INTERNATIONAL IBERIAN NANOTECHNOLOGY LABORATORY

HRS4R
Awareness Survey Analysis

2025, June

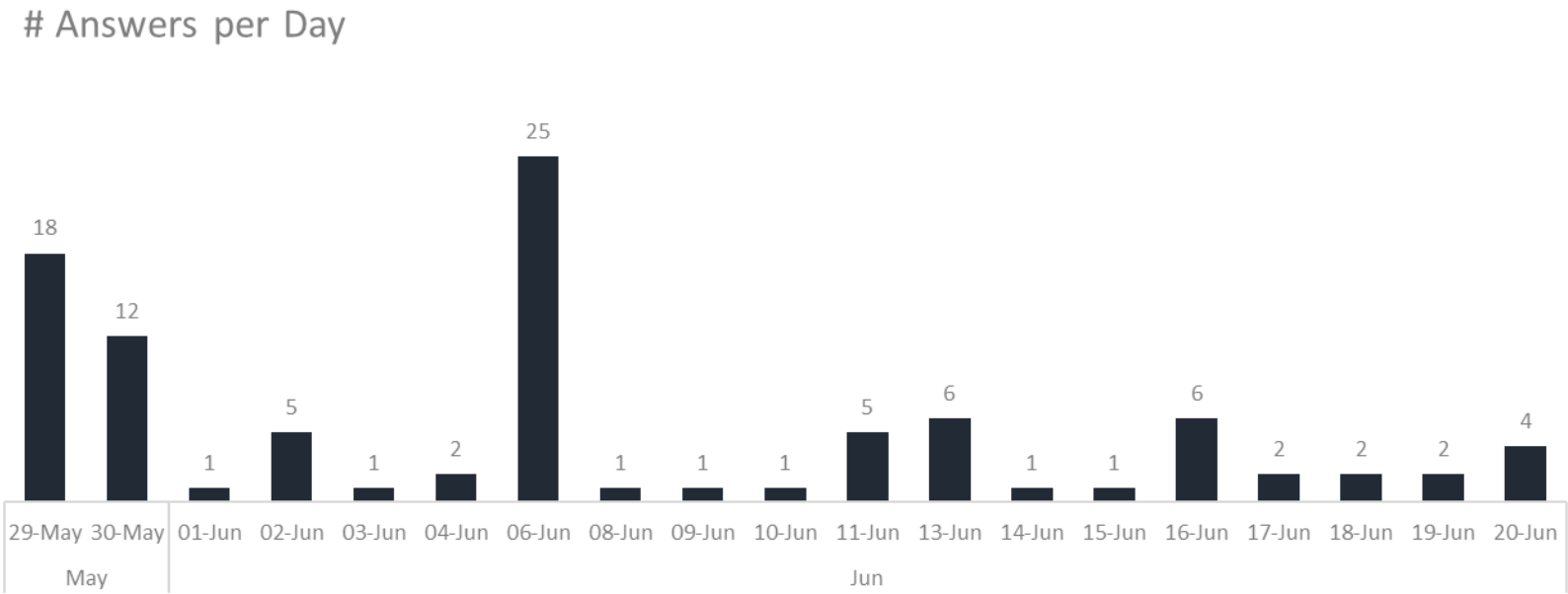
HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Answers

The survey was launched on 29/05/2025.

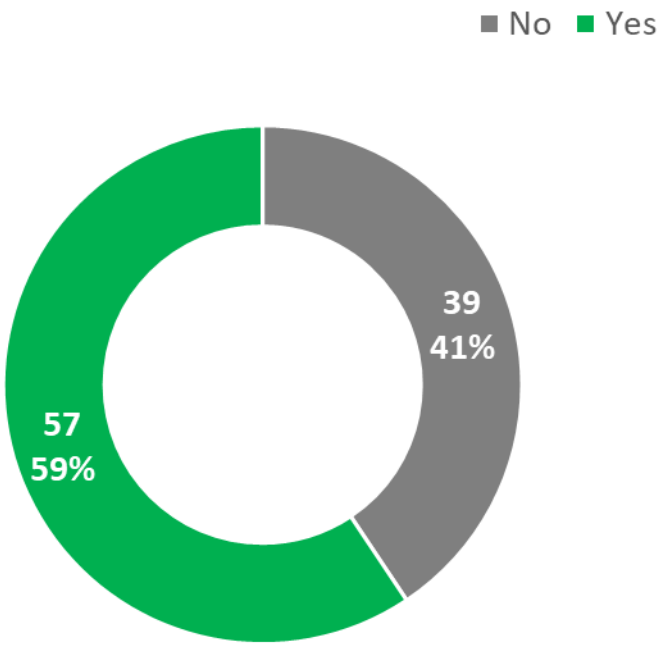
A total of 96 distinct responses (16% of total MPs).

On average, INLers took 7 minutes to complete the survey.



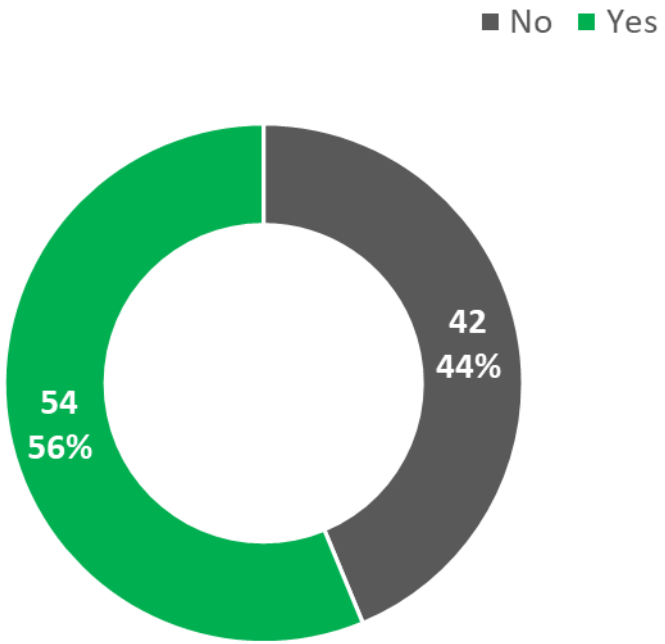
Are you familiar with the HRS4R?

59% of respondents indicated that they are familiar with the HRS4R.



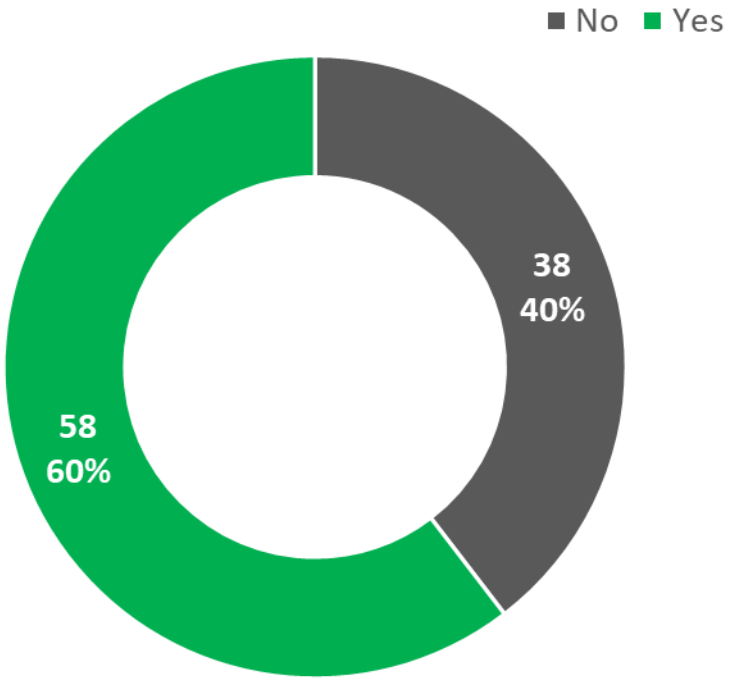
Do you know that INL holds the HRS4R 'Seal of Excellence' in Research awarded by the European Commission?

56% of respondents indicated that they are aware that INL holds the HRS4R Seal of Excellence.



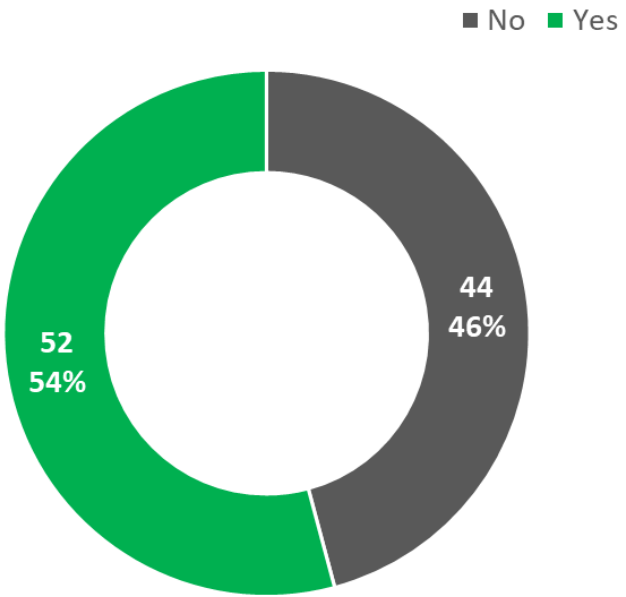
Do you know that the HRS4R is based on the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, that is based on the following principles:

- Ethics, Integrity, Gender and Open Science;
- Researchers' Assessment, Recruitment and Progression;
- Working Conditions and Practices;
- Research Careers and Talent Development.



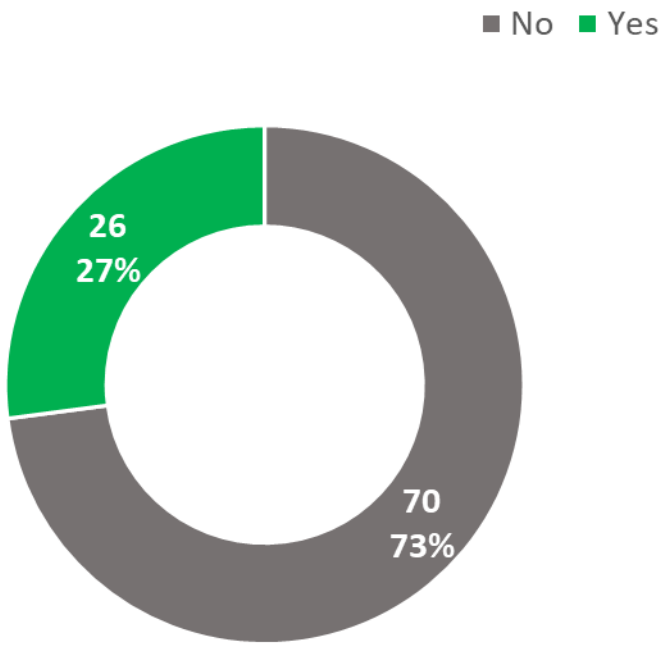
Are you aware that INL has an HRS4R Commission, which includes a working group of researchers and administrative colleagues dedicated to executing and monitoring this certification?

54% of respondents indicated that they are aware that INL has an HRS4R Commission.



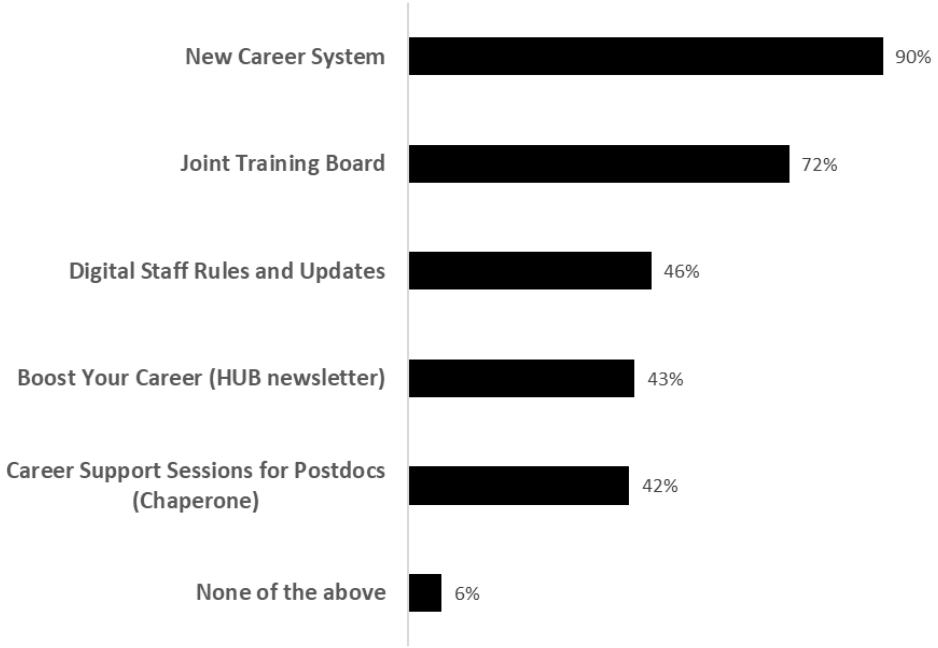
Are you aware that INL's website has a dedicated webpage for the HRS4R initiative?

Only 27% of respondents indicated that they are aware that INL's website has a dedicated webpage for the HRS4R initiative.



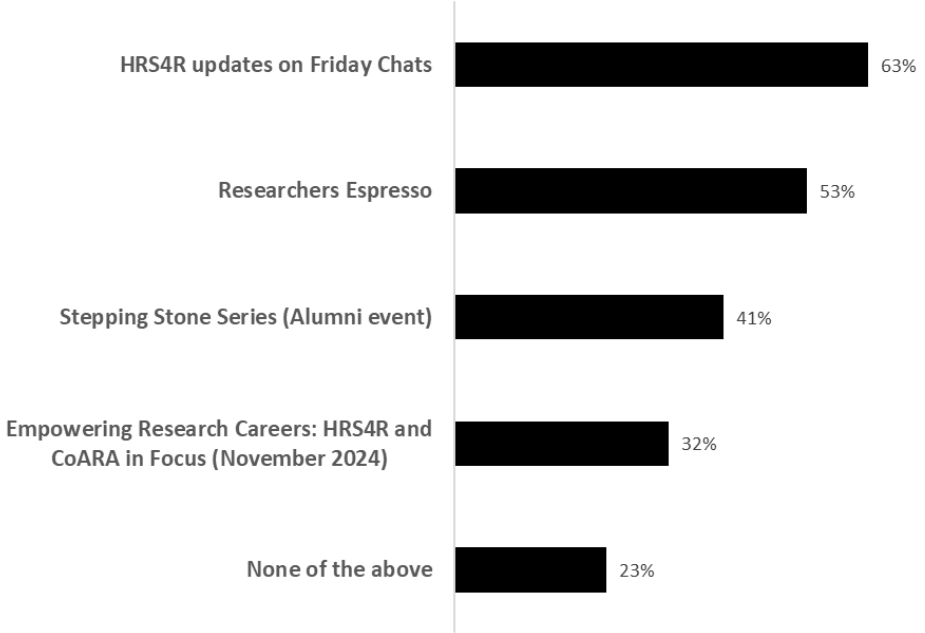
Which of the following projects/initiatives are you aware of?

- The Career System is the project that most INL employees are familiar with; 90% of INL employees are aware of it.
- The Joint Training Board is recognized by 72% of all INL employees.
- 6% of INL employees are unaware of any of the projects.



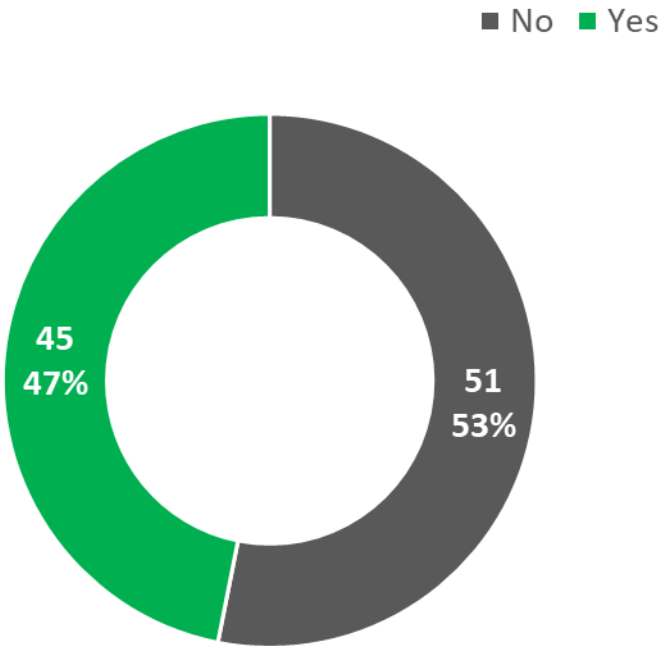
Which of the following events are you aware of?

- HRS4R updates on Friday Chats is the most recognized event, with 63% awareness among respondents.
- Researchers Espresso also showed strong visibility, being known by 53% of participants.
- 23% selected "None of the above"



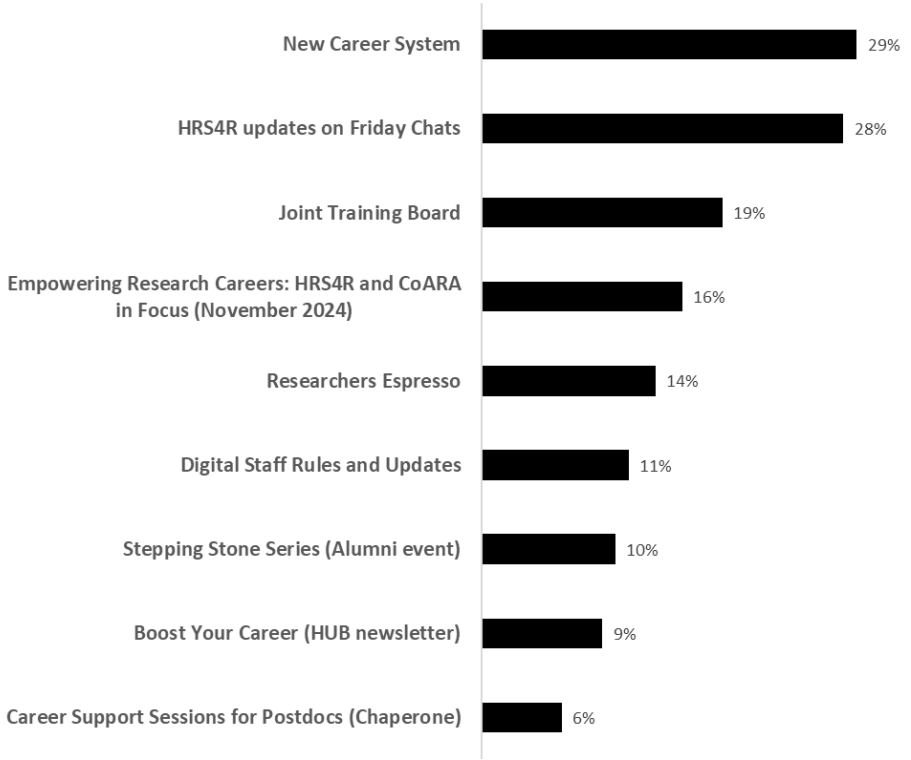
Have you participated in any of these projects/initiatives/events?

47% of respondents reported participating in at least one event.



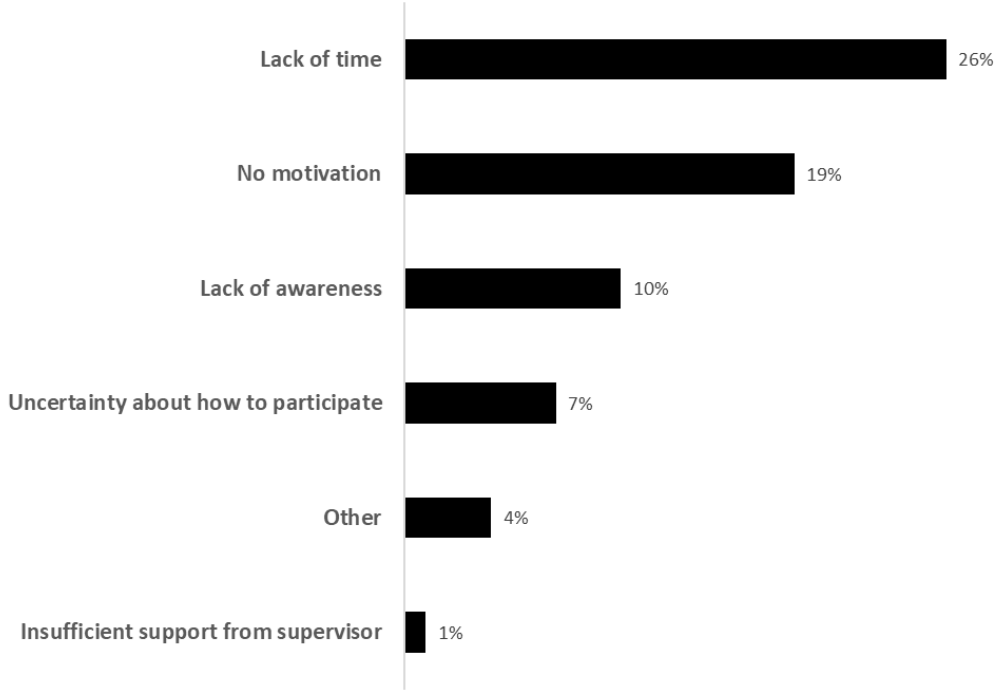
Select the events that you have participated.

INLers are participating most in the Career System and HRS4R updates on Friday chats.



What is the reason for choosing not to participate in the events?

Lack of time and a lack of motivation are the two most common reasons given.



Do you have suggestions on how to improve our communication regarding the HRS4R process and its initiatives?

15 Answers

Communication & Awareness

- Develop a simple, visual explainer of what HRS4R is (e.g., infographic, short video, PDF).
- Tailor messages for different audiences (Researchers, HR/Admin, Leadership).
- Use mixed formats: email digests, digital posters, short videos, and lunch & learn sessions.
- Ensure repeated and consistent communication, as the framework is complex and takes time to understand.
- Improve transparency in messaging — current efforts are appreciated, but often not timely or informative enough to be useful.

Strategic Alignment

- Clarify the goals and relevance of HRS4R for the broader INL community — some feel it currently seems more HR-focused than employee-focused.
- Explain the short-term benefits for postdocs and other fixed-term researchers.
- Provide clearer visibility on what HRS4R brings to researchers' career progression and daily work experience.

Engagement & Interaction

- Avoid separating staff from their Group Leaders in career-related meetings to ensure more informed and effective dialogue.
- Consider town halls or live Q&A sessions for updates and feedback — Friday Chats are helpful but limited in interactivity (It was difficult to attend due to the technical sound conditions).
- Improve individual follow-up and responsiveness from HR — several participants noted lack of replies or access.

Structural & Process Improvements

- Improve the recruitment process — make it faster, more transparent, and provide feedback.
- Address the imbalance between permanent and temporary contracts, especially within the scientific career path.
- Increase HR staffing, as the current team is perceived as overloaded and hard to reach.
- Organize in-person meetings with administrative units to align on their roles in supporting HRS4R initiatives.

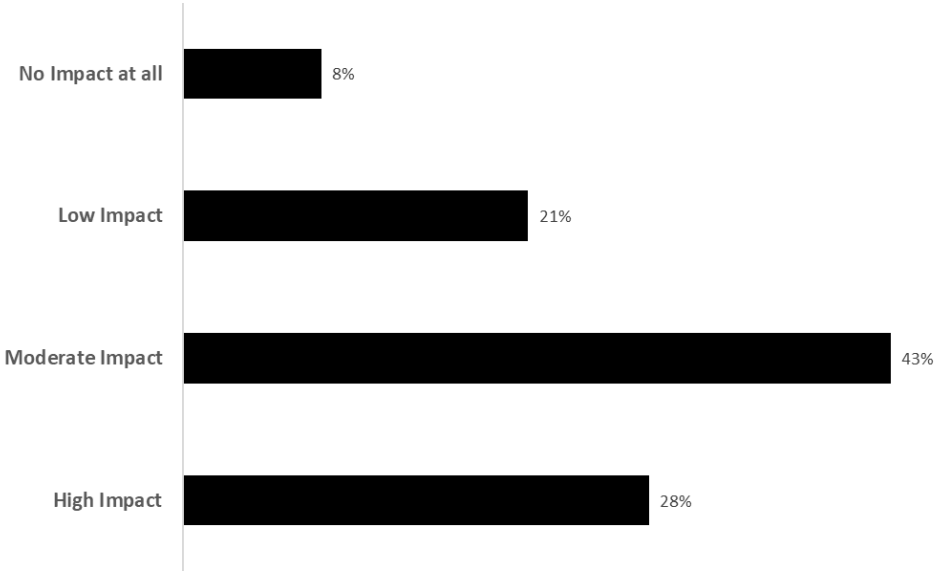
Do you believe HRS4R is generating a positive impact at INL?

Average:

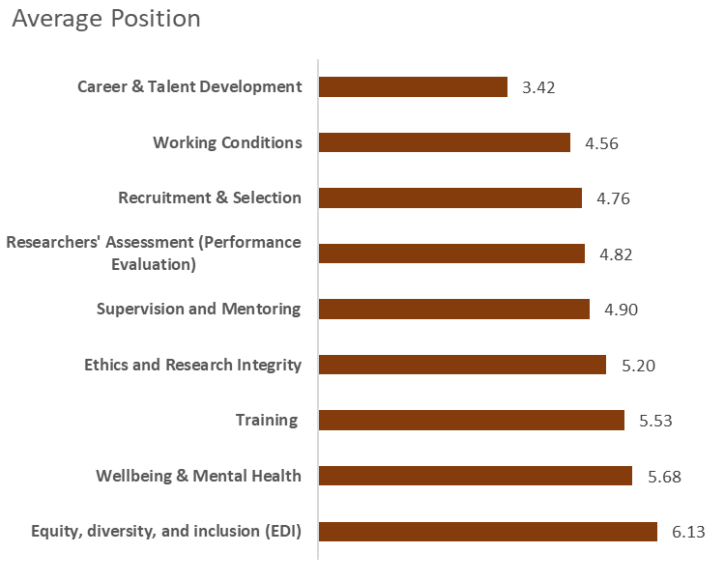
2.91

(Between 1 to 4)

71% of respondents felt that the HRS4R has a moderate or high impact at INL.



Rank the following areas in order of improvement need (where 1 is the most relevant and 9 is the less relevant)



Career and Talent Development needs significant improvement, while EDI has a lower average importance regarding the needed improvements.

	Position								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Career & Talent Development	18%	22%	19%	15%	9%	7%	7%	1%	2%
Working Conditions	19%	11%	11%	13%	8%	8%	6%	13%	11%
Recruitment & Selection	10%	13%	11%	7%	19%	14%	11%	11%	3%
Researchers' Assessment (Performance Evaluation)	16%	15%	9%	8%	9%	9%	9%	11%	14%
Supervision and Mentoring	8%	14%	10%	20%	10%	6%	8%	14%	10%
Ethics and Research Integrity	11%	7%	7%	15%	13%	13%	13%	14%	9%
Training	6%	5%	15%	14%	8%	15%	13%	11%	15%
Wellbeing & Mental Health	8%	6%	9%	2%	18%	14%	17%	15%	11%
Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)	3%	9%	8%	7%	6%	16%	17%	10%	24%

What other areas do you consider need improvement?

20 Answers

Strategic & Career Development

•Clarify career progression paths (e.g., Postdoc → PI → Group Leader)
•Implement salary step ranges that reward experience
•Recognize interdisciplinary and non-formal experience
•Reduce top-down hierarchy and increase researcher participation

Research Support & Infrastructure

•Ensure fair access to equipment and facilities
•Improve lab organization and instrument availability
•Clarify PhD student rights and MPA status
•Promote entrepreneurship and industry partnerships

Work Culture & Well-being

•Address psychological working conditions and team culture
•Ensure work-life balance is respected
•Promote respectful treatment across all roles

Learning & Inclusion

•Expand training opportunities for all levels
•Improve support for personal growth and skills development
•Address gaps in inclusion (e.g., disability access, diversity)

Processes & Communication

•Streamline workflows with clear roles and decision-makers
•Simplify systems to reduce bureaucracy and manual tasks
•Increase HR transparency and responsiveness
•Rebuild trust and communicate proactively

Please share with us actions that could have a positive impact in these areas:

15 Answers

Well-being & Work Conditions

Create a Wellbeing Policy and Guidelines, including existing initiatives and new procedures (e.g., manager response to team member distress)

Provide access to a wellbeing platform, with chat support and free psychological counselling

Improve working tools and software for researchers (e.g., updated data analysis tools)

Promote realistic yet positive expectation management, possibly through training

Ensure equal access to benefits (e.g., health insurance, car charging) for all staff, including PhD and MSc students

Performance & Career Development

Implement a centralized Performance Review System with:

- Goal tracking, 1:1 logs, peer/self/manager evaluations
- PIPs (Personal Improvement Plans) linked to the employee profile

Offer seminars and workshops on career development, transition, and change

Extend contract durations for non-permanent staff to allow measurable impact

Broaden evaluation and promotion criteria to include outreach and collaboration

Provide fast-track onboarding for new researchers

Please share with us actions that could have a positive impact in these areas:

15 Answers

Leadership & Organizational Culture

Launch a Leadership Program to support fair and effective team management

Promote more transparent and inclusive implementation of strategic HR frameworks (Pillars II & III)

Encourage community consultation before implementing new policies or protocols

Address inconsistent practices across research groups with proactive HR engagement

Consider external consultancy support (e.g., McKinsey) to define long-term HR strategy

Communication, Inclusion & Recognition

Improve HR responsiveness and visibility across all levels

Increase transparency in decisions (e.g., salaries, evaluations, recruitment)

Recognize the contribution of non-permanent staff and graduate students (symbolic payments, laptops)

Support diversity in scientific programming, expanding beyond current focus areas

Ensure accessibility, inclusion, and disability support are actively addressed