

ACTION PLAN
Update December 2024

Acronyms:

- RAD: Research Administration Department
- QUAT: Quality Assurance Team
- VRR: Vice-Rector for Research
- HRD: Human Resources Department
- DSEM: Direction de la Sécurité, l'Environnement et la Mobilité
- IPA : Insertion professionnelle et Alumni
- DSI : Direction des Services Informatiques
- PSS: Parliament of the Scientific Staff
- SC: Scientific Council
- IRD: International Relations Department
- WG: Working group
- MUMONS : Department for Scientific dissemination to the public
- DI : Department Infrastructure
- CRECH : Conseil de Recherche
- SDC : Sustainable Development Council

This document provides a summary of the work accomplished over the past three years in the implementation of the action plan related to UMONS' HRS4R.

As the format for encoding actions does not allow the inclusion of attachments or links. These supporting materials have been compiled in a document annexed to provide evaluators with a comprehensive overview of the progress made since the last reporting cycle.

| Title action | Timing | Resp. Unit | Remarks | Current status | Indicators |
|---|-------------|------------|--|----------------|---|
| 1. Improving recurring communication strategy to all researchers | End of 2022 | RAD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - New RAD web site (intranet) with all information about funding opportunities, mobility and IP issues - Videos (“Tutos de l’AVRE”) explaining various subjects such as Dual use-Misuse, Open science, PhD, ... - Videos of presentation of Research institutes of UMONS - Update of the pages containing useful information for researchers in the UMONS web site <p>These four sub-actions have been completed. The format for encoding actions does not allow the inclusion of attachments or links. Therefore, these supporting materials have been compiled into a document appended to this internal review.</p> <p>The number of views can be accessed through the referenced YouTube links.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numbers of videos - Target : 10/year • Numbers of views/visit webpages/video - Target : 1000 views /year during 2022 year then stabilisation |
| 2. Increasing awareness on UMONS mission statement and societal commitments | 2023 | QAT | <p>Formalization of UMONS’ policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A new Strategic note of UMONS (Charter of Quality, Gender Policy, OTM-R Policy) will be prepared for the coming election of a new rectoral team (2023) <p>The Rector, Philippe Dubois, was elected in April 2022 for the next four academic years (01/10/2022 to 30/09/2026). His strategic note is published on the University’s website, along with the Gender and Diversity Plan and the Sustainable Development Charter (see links in the compiled document).</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Redaction of the new strategic note |

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| 3. Developing the mentorship of young PhD students | End of 2022 | PSS IPA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extension of the Program Ment'Out (mentoring program concerning the PhD students who are considering a professional career outside the academic world) - Development of a mentoring program for integration into the academic career <p>(1) Specifically designed for future PhD holders, Team Mentorat/Team Mentorship aims to support junior researchers across all scientific research fields in developing and refining their career plans, whether within the academic scientific community or beyond, in the private, public, or nonprofit sectors.</p> <p>(2) A specific mentoring program has not been established. However, the Educational Support Service offers a comprehensive training curriculum to assist new faculty members.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of Mentors (15 for the moment) • Numbers of mentees (10 for the moment) - Target: increase of 5 % per year |
| 4. Developing doctoral programs for PhD students | November 2021 (catalogue) End 2023 (evaluation of participation) | IPA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Setting up of a new training program catalogue on transferable skills (Communication Research, Tools and Data management Resilience & Well-Being Teaching Practices Entrepreneurship Career Management) <p>The implementation of the transversal training program has been a success, both in terms of the number of high-quality trainings offered annually to early-career researchers, the involvement of various UMONS departments in proposing these trainings, and the strong interest shown by researchers themselves in these initiatives.</p> <p>Participation data for these trainings is collected by the IPA service at the end of each session.</p> <p>Number of trainings organized: 2021-2022 : 16 2022 - 2023 : 30 2023-2024 (=> June) : 33</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence and dissemination of the Catalogue • Number of participants/training <p>Target : on average 8 participants/training</p> |

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| <p>5. Setting up an Ethical Standard Commissions</p> | <p>2023</p> | <p>VRR</p> | <p>- A charter on ethical issues will be drafted by the Commission of Ethics</p> <p>The charter has been drafted and will be published soon (after validation by the Board of Directors).</p> <p>It is also worth noting that UMONS established an Ethics and Deontology Committee by decision of the Board of Directors on 13/10/2014. This committee was expanded in 2017 with the addition of the Research Integrity Committee. The Vice-Rector for Research chairs both committees.</p> <p>UMONS is also a member of the Higher Council for Scientific Integrity (CSIS), which is based within the Royal Academies of Belgium.</p> <p>Additionally, two faculty ethics committees provide oversight in specific areas:</p> <p>The Ethics Committee for Research in Humanities & Social Sciences, affiliated with the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences.</p> <p>The Ethics Committee for Animal Experimentation, affiliated with the Faculty of Medicine, Pharmacy, and Biomedical Sciences.</p> <p>Furthermore, ethics and integrity issues are now part of a broader dynamic, through UMONS' membership in the CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment).</p> | <p>Completed</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the Charter on ethical issues |

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| 6. Intellectual Property Rights | End of 2022 | RAD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Intellectual Property Day will be organised in 2022 - Efforts are made to sensitize our researchers about IP (information available on intranet, permanences in the different faculty, special courses) - Regulations on intellectual property that stipulate the means of protecting and exploiting the results obtained within the walls of the University and under its responsibility. <p>Intellectual Property Day was organized in 2022 and 2024.</p> <p>UMONS, as a PATLIB Centre*, provides practical assistance and advice on all issues related to intellectual property. The RAD regularly organizes seminars and information sessions for researchers (particularly within the framework of the Entrepreneurial Pathway, the welcome day for new PhD students), SMEs, and research centers to raise awareness about intellectual property protection.</p> <p>As a PATLIB center, UMONS submits an annual report that includes a list of the training sessions, office hours, etc., organized, as well as the number of inquiries received.</p> <p>The intellectual property policy is signed by every new staff member.</p> <p>*PATLIB is the name given to the European network of regional Intellectual Property information centers, under the supervision of the national patent offices of each member state.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of participants to the IP Day/Trainings/Permanences - Target : 30% of researchers per year • Number of cases concerning IP issues handled |
| 7. Revising HSR4R policy taking OTM-R into account | 2023 | HRD CSI | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The importance of the OTM-R principles and the HRS4R philosophy being integrated into the institutional strategy was stressed to the authorities, in particular the Rector. A new strategy note will be prepared in the context of the election of the new rector (or renewal of the current one). <p>Mention in the strategy note of the Administrator Training for managers (management, recruitment biases...).</p> <p>Production of an awareness-raising document (+ communications about) on the principles of OTM-R recruitment, accessible on a continuous basis.</p> <p>New timing => 2025</p> | In progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explicit mention in the new strategic note • Production of an awareness-raising webinar on the principles of OTM-R recruitment, accessible on a continuous basis |

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| | | | Furthermore, this subject is also part of a broader dynamic, through UMONS' membership in the CoARA (Coalition for Advancing Research Assessment) via the WP 1 "Defining the new ways and means of Research assessment" | | |
| 8. Expanding the distribution channels for job offers | January 2022 | HRD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase openness to international recruitment of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers (obligation for the Cofund C2W project) - Creation of a template for the job description, in order to help and standardize the recruitment of researchers, based on the template proposed by DRH and taking into account OTMR principles | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of a template for the job description, of guidelines about how to publish a job offer on Euraxess • Proportion of job description not explicitly compliant with OTMR principles : Target : constant diminution |
| 9. Completing the current 'Employment' page | 2022 | HRD RAD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Web page dedicated to scientific career at UMONS and link to information for Foreign students and Euraxess - Improving communication about those issues | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of new communication tools/channels |
| 10. Pooling of selection resources and tools for head of units in charge of recruiting | 2021-2022 | HRD | <p>HRD give assistance "on demand" for recruiting process <i>Further actions planned:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a section concerning good practices on recruitment will be inserted in the "vademecum" of Heads of departments - Creation of a "list of good practices" for recruitment based on OTM-R principles - Creation of a handbook for recruitment of researchers under EU funded projects <p>New Timing 2025-2026</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a e-book and e-learning about the use of OTM-(e)R principles in recruitment. - Training for managers (management, recruitment biases...). - HR contact for managers | Extended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation of the number of "on demand" assistances • Proportion of recruitment procedures not explicitly compliant with OTMR principles : Target : constant diminution • Template and guide created and made available. |

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| 11. Systematizing the preparation of a recruitment report (form) | 2022 | HRD | <p><i>Further actions planned:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of a set of indicators for the monitoring of recruitment process, with some researchers' categories (UMONS contracts, FNRS fellowships, assistants/researchers) - Apply this set of indicators for recruitment under EU funded projects - Identification of targets for the monitoring <p style="color: green;">- Raising awareness of IA. New timing 2025-2026</p> | Extended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of forms and interview templates + user guide. • Existence of a satisfaction survey on the recruitment services offered by the HRD. |
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|---|--------|-------------|--|------------------|---|
| 12. Setting up a Commission for Gender Equality | 2022 | Specific WG | <p>Gender Action Plan will be achieved by the beginning of 2022</p> <p style="color: green;">The Gender and Diversity Plan was adopted in March 2022.</p> <p style="color: green;">Work on the Gender and Diversity theme is primarily carried out through a dedicated working group/Commission: the Equal Opportunities WG. This group aims to advance the actions of UMONS' Gender and Diversity Plan, as well as other actions related to issues of disability and social inclusion.</p> <p style="color: green;">Reflection and awareness-raising also rely on the Gender.S Think Tank, which organizes (among other things) an annual scientific day focused on a theme related to discrimination and implicit bias issues.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of the Action Plan |
| 13. Identifying possible working arrangements | 2022 | HRD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Development of the homeworking during the pandemic and reflexion after the pandemic - Guides (homeworking and well-being during the pandemic, work and team organization after the pandemic...)& surveys+ ongoing support available from the HRD. <p style="color: green;">- Well-being survey by an external organization. (Cohezio, see Working conditions)</p> <p style="color: green;">- Trainings about well-being, time or stress management...).</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of a guide on homeworking • Training, advice and support for heads of department available from the HRD |

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| 14. Promoting a preventive approach to conflicts | 2024 | DRH DSEM | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appointment of “confidence persons” internal to the institution. - Possibility to contact an external prevention advisor. - Training for managers <p>HR contact for managers. Confidential counselors are identified, and their contact details are accessible via the intranet. The external prevention agency Cohezio is well-known among staff members. Management training programs have been established.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organisation of a new training for managers • Number of contact and follow-up with confidence person and the prevention advisor (regular reporting to the Ministry of Employment, Labour and social dialogue) |
| 15. Actively participating in the inter-university group identifying legal obstacles to mobility | 2022 | HRD- RAD | <p>UMONS participates regularly to the Euraxess Steering Committee coordinated by CRef (<i>Conseil des Recteurs</i>) and to other dedicated working groups</p> <p>The thematic meetings on mobility issues were held at the ARES (Academy of Research and Higher Education) and the CRef (Council of Rectors). UMONS is regularly represented at these meetings. UMONS is also actively involved in the EURAXESS CoPil. Minutes of the meetings, including attendance, can be provided upon request.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proportion of participation to the meetings Target: minimum 80% |

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| 16. Better formalization and visibility of academic paths and individual achievements | 2022 | RAD | <p>Implementation of a new tool (Sophia software) for automatically generating activity reports and CVs (teaching activities included). Researchers could directly interact and extract reports.</p> <p>Sophia is a knowledge management software tailored for technology transfer offices. It was deployed by the RAD in order to centralize all the administrative details of research projects, agreements and patents in which the University is involved. It also allows to improve the follow up of projects for the TTOs thanks to its notification system. The database is also connected to several in-house apps made to generate activity reports and CVs for the researchers.</p> <p>Sophia was deployed in December 2021 and is constantly getting upgrades based on the needs of the researchers, head of research units, administrations, etc..</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence of the new tool |

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| <p>17. Supporting the management of the teams in the research departments</p> | <p>Continuous</p> | <p>VRR HRD RAD</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - HRD provides on demand to heads of departments information about external trainings for team manager. - Training catalogue available <p>HR contact for managers</p> | <p>Completed</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of the yearly catalogue and availability to all staff. <i>Rmq : This catalogue is evolving and is adapted according to the feedback from the staff.</i> • Number of trainings <i>Rmq : The figures for the last few years are not indicative (COVID 2020/21 situation) It is also difficult to estimate the number of training courses taken by scientific departments because they are often managed independently by the requesting department.</i> |

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| 18. Supporting and valorizing mobility | 2023 | RAD IRD | <p>- “Fonds Franeau” financially supports the mobility of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers. This tool is managed by the UMONS’s Research Council.</p> <p>The allocated budget is €20,000 per year. In addition, for the past two years, a FWB Doctoral Mobility Fellowship call has been introduced, with a budget of €10,049 already used.</p> <p>In addition to the available funds, support for researchers in their mobility activities has been provided through the dissemination of targeted news on funding tools, assistance with proposal preparation, an enriched intranet site, and a brochure on international mobility.</p> | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evolution of funds dedicated to doctoral and post-doc researchers’ mobility <p>Target : increase of minimum 2,5%/year during 2 year</p> |
| 19. Improving access to research training and ongoing development | November 2022 | PSS, RAD, QAT IPA | <p>- Setting up of a new training program catalogue : transferable skills (project management,, proposal writing, communication skills, Intellectual Property issues, Entrepreneurship, Technology Transfer, Responsible Research, Career development) Teaching practices and skills, Language courses)</p> <p>In addition to the “classic” training catalog, specific courses have been added to the training offer.</p> <p>The “Entrepreneurial Pathway” specifically targets the researcher-entrepreneur profile at UMONS.</p> <p>The Educational Support Service (SAP = Service d’appui pédagogique) provides training specifically oriented towards pedagogic issues.</p> <p>As part of its C2W Cofund project, UMONS has also developed a two-day residential seminar format (Spring/Winter school) aimed at postdoctoral researchers.</p> | Completed | Existence of the Catalogue |

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| 20. Further developing PhD-specific initiatives | 2022 | VRR RAD | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Creation of a PhD College aimed to coordinate activities linked to the PhD, offering to PhD Students and their promoters visibility and place of expression. - Doctoral fellowships, financial support at the end of the thesis and dissertation thesis grant. Measure managed by the UMONS's Research Council - Perpetuation of a "mois du doctorant" (The aims were to highlight the work carried out by our PhD Students and to inform younger students (BAC) about research). <p>The PhD College serves as the coordination body for PhD-related activities, providing PhD students and their supervisors with visibility and a platform for expression. It meets four times a year. Meeting reports are available internally.</p> <p>The thesis defense award continues as part of the Research Council's initiatives.</p> <p>Each year, a month is dedicated to highlighting the PhD journey, featuring various activities such as a welcome day and courses delivered to Bachelor's and Master's students by PhD candidates. In 2024, a promotional video was created.</p> | COMPLETED | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evolution of allocated budget : Target : increase of minimum 2,5%/year • Number of meetings of the PhD College Target : minimum 4/year • PhD's Level of participation (and evaluation) Target : increase of 15%/year during 2 years then stabilisation |

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| 21. Information on career development opportunities | 2022 | RAD, HRD IPA | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reorganization of the Professional Integration and Alumni department with the creation of a specific post for the professional integration of doctoral and post-doctoral students - Systematic publication of job and internship offers on UMONS Career center platform. - Regular information on social media. - Newsletter « <i>Votre Projet Emploi</i> » - Sharing experiences through interviews with alumni (video) <p>The service includes a dedicated career advisor, and job postings on the UMONS platform are efficiently managed. The service also has a dedicated Facebook page and regularly publishes a newsletter and interview updates. Additionally, training sessions are organized, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How to Succeed in a Job Interview (outside academia)? with tips from “PaRHtners”, a company specializing in recruiting PhD profiles. - Preparing for Life After Your PhD: Navigating the Job Market with Confidence - Job Market Trends for Young Researchers: A workshop to explore job opportunities for PhD graduates. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of new registrations on the UMONS Career Center for the 2022-2023 academic year compared to 2021-2022: +49.7% ▪ Number of job offers (JobTeaser and private) posted via the UMONS Career Center for the 2022-2023 academic year compared to 2021-2022: +87% ▪ Number of clicks on job offers (JobTeaser and private) posted via the UMONS Career Center for the 2022-2023 academic year compared to 2021-2022: +32% ▪ Number of interviews in the 2022-2023 academic year: +/-10 | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistics of new registrations on the platform Target : increase of 10%/year • Statistics of consultations of the published job offers Target : 10 clicks/offer • Number of registration on event Target : minimum 1000/year • Number of video/interview : 10/year |

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| <p>22. Enhancing the quality of working conditions</p> | <p>2024</p> | <p>DI</p> | <p>- New infrastructures Acquisition and renovation of a 13,000 m2 building that will house the students and staff of the School of Law and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences</p> <p>The new building (Rosa Parks) was inaugurated in the fall of 2022. Several administrative services and student-focused departments are now housed there, including Admissions, International Relations, Continuing Education, Audiovisual Services, and the administrative unit of the Hainu region hub, as well as several classrooms.</p> <p>A new building (Kennedy) was also inaugurated in in September 2024, which houses support and advisory services for students (and PhD candidates), such as U-Help, U-Psy, Les Cèdres, DAE, as well as the University Press and the campus store.</p> <p>In addition, work has been carried out to improve the energy efficiency of certain buildings.</p> <p>A new center will also be built on the Plaine de Nimy site to house a university platform supporting the Center for Eco-Technologies and New Materials.</p> | <p>Completed</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existence and real use of this new class rooms, study rooms and offices |

Actions added in 2021

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| <p>23. Improving the welcoming procedure for newly hired international researchers</p> | <p>2022</p> | <p>RAD</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication from the welcome desk for international researchers helping them to the integration and supporting them for all their administrative procedures (mutual, bank, housing, taxes...) via a Teams platform - Organization of 1 welcoming event (city tour) and 1 social event during the academic year <p>The TEAMS platform is regularly used to share useful information with international researchers.</p> <p>The TEAMS channel, however, requires reevaluation as interactions remain limited.</p> <p>In addition, the intranet pages have been enhanced with a Genially module addressing frequently asked questions (module currently being finalized).</p> <p>EURAXESS statistics are recorded biannually on the Euraxess platform.</p> <p>Regarding event organization, it is divided between dedicated events and invitations to participate in activities designed for the researcher community (particularly PhD students) and for the whole UMONS community.</p> <p>For example:</p> <p>Christmas Event</p> <p>PhD House Events: Halloween Party, Board Game Night</p> <p>Afterworks for UMONS staff: 2-3 are held per year.</p> <p>These events started in 2019, with a break during the COVID period, of course. On average, the afterworks attract 250-300 people, with the two main ones being the end-of-year event at the Christmas market and the one organized during the “Ducasse de Mons”. This last one is generally the most successful, with nearly 600 participants in 2024</p> | <p>In progress</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Euraxess Statistics : Evolution of the number of demands by thematic • Number of participants to event : Target : minimum 30/year • Number of publications and reactions via Teams group Target: minimum 2 publications/months |

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| 24. In the framework of the C2W Project, setting up of a quality management system. | 2024-2026 | RAD | <p>- This quality management system should serve as a building block to improve other institution's projects.</p> <p>As part of the Cofund – C2W project, a selection procedure based on the evaluation by an external jury of three experts was implemented. This procedure is detailed on the project's website and was positively assessed by the European Commission.</p> <p>At this stage, the C2W project is still ongoing, and the reproducibility of these procedures at the institutional level has yet to be established.</p> | Extended | Assessment of the tools put in place and reproducibility |
| 25. Implementation of a new platform for the presentation of research, including research units and platforms | 2023 | RAD DSI Research units | The research units and institutional/technological platforms have their own personalized websites (see example in the annexed document). | Completed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Number of websites developed. Target : all units and platforms Existence of the platform |
| 26. Development and implementation of a career development and training programme for postdoctoral researchers | 2023 | RAD HRD IPA | <p>Organisation of summer school in the framework of the C2W project Sustainability of this type of training</p> <p>As part of the Cofund – C2W project, a specific training program was developed, leveraging the expertise available in the research valorization offices of both universities (The materials used for these two-day seminars are available upon request) and incorporating additional outsourced training sessions.</p> <p>At this stage, the C2W project is still ongoing, and the reproducibility of these training programs at the institutional level has yet to be established.</p> | Extended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wide availability of the summer school programme Accessibility of the database of the various speakers |

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| 27. Raise awareness and promote Open Science culture and practices | 2022 | | <p>Organisation of webinars</p> <p>Since 2022, an annual training session on open science has been organized, with a consistent participation rate.</p> <p>Work on this important topic continues through the following sub-actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Promote Open Access Publications: Encourage researchers to publish in Open Access by providing clear guidance and tools for institutional repository submissions. ▪ Develop Best Practices: Provide a comprehensive document on good practices in research data management to guide researchers in handling and sharing their data responsibly. ▪ Enhance Research Data Impact: Implement and maintain a robust tool to support Open Data practices, ensuring data accessibility, long-term usability, and compliance with evolving standards. ▪ Encourage the Use of DMPs: Promote Data Management Plans (DMPs) as essential tools for long-term data planning, usage, and valorization, while supporting their adoption through dedicated training and user-friendly tools. | Extended | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of webinars and events Target : minimum 2/year • Number of views of webinars and podcasts Target : at least 30% of researchers have been informed |

NEW Actions 2024 (see document annexed)