

## HR Excellence in Research

# GAP Analysis (Charter and Code Checklist)

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**Case number**

2025LV348295

**Name Organisation under review**

Latvijas Organiskās Sintēzes Institūts

**Organisation's contact details**

Aizkraukles 21, Rīga, LV1006, Latvia

**Date endorsement charter and code**

18/07/2025

## 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

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### PILLAR 1 – ETHICS, INTEGRITY, GENDER AND OPEN SCIENCE

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**Status****1. ETHICS AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
++ fully implemented	While most respondents are familiar with the LIOS Code of Ethics and research integrity principles, onboarding processes require strengthening to ensure systematic awareness among all employees	<p>This is one of the most highly rated sections. Scientists work in accordance with the Latvian Academy of Sciences/Latvian Council of Science's Code of Ethics for Scientists (2017) LIOS Code of Ethics (approved on 25.09.2024), Ethics Committee established on 26.09.2024. LIOS Biomedical Research Ethics Committee Regulations (approved on 09.02.2021). The LIOS Code of Ethics is published on the LIOS website in Latvian and English, and is also available on the internal system (HoP). The LIOS research integrity officer is active in the EARMA Ethics and Research Integrity Officer Network (ERION) events. LIOS, as a partner, is active in the Alliance4Life Ethics focus group. All experimental procedures involving animals are performed in accordance with the guidelines of the European Community as well as local laws and policies, and the procedures were approved by the Latvian Animal Protection Ethical Committee. • LIOS Biomedical Research Ethics Committee Regulations (approved 09.02.2021)</p> <p>Planned Actions: • Mandatory Research Integrity training during onboarding • Training on the ethical aspects of AI in research</p>

**Status****2. FREEDOM OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	Overall LIOS supports freedom of scientific research, but it is necessary to ensure compliance with this principle at all career stages and in all structural units.	Academic freedom is guaranteed by national legislation (Law on Scientific Activity) and reinforced by the LIOS Code of Ethics. However, consistent implementation across all structural units and career stages requires monitoring. Planned Action: ● Consider the possibility of the development of a formal Academic Freedom Statement

**3. OPEN SCIENCE**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
-/+ partially implemented	Open Science principles are generally supported and used in LIOS, but not all scientists have sufficient information about this support. Improvements are needed in various areas to strengthen the Open Science policy. A fairly large number of NA responses may mean that there is too little information or that employees are performing contract work.	Mandatory Data Management Plans (DMPs) in publicly funded projects Open Access policy with centralized support for high-impact publications payment if the journal IF $\geq$ 10 Planned Actions: ● Development of an institutional Open Science Policy ● Institutional Data Management Plan

**Status****4. GENDER EQUALITY**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	Survey results show that LIOS employees are highly aware of the Gender Equality Plan. On the other hand, some respondents feel that there is no gender equality. LIOS needs to continue integrating gender equality principles into recruitment, evaluation, and career development processes.	The Code of Ethics affirms the equality of all employees regardless of gender. The Gender Equality Committee (established on 28.03.2022), which conducts annual employee satisfaction surveys and discrimination training. The gender equality plan is updated annually; it is published on the LIOS website and available on HoP. Planned Action: • Integration of a Gender Equality composite index into institutional KPIs in strategy for next planning period

**5. EMBRACING DIVERSITY**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	The acceptance of diversity at LIOS is rated positively. Minor improvements are needed in LIOS's selection, evaluation, and career development processes.	The Code of Ethics includes a Diversity and Inclusion statement. A Welcome Service supports international staff. Accessibility measures are partially implemented. Planned Actions: • Integration of DEI principles into recruitment, selection, and career progression processes in alignment with the national New Academic Career Framework (NACF)

**Status****6. THE RESEARCHER**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	The proportion of positive responses indicates that the level of understanding is sufficiently high, but there is a lack of clarity about LIOS strategies and funding mechanisms. This could indicate fragmented and/or informal information. Researchers demonstrate high levels of responsibility in managing research and allocating resources.	The LIOS Development Strategy for 2022-2027 is published on the LIOS website in Latvian and English. However, institutional strategies and funding mechanisms require clearer communication. Planned Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preparation of financial guidelines for researchers</li> <li>• During the onboarding process, provide new employees with a structured and unified summary of information about LIOS's strategy and funding mechanisms</li> </ul>

**7. FREE CIRCULATION OF RESEARCHERS**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
+/- almost but not fully i...	The large number of positive responses indicates that researchers feel that LIOS strongly supports researcher mobility. Nevertheless, 35% have not participated in mobility activities in the last year. The reasons are unknown, possibly due to heavy workloads or a lack of funding.	Currently, LIOS public projects allocate funds for mobility; there are institutional projects focused on mobility. Attendance at conferences is mandatory for PhD students during their studies. Researcher mobility is institutionally supported; however, participation rates suggest structural barriers (e.g., workload or funding limitations). Planned Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 3I mobility</li> <li>• Consider the possibility of targeted mobility grants</li> <li>• Mobility-focused KPIs in strategy for next planning period</li> <li>• Continued support for doctoral mobility</li> </ul>

**Status****8. SUSTAINABILITY OF RESEARCH**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i...	Most responses are positive, but the high percentage of "somewhat agree" could indicate more informal, inconsistent practices that are not clearly structured, formalized, and communicated. There may be a lack of institutional sustainability policy.	Sustainability practices are present but not yet structured within a formal institutional framework. To transform sustainable research practices from informal initiatives into a structured institutional approach, LIOS plans to develop and implement a sustainability policy based on LEAF - Laboratory Efficiency Assessment Framework. In addition, it is planned to appoint an Environmental Officer. Planned Actions: ● Development of an institutional Sustainability Policy based on LEAF ● Appointment of an Environmental Officer ● Practical sustainability guidelines for laboratories

**PILLAR 2 – RESEARCHERS ASSESSMENT, RECRUITMENT AND PROGRESSION**

**Status****9. RESEARCHERS' ASSESSMENT**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	<p>Most respondents view the assessment system positively, but almost a third of those surveyed have doubts about its transparency and objectivity. The number of negative and NA responses indicates a problem at the institutional level. There is a lack of assessment systems with clearly defined criteria.</p>	<p>Currently, the evaluation of LIOS researchers is governed by the Regulations on the Performance Funding of the Latvian Institute of Organic Synthesis, published in Latvian and English on the LIOS's internal HoP system. LIOS plans to develop and implement a unified Researchers' Assessment Policy. It will have to be developed in accordance with the national New Academic Career Framework (NACF), which will be gradually introduced in Latvia from 2026 to 2030. It will include regular (annual) documented discussions with the manager about performance, goals, and career development. Planned Actions: • Development of a unified Researchers' Assessment Policy in alignment with NACF • Introduction of annual documented performance and career development discussions</p>

**Status****10. RECRUITMENT**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
+/- almost but not fully i...	The survey results show partial compliance with OTM-R principles and a lack of information about different career paths. Currently, recruitment is carried out at the level of individual projects in accordance with OTM-R principles, and there is no unified recruitment policy.	Recruitment follows OTM-R principles at the project level; however, there is no unified institutional recruitment policy. The LIOS career development system will be developed in accordance with the national New Academic Career Framework (NACF), which will be gradually introduced in Latvia from 2026 to 2030, while improving the availability of information on various career paths. In order to strengthen compliance with the OTM-R principles, a recruitment policy will be developed for LIOS. In addition, the channels for disseminating vacancies need to be improved. Planned Actions: • Development of an institutional OTM-R Recruitment Policy • Internal guide to set clear OTM-R procedures and practices

**Status**

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**11. SELECTION**

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Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	The large number of NA responses most likely indicates that many scientists are not involved in the recruitment/selection process. There is no dissatisfaction, but rather a lack of involvement in the process. Only partial agreement with the OTM-R principles. Risk of unsystematic compliance with the principles of diversity and equality.	The LIOS career development system will be developed in accordance with the national New Academic Career Framework (NACF), which will be gradually introduced in Latvia between 2026 and 2030. This will reduce the risk of unsystematic diversity and equality principles being observed and promote more active involvement of scientists. Selection procedures require formalization to ensure consistent adherence to OTM-R and diversity principles. Planned Actions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardization of selection procedures to ensure consistent compliance with OTM-R principles</li> </ul>

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**Status****12. CAREER PROGRESSION**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-- insufficiently impleme...	<p>Although the majority express satisfaction, there is also a significant number of dissatisfied respondents and a very high number of NA responses regarding career development discussions with managers. There is a lack of defined processes at the institutional level. There are no mandatory career development discussions. The principles of lifelong learning and skills development are poorly observed. Insufficient institutional support for structured career planning.</p>	<p>The career development system at LIOS should be developed in accordance with the national New Academic Career Framework (NACF), which will be gradually introduced in Latvia from 2026 to 2030. Develop (in accordance with NACF) and implement an LIOS career development policy, including regular and documented career development discussions. In addition, horizontal career development opportunities will be developed, and mentoring support will be introduced. Structured career development processes are currently insufficient. Career discussions are not mandatory, and lifelong learning principles are inconsistently applied. Planned Actions: ● Development of an institutional Career Development Policy ● Regular documented career development discussions ● Introduction of mentoring and horizontal career opportunities</p>

**PILLAR 3 - WORKING CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES**

**Status****13. WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	Overall, LIOS provides good working conditions, salary transparency, and flexible working hours.	Working conditions, funding, and salaries at LIOS are regulated by 1) 26.05.2025. Description of the procedure for determining remuneration and the motivation system for 2025; 2) 29.07.2022. LIOS internal rules of procedure. Continue to systematically review workplace equipment and infrastructure needs. To enhance salary transparency, publish average rates for basic categories of research positions. Working conditions and remuneration are regulated and transparent. Institutional regulations define salary determination and motivation systems. Planned Actions: ● Regular review of infrastructure needs ● Publication of average salary ranges by research category

**14. STABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	LIOS is considered a stable employer in general, but support mechanisms for employees with short-term contracts may be insufficient. The large number of NA responses may mean that this does not apply to most of the respondents, as the number of short-term contracts is not large. Project-based and fixed-term funding.	Improve the management of fixed-term contracts and communication about contract extensions, internal mobility opportunities, available vacancies, and, in particular, fixed-term researchers. LIOS is perceived as a stable employer. Communication regarding fixed-term contracts and extension procedures requires improvement. Planned Actions: ● Enhanced communication on contract extensions and internal mobility ● Improved support for fixed-term researchers

**Status****15. CONTRACTUAL AND LEGAL OBLIGATIONS**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
++ fully implemented	Researchers know that the information is available, but not all of them are familiar with it. Information is available but fragmented. Onboarding requires better structuring.	Improve the onboarding process by clearly communicating the responsible contact persons and support structure that employees can turn to with questions about legal and administrative requirements. Clear roles and support structure. Planned Actions: ● Clear communication of support structures and responsible contact persons ● Improve the onboarding process

**16. DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
+/- almost but not fully i...	LIOS provides support to researchers for the dissemination of results, but participation in technology transfer is very limited.	LIOS has already established a basic framework for the dissemination of results and intellectual property management - on 26 April 2018, the Intellectual Property Rights Management Manual was approved. In 2023 Technology Transfer Office was established, and LIOS is the coordinator of the BioPhoT - Biomedical and Photonics research platform for innovative products. Planned Actions: ● Targeted training on knowledge transfer and consultations on the possibilities of using results to increase the practical involvement of researchers

**PILLAR 4 -RESEARCH CAREERS AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT**

**Status****17. VALUING DIVERSE RESEARCH CAREERS**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	More than a quarter of respondents believe that non-traditional career development is not valued. There is insufficient institutional support, and scientists may avoid diversity for fear of negative career implications.	To promote career diversification, LIOS currently supports the teaching work of scientists at universities and has introduced projects on intersectoral mobility. It is necessary to improve the evaluation system for scientists by including criteria that recognize mentoring, training and student supervision, Open Science practices, collaboration with industry, and public engagement. Career development planning will integrate the principle that career diversification is considered valuable and equivalent to linear career development. Non-linear and intersectoral career paths are not yet systematically valued in evaluation systems. Planned Actions: ● Inclusion of Open Science, mentoring, supervision, industry collaboration, and public engagement criteria in evaluation systems ● Integration of career diversification principles in career planning

**Status****18. CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVICE**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
-/+ partially implemented	A structured career development system covering R1-R4 levels is lacking. There may also be a lack of motivation and/or information among researchers.	LIOS has a formal career development system in line with the National Law on Scientific Activity; however, it is rather broadly defined and does not address all the elements of the modern, attractive research career system. Career development systems at LIOS should be developed in accordance with the national New Academic Career Framework (NACF). Planned Actions: • Development of a comprehensive Career Development Framework for all levels of scientists (R1-R4) at the institute aligned with NACF

**19. CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

<b>Implementation</b>	<b>GAP / Implementation impediments</b>	<b>Initiatives undertaken/new proposals</b>
-/+ partially implemented	The survey results show insufficient and unequal opportunities for professional growth, meaning that professional development opportunities are uneven and not systematically structured.	Professional development and mobility opportunities, although numerous in absolute terms, are rather fragmented and unevenly available to the researchers due to the fact that those are mostly project-based and project-funded. Consider the possibility of introducing targeted mobility and training grants for young researchers (R1/R2) from institutional resources. Develop the range of professional development activities on offer to promote systematic competence development. Planned Actions: • Consider the possibility of introducing Targeted mobility and training grants for R1/R2

**Status****20. SUPERVISION AND MENTORING**

Implementation	GAP / Implementation impediments	Initiatives undertaken/new proposals
-/+ partially implemented	<p>The supervision process is well evaluated, but the development of management skills is not so well evaluated. There is a lack of a structured mentoring system and standards (frequency, feedback, responsibilities). Supervisors are not sufficiently prepared. The lack of mentors and skills can affect the performance of R1 researchers and students.</p>	<p>There is a somewhat informal supervision system at LIOS with a number of trainings offered to boost managerial competences of the supervisors, however, no dedicated supervision training has been conducted so far as well as no formal mentoring system has been introduced at the institutional level. Supervision is positively evaluated; however, mentoring structures and leadership training require formalization. Planned Actions: ● Establishment of a structured mentoring system for R1 researchers and doctoral candidates ● Leadership and management training for supervisors</p>