastructure frameworks that directly involve mixed teams of senior and junior researchers: The EDUTIM Program (https://www.itim-cj.ro/pncdi/edutim/): This initiative serves as a core regional outreach pillar, implemented across 29 lower and upper secondary schools in both urban and rural areas. Through community engagement activities, mixed research teams demonstrate the real-world impact of science on global challenges, providing early-career researchers (R1/R2) with hands-on competencies in scientific dissemination and teaching under the guidance of senior mentors. Connection with the University Environment and Doctoral Schools: The institute's educational and mentoring scope directly aligns with its core strategic research directions through 7 habilitated researchers (doctoral supervisors) affiliated with prestigious national Doctoral Schools. Involvement in Academic Committees: Academic mobility and inter-institutional knowledge transfer are consistently demonstrated by the active and growing participation of INCDTIM senior researchers in university consortia, PhD guidance committees, and doctoral thesis defense committees.

Status

34. Complains/ appeals

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	Although INCDTIM has a functional system for managing complaints and promoting ethics in research, the survey results suggest that there are still significant gaps regarding the complete information of researchers and the accessibility of this system.	Practiced Approach: The institute has implemented a clear, accessible, and efficient system for managing researchers' complaints/appeals, thus promoting a fair and equitable working environment. The resolution of complaints regarding ethical issues is the responsibility of the Ethics and Integrity Committee. Disciplinary violations (violations that do not involve a breach of the Code of Ethics and Integrity) fall under the responsibility of the Disciplinary Committees. Conflicts regarding rights and working conditions are resolved between management and employee representatives. National Legislation: • Law No. 183/2024 regarding the Status of Research, Development, and Innovation Personnel • Law No. 53/2003 regarding the Labor Code, Articles 247 – 252 Internal Regulations: • Ethics Committee Regulation Ethics Regulation • Guide on Workplace Harassment Harassment Guide Suggestions for Improvement: • Reviewing and clarifying ethical procedures: o Organizing periodic training sessions on ethics in research and the proper use of the complaint management system o Creating an anonymous reporting system to encourage researchers to report irregularities or request clarifications.

Status

35. Participation in decision-making bodies

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	Excluderea din procesul decizional: Aproape 23% dintre cercetători (15% + 8%) se simt oarecum excluși din procesul decizional. Acesta este un semnal că nu toți cercetătorii au o implicare activă în luarea deciziilor, ceea ce poate duce la o percepție de lipsă de transparență și de oportunități de a influența procesele importante din cadrul institutului. Although there is an open policy regarding the involvement of researchers in the decision-making process, the survey results suggest that this process is not fully effective or sufficiently transparent for all researchers. According to the data: • Degree of Awareness: Nearly 44% of researchers feel informed and consulted to a significant extent (25% + 19%), but almost 35% are neutral or do not consider themselves adequately informed (score of 3). This suggests that there is poor communication or inaccessibility of information for some researchers. • Exclusion from the Decision-Making Process: Nearly 23% of researchers (15% + 8%) feel somewhat excluded from the decision-making process. This is a signal that not all researchers have active involvement in decision-making, which can lead to a perception of lack of transparency and limited opportunities to influence significant processes within the institute.	Practiced Approach: Researchers are considered active partners in the decision-making process for the effective functioning of the institute. This includes their participation in decision-making structures (Scientific Council, Steering Committee, Board of Administration), in the development of research policy, and in promoting a climate of transparency and open dialogue. Involving researchers in decision-making not only protects their interests but also contributes to the efficiency and success of the institute by leveraging their diverse experiences and perspectives. The minutes from the meetings of the Scientific Council are published on the institute's intranet, thus providing employees access to information regarding decisions made. Scientific Council Minutes The Union of Researchers at INCDTIM Cluj-Napoca promotes and defends the interests of researchers during the negotiations of the Collective Labor Agreement, which concern both salaries and working conditions for employees within INCDTIM. National Legislation: • Law No. 367/2022 regarding social dialogue Internal Regulations: • Regulations for the operation of the Board of Administration Board of Administration Regulations • Regulations for the organization and functioning of the Scientific Council Scientific Council Regulations • Appointment Decision for the Steering Committee Steering Committee Appointment • Collective Labor Agreement Collective Labor Agreement Suggestions for Improvement: • Increasing transparency in the decision-making process: INCDTIM will organize clarification sessions for all researchers, explaining the stages of the decision-making process, the criteria for decision-making, and how researchers can influence decisions. This would help build trust in the decision-making process and reduce perceptions of opacity. •

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		Creating channels for continuous feedback: To avoid perceptions of exclusion, INCDTIM will implement more open and structured feedback channels that allow researchers to consistently express their opinions. These could include periodic surveys, feedback meetings with management, and an anonymous suggestion system.

Training and Development

Status

36. Relation with supervisors

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	The survey results suggest that, although some researchers (54% of those who fully and partially agree) benefit from an individualized professional development plan and work with their direct manager, nearly 50% of researchers are not fully engaged or do not have a clear professional development plan. This is a signal that there is room for significant improvements in supporting and guiding researchers in their careers so that they can benefit from a well-defined plan that supports their professional development.	Practiced Approach: Within the institute, there is direct and ongoing interaction between researchers in training and the coordinators of research activities for their respective projects. Project directors/managers ensure that resources are used efficiently and that deadlines are met, continuously assessing the progress of activities and monitoring the achievement of objectives. The monitoring process includes analyzing reports, tracking performance indicators, and identifying any deviations. If issues arise, managers take corrective actions to redirect the activities. Effective communication between coordinators and members of the research teams is promoted to address issues that may influence the conduct of research. Research project coordinators are involved in resolving administrative problems that may arise and affect the efficiency of the research activities of team members. Solutions can be identified at the team level, or, if necessary, support from upper management can be requested. Thus, researchers are supported so that any issue is resolved quickly, without affecting the research activities. Suggestions for Improvement: 1. Creating and implementing an individualized professional development plan for each researcher, which includes clear objectives, continuous training activities, and progress milestones. Encouraging dialogue between researchers and their managers to establish a long-term career plan, considering each researcher's skills, interests, and ambitions. 2. Training and developing mentoring skills for supervisors: Organizing training sessions for supervisors to support them in developing their mentoring and guidance skills for researchers. They should learn to identify the professional needs of researchers and create long-term career development plans. Improving communication between researchers and supervisors so that researchers feel supported and actively guided in their careers.

Status

37. Supervision and managerial duties

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i…	While the institutional hierarchy and escalation pathways function effectively, the supervision framework lacks a centralized digital tool for real-time feedback and a structured, formalized mentorship program. Transitioning from informal mentoring practices to a unified institutional system is required to achieve full implementation.	Practiced Approach (Current Practice) Each group coordinator (R3/R4) holds the responsibility of guiding and training the early-career researchers (R1/R2) under their supervision, fostering constructive relationships and ensuring an efficient transfer of knowledge. Particular emphasis is placed on their theoretical and practical development, alongside training in project management, research-specific risk management, and scientific ethics. These activities take place during project working meetings and methodological seminars. Furthermore, operational support throughout the proposal writing and submission process (including specific grants dedicated to postdocs – PD or young research teams – TE) is actively provided by the International Projects Office and the Center for Technology Transfer (CTT-INCDTIM). An environment built on mutual respect, empathetic communication, constructive feedback, and autonomy is cultivated, with senior researchers actively facilitating the independence of their junior colleagues. Professional development is structurally supported through career planning, conference participation, result publication, and the valorization of expertise through contracts with the private sector. Through the consistent implementation of these practices, a robust mentorship dynamic is established, directly contributing to both the professional and personal growth of early-career researchers. Suggestions for Improvement Formalizing and Structuring the Mentorship Relationship (Mentorship Guide): Transitioning from an informal practice, which currently relies on the individual initiative of each coordinator, to a more structured institutional framework. It is proposed to develop an official INCDTIM Mentorship Guide, formally designate mentors, and establish a set of best practices for periodic progress evaluation meetings. Standardizing Individual Development Plans (IDP): Introducing a unified tool (digital template) through which early-career researchers and their supervisors jointly establish annual short- and long-term career goals, closely aligned with the resources provided by the institute. Professional Development Programs for Supervisors: Supporting group coordinators through dedicated courses focused on developing modern scientific leadership and mentoring skills—an initiative that will

Status

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
		simultaneously support the preparation of the application file for INCDTIM's future accreditation as a professional training provider

Status

38. Continuing Professional Development

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: INCDTIM focuses on developing researchers' competencies to ensure performance in their scientific careers. Young researchers are encouraged to participate in traditional scientific conferences on various topics, which serve as essential platforms for disseminating the latest advances in their field and identifying development trends. Their participation in specialization internships, experience exchanges, and continuous training courses is also supported. Self-directed learning through independent study, using books, scientific articles, or online resources, enables researchers, regardless of their level, to progress at their own pace while exploring interdisciplinary topics of personal interest. Participation in continuous training activities is decided individually or in agreement with the direct supervisor, being an important objective in INCDTIM's Strategic Development Plan. The institute's management is committed to improving effective training methods by organizing workshops, thematic seminars, and e-learning sessions. Every two years, INCDTIM organizes an international conference (PIM), inviting renowned scientific personalities from around the world. Detailed evaluations of performance and development plans are also implemented to highlight researchers' strengths and areas needing improvement, providing clear direction for continuous progress. Internal Regulations: International Conference PIM – international expertise and opportunities for scientific collaboration and continuous training PIM Conference INCTIM Strategy 2023 – 2027 INCTIM Strategy

Status

39. Access to research training and continuous development

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented		Practiced Approach: Researchers have the opportunity to participate in professional training programs, both nationally and internationally, depending on the availability of funds. Their participation in short-term mobility activities, such as conferences, workshops, and symposia, is encouraged. Many young researchers have benefited from training internships lasting between 1 and 6 months. Researchers at the institute are supported in actively engaging in attracting and training young talents, including students who show an interest in research activities. Existing agreements between the institute and universities in Cluj-Napoca have facilitated their access to internship opportunities in the institute's laboratories. In annual evaluations or promotion competitions for higher research positions, participation in professional training internships is a valued criterion. Any available financial opportunity is leveraged, especially "Institutional Development" projects that support the training and development of researchers by facilitating participation in various types of mobility.

Status

40. Supervision

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	The survey results show that 70% of researchers had access to mentoring or guidance in the early stages of their careers, which is a positive aspect indicating a culture of support and continuous learning at INCDTIM. However, 30% of researchers did not benefit from this type of support, which may signal an opportunity to improve the integration and support process for new researchers.	Practiced Approach Within INCDTIM, the resolution of operational and administrative issues follows a clear personnel management policy based on the strict observance of the institutional hierarchy. The escalation and resolution workflow for potential bottlenecks or dysfunctions is structured across three distinct levels: The Research Project Director: Holds the direct role of coordinating, instructing, and resolving day-to-day issues (both scientific and related matters) within the project team. The Head of Department: Intervenes as hierarchical support whenever the specific nature of an issue exceeds the competencies or responsibilities of the project director. Senior Management: Major complex issues that surpass the capabilities of the core organizational structure (the department) are sequentially addressed to the Scientific Director and/or the Economic Director (depending on the nature of the issue), with the final decision resting with the Director General. This structured mechanism aims to minimize response times and ensure the continuity of research activities without any logistical or administrative disruptions. Suggestions for Improvement 1. Digitalization of the Feedback and Early Warning Workflow: Developing and deploying a secure online platform (integrated into the institutional intranet) to collect real-time feedback, complaints, or suggestions from researchers (R1–R4) regarding supervision and management activities. This platform will be backed by an internal rapid-response mechanism, guaranteeing the confidentiality and transparency of the resolution process. 2. Continuous Training for Supervisors in Conflict Management and Leadership: Organizing training sessions (either internal or external) for group coordinators (R3/R4), focusing on modern leadership techniques, assertive institutional communication, research team management, and conflict mediation.

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