

European Charter for Researchers

What is the Charter?

- ✓ The Charter is a set of principles that support the development of **attractive scientific careers** and aim to achieve **excellence in research and innovation** across Europe.
- ✓ The main objective of the Charter is to define the **rights and responsibilities** of researchers, employers, funders, and policymakers.

What is in it for you?

- ✓ Emphasises **fair working conditions**, transparency, equal opportunities, and career development.
- ✓ Anchors the **principles of ethics, integrity, credibility**, and **respect** for intellectual property in science.
- ✓ Improves conditions for both early-career and experienced researchers, thereby enhancing the **attractiveness of a research career**.
- ✓ Strengthens **international cooperation**, recognition of qualifications, and open collaboration across Europe.

4 PILLARS & 20 KEY PRINCIPLES

PILLAR 1

ETHICS, INTEGRITY, GENDER AND OPEN SCIENCE

- 1.1 Ethics and Research Integrity
- 1.2 Freedom of Scientific Research
- 1.3 Open Science
- 1.4 Gender Equality
- 1.5 Embracing Diversity
- 1.6 The Researcher
- 1.7 Free Circulation of Researchers
- 1.8 Sustainability of Research

PILLAR 2

RESEARCHERS' ASSESSMENT, RECRUITMENT AND PROGRESSION

- 2.1 Researchers' Assessment
- 2.2 Recruitment
- 2.3 Selection
- 2.4 Career Progression

PILLAR 3

WORKING CONDITIONS AND PRACTICES

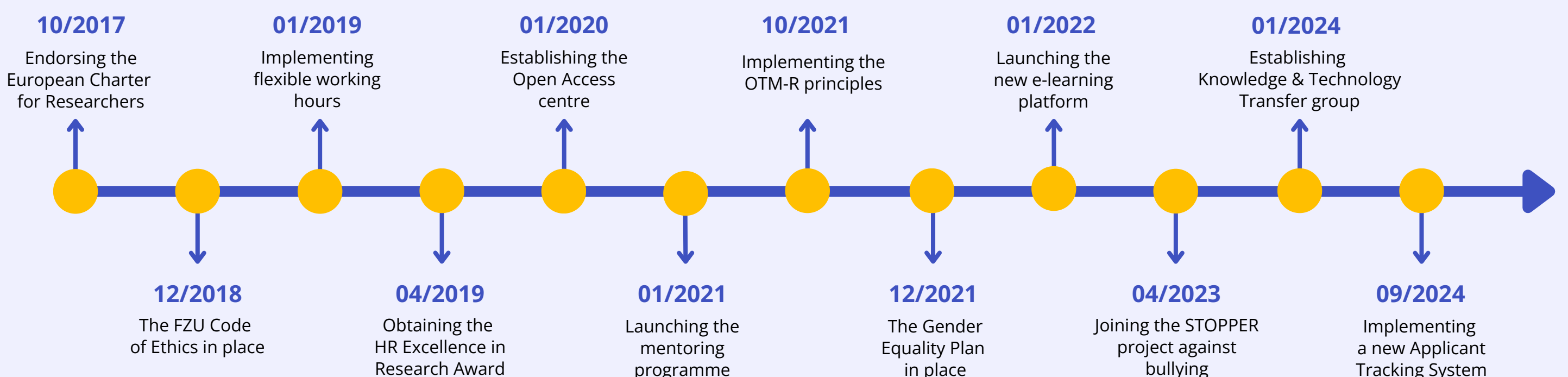
- 3.1 Working Conditions, Funding and Salaries
- 3.2 Stability of Employment
- 3.3 Contractual and Legal Obligations
- 3.4 Dissemination and Exploitation of Results

PILLAR 4

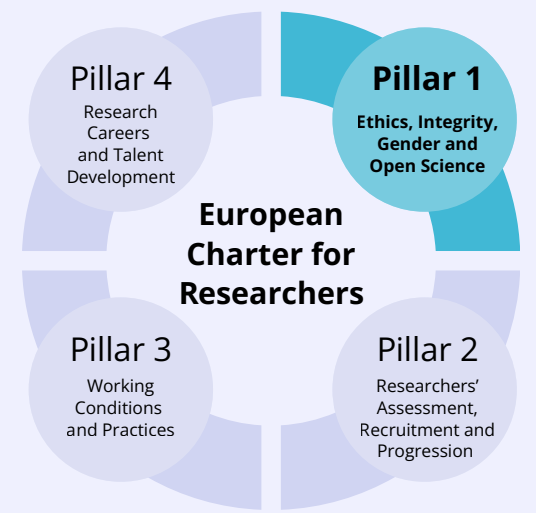
RESEARCH CAREERS AND TALENT DEVELOPMENT

- 4.1 Valuing Diverse Research Careers
- 4.2 Career Development and Advice
- 4.3 Continuous Professional Development
- 4.4 Supervision and Mentoring

Milestones: the Charter Principles Implementation at FZU



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PILLAR 1 Ethics, Integrity, Gender and Open Science

What is the Charter?

- ✓ The Charter is a set of principles that supports the development of **attractive scientific careers** and aim to achieve **excellence in research and innovation** across Europe.

- ✓ The first pillar sets out the core principles of the Charter, promoting research excellence through inclusive, bias-free environments. These values support the vision of a renewed European Research Area and should guide all other principles.

1.1 ETHICS AND RESEARCH INTEGRITY

Researchers must act ethically, with honesty, objectivity, and responsibility, ensuring trustworthy and unbiased research.

Institutions should support a culture of integrity, prevent misconduct, and protect intellectual property.

- An **open and respectful environment**, with a transparent and ethical approach to scientific work, is rooted in the FZU core policies.
- Ethical aspects are anchored in the **Code of Ethics** and **FZU Competency Framework**.
- The **Ethics Committee** helps evaluate ethical concerns and addresses research misconduct.
- Researchers are also bound by the **Code of Ethics for Scientific Research** of the Czech Academy of Sciences.

1.2 FREEDOM OF SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Freedom of scientific research is a core value of the European Research Area.

Researchers should advance knowledge for humanity while enjoying freedom of inquiry and dissemination, within limits set by supervision, law, or resources.

- At FZU, we support researchers' fundamental rights, including **autonomy, academic freedom**, access to information, and the right to share, disseminate and publish results.
- Researchers have the freedom to study and teach, define their research topics, methods, and collaborations.
- FZU promotes **independent, innovative science** through international cooperation, mobility, and flexible funding opportunities.

1.4 GENDER EQUALITY & 1.5 EMBRACING DIVERSITY

Gender equality should be promoted in research, leadership, and teams, ensuring safe and inclusive environments. Institutional change through monitored Gender Equality Plans is key to lasting progress.

Diversity enriches research and must be embraced. Addressing unconscious bias is essential for inclusive, high-quality science.

- The principles of equal opportunities, diversity, and inclusion are anchored in the **FZU Equality and Diversity Plan**, implemented by the **Equality and Diversity Panel**.
- Seminars, e-learning, and campaigns on **gender and unconscious bias** raise awareness of these topics within the institute.
- **Bringing together researchers from 43 nationalities**, FZU welcomes and supports talents from all backgrounds.
- Employees with diverse health conditions are fully involved and supported.

1.3 OPEN SCIENCE

Researchers should actively engage in Open Science by sharing results openly, ensuring reproducibility, and participating in open peer review.

Institutions should support this initiative with tools, infrastructure, and recognition, while encouraging citizen participation to make science more inclusive and impactful.

- The open access principles are anchored in the **Open Access Methodology**.
- FZU provides various **learning opportunities**, including e-learning self-study course and networking events focused on open access, data management, and responsible research practices.
- Dedicated **Open Access Specialist** and **Data Steward** provide expert support to all researchers at FZU.

1.6 THE RESEARCHER

Researchers create new knowledge and must be valued as professionals from the start of their careers. Institutions should support flexible career paths across sectors.

Researchers are expected to align their work with strategic goals, ensure societal relevance, avoid duplication, communicate transparently, and use resources responsibly.

- FZU supports **mobility programmes**, such as MSCA fellowships and other mobility opportunities.
- The **FZU Competency Framework** defines the core competencies for researchers.
- Clear guidelines are in place for **research project management**, with dedicated support from project and finance managers.
- Researchers at all levels are regularly informed about **strategic plans and priorities** through internal communication channels.



The European Charter for Researchers sets clear and fair guidelines as a basis for free and responsible research. It promotes the values of ethics, scientific integrity, and open science, which are essential for transparency, trust, and achieving excellence in scientific work.

Michael Prouza
FZU Director



European Charter for Researchers



PILLAR 2 Researchers' Assessment, Recruitment and Progression

What is the Charter?

- ✓ The Charter is a set of principles that support the development of **attractive scientific careers** and aim to achieve **excellence in research and innovation** across Europe.

- ✓ The second pillar highlights that researchers' assessment should ensure equal recognition of careers regardless of sector and follow an unbiased, talent-based approach. Fair recruitment policies are key to an open labour market and the advancement of the European Research Area.

2.1 RESEARCHERS' ASSESSMENT

Researchers should be assessed through qualitative evaluation and responsible metrics, recognising diverse outputs and practices.

Institutions should promote fair systems valuing collaboration and mobility and ensure training for evaluators.

- At FZU, researchers are evaluated by the internal **Qualification Audit Committee** every 5 years.
- **Regular feedback reviews** allow employees to discuss their work results and career development with their direct supervisor.
- At FZU, supervisors receive **training** on how to provide effective and constructive feedback.

2.2 RECRUITMENT & 2.3 SELECTION

Recruitment should be open, transparent, and merit-based, valuing diverse career paths, with clear criteria and fair treatment of career breaks.

Candidates should be assessed upon achievements relevant to the position only.

The selection should evaluate candidates' full range of experience, using well-trained committees and fair methods.

Institutions must ensure transparency, avoid any discrimination, and provide feedback.

- At FZU, recruitment is based on the **OTM-R principles** (Open, Transparent, Merit-Based Recruitment).
- **The Employee Recruitment and Selection Strategy** outlines each step of the process.
- Up-to-date information for applicants is published on the **FZU career website**.
- All job vacancies are advertised on the FZU website and relevant advertising portals.
- The **ATS tool** (Applicant Tracking System) makes the selection process **transparent and efficient**.
- The **HR partnering system** assists managers with HR planning, hiring, and selection.
- **Members of selection committees** receive training on the practical application of OTM-R principles and hiring process.

2.4 CAREER PROGRESSION

Researchers should be regularly and transparently evaluated with recognition of diverse career paths, outputs, and mobility.

Career systems must be fair and inclusive, supporting ethical co-authorship and valuing all relevant professional experiences.

- Researchers are regularly evaluated in accordance with the **Career Development Rules of the Czech Academy of Sciences**.
- Internal guidelines outline the process of **Qualification Audit** at FZU.
- For evaluation purposes, the internal **Atest** database is used.

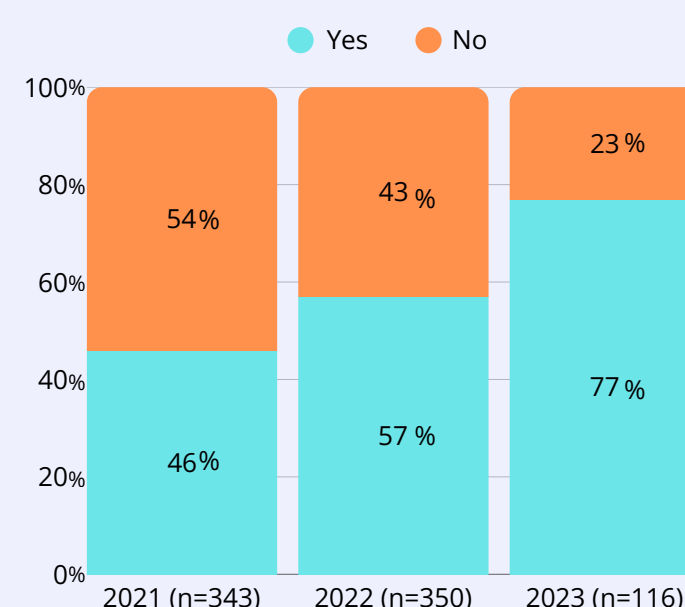


Starting a new research team comes with many challenges, one of which is recruiting the best possible people. Having an experienced HR person next to you, who helps to streamline the recruiting process, organises and joins the (online) meetings, provides unbiased feedback, and with a successful candidate, helps with the onboarding, are not to be neglected factors to build a flourishing team.

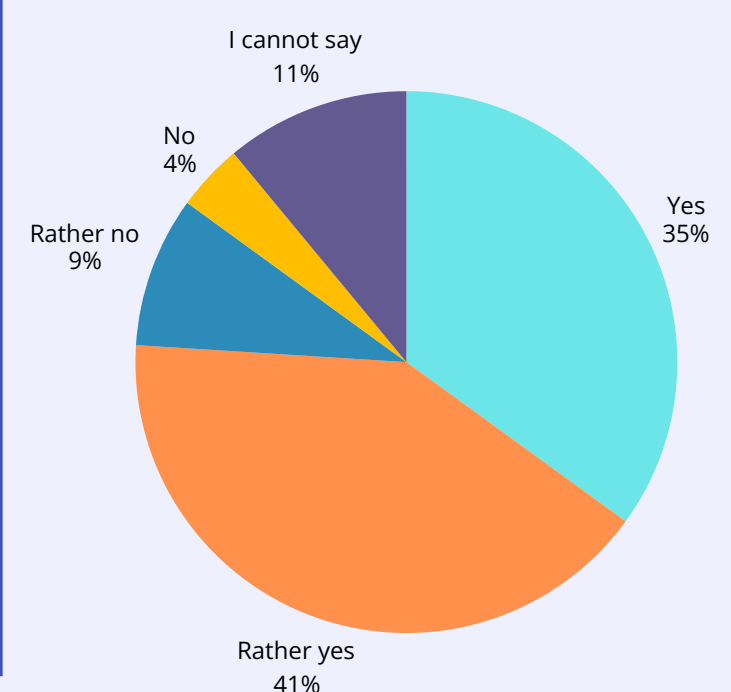


Timotheus Verhagen
Senior Scientist

Are you informed about the procedures and rules for selection processes for new positions? *



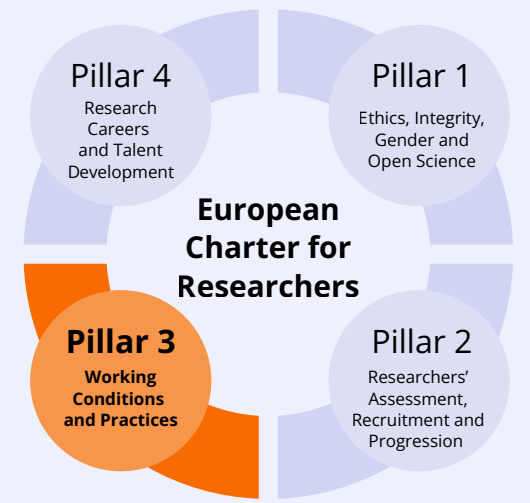
Do you consider the qualification audit process to be transparent and independent? *
Researchers only (n=364 %)



*source: Internal Employee Survey results 2021, 2022, 2023



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PILLAR 3 Working Conditions and Practices

What is the Charter?

- ✓ The Charter is a set of principles that support the development of **attractive scientific careers** and aim to achieve **excellence in research and innovation** across Europe.

- ✓ The third pillar states that improving researchers' working conditions should be central to EU research career policy, supporting stable employment and clear labour rights. Organisations should foster a culture of excellence and a thriving research community.

3.1 WORKING CONDITIONS, FUNDING AND SALARIES

Institutions should ensure flexible and inclusive working conditions that support researchers' wellbeing, career development, and work-life balance.

A safe, supportive research environment, fair pay, social security, and clear communication of rights must be guaranteed, along with access to complaints procedures and participation in institutional governance.

- At FZU, **flexible working conditions** are supported through flexible working hours, remote work options, and adaptable employment contracts.
- A well-integrated **onboarding process** helps new employees with their adaptation.
- **Welcome Office** provides support to foreign colleagues.
- A system for **complaints appeals and resolutions** is in place to ensure fair and equal treatment of all employees.
- The **Salary Policy** provides an overview of the remuneration system, its components, and the classification into career levels.
- FZU offers a wide range of **benefits**, including support from the **social fund**.

3.2 STABILITY OF EMPLOYMENT

Job insecurity should be reduced by promoting stable contracts, and early-career researchers should be supported with fair conditions, clearly defined appointments, and diverse career development opportunities.

- FZU offers a clear path for **professional growth**, support, and effective collaboration, as well as mobility options for each scientific level.
- **Work contracts** typically begin as fixed-term, depending on funding, with the expectation of developing long-term cooperation.

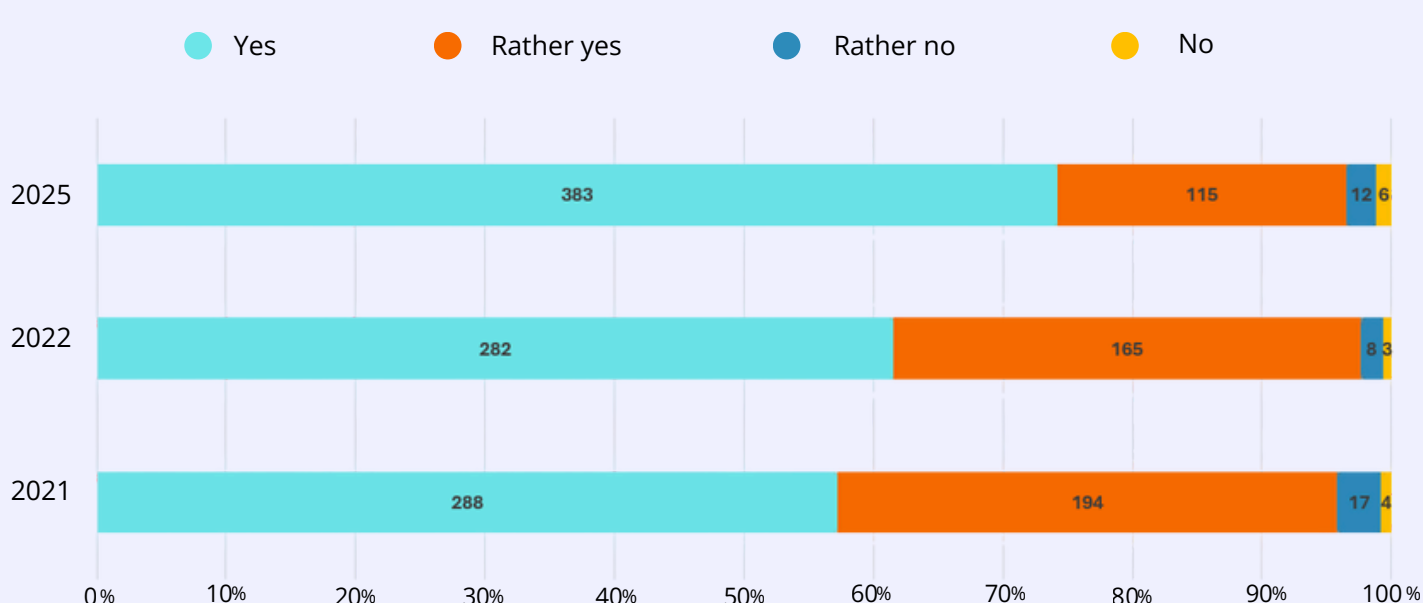
3.4 DISSEMINATION AND EXPLOITATION OF RESULTS

Researchers should practice Open Science by sharing and applying results openly. Institutions should support this through training, and fair recognition.

Intellectual property and public engagement should be promoted to maximise impact and societal benefit.

- FZU's financial contribution to the **SCOAP³** consortium and **transformative agreements** enables researchers to publish in **open access** regime without additional cost.
- For **data sharing**, the **Zenodo** open repository is available.
- The **Grant Office** and the **Knowledge and Technology Transfer Office** provide professional support.
- The **PR team** helps researchers coordinate their outreach activities and organises events for the **public, students, and schools**.

Do you consider FZU an employer that offers good conditions for work-life balance? *
(comparison of years 2021, 2022, 2025)



*source: Internal Employee Survey results 2021, 2022, 2025



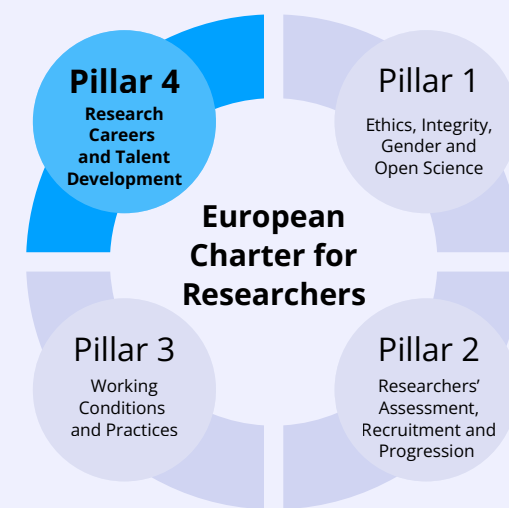
I have received assistance from the Grant Office for writing a QuantEra project proposal, and when my associate was applying for an MSCA fellowship. On both occasions, the help I received and the expertise in writing European grants that was shared have helped me immensely. Especially the MSCA proposal benefited greatly from the assistance of the Grant Office, as it made dealing with the special requirements of the EU Commission much easier.



Katarzyna Roszak
Senior Scientist



European Charter for Researchers



PILLAR 4

Research Careers and Talent Development

What is the Charter?

- ✓ The Charter is a set of principles that support the development of **attractive scientific careers** and aim to achieve **excellence in research and innovation** across Europe.

- ✓ The fourth pillar supports skills development and professional growth as key to enhancing research quality and societal relevance. The diversity of roles and expertise strengthens the research community. Ongoing training is essential to maintain competence and expand career opportunities.

4.2 CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND ADVICE

Institutions should recognise diverse research careers and promote mobility and varied activities beyond research.

Career diversification through mentoring and advisory services, especially for early-career researchers must be supported.

- **FZU Competency Framework** provides clear guidance for career planning and identifying development needs.
- **Personal Development Plans** support individual career paths.
- We support **talented students** with internships and thesis supervision, opening paths to their research careers.

4.3 CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Researchers should continuously improve their skills through training, workshops, and collaboration.

Institutions must ensure access to professional development, support mobility and the development of entrepreneurial skills.

Teaching should be recognised and supported with proper training and remuneration.

- Comprehensive Training Programme provides a wide range of training in key areas such as **Project Management, Grant & Academic Writing, and Communication Skills**.
- Targeted training programmes such as the **Leadership Academy**, help managers to enhance their managerial skills.
- We promote bilingual communication through regular **Czech and English language courses** for all employees.
- **E-learning platform Competent** offers more than 20 self-study courses, available anytime and anywhere.

4.4 SUPERVISION AND MENTORING

Effective research management requires inclusive leadership and regular supervision, especially for early-stage researchers. Supervisors should provide ongoing feedback and career support. Senior researchers must lead by example, fostering knowledge transfer and professional growth in a supportive environment.

- Team leaders are encouraged to conduct **regular feedback reviews** with their team members to support career progression.
- **FZU mentoring programme** connects experienced mentors with PhD students and postdocs, actively supporting their professional growth.

What did we achieve between 2020 and 2024?



Meeting new people out of the large FZU-family is the biggest benefit of the mentoring programme for me. Even though I did not meet my mentors frequently, knowing there is someone one can turn to with problems is comforting!

Dominik Kriegner

Senior Scientist, mentee & mentor

