

ANNEX A: EVALUATION 2021 OF THE 4X4 ACTION PLAN

Number	Action title and description	Timing	Responsible Unit	Indicator(s) / Target	Current status	Status evaluation 2021
Recruitment and selection						
1	<p>ACTION R&S1: REVIEW OF THE SELECTION PROCESS</p> <p>Since a good selection impacts the efficiency and effectivity of hiring the appropriate talents at the very beginning, it was decided to evaluate the current selection process in depth with all stakeholders with respect to criteria, testing tools, KPI, etc. The goal is to improve selection success and to align the process with the Code of recruitment. An action plan will be decided and implemented.</p> <p>Reference clauses: 14</p>	2016 Q1 2019 Q1	HR Recruitment & Selection	<p>Project plan: "Review R&S process" with OTM_R KPI's in R&S (Q-reporting / Y-reporting)</p> <p>OTM_R: main selection principles</p> <p>OTM-R: checklist interviewer ; candidate evaluation form; PhD evaluation form</p>	Completed	<p>HR started this action in 2016 with an extended analysis of the current R&S process. Based on the risks, opportunities and finding, a renewed R&S process was designed, emphasizing efficiency and quality and taking into account the recruitment code. Early 2020 the OTM-R policy was approved by management and published on the website. The selection process for PhD and postdoc positions was integrated in the selection tool for the regular employees. A new selection tool is chosen and implemented beginning of 2021 with focus on candidate journey and candidate centric approach. The user-friendliness of the tool is high which will help to achieve the ambition of giving feedback to all the applicants.</p> <p>Indicators: outputs available.</p>
2	<p>ACTION R&S2: TRAINING OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE</p> <p>The recent strategic choices of VITO also impact the talents and skills needed in the organization to realize the VITO goals. To align the recruitment process with these strategic choices the selection committee should be aware of the changed need in competences. Furthermore the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers is an essential guideline in attracting the best talents. The training program for the members of the selection committee will be therefore supplemented with the topics of the Charter and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and the strategic VITO choices, such as mobility, relevant for recruitment. Clear guidelines about judging merit (scientific knowledge, skills and experience) and the use of the non-chronological CV will be foreseen in the training programme. All hiring managers will be trained in the new training format and evaluation criteria will be defined to follow up the quality and impact of the training action.</p> <p>Reference clauses: 12, 16, 17, 18</p>	2017 Q1 2017 Q2	HR Learning & Development	<p>Training program: Certified recruiter</p> <p>Number of participants</p>	Completed, continue training	<p>A training program 'certified recruiter' was developed and implemented fin 2016. The program is focused on structured competence-based (merit-based) interviews, a positive candidate experience and the fair assessment of candidates "judgement pitfalls". In 2017 the whole VITO management participated in the newly developed training "VITO Certified Recruiter" Other stakeholders participating in selection committees will also be trained since the goal is to only have trained participants in our selection process to guarantee the selection quality. To be able to train all newcomers in the selection committees a flexible course format is needed and it was decided to design an e-learning.</p> <p>Due to Corona the design and implementation of the training "Certified Recruiter" for experts in e-learning format is delayed and defined as an action in the renewed HR excellence action plan</p> <p>Indicators: Training program available, total management team trained.</p>
3	<p>ACTION R&S3: REDESIGN OF THE JOB WEBSITE</p> <p>Since the job page is often one of the first visited pages by potential employees, it is a very important page with an eye toward employer branding and attracting talents. These 'Join us' pages on the VITO website will be redesigned in line with the Code of recruitment of researchers. Overall a new employer brand will be created in line with the corporate branding. In a first step the relevant job and career information will be listed. Special attention will be paid to transparent information about recruitment and selection procedures for all types of jobs including PhD and Postdoc positions, information about working conditions and career opportunities at VITO. The current job pages will be updated with the relevant information but thereafter a totally new job site will be designed to also meet all criteria of the new employer brand.</p> <p>Reference clauses: 13</p>	2016 Q1 2019 Q1	HR Recruitment & Selection	<p>https://vito.be/en/jobs (after launching of new website)</p> <p>Project plan: employer branding</p>	Completed	<p>The analyses for redesigning the jobsite has been initiated at the end of 2016. Due to efficiency reasons and limited resources, the actual redesign of the job pages was started together with the implementation of the new VITO website which as launched May 2018. The jobsite was updated from a candidate perspective taking into account the OTM-R principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *Extra information was added to the regular employee section with amongst others selection process description, Information about working conditions, career opportunities and support for international people *The PhD part was supplemented with more detailed information about the PhD selection procedure and the PhD-programme *The VITO OTM-R policy was added. <p>Indicators: job pages launched May 2018; project plan employer branding available</p>

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4	<p>ACTION R&S4: REVIEW OF THE ONBOARDING PROCESS</p> <p>To render the recruitment and selection a success, the onboarding process can be crucial. This process starts already the moment the potential VITO employee is exploring the VITO job possibility. This onboarding process will be assessed from selection to the first period of job performance, above all to improve the alignment with VITO strategic choices and the Charter and Code and secondly to improve the integration in the VITO community and the knowledge of the VITO way of working.</p> <p>The introduction/training sessions will be modified and the introduction session for international people will be supplemented with dedicated information material for this group. International mentoring will be installed for 'soft landing' aspects with training of the international mentors. Special attention will be paid to fluent co-operation with other processes (QSE, IT, ...) and to the equal treatment of the different types of starting VITO people: employee, PhDs Postdocs, visiting researchers, ..</p> <p>Reference clauses: 10</p>	2016 Q1-2017 Q4	HR Learning & Development	Feedback onboarding surveys	Completed	<p>The onboarding process and related aspects were assessed in close cooperation between HR, and other relevant departments such as IT, Quality and safety, research relations,</p> <p>End 2017 most of the decided improvement actions were implemented and the actionplan was further optimised and finetuned until now:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *a standardized welcome moment during the first day with the readily needed information, later also introduced for non employee PhD-researchers *design of specific intranet pages with interesting information for newcomers *introduction of a standardized onboarding training offer (typical VITO IT tools, QSE procedures,...) *The big welcome sessions are opened for non-employee PhDs (see also action SE2) *Installation of international mentoring *Design of an onboarding app <p>As a response to the COVID circumstances a toolkit 'remote onboarding' was designed as a priority. Remote courses were organized first for the VITO management and subsequently for the mentors to emphasize the need for and to support adequate onboarding. The onboarding app was implemented for employees end of 2020</p> <p>Indicators: Very positive feedback on onboarding surveys.</p>

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FIT@VITO						
5	<p>ACTION FIT1: DEFINITION OF A CODE OF CONDUCT The definition of a Code of conduct that summarizes and emphasis the main values and principles VITO stands for will allow clear and easy communication of the VITO ethical way of working. Currently many different policies are in place but are scattered over too many different places, rendering it difficult for researchers to find them. A first step is thus to collect all available codes and policies. The main principles will be summarized in a code of conduct that can be further specified as per target group. The missing policies have to be made explicit such as the Confidentiality policy including the measured taken for personal data protection regulations. Embedding attention for the code of conduct and thus also personal data protection in the VITO processes is a following step to ensure the living up to the code of conduct. Reference clauses: 2,3,7</p>	2016Q1 - 2016Q3	HR	Code of conduct	Completed, supplement code based on new evolutions	<p>March 2016 a code of conduct was published on the intranet. It is based on the VITO core principles i.e.: the organizational values; scientific ethics and integrity; diversity and equal opportunities; quality, environment, health and safety. All newly starting employees receive the code on their starting day in the welcome information package. End 2018 the code was updated with the guidelines regarding privacy (GDPR). June 2020 the code was updated with regard to the Diversity& Inclusion policy. Indicators: Code of conduct available on the intranet March 2016</p>
6	<p>ACTION FIT2: DEFINITION OF IP POLICY POSITIONED IN THE BROADER VALORIZATION PROCES Since IP is very important in the process of valorization, a special action is defined to improve the information about IP and valorization and the access to this information for researchers. An IP policy will be made explicit with guidelines on how to deal with contractual obligations about IP. This policy will be placed on the intranet and be positioned in the total valorization process. Communication and awareness raising efforts will continue. In a further step a focus group will be established to investigate how the protection of ideas can be stimulated in order to improve the chances of valorization and to implement the appropriate actions. Reference clauses:8, 31</p>	2016Q2 -2019 Q4	IP-officer	IP information on the intranet	Completed	<p>Starting in 2017 the IP process was reviewed and changed to improve the easiness and effectiveness of patenting. At the same time awareness actions about the importance of IP were launched. An 'IP ambassadors group' consisting of different profiles ranging from researcher to commercial and business developing profiles acted as the focus group and investigated how the protection of ideas could be stimulated in order to improve the chances of valorization. The main resulting actions were publishing of information and guidelines on the intranet and launching of courses and awareness actions about the impacts as a result of specific agreements on the freedom to use results later on as well as on valorization options. In 2019 a new IP coordinator started at VITO who maintained the education effort based on needs detected in dealing with the inventors and organized courses about 'searches in IP databases' and 'how to protect software related inventions?' An IP policy is in preparation aimed at o Acquiring IP for new technology directions resulting from collaborative projects with industrial partners o Broadening and deepening IP protection for technologies for which Vito already owns IP o support with IP valorization – licensing Indicators: Dedicated section on the intranet on Knowledge protection and Intellectual Property including the patent strategy</p>
7	<p>ACTION FIT3: CREATE 'ACTIVITY BASED WORKING' FORMAT For both the organization and the employee, it is important that "time" is used optimal as well as that the work organization and place of working follow logically out the nature of the activities to be performed and results to be achieved. VITO wishes to introduce the 'activity based working' concept that allows employees to work where and when they want in accordance with the nature of their work and the agreed on objectives. This would allow the employees to balance their work and personal life even better. However this concept requires training and infrastructural support and self-management in an agreed on framework that focuses on a good collaboration in the teams. A pilot will be set up to experiment with the new principles and work arrangements and to assess the necessary support. It offers the opportunity to gain learning experience to develop a policy before implementing the concept further. Reference clauses: 24</p>	2016 Q1 2017 Q4	HR	Survey results ABW	Pilot completed, decision to not extend VITO wide	<p>Since the move of our Energy department to their new work place in Genk (EnergyVille) the principle of Activity Based Working was introduced in the 2 business units affected as a pilot. The evaluated period foreseen to be finalised end of 2016 was extended until September 2017. Since October 2018 Activity Based Work is officially installed for the Energy related Units that work on the EnergyVille site. In employee surveys the impact of this activity based working mode on company results and well-being is monitored since then. The same working mode was not rolled out for the employees working on other VITO sites, however we do have homework and telework formats installed company-wide (based on the distance to work and commuting time). The COVID pandemic and the related restrictions and legal context were the basis for a new company-wide policy on Activity Based Working (activities are leading and determine the work location, working from home is possible in that context). This is high on the agenda of management, teams and unions (in their role of employee representatives). Indicators: Activity Based Working is implemented officially in the VITO EnergyVille campus</p>

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Talent Mobility						
9	ACTION TM1 : SET UP OF A TALENT CENTER TO FACILITATE INTERNAL TALENT MOBILITY The setup of the VITO Talent Center is intended to bring talent and job/assignment opportunities in the organization together, enabling the deployment and employability of employees. Doing so the strategic personnel (need) planning can be optimized. The Center will focus on developing initiatives for the individual (self-management, self-branding, strategic competence development that contribute to employability), coaching and internal career guidance. A new concept that will be developed further is 'grow assignments' intended to develop competences and/or skills in a new job. The shaping of this Talent Center will be done in co-creation with the different stakeholders and will be started in a pilot format. Reference clauses: 29	2016Q4-2017Q4	HR Learning & Development	Talent Movement PLT-FIT program_internal mobility	Stopped	In 2016 we organized several task force meetings with managers of different business units, to discuss and co-create the concept of the VITO Talent Center and implementation requirements of the "supply and demand" approach. An important learning in this process was that the corporate structure and overall mindset was "not ready" yet for that kind of exchange. Competence needs in projects are usually not immediately available in the organization and underused resources are not always competent to fill the urgent needs. Based on these discussions we decided not to establish a "Virtual" Talent Center" as such, but to focus in a positive way on awareness about internal mobility to induce cultural change. T Some concrete actions in this context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal and external "Learning Journeys" (or assignments) for employees • career guidance actions as a way to make talent more mobile (Personal coaching in career guidance, learning programs "personal branding",...)
10	ACTION TM2: STIMULATE INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY The low number of VITO-researchers visiting other organizations suggests the existing of important obstacles. The first goal of the taskforce that will be set up is to analyze the business case of outgoing mobility for VITO, cost and benefits. The second goal is the recommendation of a range of measurements in alignment with the findings to take away the obstacles for outgoing mobility today. Last but not least the taskforce will define promotion actions for the outgoing mobility that VITO wishes to increase. Once confirmed by the higher management the recommended plan can be implemented in the form of a pilot. To support the taskforce, a pilot for exchange of HR people in a mentoring program is already started in the framework of EARTO. It is believed that the real life experience will be very valuable in detecting obstacles and understanding practical difficulties. Reference clauses: 29	2017Q4 - 2019Q3	Co-ordination scientific relations	Analyses of outgoing international mobility	Completed	In 2017 an exploration was made of the different barriers for outward mobility in general and in specific for VITO researchers. Different stakeholders having experience with international mobility in the context of VITO were interviewed (management and researchers). At the same time it was explored which benefits these international internships could bring for the person him/her self as for the company sending the researcher abroad. Moreover suggestions proposed by the interviewed researchers for improving outward mobility were collected. The findings were brought together in a short nota. It was found that the recent experiences with internships abroad have improved the available knowledge and VITO organized support, leaving funding as the main barrier. Since no central funding is provided, focus is on awareness actions about including internships in applications for project funding were done. Indicators: analyses in nota available end 2017
11	ACTION TM3: ESTABLISH INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT To support as well the outgoing as incoming international researchers all support that is already given in the framework of the Euraxess network will be centralized and promoted as a one-contact point. This support offer will be evaluated and modified if required. The information regarding international mobility such as practical information about VISA, housing, administration (address, taxes,...) and information about the culture differences will be centralized and the accessibility will be increased. The introduction programme for international researchers will be supplemented with specific relevant topics. The establishment of a multicultural and diverse community will be encouraged through supportive actions coordinated through the international support center in close collaboration with the international community at VITO. Reference clauses: 10, 29	2016 Q1-2016 Q2	HR-International Support	Intranet pages: HR-international support; international projects/people/... VITO website page international employment HR KPI: Number of international employees, PhDs, postdocs and visiting researchers	Completed: International support is up and running	To support as well the outgoing as incoming international researchers all available measures and information in the framework of the Euraxess network were centralized and promoted as a one-contact point. Different specific measures to facilitate the integration and guidance of international staff were taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> *A specific information page for international candidates interested in VITO job opportunities was established. *Specific attention was given to the onboarding of international starters. The big welcome day that is organized per quarter is recently for everyone in English to emphasize the multicultural employee community. Since 2016 we also offer a mentoring program in English. *The training offer was complemented with topics specifically oriented to international profiles such as a cultural awareness training (to facilitate integration) and practical work sessions for helping with tax-form completion (country specific regulation). Language training is still available in the training offer. *We offer professional guidance for house search for our international staff who wants to live in Belgium. *Positive attention goes to international researchers by periodically publishing articles/interviews on the intranet about specific international researchers and their work at VITO . Indicators: A dedicated contact person for international support was appointed in 2016; % international researchers has increased to 20%; international employment dedicated intranet pages and internet pages available

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12	<p>ACTION TM4: SET UP OF AN ALUMNI NETWORK</p> <p>Through incoming mobility the VITO community and network is expanded tremendously. This network opens opportunities to exert more impact on worldwide sustainable development. Therefore VITO wants to keep in contact with all researchers that ever worked at VITO and extend the good cooperation beyond the visiting period. VITO believes that an Alumni network can be more than just a linked in page and will develop an Alumni concept with benefits for both parties i.e. Alumni researcher and the VITO organization. After fine tuning the scope of the Alumni networking, an Alumni programme will be defined. The set up with listing of Alumni members will be performed after the appointment of an Alumni responsible.</p> <p>Reference clauses: 29</p>	2016Q2-2019 Q3	Co-ordination scientific relations	<p>Website pages Alumni, Number of Alumni</p> <p>Participation in the alumni activities</p>	Network is established, set up yearly programme	<p>In February 2017 the VITO-Alumni linked In group went live and registration possibilities were available. By June 2017 an Alumni committee was formed by 4 enthusiastic former VITO people currently active in different sectors (industry, academy and government). Together with VITO they defined the mission for the Alumni network and started thinking about interesting activities to connect and engage former and current VITO people. The logistics were brought into place to automatically invite VITO employees, PhDs, Postdocs and guest researchers. Since then the Alumni community is growing. An Alumni newsletter is released on a quarterly base</p> <p>A specific Alumni activity is foreseen on the main regular VITO conferences GSTIC and Clean Vision Summit.</p> <p>Indicators: Alumni network is established. Number of members: 275; 50% of invited registers; <10 participants per activity</p>

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Sustainable employability						
13	<p>ACTION SE1: ALIGNING JOBS AND CAREER PATHS WITH THE STRATEGIC VISION OF VITO The most important HR instrument in the context of job description and possible career paths is the job description book of VITO which was defined around 2010. The desired role dynamics and the pursuit of "flexible" and temporary assignments in an R&D environment are currently missing in the job structure. Career ladders are sometimes too long or incomplete in the description. A custom format for career opportunities, matching the applied research lifecycle of research topics is necessary. Therefore the reviews foreseen in the job description book maintenance process will focus in the future on including the new and changed skillsets and their evaluation criteria and on clarifying career possibilities in the changing VITO organization. Reference clauses: 11, 28</p>	2016Q1-Q4 yearly update	HR	New version of function book	Completed	<p>There is a formal process installed for the revision of the function book. Every stakeholder involved in the process can ask for a revision (yearly). The revision process is a guided process with external experts (KornFerry) and an internal commission. This is a corporate process with strong participation of the employees, via the employee representatives and the management. Every change results in a new version of the function book (available on the intranet, last updated: October 2019). In the R&D context, the R&D job description was adjusted, and a new function family was introduced "Engineering and Development" specific for positions focusing on the higher TRL-levels in a technological unit (upscaling, pilots,...). In our daily practices we are also evolved towards a more "hybrid" job orientation; combining academic and commercial skills, or focusing on one of the aspects. The open process with stakeholder involvement ensures that we have a continuously updated job inventory (described at high level). The revision of the commercial positions (Business en relationship development) ended with new descriptions (this is considered "work material" and not final/validated new descriptions), the ICT job family has changed. Other positions that were introduced; lab coordinator and operation manager. Indicators: Research related changes in the functionbook a.o. 1 new function family, 2 new positions, several description modifications</p>
14	<p>ACTION SE2: ALIGNMENT OF THE PHDS/ POSTDOC AND THE EMPLOYEE TREATMENT At some points the processes for PhDs, Postdocs and employees differ, possibly resulting into discrimination in one way or another. To ensure that no unintended discrimination occurs, the different HR processes will be evaluated on this topic. Moreover an in depth evaluation of the VITO post doc career policy is planned since this is the least developed one. Updates of the procedures with clear and transparent information will be certainly among the resulting measures. For example to explore the extension of the training offer to PHDs and Postdocs, to revise the recruitment and selection process for non-employees and to foresee a mentor for postdocs at VITO are measures that was already proposed during the Charter and Code base assessment. Reference clauses: 11, 21,28, 36, 39</p>	2016 Q2-2019 Q3	Co-ordination scientific relations	Number of starting postdocs Number of different processes (decreasing)	completed	<p>In 2016 all HR processes were reviewed to identify the differences between the processes (and tooling) for employees on the one hand and PhD's and postdocs on the other hand. Where necessary and possible (legal compliancy) actions were defined to harmonize the processes for the different types of employees such as: *giving PhD's and postdocs access to the training offer *integrating the request for PhD's and postdocs in the standard request tool (1 process, 1 tool, regardless of the contract type) *integrating applications and selection of PhD's and postdocs in the employee selection tool (1 process, 1 tool) *inviting all PhDs and postdocs to the general onboarding sessions (and adjusting the program) *introducing yearly feedback sessions for PhD's Indicators: PhD and postdoc processes and tools mainly in line with the employee processes, number of Postdocs is increasing (2016:16-2020:32)</p>
15	<p>ACTION SE3: CAREER DEVELOPMENT & GUIDANCE An new strategic training programme aligned with the new VITO strategy and the associated skillset shift and cultural values will be defined. As R & D is "the core" of the organization, an "R & D Competence Portfolio" will be developed in which t training of various skills are offered to the R & D population. It will be focused on the development of personality and team work, business & financial awareness, R & D skills and VITO-specific tracks. This renewal will happen gradually and will be evaluated and updated yearly. VITO Talent Center is the "Center" that will safeguard the development of 'strategic' talent and will provide formats for career guidance to support employees in their growth with the organizational goals in view. Once the evolutions for succession planning and the Talent Centre are clear the training programme can be accurately supplemented. Coaching and customized initiatives will get their rightful place in the training offer. Reference clauses: 30, 38</p>	2016Q1 - 2016 Q4	HR Learning & Development	Training offer Number of attendance of these specific career oriented trainings	completed, to be reviewed regularly	<p>The new training offer was launched in the organization in 2016. The offer fits within the HE excellence strategy and the broader VITO strategy and the dynamics related to it. With these training opportunities we are dedicating ourselves to the sustainable employability of everyone. The new offer is accessible to everyone who is "active" in the organization, that is the entire VITO community. Different coaching and career guidance opportunities were newly introduced in this offer. The offer is reviewed and adapted to the changing focus and requirements yearly. Indicators: development brochure available since 2016 and yearly updated; 13 participants of specific career oriented trainings/coachings</p>

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16	<p>ACTION SE4: DEVELOPMENT OF SUCCESSION PLANNING Succession planning is a way for targeted career guidance. A first step is the identification of key positions in the organization with the aim to proactively secure the internal succession of these important positions. The next step is to screen the potential of the present population in order to map the "next generation potential". Finally VITO staff will be developed for a targeted career path, thereby promoting internal mobility and value increase and employability increase of the employee. This planning overcomes the dramatic effect of loss of key personnel by allowing rapid internal rotation. Reference clauses: 29</p>	2016Q4 - 2018Q1	HR	Pilot succession planning RMA Number of units that have succession planning (partially) implemented	format established, further roll out on demand	<p>In close collaboration with the line management of a 'pilot' business unit, a format for succession planning of key persons in the organization was designed. This format is linked to the team strategy, including competence analysis, potential mapping and the design of personal development plans for successors. Assessment of the risk of leaving and foreseen exit of seniors is introduced as a standard topic during the yearly talent reviews. The learnings and developed format can be taken into account when key persons are leaving the company. The use so far is very limited. Because of the importance of knowledge transfer as indicated by the researchers in the research survey, a follow-up action is defined in the new 5-year plan. Indicators: format for succession planning available and used in 2 units</p>