



## Strategic Plan for the Incorporation and Stabilization of Research Talent

Agreement of the Governing Council, at an ordinary session on March 21, 2024, approving the Strategic Plan for the Incorporation and Stabilization of Research Talent at the University of Cordoba.

### Strategic Plan for the Incorporation and Stabilization of Research Talent

The 2021-2027 Spanish Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation defines as one of its main lines of action (Axis 7) *"To establish mechanisms to attract research, technological and innovative talent to companies, industries and R&D&I centers, facilitating the mobility of researchers in both the public and private sectors."* The incorporation of research talent is key to boosting the productivity of universities and research centers, understood as personnel with the capacity to capture funds in the context of competitive calls, with scientific influence and renown, and with the ability to integrate new lines of research and/or strengthen existing ones. In addition, the stabilization of research talent represents a measure to rejuvenate teaching and research staff, thereby guaranteeing generational renewal without undermining scientific competitiveness.

Complementarily, the recruitment and selection of research staff is one of the four blocks into which the 40 principles set down in the European Charter for Researchers are distributed. This Charter is a set of general principles and requirements specifying the roles, responsibilities and rights of researchers, as well as of those entities that employ and/or fund them [1]. Several of these principles are geared towards recruitment (Principle 12), selection (Principle 14), merit assessment (Principle 16), the recognition of mobility (Principle 18), the recognition of assessments (Principle 19) and postdoctoral agreements (Principle 21). Compliance with these principles, together with guaranteed transparency in the recruitment process, the equal treatment of researchers, and the implementation of open, transparent and merit-based researcher recruitment practices, are key to obtaining the HRS4R Excellence in Research Seal.

There are currently several strategies for attracting, incorporating and retaining research talent through calls, whether international (Marie Skłodowska Curie Actions), national (Ramón y Cajal and Juan de la Cierva programs) or regional (Emergia). These processes are complemented by the evaluation of research activity by means of the R3 Certificate, whose purpose is to assess the careers of national and foreign researchers within the framework of a postdoctoral itinerary of access to the Spanish System of Science, Technology and Innovation in such a way that it yields recognition of their quality and independence as researchers, thereby complying with the European profile of an established researcher (R3).

In a complementary manner, the UCO, within the framework of its internal Enrique

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Aguilar Benítez de Lugo Research Plan, offers several submodalities for scientific training (Seed Grants, Predoctoral Contracts and Postdoctoral Contracts) to generate research talent. In addition, the university's internal plan proposes specific submodalities for junior researchers to spearhead R+D+I actions with a view to excelling in evaluations such as the R3 Certificate, in which leadership is identified as a relevant criterion for one to be considered an established researcher.

As described in the Program of the University of Cordoba's current Governance Team, a key objective in Science Policy is the **Promotion of Talent Attraction and Stabilization as a basis for research groups and their future career paths**. Therefore, this document sets down a strategic plan to support and regulate the attraction, incorporation and retention of research talent at the UCO, covering different situations identified as priorities for adequate human resources management. This Strategic Plan aims to strengthen the UCO's research groups, incorporate new lines of research in areas in need of them, and contribute to generational renewal at our University.

The following are its needs, in terms of attracting talent, based on the different causes determining them:

### 1. The attraction, incorporation and stabilization of research talent at the University of Cordoba through postdoctoral programs of excellence, or postdoctoral links.

Each academic year the Vice-Rectorate charged with overseeing Scientific Policy will draw up a list of all those doctoral staff who are completing or have completed postdoctoral programs of excellence, indicating the start and expected end dates of each contract, as well as the Departments and areas of knowledge in which they have carried out their activities, receiving the information corresponding to this staff at the time of their incorporation at the UCO. This list will be at the disposal of the Vice-Rectorate charged with overseeing Teaching and Research Staff (TRS/PDI), which will inform departments' administrations of the incorporation of any and all research personnel into this plan through compliance with any of its modalities.


#### 1.1. *The recruitment and stabilization of persons hired within the framework of postdoctoral programs of excellence with a commitment to stabilization.*

For the stabilization of the postdoctoral group included in this section, the University of Cordoba will proceed to allocate in its public job listings at least 15% of the total number of positions it offers, within the limit of the replacement rate, to Full Professors (*Catedráticos de Universidad*), Associate Professors (*Profesores Titulares de Universidad*), and PhD Assistant Professors (*Profesores Contratados Doctores*) for their incorporation in the categories for which each is accredited. The general requirement to qualify for this stabilization plan is to have a positive evaluation in the Program to obtain the R3 Certificate (previously I3). The prioritization in the allocation of positions is that which is set down in this document, in order of appearance. When there are multiple researchers at the same level who meet the requirements in the same Area of Knowledge, the Vice-Rectorate charged with overseeing TRS will create a list ranking these professionals according to the date on which they obtained a positive R3 evaluations, as a second prioritization criterion.

#### 1.1.1 *Beneficiaries of the Ramón y Cajal program.*

The Ramón y Cajal Program is a leader and model with reference to the incorporation of researchers of recognized excellence. To encourage the beneficiaries of Ramón y Cajal contracts to opt for the University of Cordoba to do their research, the following actions have been slated:

- The allocation of a faculty position in the Area of Knowledge and Department in which one is assigned, according to the researcher's accreditation - Full Professor (*Catedrático*), Associate Professor (*Titular*) or PhD Assistant Professors (*Profesor Contratado Doctor/PCD*) - including as a requirement compliance with the

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r3 Certificate quality criteria. In the event that the accreditation or R3 Certificate requirements are not yet met, the researcher's contract will be extended up to a maximum of 2 years, provided that the maximum duration legally established for the modality of the researcher's contract is not exceeded. The allocation of the position may be requested once the third year of one's contract has been completed.

- The provisioning of a Trainee Researcher (PIF) contract associated with the Ramón y Cajal contract, for three years, with a view to completing a doctoral thesis, to help the researcher implement his/her lines of research.

- Equalization with the remuneration of the interim PhD Assistant Professor (PCD) in the event that the salary associated with the Ramón y Cajal contract is lower than the former.

- As of the third year, equalization with the figure of interim PhD Assistant Professor, for all purposes, with the remuneration specified in the previous point, and with the teaching load limit indicated in their contract.

- The possibility of requesting the evaluation of six-year research periods (*sexenios*) as of the third year of the contract, without financial remuneration.

In relation to the teaching capacity of Ramón y Cajal personnel existing in an area, this will not count when requesting the incorporation of personnel due to teaching needs.

#### ***1.1.2. Beneficiaries of competitive postdoctoral programs of excellence with stabilization commitments.***

There are several competitive postdoctoral programs of excellence including as a requirement for the formalization of contracts a commitment to "stabilizing" the researcher at the requesting entity. These include the ATRAE, Research Consolidation, and Emergia programs. These programs' Research Staff (PI) can be stabilized by submitting the corresponding application via the Electronic Office (procedure: <https://sede.uco.es/GOnceOV/tramites/altaSolicitud.do?id=139>) provided that the following requirements are met:

- The postdoctoral contract of excellence must have been carried out at the University of Cordoba.


- Accreditation as a PhD Assistant Professor (PCD) or higher.

- Having obtained a positive evaluation of one's research activity in the I3/R3 Program. In the event that this requirement is not met at the end of the contract, it will be extended until a positive evaluation is achieved, provided that the maximum duration legally established for the modality of the researcher's contract is not exceeded.

The University of Cordoba will establish a faculty position in the Knowledge Area and Department to which the researcher is assigned, according to their accreditation: Full Professor (Titular) or PhD Assistant Professor (PCD).

#### ***1.2. The recruitment and stabilization of postdoctoral staff of excellence without a stabilization commitment.***

This section covers the possibility of postdoctoral staff of excellence recognized for their research activity being able to join this Strategic Plan. Specifically, for personnel who meet the requirements set forth in this section, the University of Cordoba will establish a faculty position in the Knowledge Area and Department to which the researcher is assigned according to their accreditation - University Professor (*Titular*) or PhD Assistant Professor (PCD) - provided that there is an annual surplus of positions in the UCO's 15% reserve quota in its public employment offer. When the number of people who meet these requirements exceeds what is available in accordance with the 15% quota, the prioritization will be based on strategic criteria of the institution, such as the teaching situation in the Knowledge Area, the number of competitive postdoctoral figures pending stabilization, and budgetary availability. In addition, only one person with this status may be incorporated into a Knowledge Area

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during each academic year, except in those cases in which there are needs described. If there are Areas with described needs, the stabilization of researchers who meet the requirements set forth in this Section 1.2 may occur, provided that they are from another Area with a similar profile, and the candidate and the accepting Department agree.

### ***1.2.1. Beneficiaries of competitive postdoctoral programs of excellence without stabilization commitments.***

This section is aimed at people who are or have been hired within the framework of a postdoctoral program financed by a public funding agent of the European Union (Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships), or the Spanish System of Science, Technology and Innovation, in a modality other than an access contract for Doctoral Research Staff (PID) [Juan de la Cierva, María Zambrano, Margarita Salas] or the Junta de Andalucía (Talentia). Other competitive postdoctoral programs that may arise in the future, similar to the previous ones, may be included in this block, contingent upon their consideration by the Research Committee and its approval of them.

These programs' research staff may be stabilized by submitting the corresponding application via the Electronic Office (procedure: <https://sede.uco.es/GOnceOV/tramites/altaSolicitud.do?id=139>) provided that the following requirements are met:

- The postdoctoral contract of excellence must have been carried out at the University of Cordoba, with the exception of contracts corresponding to competitive calls for postdoctoral staff from the European Union. In the case of the Marie Curie Postdoctoral Fellowships program, the person must have had a work relationship with the UCO having lasted at least six months and still in force at the time one is applying. In the case of other programs, the application must have a favorable report from the UCO's Research Committee.

- Accreditation as a PhD Assistant Professor (PCD) or higher.
- Having obtained a positive evaluation of one's research activity in the I3/R3 Program.
- Proof of a postdoctoral stay(s) in another country(ies) for a period of at least 12 months.


### ***1.2.2. Recruitment and stabilization of persons linked to the UCO who have obtained the R3 certificate***

The Program for obtaining the R3 Certificate provides for other possibilities in relation to the prior contractual links of the researchers applying. Specifically, the following may also be applicants: (1) persons who have been or are contracted under the Access Contract for Doctoral Research Staff (PID) modality, in accordance with the provisions of Article 22 of Law 14/2011, of June 1; or under the extinct Access Contract to the Spanish System of Science, Technology and Innovation modality; and (2) postdocs who have been contracted for at least five years. Research staff in these situations may be stabilized by submitting the corresponding application via the Electronic Office (procedure: <https://sede.uco.es/GOnceOV/tramites/altaSolicitud.do?id=139>) provided that the following requirements are met:

- Having enjoyed a postdoctoral fellowship at the University of Cordoba for at least 2 years.
- Accreditation as an Assistant Professor (PCD) or higher.
- Having obtained a positive evaluation of one's research activity in the I3/R3 Program.
- Proof of a postdoctoral stay(s) in another country(ies) for a period of at least 12 months.
- Having been or being the Principal Investigator on a research project linked to a competitive call.

### ***1.3. The recruitment of research personnel who are beneficiaries of the ERC Grants Program.***

Securing financing from international programs is a strategic question for the UCO, reflected in the progressive increase in funds secured via calls for European projects in recent years. Thus, this Strategic Plan includes a way to attract research personnel benefiting from the ERC Program (Starting

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Grants and Consolidator Grants). The requirements for the stabilization of this research staff are:

- Having joined the UCO during the first year of the execution of the ERC research project.
- Accreditation as a PhD Assistant Professor (PCD) or higher at the end of the project.
- A positive evaluation of one's research activity in the R3 Program at the end of the project.

Upon incorporation at the UCO, a personalized plan will be designed for the researcher so that he/she can obtain the required accreditation and a positive evaluation in the R3 Program. In addition, the researcher's contract will be extended until they obtain sufficient merits to be eligible for a positive evaluation in the processes for the accreditation and recognition of their leadership in their research activity. The maximum duration of this extension will have to be approved by the Research Committee. This group will receive the same status, in terms of stabilization priority, as that of the beneficiaries of the Ramón y Cajal Program.

## 2. Talent recruitment needs for institutional reasons

### 2.1. The recruitment of talent in knowledge areas with teaching needs

#### 2.1.1. Applicable scale

Application of the weighting of the research scale will be mandatory for those PhD Assistant Professor positions (PAD) instituted in response to teaching needs in those areas defined in Point 2.3 (strategic areas where there are deficiencies, either in terms of the impact or volume of the staff's research), when there are people included in the situations indicated in Point 1.

#### 2.1.2. Exception


The previous section will not apply in the event that the PhD Assistant Professor (PAD) positions offset positions of substitute teaching staff with contracts not linked to specific causes (temporary incapacity, maternity, teaching needs until the resolution of positions that were convened...).

### 2.2. The recruitment of talent to bolster the research impact of knowledge areas in the medium and long term.

#### 2.2.1. PhD Assistant Professor (PAD) faculty positions to bolster research

The University of Cordoba may annually convene  PhD Assistant Professor (PAD) positions in areas whose research requires bolstering, a scenario that will be verified via the application of the following criteria:

- In terms of the research's impact and influence:
  - The production of documents
  - % of Q1 of said production (according to indexed databases to be defined by the Research and Departmental Policy Committees)
  - % of citations of said production
  - average % of citations per document
  - % international collaborations in the production
  - % of documents/researcher
  - number of international, national and local projects, and total euros in the projects
- Regarding the need for the research's impact and influence to be bolstered:
  - Number of personnel assigned to the area, including Teaching and Research Staff (PDI), Ramón y Cajal researchers and other post-doctoral excellence programs referred to in Sections 1.1.2, 1.2 and 1.3. The existence of FPU/FPI/PIF (University Faculty Training/Research Staff Training/Trainee Research Staff) predoctoral staff of competitive programs will be taken into account for the purposes of scheduling the allocation of the PhD Assistant Professor Doctor (PAD) positions that, where appropriate, may apply.
    - The average age in the knowledge area, taking into account all the personnel indicated in

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the previous section.

The weighting of the criteria established to determine the area's research impact will be decided by the Governing Council for at least 3 continuous years.

In these PhD Assistant Professor (PAD) positions, the application of the research scale will be mandatory.

Priority will be given to areas with staff who have obtained the R3 Certificate, provided that they do not have Ramón y Cajal researchers, or ones from other postdoctoral programs of excellence referred to in sections 1.1.2, 1.2 and 1.3.

The allocation of a PhD Assistant Professor (PAD) position will, in any case, be contingent on its incorporation into the Area *not* generating a net surplus of more than 240 hours, unless the average age of the area justifies the allocation, despite this surplus.

In the allocation of these places an equitable distribution between the different macro areas of knowledge will be sought.

### ***2.2.2. PhD Assistant Professor (PAD) positions allocated in compliance with stabilization commitments corresponding to aid programs for the recruitment of research personnel.***

The University of Cordoba, in compliance with the commitments it has made within the framework of aid programs for the recruitment of research personnel leading to the researchers' necessary stabilization as PhD Assistant Professors, will allocate the appropriate positions of this nature in the corresponding field.

The call will conform to the rules and criteria that may be established, where appropriate, by the corresponding aid program. Failing this, the weighting of the research scale will be applied to these positions.

### ***2.3. Talent recruitment in strategic areas where there are deficiencies in the staff's research impact or its volume.***

#### ***2.3.1. Applicable criteria***

The criteria determining whether an area meets this definition will be set by applying the terms in Point 2.2, but adjusted to the weighting's lowest positions.

#### ***2.3.2. Actions***

- The Departments that include the areas indicated in this section will be assigned priority in the recruitment of postdoctoral talent (Ramón y Cajal, ERC, Juan de la Cierva, Emergia, Beatriz Galindo, etc.), and may also be assigned priority in the recruitment of pre- and postdoctoral talent through the UCO Research Plan.


- In order to strengthen these areas the University of Cordoba may offer up to a maximum of a secondment position of Associate Professor (Titular) or Full Professor (Catedrático) to attract talent from other universities or public research bodies in each of the branches of knowledge where these needs exist. To this end, the Vice-Rectorate of Teaching and Research Staff (PDI) will publicize the possibility of these public positions through a national and international public call.

The requirements to be met candidates for this possible job offer will be the following:

o Accredited a minimum of three six-year research periods (*sexenios*), the last of them active, or a minimum number of scientific publications as an author for correspondence in Q1 (according to indexed databases that will be defined by the Research and Departmental Policy Committees).

o Have teaching or research experience at the international level (stays with verifiable results), as well as in the management of international projects, etc.

o Have directed doctoral theses and/or research and innovation projects.

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o Accredit having directed lines of research in their area of knowledge.  
Once the applications have been received and evaluated, and after informing the interested Departments, the positions will be included, where appropriate, in the public job offer.

### 3. Strategic Plan for the Incorporation and Stabilization of Research Talent

The evaluation of the results of this Strategic Plan and the proposal of any changes that may be necessary will be the responsibility of the Research and Departmental Policy Committees.

### 4. Gender equality


Any names of governing and representation bodies, positions, functions, and members of the university community found in these Regulations and expressed in the male form should be understood as encompassing females, in accordance with the gender of the person in question.

### 5. Repeal of the Strategy for the incorporation/retention of teaching and research talent approved by a Governing Council Agreement in an ordinary session on December 18, 2020

This Strategic Plan repeals the Strategy for the incorporation/retention of teaching and research talent approved by a Governing Council Agreement in an ordinary session on December 18, 2020.

### 6. Entry into force of this Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan shall enter into force on the day following its publication in the Official Gazette of the University of Cordoba.

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