



# HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS

## Action Plan 2019-2021



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH



Silesian  
University  
of Technology



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# Introduction

In the dynamically changing world of science and higher education, Silesian University of Technology faces the challenge of continuous development and adaptation of its human resources management strategy to attract, develop and retain academics. The mission of the University, embedded in the pursuit of excellence in research and teaching, based on universal European academic values, i.e. mutual respect, tolerance, integrity, and equity, as well as respect for the diversity of academic faculties, while respecting worldview differences, requires a solid foundation. In this context, the endorsement and adoption of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (the Code) in 2015, as well as the achievement of the HR Excellence in Research Award in 2017, provide a solid foundation for the adopted HR strategy for researchers and underline the University's commitment to promoting openness, transparency, equality and diversity in recruitment processes and academic career management.

The European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct provide a comprehensive set of principles and good practices to facilitate mobility and career development in the European research area. The Silesian University of Technology is committed to implementing these policies with a view to both the rights and responsibilities of researchers and other university staff. First adopted in 2016 and currently being updated, the HR Strategy for Researchers is based on several key pillars:

- The pursuit of transparent recruitment processes based on the principles of equal opportunities, where decisions are made solely on the basis of measurable criteria, without regard to background, gender or other discriminatory criteria,
- Comprehensive support for research career development, including mentoring, training, and financial support, as well as the opportunity to develop international collaborations and access to advanced research equipment at different stages of scientific development,
- Building an inclusive and diverse working and learning environment, recognising that working in such a community allows one to see multiple perspectives, which are now crucial in the pursuit of scientific excellence and innovation,
- supporting researchers in achieving a work-life balance by making working patterns more flexible and offering attractive social and living programmes and financial allowances.

By implementing the above principles, Silesian University of Technology strengthens its position in shaping the future of science and education. The adopted updated HR strategy is once again an official and public affirmation of the University's aspiration to introduce comprehensive programmes, procedures, and processes in full compliance with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code as common principles applicable to European higher and scientific education institutions. The communicated strategy, which is a set of objectives and actions, will be subject to regular evaluation and evolution to respond effectively to challenges and opportunities, always respecting the well-being of the entire academic community.

# I. Strategic diagnosis

## Silesian University of Technology – key facts

The Silesian University of Technology is the oldest technical university in Upper Silesia and one of the largest in the country. It was founded in 1945 as a scientific and educational base for the most industrialised region in Poland and one of the most industrialised regions in Europe - Upper Silesia. It is an important institution of public life and plays a special cultural and opinion-forming role in the region.

The wide range of courses and the high quality of research and teaching have made Silesian University of Technology one of the leading technical universities in Poland for many years, as evidenced by its high positions in university rankings. Its strong status is confirmed by the scientific and didactic output of outstanding specialists and numerous national and international successes.

### **Mission of the Silesian University of Technology**

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*As a prestigious European Technical University, Silesian University of Technology carries out innovative research and development work, educates highly qualified personnel for the benefit of society and the knowledge-based economy, and actively influences the development of the region and local communities. Through continuous improvement of its processes and organisation, the University is a friendly and open place for work and development of the academic community.*

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### **Vision of the Silesian University of Technology**

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*The Silesian University of Technology, guided by respect for universal values and academic traditions, is a modern, recognisable, European technical university, at the forefront of Polish technical universities, preparing the elite of society, supporting the dynamic development of the economy in the spirit of ethical values, the highest quality of research and education.*

*It builds its high position and prestige through self-improvement in an atmosphere of partnership cooperation between employees, postgraduates, students, and the socio-economic environment, which promotes creativity, innovation and technology transfer.*

## Values of the Silesian University of Technology

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*Participating in the development of science, technology and culture, the Silesian University of Technology fosters in its community attitudes of patriotism, civic responsibility, social activism, mutual respect, tolerance, honesty, and justice, and promotes good manners in science. In accordance with the principle of freedom of science, the University respects the diversity of scientific faculties and the differences in ideologies.*

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### Silesian University of Technology in numbers (as at 31 December 2018.)

**Number of PhD students: 649**

**Number of academic teachers: 1623** (1596.31 FTE), *including:*

- 15 foreign academic employees,
- 93 full professors,
- 232 associated professors,
- 915 assistant professors
- 99 assistants

Among teachers and academics employed in teaching, research and research and teaching, 33.5% (533.83 FTE) are women.

**Number of awarded doctoral degrees: 102**

**Number of awarded habilitated doctoral degrees: 41**, including 26 to the employees of the Silesian University of Technology, and 15 to the researchers outside SUT

**Number of staff appointed as associate professor: 57**

**Number of employees who obtained the title of professor: 5**

**Number of students: 18 388**

**Number of awarded projects: 121**

**Number of research works acquired: 394**

## The composition of the Steering Committee and the Project Team

The composition of the Steering Committee and the project team was determined on the basis of the strategic task entitled "Implementing procedures and monitoring the implementation of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers", which was adopted and approved on 15 February 2017 by the Rector of Silesian University of Technology under the leadership of Magdalena Kudewicz-Kiełtyka, MA

in accordance with Ordinance No. 42/16/17. The work on updating the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers started in the second quarter of 2018 and ended with the publication of the updated Human Resources Strategy for Researchers in January 2019. At the same time, from 15 February 2017, the team worked on the implementation of the relevant procedures and actions to implement the HR Strategy for Researchers adopted in 2016, and reported on progress on a quarterly basis. The quarterly reports were approved by the Rector, Prof. Arkadiusz Mężyk - the Chairman of the Steering Committee established as part of the project implementation.

#### **Composition of the Steering Committee:**

prof. dr hab. inż. Arkadiusz Mężyk – Rector of the Silesian University of Technology, Chairman  
prof. dr hab. inż. Marek Pawełczyk – Vice-Rector for Science and Development  
prof. dr hab. inż. Bogusław Łazarz – Vice-Rector for General Affairs  
dr hab. inż. Tomasz Trawiński, prof. ndzw. – Vice-Rector for Students' Affairs and Education  
dr inż. Marcin Górski – director of the Project Management Centre  
mgr Magdalena Kudewicz-Kiettyka – head of the Development Office

#### **Composition of the project team:**

Prof. dr hab. inż. Marek Pawełczyk – Vice Rector for Science and Development  
Dr inż. Marcin Górski – Director of the Project Management Centre  
Dr inż. Magdalena Letun- Łątka – Director of the Centre for Incubation and Technology Transfer  
Dr inż. Jerzy Mościński – Director of the IT Centre  
Mgr Ewa Brońka – Legal Services Office  
Mgr Beata Borszcz-Grela – Head of the Human Resources Department  
Mgr Grażyna Maszniew – Head of Student Affairs and Education Office  
Mgr Marta Snopkowska – Head of the Research Office  
Mgr Magdalena Kudewicz-Kiettyka – Head of the Development Office  
Prof. Joanna Polańska – (R3 & R4) – representative of scientists  
Mgr Barbara Balon – (R1) – representative of PhD students  
Dr inż. Joanna Bartnicka – (R2) - representative of scientists

## **Progress of work on updating the action plan under HRS4R**

The work on updating the Action Plan under the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers involved the following stages:

- An internal review and summary of the objectives of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and action plan adopted in 2016 to date. The analysis included:
  - a review of the submitted written quarterly reports prepared as part of the implementation of the strategic project "Implementation of procedures and

- monitoring of the Action Plan adopted under the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers”, with comments from individual members of the project team,
  - outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the Action Plan implementation process,
  - review of tasks that have not been completed within the planned timeframe with suggestions for improvement,
  - review of policies, regulations and ordinances introduced following the implementation of the Action Plan,
  - a list of issues proposed by the project team to be discussed with researchers (R1 - R4) through focus group interviews.
- Preparation of the internal assessment carried out in the third quarter of 2018 by the heads of the individual offices or units responsible for the implementation of a specific task in the plan. An overview of the activities carried out within the framework of a given action was drawn up and any comments on the implementation process or the practical operation of the solutions introduced were added.
  - Conducting four independent interviews with researchers in focus groups selected on the basis of the stage of career development represented. Each group consisted of eleven people from different faculties - PhD students, Assistant Professors, Associate Professors, Full Professors respectively - and a moderator - the Head of the Development Office. In each group, the participants discussed the implementation of the tasks included in the plan, proposals for new tasks and the application of the OTM-R principles in staff recruitment at Silesian University of Technology. In addition, the researchers were asked for their opinion on the current state of the overall implementation of the Charter and the Code in four thematic areas, i.e.:
    - a) ethical and professional aspects,
    - b) recruitment and selection,
    - c) working conditions and social security,
    - d) training.

The purpose of the interviews was to identify any new gaps or issues of concern. A written report of the interviews was produced and shared with the project team and steering committee.

The data from the three-stage internal evaluation was reviewed by the whole project team. All comments and observations, especially those expressed in the 'don't know' responses given by the researchers, were examined in detail. As a result of this process, new areas for improvement were identified and an updated Action Plan for 2019-2021 was proposed as part of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. The new action plan, together with the strategy, was announced on the website and in the University newsletter, which is distributed to all staff.

## List of issues and topics addressed during the focus interviews

The list of topics and questions prepared for the focus interviews with representatives of male and female researchers at different career stages - from R1 to R4 - was intended to create an open dialogue between researchers and the university administration, which would, in turn, enable the different



perspectives and needs of researchers to be explored and understood, thus improving the implementation of the HR strategy.

**General sample questions:**

1. How do you assess the current working conditions and the development of your research career at the Silesian University of Technology?
2. Has the award of HR Excellence in Research and the subsequent HR Strategy for researchers improved your working conditions in any way?
3. How was your recruitment process at the Silesian University of Technology and did it reflect the principles set out in the Code? (question especially directed to R1 and new employees R2 and R3)
4. Were you informed about the principles of equal opportunities and transparency in the selection process and how?
5. What career development opportunities and available training do you find most valuable at this stage of your career?
6. How does the Silesian University of Technology support you in planning and realising your individual research career path?
7. How do you evaluate your working conditions, including availability of resources and administrative support, in the context of your research projects?
8. According to you, are there support mechanisms in place at the Silesian University of Technology to ensure work-life balance and how do you assess them?
9. How does the Silesian University of Technology support international cooperation and mobility of researchers? What are your experiences in this respect?
10. What are your suggestions for improving support for international scientific exchange and cooperation?
11. How do you assess the actions of the Silesian University of Technology to promote diversity and equal opportunities among the academic staff?
12. Have you encountered any barriers or challenges related to equal opportunities in your academic career while working/learning at the Silesian University of Technology?
13. What are your main suggestions for further development and improvement of the HR Strategy for researchers?
14. Are there any specific actions or changes that you think could further improve working conditions and scientific development at Silesian University of Technology?



## II. Strategic goals of the HR Strategy for Researchers

On the basis of the diagnosis carried out, the key strategic objectives identified in 2016 in the area of human resources policy for researchers have been maintained. Their implementation should ensure compliance with the highest standards of human resources management and the promotion of scientific ethics and professionalism in the academic community.

### Strategic objectives of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

#### 1. Promotion of openness and transparency in recruitment processes:

- Development and implementation of new recruitment procedures in line with the OTM-R principles to be made publicly available on the new website,
- Training for selection board members to ensure understanding and application of best practice in line with the Code.

#### 2. Stimulating career development at all stages and supporting researchers:

- Creating and publishing on the website a comprehensive guide on research career paths, available grants, training opportunities and other resources to support professional development.
- Developing an incentive system that recognises the diversity of scientific achievement and encourages innovation and research engagement.

#### 3. Ensuring compliance with the principles of equal treatment and diversity

- Modifying employment policies to promote equal opportunities, diversity and inclusivity in every aspect of academic and scientific work.
- Introduction of complaints and appeals mechanisms to enable fair treatment and investigation of possible violations.

#### 4. Optimising the use of research infrastructure:

- Improving research infrastructure management processes to enable more efficient and accessible use of equipment, laboratories and other resources.

#### 5. Adaptation to changing working conditions:

- Introduction of teleworking in the working regulations, which will allow flexibility and better adaptation to the needs of individual researchers.
- Introduction of task-based working as part of performance appraisal, which can contribute to a more efficient and result-oriented working culture.

#### 6. Development of digital communication tools and services:

- Improving access to information and facilitating interaction with the University through a new website and e-services.

**7. Monitoring and improving the OTM-R recruitment system:**

- Implementing control mechanisms to assess the effectiveness and compliance of recruitment processes with the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, allowing for continuous improvement and adaptation.

### III. Revised Action Plan for the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

ASPEKTY ETYCZNE I ZAWODOWE				
NAZWA DZIAŁANIA	TIMING	RESPONSIBLE UNIT	INDICATOR(S)/TARGET	CURRENT STATUS
Modification of the ordinance on the Projects Management System <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>in the scope of introducing an agreement with the Project Manager defining his/her responsibility for the ongoing project</i></li> </ul>	December 2020 r.	Project Management Centre	Establish a contract or other mutually binding document that defines the responsibilities for the implementation of the project.	Extended - task carried over from 2016-2018 plan  (originally scheduled for the end of March 2017)
Development of promotional materials presenting research and scientific cooperation - both international and with the socio-economic environment - at Silesian University of Technology.	January 2020	Promotion Office	Preparation of paper and/or video and online promotional materials presenting the scientific achievements of the Silesian University of Technology employees.	New action
Creating a guide and training in the field of personal data protection in the research projects and concluded contracts in relations to the Regulation of the European	June 2020	Inspector of Personal Data Protection	Developing information and providing training	New action

Parliament and the Council in the scope of the General Data Protection Regulation				
<b>RECRUITMENT</b>				
<p>Creation of a website providing information on career development IN TERMS OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>containing contacts and information, where to look for announcements of vacancies and general requirements,</i></li> <li>• <i>about career path with references to the faculty pages,</i></li> <li>• <i>development (publication of rules for transitioning to research positions and reducing teaching hours)</i></li> </ul>	March 2021	Vice Rector for Science and Development	Implementing a website or bookmarks on a website	<p>Extended - task carried over from 2016-2018 plan</p> <p>(originally scheduled for the end of March 2017)</p>
<p>Modification of the ordinance on researchers' recruitment IN TERMS OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>inviting committee representatives of other sectors and foreign experts (in justified cases),</i></li> <li>• <i>introducing general recruitment rules, announcement in Public Information Bulletin and Euraxess, researchers' selection criteria and information about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications,</i></li> <li>• <i>recognition of doctoral studies as professional experience</i></li> </ul>	March 2021	Vice-Rector for Science and Development	Implementation of the amended Regulation	<p>Extended - task carried over from 2016-2018 plan.</p> <p>(originally scheduled for the end of March 2017)</p>

Conducting a training program for academic employees sitting on selection commissions in the field of OTM-R principles and their practical application in recruitment	September 2019	Development Office	Carrying out training	New action
Developing a feedback template form for the evaluation of the candidate in recruitment process in accordance with the OTM-R rules	October 2019	HR Department	Development of a template form outlining the strengths and weaknesses of the candidate's application. The form should be a compulsory element of an open competition for a position in a group of academic teachers.	New action
Development of a quality control system for OTM-R principles at the Silesian University of Technology	December 2019	HR Department	Development of a control system and implementation in the form of the Rector's ordinance/regulation	New action
<b>WORKING CONDITIONS AND SOCIAL SECURITY</b>				
Improvement of the system for use and settlement costs for Research Infrastructure IN TERMS OF: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>rules of providing equipment among university units to increase capacity of working time</i></li> </ul>	December 2021	Centre for Incubation and Technology Transfer	Implementation of rules in the form of an ordinance/regulation	Extended - task carried over from 2016-2018 plan.  (originally scheduled for the end of March 2017)

<p>Insertion of teleworking to internal work regulations IN TERMS OF:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>remote collaboration methods including usage of international research infrastructure (for researchers in justified cases),</i></li> <li>• <i>including remote work methods and detailing the rights of disabled researchers (in justified cases)</i></li> </ul>	December 2021	Vice Rector for General Affairs	Changes to the work regulations and introduction of teleworking policies	<p>Extended - task carried over from 2016-2018 plan.</p> <p>(originally scheduled for the end of December 2018)</p>
<p>Information about the possibilities for submitting complaints and appeals by researchers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>e-mail with information on the manner in which the complaints and appeals can be submitted, with reference to specific documents regulating those issues and information about the established Conciliation Commission (sending once every half a year to all researchers of the University).</i></li> </ul>	December 2021	Vice Rector for General Affairs	Implementation of a complaints and appeals system	<p>Extended - task carried over from 2016-2018 plan.</p> <p>(originally scheduled for the end of July 2018)</p>
Introduction of task-based working time in work regulations	December 2019	HR Department	Modification of the Working Regulations with relevant provisions	New action
<p>Launching a new university website with active e-services</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e-news,</li> <li>– e-apparatus</li> <li>– e-laboratory.</li> <li>– e-science</li> <li>– e-newsletter,</li> <li>– e-software,</li> <li>– e-patent,</li> </ul>	January 2020	IT Centre	Implementation of the new website of the Silesian University of Technology	New action

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– e-employee,</li> <li>– e-technology,</li> <li>– e-study-selection</li> </ul>				
<p>Conducting the 2nd edition of the survey among researchers to assess the degree of compliance of the Silesian University of Technology's procedures, policies and legislation with the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.</p>	<p>September 2019</p>	<p>Development Office</p>	<p>Conducting the survey</p>	<p>New action</p>



## IV. Monitoring

Following the adoption of the revised Action Plan, a decision by the Rector assigned responsibility for monitoring the tasks implemented as part of the Plan, which is an integral part of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers, to the Development Office - an organisational unit within the Rector's Division for Science and Development. To ensure appropriate standards for the implementation of the initiatives identified, the existing rules have been maintained, including the composition of the Steering Committee and the project team. In each year of the plan, a detailed timetable for the implementation of each activity will be developed, as well as a risk analysis. There will be quarterly reports to the Steering Committee and an annual report. Key documents and procedures initiated and launched because of the implementation of this Action Plan will be included in the Annual Report on the Implementation of the Development Strategy of Silesian University of Technology in the chapter entitled "Internal Cooperation and Staff Qualification", the adoption of which is subject to the vote of the Senate.

In Q3 and Q4 of 2021 it is planned to prepare for an external evaluation of the progress made in implementing the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, i.e. to set up a team for this purpose, and to conduct an internal analysis of the needs of researchers and scientists in order to develop a new HR strategy for researchers for 2022-2024.

## Timeline

