# Clara

**CLARA**

**Center for Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing in System Brain Research**

## Deliverable 4.1
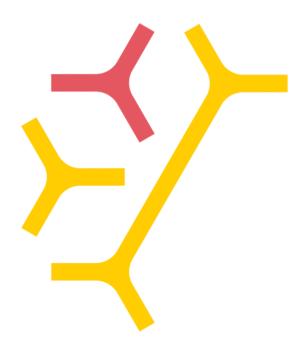
## Title: HR Strategy

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**Disclaimer**

## Document Status – History of Changes

| Version | Date | Contributor(s) | Description of Changes |
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| v0.1 | 03/06/2025 | Vít Dočkal | First draft. |
| v0.2 | 20/06/2025 | Kastner Pies, Vít Dočkal | Revised version shared with contributors-internal round of revisions at the task level. Applicability provisions amended and clarified. |
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| v2.0 | 14/07/2025 | Vít Dočkal, Petr Šamánek | Version approved at WP level. |
| v3.0 | 26/07/2025 | Vít Dočkal | Version approved at Project level. |
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## Document Keywords

| HR Strategy, HR Award, Excellence, talent, mentor, career |
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## Confidentiality

| Does this report contain confidential information? | Yes ☐    No ☑ |
|---|---|
| Is the report restricted to a specific group? | Yes ☐    No ☑<br>*If yes, please precise the list of authorized recipients*: |

# Table of Contents

# 1 Executive Summary

*To be shared with Partners of International Neurodegenerative Disorders Research Center (INDRC) and the CLARA Project. Compliant with Horizon Europe and EU Research Development Standards.*

The INDRC and CLARA are committed to building a world-class research environment where scientific excellence and societal relevance are powered by a workplace culture rooted in fairness, inclusion, and purpose. Our Human Resources and People Plan (HRPP) seeks to align fully with the principles and requirements of Horizon Europe, the European Charter for Researchers, and the European Pillar of Social Rights. It reflects both our duty to meet high EU standards and our aspiration to foster careers of enduring impact, integrity, and pride.

**Strategic Objectives**

- Attract and retain top talent through Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R).
- Ensure gender equity and inclusive opportunity via a resourced and monitored Gender Equality Plan (GEP).
- Promote ethical research and integrity, including "Do No Harm" strategies and responsible innovation.
- Support fulfilling career development, with clear pathways, mentoring, and recognition for excellence.
- Protect working conditions and wellbeing, grounded in fair labor practices and proactive organizational health.

**Core Features**

- Transparent recruitment with public postings and bias-aware selection panels.
- Structured mentoring and individualized development plans (IDPs) for all staff.
- Formalized ethics training, an independent research integrity, and reward mechanisms for exemplary conduct.
- Gender parity targets for leadership and research teams, with inclusive workplace supports.
- Commitment to achieving the HR Excellence in Research (HRS4R) designation within the first year of plan implementation.

**Impact**

By prioritizing a positive, enabling people culture, this Policy ensures that INDRC and CLARA will not only meet EU compliance standards but also distinguish themselves as beacons of research excellence and human-centered innovation in Europe. Our Policy is a living commitment to those who make our mission possible — our researchers, staff, and collaborators — and a demonstration of readiness for the future of European science and health leadership.

## 2  Motivation and General Goals

CLARA is the first interdisciplinary Center of Excellence in Central and Eastern Europe that focuses on the next generation of artificial intelligence and machine learning applications and quantum-centric supercomputing tools to push the frontier of neurodegeneration research. As the new international center of research and innovation excellence, it has its human resource policy at the forefront of its activities. People are the most valuable and competitive resource needed for achieving the goals of excellence building. Therefore, the ability of CLARA to offer attractive scientific career opportunities is one of the cornerstones of the CLARA vision.

The INDRC and the CLARA Project recognize that excellence in scientific discovery and societal innovation begins with excellence in people. This Policy reflects our commitment to the highest European standards for research institutions as articulated especially in the:

- European Charter for Researchers,
- Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers,
- Horizon Europe Guidelines on Gender Equality Plans,
- European Human Resources Strategy for Researchers,
- European Pillar of Social Rights.

This Policy sets forth a holistic, forward-looking framework to attract, develop, support, and retain diverse and exceptional talent, ensuring that our research environment is one in which all individuals can pursue fulfilling, impactful careers with dignity, fairness, and opportunity.

We strive to cultivate a workplace culture where:

- Researchers and staff are respected, protected, and enabled to grow;
- Careers in science and administration are fulfilling, purpose-driven, and resilient;
- Inclusion, transparency, and ethical conduct are deeply embedded in institutional life;
- Collaborative work and individual excellence are equally valued;
- The pursuit of impact — in health, policy, and society — is recognized and celebrated.

<div align="center">

"People First for Scientific Excellence, Equity, and Impact."
"Our People. Our Power. Our Purpose."

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## 2.1  Definitions

For the purpose of this Policy:

**CLARA** means project Center for Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing in System Brain Research.

**CLARA Director** means a person who was appointed as a director or interim director of the CLARA Project by INDRC.

**Director** means INDRC Director or CLARA Director or a director of any other branch, unit or project created under the INDRC. Each Director shall exercise the rights and responsibilities of a Director under this Policy with respect to the specific branch, unit, or project they oversee. When this Policy instructs INDRC Personnel to contact "the Director", it shall be understood to mean the Director of the branch, unit, or project to which the INDRC Personnel are assigned.

**Foreground** means project results, whether technical, scientific, commercial or educational, generated within CLARA Project.

**GEP** means Gender Equality Plan.

HR means Human Resources

**HRPP** means Human Resources and People Plan.

**HRPP Committee** means an INDRC/CLARA body responsible for the Annual employee assessment, which is consisted of INDRC Director or COO (for CLARA), Ethics and Security Experts, and related HR staff.

**HRS4R** means Human Resources Strategy for Researcher

**HR Award** means HR Excellence in Research Award

**INDRC** means International Neurodegenerative Disorders Research Center, zapsaný ústav and its branches, units or projects created under the INDRC, or projects which are under the supervision of INDRC, including CLARA, or project on which INDRC cooperates with other organizations.

**INDRC Director** means a person who was appointed an executive director of INDRC.

**INDRC Personnel or you** mean any employee,  or member of any governing, supervisory or advisory body of INDRC and CLARA Personnel. For the purposes of this definition, individuals providing expert services to INDRC, in relation to the scope of the INDRC activities (and not acting as a Third Party) shall also be considered INDRC Personnel.

**Policy** means this HRPP.

# 3 Pillars of the HRPP

## 3.1 Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R)

Goal: Recruit world-class talent through fair, evidence-based, and inclusive processes.

Commitments:

- All positions publicly advertised (e.g., via INDRC and CLARA websites, paid advertisements, EURAXESS), using inclusive and gender-neutral language.
- Clearly defined job profiles and descriptions with transparent selection criteria and evaluation matrices.
- Selection committees that are gender-balanced and trained in bias mitigation.
- Set objective and impartial criteria for the candidates' assessments during the recruitment process.
- Fair feedback provided to all applicants, supporting researcher mobility and reputation.

## 3.2 Gender Equality and Inclusive Opportunity

Goal: Ensure structural and cultural support for gender equality and intersectional fairness.

Commitments:

- A fully compliant and resourced Gender Equality Plan (GEP, see D2.2) with regular reporting.
- Collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated and intersectional HR data.
- Targets and action plans for gender parity in leadership, research teams, and governance bodies.
- Family-friendly workplace provisions (e.g., parental leave, flexible arrangements, care support).
- Integration of sex/gender analysis into research content and proposals.
- Equal-pay and access to opportunities and promotions strategy.

## 3.3 Talent Development, Career Pathways, and Recognition

Goal: Foster long-term, meaningful careers through professional development and recognition.

Commitments:

- Each staff member has an Individual Development Plan (IDP) aligned with institutional goals and personal aspirations.
- Structured access to training (e.g., leadership, data science, commercialization, ethics).
- Internal and cross-border mobility opportunities through EU fellowships and exchanges.
- A Mentoring and Coaching Program tailored to early-career researchers, women in STEM, and under-represented groups.
- Annual awards for outstanding contributions in research, mentoring, equity, and public engagement.

Funded by
the European Union

CLARA - Center for Artificial Intelligence and Quantum Computing in System Brain Research
*Deliverable 4.1: HR Strategy*

Clara

## 3.4 Research Integrity, Responsibility, and Do No Harm

Goal: Embed ethics, transparency, and social responsibility into the fabric of research (see D2.4 incl. Annexes).

Commitments:

- Mandatory ethics and research integrity training aligned with the ALLEA Code of Conduct.
- Appointment of an Independent Research Integrity Ombudsperson.
- Integration of Do No Harm and Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles in all projects.
- Reward systems for ethical leadership, transparency, and responsible authorship.

## 3.5 Working Conditions and Organizational Health

Goal: Provide employment conditions that safeguard worker rights, security, and well-being.

Commitments:

- Employment contracts aligned with applicable laws and fair employment standards.
- Equal pay for equal work, across all roles and identities.
- Whistleblower protections, grievance procedures, and anti-harassment safeguards.
- Periodic workplace climate surveys to monitor satisfaction, safety, and inclusion and asses mental health, stress management, and workplace wellness.

# 4 Monitoring, Accountability, and Continuous Improvement

| Mechanism | Function |
|---|---|
| Annual employee assessment | Includes immediate supervisor, senior executives (COO), Ethics and Security Experts, and related HR staff if needed |
| Annual HR and GEP Report to the HRPP Committee | Transparent reporting of gender, equity, and development metrics. Includes senior executives (COO), Ethics and Security Experts, and related HR staff if needed |
| Biennial Staff Climate Survey | Tracks perceptions of fairness, inclusion, and career satisfaction |
| External Peer Review (every 3 years) | Ensures alignment with Horizon Europe and European Commision research employment standards |

The INDRC will seek formal designation under the HRS4R "HR Excellence in Research" award by Year 3 of this Policy.

# 5    Applicability

Provisions and commitments in this HR Strategy are mandatory for INDRC as the CLARA coordinator. Other CLARA partners remain free to maintain their existing HR policies and procedures, provided they support the core HR principles outlined in this Strategy. Partners with comparable HR frameworks will be considered aligned with this Strategy. Partners are specifically not required to adopt provisions that conflict with their established HR practices, and may voluntarily adopt additional elements from this Strategy that enhance their existing standards. All provisions remain subject to applicable legal regulations, which take precedence in cases of conflict.

# 6    Closing Commitment

The INDRC and CLARA Project view this Policy not merely as a compliance tool, but as a core expression of our identity as a modern, ethical, and globally engaged research institution. We believe that a workplace built on trust, dignity, and opportunity produces science that is more innovative, more relevant, and more capable of delivering meaningful health outcomes to society.

We welcome collaboration, transparency, and benchmarking with other EU and global institutions, and we pledge to make our Policy a living document that evolves with the aspirations of our people and the needs of the communities we serve.