![ICTA-UAB Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia Ambientals]

Culture Manifesto

Vision, mission, values, and best practices for care and beyond at ICTA-UAB

Institut de Ciència i Tecnologia Ambientals (ICTA-UAB)

Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

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Introduction

The Institute of Environmental Science and Technology at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona (ICTA-UAB) has always had an implicit set of values and an institutional culture. However, given the increasing internationalization and interdisciplinarity of the institution, along with ever increasing complexity of the major social-environmental problems that the institution investigates, we now have a great opportunity to explicitly set a series of intentional values and best practices that, paired with a revised vision and mission, will achieve a unified sense of purpose towards an impactful, an inspiring and a thriving community.

Why a Culture Manifesto?

A Culture Manifesto is neither policy nor a legally binding code of conduct. It is a document that provides guidelines for thoughtful, appropriate, and careful individual and collective behaviour. At times, at ICTA-UAB, we face dilemmas around conduct and standards that a broad vision and mission statement do not address. For many of these dilemmas there are specific policies and codes of conduct governing us at UAB that support our decisions (see Reference section). However, we believe that there are other dilemmas around conduct and professional standards that can be addressed through this Culture Manifesto.

This ICTA-UAB Culture Manifesto highlights the qualities and practices that most members of our community already follow or aspire to. Explicitly acknowledging our values and best practices, this document is a meaningful way to empower every community member to stand up for those values when they are possibly or occasionally disregarded. The Culture Manifesto summarises the values and behaviours that will support the achievement of the mission of our organization while staying true to our vision. It is then a document where we codify the values and behaviours that, while aligned with our mission and vision, inspire, and encourage our staff to work at their best.

Unless an institutional culture is in place, organizations develop a culture "as they go" often influenced by strong personalities and or influenced by external pressures. The problem with such *laissez faire* approach is that organizations may end up with a toxic or an unwanted culture. Without a reflection of the culture an organization wants to have, institutions may turn into a collection of individuals with a tunnel vision, pulling in opposing directions to achieve the same goal (to do a good job), competing instead of collaborating, disregarding relationships as well as the mission and vision of the institution.

This Culture Manifesto allows us to define how we are going to work together to achieve our mission. It is an explicit reminder of our values so that we can incorporate it into our everyday interactions, policies, and processes. When embraced by all, this Manifesto can help build or express a sense of shared purpose, expectations, and responsibilities. It also helps our associates and potential students and researchers to know us better, and to understand how we want to work.

This Culture Manifesto is unique to ICTA-UAB and it is not a generic set of values and best practices. In this sense, it reflects what the ICTA-UAB community widely believes is true of itself, but is also recognizes when those values are not yet universally embraced and remain aspirational to some degree. For example, if diversity and equity are important values, we must recognize that the lived

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and reported experiences by some demonstrate that we are not yet all fully embracing or experiencing such values. This should impel us to work harder to incorporate diversity and equity, and more generally, this also calls for the development of effective monitoring and feedback processes that can guide us towards a full realization of the values and best practices we aim to put in practice (more details in the Recommendations section).

Background

ICTA-UAB is a multidisciplinary centre that promotes academic research and postgraduate education in the environmental sciences. It aims to improve our understanding of global environmental change, and the nature and causes of environmental problems. In addition, it studies policies, strategies, and technologies to foster a transition to a sustainable economy.

Over the past years, ICTA-UAB has developed policies and protocols towards improving gender equity and care within the institution with the support of ICTA Management team. As part of our commitments stated in our 2022 , we organize regular training activities aimed at improving practices of gender equity and care within the institute: the first training on gender equity took place in the fall of 2021 and the second one in the fall 2023 for new hires. In 2023, the institute also organized a training session on Ethics of Care in Academia. In addition, the Management Team convened a teambuilding session in September 2023 for senior faculty to initiate a process of redrafting the vision, mission, and values of ICTA-UAB towards improved cohesion (See Appendix B). All those activities were part of the commitments set up in the Gender Equity Policy and aimed to improve the culture of care in our institution. At the end of each of the trainings mentioned above participants identified values and initiatives that could improve our culture of care.

This Culture Manifesto stems from the revised ICTA-UAB Mission and Vision suggested at the teambuilding session for senior faculty in September 2023, as well as from the contributions of all our staff during the gender equity and ethics of care workshops. The summaries of all these contributions can be found in the Appendix section. The rest of this document has been written by Isabelle Anguelovski, the member of the Institute's management team in charge of Gender, Equity, Diversity and Wellbeing issues, with additional contributions by the other members of the management team. A first draft was presented in and slightly revised after a faculty meeting held on January 24th 2024. The management team aims to present this version to the Permanent Board of the Institute for approval in March 2024.

Objective and Scope

ICTA-UAB's Culture Manifesto aims at summarizing the values and best practices that will support the achievement of the mission of our organization while staying true to our vision. The objective of the Manifesto is to codify the values and behaviours that, while aligned with our renewed mission and vision, inspire, and encourage our team to work at their best.

ICTA-UAB's Culture Manifesto is comprised of this document and is complemented and supported by existing policies (UAB Code of Ethics, ICTA-UAB Gender and Equity Policy. The Manifesto applies to all ICTA-UAB members (staff and students) as well as to ICTA-UAB visitors and associates. For this reason,

the Manifesto will be shared among all members and be included as part of the informational material to all associated, visitors and service providers.

People living by our values, along with the processes and activities that will be designed around it, are what make our culture tangible, accountable, accessible and functional. For instance, if we encourage Collaboration as one of our core Values, then our people, processes, and funding need to be driven by that. From the numerous trainings, conversations and processes led by the Institute's management team over the past years with ICTA-UAB members, it is clear that we hold distinctive values that make us particularly proud to be here. Likewise, the sense that some ICTA-UAB members have at times made choices of which we have not been proud is known to the community. Therefore, while this Culture Manifesto aims to articulate and celebrate the best of ICTA's long-standing implicit values, this is also a deliberate document to make explicit our values, *as well as* to set aspirational values and best practices.

Some of the values that emerged from the data collection process are foundational to the institution (and hence coherent with values stated in UAB's code of conduct - such as Integrity) and they are also core to ICTA-UAB deeply ingrained principles that have long guided all our actions. Other values have more recently emerged as clearly (still) aspirational and provide a direction to help us watch out for accidental values that do not serve us well. All together these values and associated best practices – which shall evolve over time – offer up a signpost and a path for what we need to keep doing and what we need to still do, to achieve sustained success in the future.

A living document collectively defined that shall evolve with us

The revision of the vision and mission of the institution has been fundamental to help us clarify and remember what is worthwhile to pursue, while the values statement and associated best practices define how we want to pursue our mission. This Culture Manifesto then attempts to more deliberately acknowledge and draw from the diversity at ICTA-UAB while striving to achieve our ambitious mission.

Culture, however, is not something that is defined and policed by a Human Resources department team. It is lived and breathed by each and everyone. Along with our vision and mission, our values and behaviours are a fundamental block of our culture. Therefore, revising them as a community as we go along, is the only way to make sure they resonate with each one of us.

Therefore, this Manifesto, in particularly its stated best practices and actions, is intended to be a living document, evolving over time, as needed. It is also the responsibility of all in the community to make these values meaningful in the life of ICTA. Under each of the 9 best practices written below, a series of actions have been proposed for bringing best practices to life, based on our staff's inputs.

The Culture Manifesto in the context of UAB code of conduct and other policies

Having a Culture Manifesto makes transparent our values and behaviours and keeps us accountable, so that we learn collectively how to "walk the talk." It is a learning curve and yet, without an

intentional culture, we may end up hurting each other and putting in danger the mission and vision of the institution. When we write things down, it is easier to call each other out with the purpose of thriving together.

As we described earlier, we recognize that there is a distinct difference between a set of values and best practices and the institutional policies around acceptable behavior at ICTA-UAB. Sections of the ICTA-UAB Gender Equity Policy, and the UAB's Protocol Against Sexual Harassment, , the Ethic Code notably include, among others, provisions on integrity, human dignity, respect, plurality, non-discrimination, racist conduct, harassment, and violence, all of which are enforceable. All members of ICTA-UAB are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that abide to all those principles.

Unlike these institutional policies, however, the Culture Manifesto is not designed to be a set of punitive guidelines to which individuals are held accountable in a formal sense. The Manifesto *can* and *should* be a guiding set of shared best practices to model and direct decision making, to serve as a reference point to uphold acceptable behaviors for everyone, and to remind us of the kind of individuals and community we are at our best and aspire to be always at ICTA.

Culture Manifesto

Our Vision and Mission, along with our values, are fundamental building blocks of our institutional culture that contribute to determining how ICTA works (institutionally, research-wise, professionally, at the human level. They are also aligned with our ICTA-UAB Communications tagline ("Brave Science for a Changing World").

Vision

We strive to empower society with science to address global socio-environmental challenges.

Mission

ICTA UAB is a transdisciplinary science institute that develops vital and strategic knowledge towards strong sustainability. Committed to impactful science, we train researchers and practitioners, and partner with diverse interest groups to strengthen ecosystems health and foster socio-environmental transformation and innovation.

Values that shape our culture

The values presented below are a consolidation of the most mentioned values by ICTA-UAB members, along with a brief description of each value based on our staff's contributions.

CARE

We value care, respect, support, empathy, mentoring, appreciation, and sense of belonging as signs of institutional and professional maturity. We strive to make our community a humane one: every action and decision we make is done with kindness and care within our teams and our extended community. We know that it is paramount to attend to our personal and collective well-being.

COLLABORATION AND IMPACT

We value collaboration, cooperation, connectivity, creativity, critical and socially-committed education, knowledge co-creation, and outreach. We know that the impact from collaboration is higher than the sum of individual efforts. We challenge existing paradigms and commit to high societal and environmental impact through our research and every-day interactions.

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY

We are made of diverse people who address research from a myriad of angles. As such, we are stronger when we nourish each other by bringing awareness and find equitable solutions. We value diversity, inclusivity, freedom, equity, open-mindedness and solidarity.

INTEGRITY

We strive for excellent science grounded in the highest standards of integrity, embracing rigour, quality, impact, curiosity, humility, responsibility, honesty, creative irreverence, commitment, transparency, and exemplary behaviours.

While some of the above are already core values within the institution as mandated by the UAB's code of conduct at this time we particularly aspire to this set of best practices.

Best practices that speak to our values

We present 9 best practices specified in 25 behaviours. We strive for every current and future ICTA-UAB member to commit to such practices and behavior in their daily work, research, and social interactions.

CARE BEST PRACTICES
  1. We work towards a safe place for everyone, where we communicate clearly and freely.
   I. *We care for what people have to say, we are empathetic, and we listen well.*
   II. *We know who to talk to, in a safe space, when the need arises to share something vulnerable.*
   III. *We offer quality feedback and receive training accordingly.*
  2. We connect for everyone to thrive.
   IV. *We organize social events.*
   V. *We do regular check-ins in our teams and between researchers.*
   VI. *We practice care in our work, mentoring, teaching, management, collaborations, and supervision.*
  3. We manage time beyond productivism: we are aware of external time pressures, yet we strive for quality.
   VII. *We allow time for empathy, feedback and reflection, quality, and creativity.*
   VIII. *We support life-work balance and family-work conciliation.*
   IX. *We do not praise nor admire working extra hours and encourage flexible working practices.*

COLLABORATION AND IMPACT BEST PRACTICES
  4. We collaborate.
   X. *We facilitate exchanges for mutual collaboration and synergies.*
   XI. *We build synergies wherever we see the potential.*
  5. We are strategic and meaningful.
   XII. *We strive for impacts in research, policy, and practice.*
   XIII. *We commit to transparency and accountability.*
   XIV. *We clarify duties and responsibilities and anticipate others' needs.*
   XV. *We nurture personal and career development pathways.*
   XVI. *We value strengthening our emotional intelligence capacities.*

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY BEST PRACTICES
  6. We welcome people from different backgrounds, genders, and with diverse needs.
   XVII. *We are an international and intercultural community that strives to integrate newcomers.*
   XVIII. *We work towards diversity and gender equity.*
  7. We practice awareness and respect.
   XIX. *We respect people's boundaries and diversity needs, yet we strive to be worthy of each other's trust.*
   XX. *We continuously learn and support diversity and inclusion.*
   XXI. *We take special care to prevent and address toxic and inappropriate behaviors and do not excuse them on any grounds.*

INTEGRITY BEST PRACTICE

8. **We aim for quality in our science.**

    XXII.   *We evaluate performance in non-traditional ways and beyond classical merit indicators.*

    XXIII.   *We prize care, originality, and impact in our work.*

9. **We serve our ICTA-UAB community.**

    XXIV.   *We each do our share of management and community building work.*

    XXV.   *We participate in social and care activities.*

Along each practice, a series of actions can support their implementation. Some actions were suggested by participants while others (the ones with an *) come from the gender equity and ethics of care workshops' facilitator based on comments from ICTA-UAB members who directly participated in the workshops. The list of actions below are presented as a general list of proposals while Table 1 establishes a prioritization of the most feasible and implementable actions. We acknowledge that some of them are already being implemented as part of the Doctoral Program in Environmental Science and Technology, the Institute's Maria de Maeztu Unit of Excellence Program, or as part of the working ethos of our individuals and working teams, at both research and administrative levels.

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ACTIONS TO OPERATIALIZE CARE BEST PRACTICES

1. **We work towards a safe place for everyone, where we communicate clearly and freely.**
   I. *We care for what people have to say, we are empathetic, and we listen well.*
   Actions:

* Incorporate Community Agreements in office spaces, labs and during team meetings, such as:

- *Be willing to share and listen actively.*
- *Communicating in a direct caring and non-violent way.*
- *Ready to listen to others.*
- *Listening, putting yourself in someone else's shoes.*

* Encourage seniors to lead by example (senior faculty, administrators, and managers)

* Offer recurring training, to those in senior positions (including staff, management, and professors) on <u>non-violent communication</u> and on <u>establishing group norms or agreements</u>.

II. *We know who to talk to, in a safe space, when the need arises to share something vulnerable.*
   Actions:

- Provide clear information on the ICTA-UAB onboarding package (e.g. Welcome Guide) of who the Ombuds person is, and any other ICTA-UAB information point associated with gender discrimination and conflict.

* Offer training to Supervisors (Seniors and Senior Postdocs) on harassment and discrimination policies and on daily practices to reduce the risk of microaggressions and unsuspected toxic behaviours.

- Reinstate the importance of a first meeting between PhD students and supervisor during the first month of their arrival, where a form is to be completed stating meeting goals for the trimester, duties and responsibilities, frequency of meetings and any other relevant observations such as students' aspirations and motivations. This is to be filed in the student's profile in the administration office.

- *Create a Buddy System for newcomers.*
- *Create a PhD mentorship program with more independent tutors.*

III. *We offer quality feedback and receive training accordingly.*
   Actions:
- *Offer mandatory workshop on non-violent communication to all ICTA members.*
- *Offer a recurring training, to those in senior positions (including staff, management, and professors) on <u>collaborative work</u> and <u>giving feedback</u>.*
  - *"When giving feedback, thinking along with the ideas of others, rather than against them."*
  - *Train people on how to give content-related or creative-idea related feedback, instead of format or just output-related.*

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2. We connect for everyone to thrive.

IV. *We organize social events.*
   Actions:
   - *Establish a Social fund for the Care group, a potential ICTA-UAB student association or Social Events association to develop social activities to spur connections, social capital, and inclusion.*
     - *Create routines to share time with each other (e.g., lunch together, weekly breakfast).*
     - *Create informal events to get everyone together in a fun/relaxed setting (music events, sports, cultural food exchange, Friday drinks, weekend events).*
     - *To apply for the fund a form should be available to describe event and budget as well as to argue for the equity and inclusivity of the event (process, out come etc.).*
   - *Keep the Tuesday's coffee break. But change the place. It is too noisy and warm. Could be done outside, or where the catering is often organized.*

V. *We do regular check-ins in our teams and between researchers.*
   Actions:
   - *Have regular check-ins on how your colleagues are at meetings. Make office hours available to students and other colleagues to ensure your colleagues know when you are available and ready to focus on student's matters.*

VI. *We practice care in our daily work, mentoring, teaching, management, collaborations, and supervision.*
   Actions:
   - *Include care guide in the monthly newsletter, welcoming new members/farewell to those leaving.*
   - *Announce widely the existence of the Care Group via email, sign boards etc.*

* Establish a weekly wellness blip email with information on wellness events on campus, wellness tips, community-building events, social activities, etc.

3. We manage time beyond productivism: we are aware of external time pressures, yet we strive for quality.

VII. *We allow time for empathy, feedback and reflection, quality, and creativity.*
   Actions:
   - *Simplify bureaucracies to allow more time for content and passion.*
   - *Discourage productivism at the expense of quality and creativity.*
   - *Make time in meetings for sharing how we feel at work (in relationship to interactions with colleagues or concerning pressures and expectations).*
   - *Establish a % of supervision time and effort to feedback from supervisors to students.*

VIII. *We support life-work balance and family-work conciliation.*
   Actions:
   - Encourage the use and dissemination of family-work conciliation rights.

- Support teleworking practices as much as possible.

IX. *We do not praise nor admire working extra hours and encourage flexible working practices.*
Actions:
- *Discourage regularly working extra hours through media campaigns and lead by example.*
- *Support people to have a healthy family-work balance though information of their rights as well as offering a work/life balance information point.*

COLLABORATION AND IMPACT BEST PRACTICES

4. We collaborate.

X. *We facilitate exchanges for mutual collaboration and synergies.*
Actions:
- *Create incentives for collaboration between researchers rather than competition or focus on large scale projects.*
- *Support inter-lab/group and interdepartmental collaboration to develop common goals and shared aspirations, through funding schemes or other non-monetary incentives.*

XI. Establish interdepartmental social-academic talks to encourage ICTA-UAB members to "Seeing the big picture that makes our day-to-day tasks meaningful."

XII. Promote exchanges between different taff members within ICTA-UAB (e.g. through workshops, trainings) whilst still maintaining a safe space for conflict.

XIII. *We build synergies wherever we see the potential.*
Actions:
- *Establish mechanisms and incentives to avoid antagonism among groups. Strengthen intragroup cooperation and take care of all ICTA-UAB staff, including researchers, the administration office, cleaning, maintenance, and security services, as well as lab technicians.*
- *Create community service request board where people or departments can post material, informational or skills needs to encourage solidarity and synergies.*
- *Promote time and spaces where people can share and acknowledge their strengths, weaknesses, and limitations to work more effectively.*

5. We are strategic and meaningful.

XIV. *We strive for impacts in research, policy, and practice.*
Action:
- *Dedicate time to societal contributions and strategically allocate funds or incentives towards this end.*

XV. *We commit to transparency and accountability.*
Actions:
- *Put mechanisms in place to monitor decisions, policies, and guidelines to avoid changing them or disregarding them without a solid foundation or reasoning for it.*
- *Create awareness across ICTA of the buffer time needed to see results from goals and policies and stick to them trying to achieve them without rush.*

XVI. *We clarify duties and responsibilities and anticipate others' needs.*
Actions:
- *Anticipate other's needs.*
- *State clear responsibilities for each professional categories to manage expectations around time and resources available dedicated to management tasks.*

XVII. *We nurture personal and career development pathways.*
Actions:
- *Support younger scholars for long-term career development through mentorship programs, professional development trainings, quality feedback from colleagues and professors, and an assessment of expectations while at ICTA-UAB (during the initial onboarding meetings) to create a road map and monitoring mechanisms.*
- *Training on strength-based feedback to appraise dreams and goals of ICTA-UAB members and support them along the way.*
- *Develop a powerful welcome package with media displaying success stories (at the research, managerial, social impact level).*

XVIII. *We value strengthening our emotional intelligence capacities.*
Actions:
- *Develop a list of Professional Development trainings available while at ICTA-UAB highlighting the benefits and value of strengthening emotional intelligence capacities for successful career development.*

DIVERSITY AND EQUITY BEST PRACTICES

6. We welcome people from different backgrounds, genders, and with diverse needs.

XIX. *We are an international and intercultural community that strives to integrate newcomers.*
Actions:
- *Design or revise the Newcomers welcoming protocols to contemplate/include the following aspects:*
    i. *Newcomers informative point at ICTA-UAB.*
    ii. *Establish a buddy system to meet quickly meet people and resources.*
    iii. *Develop welcoming packages with useful and practical information to new students.*
    iv. *Specifically engage students from outside Spain and have a reference person for international students.*
    v. *Create a newcomers WhatsApp group/Instagram/Facebook etc.*
    vi. *Enable a space in the building where newcomers can socialize with other colleagues (e.g., a graduate student social room/area)*
    vii. *Run a regular knowledge-gap survey among ICTA members to understand what information or knowledge ICTA members are missing around duties, responsibilities, policies etc. ICTA should be better during welcoming sessions to inform newcomers about any relevant information concerning their wellbeing and navigation during their time at the institution.*
* Inform ICTA-UAB members of newcomers and encourage participation in social events for newcomers to meet their senior colleagues and share humour and laughter.

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* "Stop and greet media campaign" during the periods when newcomers arrive to encourage senior colleagues to be more alert to the fact, they may be meeting down the hallway newcomers feeling lost or isolated.
- *Make explicit effort in labs to include newcomers in conversations and introduce everyone to the group.*

XX. *We work towards diversity and gender equity.*
Actions:
- *Continue with the implementation of the 2022 Gender Equity Action Plan*

7. We practice awareness and respect.

XXI. *We respect people's boundaries and diversity needs, yet we strive to be worthy of each other's trust.*
Actions:
- *Encourage community agreements that include:*
    i. *Respecting people's personal context and find ways to achieve collective research goals.*
    ii. *Respecting boundaries of intimacy, and personal space.*
    iii. *Taking care of ourselves to be able to be at our best at work.*
    iv. *Remaining mindful that we do not know what other people are going through and proceed with care and respect.*

XXII. *We continuously learn and support diversity and inclusion.*
Actions:
- *Celebrate April 2nd: Autism awareness day, along with other relevant awareness days.*
* Offer recurring training, on functional diversity (autism, neurodiversity, ablism), agism, racism, gender, internalized bias, bystander behaviour to gain skills around diversity and inclusion and support each ICTA member to reach their potential.
- Offer again the courses on Feminist Climate justice, as well as the Decolonial and Feminist Environmental Sciences course in a more accessible manner (timing, language, etc.).
- Encourage in labs and institutionally to visibilize works of different backgrounds, literatures, and practices in syllabi, presentations, etc.
    a. *Include, during presentations pictures of authors cited, to highlight contributions by minorities.*
    b. *Visibilize newer generations of researchers in ICTA publications, outreach, social media, etc.*
    c. *Share through online platforms alternative feminist approaches to cite bibliography considering biases around gender, global north/global south, academics/communities, researchers under investigation or unresolved harassment behaviour.*
- *To write the full name on citations to visibilize women´s contributions.*
- Have blind selection process in conference presentations to avoid biases.
- Develop accessibility protocols for a neurodiverse community.

XXIII. *We take special care to prevent and address toxic and inappropriate behaviors and do not excuse them on any grounds.*

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Actions:
- *Implement the anti-harassment and anti-discrimination items of the 2022 Gender Action plan.*
- *Denounce toxic and inappropriate behaviors to the ICTA-UAB Punt Lila and Ombudsman.*
- *Call out toxic and inappropriate behaviors in meetings and seminars.*

INTEGRITY BEST PRACTICES

8. We aim for quality in our science.

XXIV. *We evaluate performance in non-traditional ways and beyond classical merit indicators.*
Actions:
- *Expand and visibilize ICTA-UAB's performance indicators beyond number of publications, projects, and raised funding.*
- *Include in evaluation by PhD of supervisors' aspects related to supervisor care for the student, supervisor's contribution to career development.*

XXV. *We prize care, originality, and impact in our work.*
Actions:
- *Yearly vote for the most supportive ICTA-UAB member, for the most original research, and for the most impactful project (as in community outreach, co-investigation with citizens etc.) through an online survey or through a social event.*

9. We serve our ICTA-UAB community.

XXVI. *We each do our share of management and community building work.*
Actions:
* Establish rotational commitments for management responsibilities.

* List management duties in labs and reaching consensus on management shares.

* Secure or Apply for funds to financially support ICTA-UAB's management structure.

XXVII. *We participate in social and care in care activities*
Actions:
* Actively encourage ICTA-UAB members to partake in the Care Group (as suggested earlier Funding incentives and recognitions may help).

Upon the consideration of actions that do not duplicate existing policies, plans, documents (e.g. Gender Equity Action Plan; Welcome Guide), and actions and that are realistic and feasible within ICTA-UAB's competence and budget, we propose below a set of <u>priority</u> actions for 2024-2028.

TABLE 1: Priority Actions for Implementing Best Practices

RESPONSIBILITY / PRIORITY ACTIONS (START YEAR IF ACTION NOT YET IN PLACE)	INDIVIDUAL	COLLECTIVE	RESEARCH LABS/GROUPS	MANAGEMENT TEAM & MDM TEAM	COMMUNICATIONS
CARE BEST PRACTICES					
Design and Incorporate community agreements about listening, feedback, and communications in lab/research spaces (2024 and onwards)	X		X		
Add conciliation rights to the ICTA-UAB website (e.Gg. leave of absence and other rights + teleworking) (2024)					X
Offer and take training on non-violent communication and on constructive feedback to colleagues (2024 and onwards)			X	X	
Create buddy system for newcomers (PhD students, postdocs, and seniors) (2024 and onwards)		X	X	X	
Create mentoring system for newcomers (Phs, postdocs, and seniors) (2025)			X	X	
COLLABORATION AND IMPACT					
Start meetings with check-ins about how people are doing and feeling (at work in particular), encourage open discussions about complex/sensitive issues, and provide space during meetings where people can share strengths/weaknesses and limitations to work more effectively – at all career/staff levels (2024 and onwards)	X	X	X	X	
Include existing or new care activities/group, new colleagues, or departing colleagues in the monthly newsletter (2024 and onwards)					X
Regularly advertise the "Cares group" on ICTA-UAB boards, screens, and website (2024 and onwards)					X
Create community service request board where people or departments can post material, informational or skills needed to encourage solidarity and synergies (2024)	X	X			X
Encourage creativity during research meetings and allow for creative thinking over productivity and technical issues (2024 and onwards)	X	X	X		
Organize talks inviting faculty from UAB-wide departments (2025-onwards)	X	X	X		
Steer Maria de Maeztu Unit of Excellence funds towards inter-group collaboration (e.g. seed grants) - depends on grant renewal				X	
DIVERSITY AND EQUITY					
Revise Welcome Guide to include new aspects related to buddy system (2024 and onwards)				X	X

Inform ICTA-UAB members of newcomers and encourage their presentation and participation in social events for newcomers (2024 and onwards)			X	X	X
Make a special mention of April 2nd Autism Awareness Day, along with other relevant awareness days (2024 and onwards)					X
Continue and strengthen the implementation of ICTA-UAB's Gender Equity Policy (2024 and onwards)	X	X	X	X	X
Visibilize works and authors of different backgrounds, literatures, or practices in syllabi, PPTs, lab meetings, and institutionally (2024 and onwards)	X	X	X		
Denounce toxic & inappropriate behaviors to the ICTA-UAB Punt Lila and Ombudsman and call them out as they occur (2024 and onwards)	X	X	X	X	
INTEGRITY					
List management duties in labs and reaching consensus on management shares (2024 and onwards)	X	X	X		
Expand and visibilize ICTA performance indicators in Memoir and on the website beyond number of publications, projects, and funding raised (2024 and onwards)			X		X
Yearly vote for the most supportive ICTA member, for the most original research, and for the most impactful project (as in community outreach, co-investigation with citizens etc.) through an online survey or through a social event (2025-onwards)	X	X			X
Establish and agree upon rotational commitments for management responsibilities at ICTA-UAB (2025-onwards)	X	X			X

Implementing the Manifesto

The incorporation of a Culture Manifesto at ICTA-UAB, alongside the concurrent application of preestablished care practices (such as annual workshops and trainings on the ethics of care and gender equity), increases the chances to enable our institute to become a transformative, a sustainable and a caring space for everyone.

However, since this document is not legally binding yet was approved in the March 5th 2024 JP, it will be important to make everyone accountable and to develop a series of strategies to highlight its positive impacts as well as to reward those who partake in its improvement and actioning. To this end, every member of staff should embrace those behaviours and actions that imply an individual responsibility and make their own research group and the institute's management team or communications office accountable for the other actions (Table 1).

To further increase individual and collective accountability, a member of the Management Team will also meet twice a year with a representative from each research group to discuss progress, share good practices, and review challenges in the implementation of those actions. Research groups will also can present their work on those practices during ICTA-UAB's social events, such as the Summer Day or the Winter Symposium.

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Legal references

- [ICTA-UAB Gender Equity Policy](#)
- [UAB Protocol Against Sexual Harassment](#)
- [UAB Policy For Human Dignity](#)
- [UAC Ethics Code (Draft stage)](#)

Acknowledgements

Appendix

Appendix A: Committee in charge and process

ICTA Management Team

Isabel Pont

Esteve Corbera

Isabelle Anguelovski

Laura Talens

Andre Colonese

Adriana Artola

Maica Nogales

Phases

- Phase 1: Fall 2023 Senior Management Team Building session on Sept 28th Initial revision of mission and vision statement and values.
- Phase 2 Fall 2023 Gender Equity and Ethics of Care trainings where proposals for best practices and values were collected.
- Phase 3 January 2024 Analysis of data and draft of Culture Manifesto
- Phase 4 January 2024 Review and Revision of Culture Manifesto by ICTA-UAB Management Team and by ICTA-UAB Seniors
- Phase 5 March 2024 Vote and Approval by ICTA-UAB Junta Permanent
- Phase 6 2024-2027 Implementation and Monitoring of Culture Manifest
- Phase 7 2027 Culture Manifesto Revision

Appendix B: Summaries of inputs

Inputs were drawn from the following reports:

- Summary Report of ICTA Senior Faculty Meeting 09.2023.pdf
- Evaluation of ICTA Senior Faculty Meeting 09.2023.pdf
- Summary Report ICTA Gender Equtiy trainings 10.2023.pdf
- Evaluations of ICTA Gender Equtiy trainings 10.2023.pdf
- Summary Report ICTA Ethics of Care trainings 10-11.2023.pdf
- Evaluations of ICTA Ethics of Care trainings 10-11.2023.pdf

Values collected through Ethics of Care training sessions as well as at the Senior Management Team Building Sessions 2023

Row Labels	Count of Values reported
Care	**43**
Diversity and equity	**30**
Collaboration and impact	**28**
Integrity	**26**
(blank)	**8**
Grand Total	**135**

Row Labels	Count of Values reported
Care	**43**
Empathy	14
Care	11
Support	6
Respect	5
Appreciate	3
Belonging	3
- Productivity	1
Diversity and equity	**30**
Diversity	7
Inclusive	7
Equity	6
Open-minded	5
Solidarity	4
Freedom	1
Collaboration and impact	**28**
Cooperation	4
Co-creation	4
Critical	4

Socially committed	4
Connectivity	3
Creativity	3
Impact	2
Collaborative	2
- Competition	1
Outreach	1
Integrity	**26**
Honesty	8
Responsibility	6
Humility	4
Integrity	3
Commitment	2
Exemplary	1
Justice	1
Trust	1
(blank)	**8**
- Excellence	2
Excellence	2
Fun	1
Joy	1
Strategic	1
Inspiring	1
Grand Total	**135**

Proposals for best practices collected through Ethics of Care training sessions in 2023.

Row Labels	Count of VALUES2
Care	34
Collaboration and impact	19
Diversity and equity	15
Integrity	12
Grand Total	80

Row Labels	Count of Best practices
Care	34
We strive for clear and empathic communication	14
We connect for everyone to thrive	13
Time management beyond productivism	8
Collaboration and impact	19
We collaborate	10
We are strategic and meaning-full	11
Diversity and equity	15
We practice awareness	6
We welcome people	9
Integrity	12
We perform beyond numbers	3
We do community service	6
Grand Total	80

Row Labels	Count of specific best practices
Care	35
We work towards a safe place for everyone, where we communicate clearly and empathically	14
We offer quality feedback and receive training accordingly	3
We know who to talk to, in a safe space, when the need arises to share something vulnerable	4
We care for what people have to say, we are empathic, and we listen well	7
We connect for everyone to thrive	13
Social events	9
Regular check-ins	2

Care practices	2
Time management beyond productivism	**8**
Time to rest	2
Time for quality	1
Time for feedback	1
Time for empathy	1
Time for creativity and reflection	3
Collaboration and impact	**21**
We collaborate	**10**
Facilitate exchanges for mutual collaboration and synergies	7
Build synergies	3
We are strategic and meaning-full	**11**
We clarify duties and responsibilities and anticipate others needs	2
Stick to decisions and monitor	2
Nurture meaning and potential	5
Encourage social impacts from research and practice	1
Capacity building	1
Diversity and equity	**15**
We practice awareness	**6**
We respect people's boundaries and diversity needs	4
We continuously learn and support diversity and inclusion	2
We cwelcome people	**9**
Welcoming environment	9
Integrity	**9**
We perform beyond numbers	**3**
We apply performance indicators beyond numbers	2
Create awareness of the value of performance beyond numbers	1
We do community service	**6**
Participation in care activities	3
Everyone does it's share of management work	3
Grand Total	**80**

Row Labels	Count of suggested actions within each section of best practices
Care	**35**
We work towards a safe place for everyone, where we communicate clearly and empathically	**14**
We offer quality feedback and receive training accordingly	3
Feedback content-related, not output-related.	1

25

Mandatory workshop on non-violent communication. 1

When giving feedback, thinking along with the ideas of others, rather than against them. For example, organize a workshop on collaborative work/feedback. 1

We know who to talk to, in a safe space, when the need arises to share something vulnerable 4

PhD meetings: mentorship program, more independent tutors. 1

Safe spaces to share (PhD-supervisors). 1

Sharing vulnerabilities/needs (safe spaces). Knowing who can help. 1

Understanding, unlocking potential and acknowledging and seeing each other through creating a safe space for sharing and clear communication. 1

We care for what people have to say, we are empathic and we listen well 7

Active listening (establish agreements in individual labs and group meetings). 1

Ask people to share and listen actively. 1

Asking about how each other feel. 1

Communicating in a direct caring and non-violent way. 1

Listen. 1

Listening, putting yourself in someone else's shoes. 1

Ready to listen to others. 1

We connect for everyone to thrive **13**

Social events 9

Create informal events to get everyone together in a fun/relaxed setting (music events, sports, cultural food exchange). 1

Create routines to share time with each other (e.g., lunch together, weekly breakfast). 1

Friday beers. 1

Fun. 1

Group activity opportunities. 1

Keep the Tuesday's coffee break. But change the place. It is too noisy and warm. Could be done outside, or where the catering. 1

More parties and external activities. 1

Socialize with socially-disabled people as they are socializing. 1

Spending time in/for different activities (change environment) e.g., mountain, oceans, cooking, breakfast. 1

Regular check-ins 2

Be present/available, open. 1

Have regular check-ins on how your colleagues are. 1

Care practices 2

Include care guide in the monthly newsletter, welcoming new members/farewell to those leaving. 1

Promote the support care group. 1

Time management beyond productivism **8**

Time to rest 2

Normalize working normal hours. 1

Support people to have a healthy family-work balance. 1

Time for quality 1

Being aware of how much time a meeting/task takes (not to rush).	1
Time for feedback	1
Devote a % of supervision time/effort to feedback.	1
Time for empathy	1
Dedicate time in meetings for sharing personal feelings and interpersonal relationships (emotional feelings).	1
Time for creativity and reflection	3
Make time for reflection with your team, as well as between individuals.	1
More time to content and passion and less bureaucracies.	1
Take time, avoid productivism.	1
Collaboration and impact	**21**
We collaborate	**10**
Facilitate exchanges for mutual collaboration and synergies	7
Acknowledging hierarchies young scholars/everyone.	1
Ask for feedback or collaboration with other researchers at ICTA that study on the same topic. Use the MdM challenges to enable this.	1
Creating spaces to facilitate exchange and mutual collaboration.	1
Inspiring seminars for/from other groups.	1
Promote exchange among hierarchies within ICTA (i.e., workshops) whilst still maintaining a safe space for conflict.	1
Push for collaboration between researchers to support pressure on outputs rather than facilitating competition.	1
Sharing life experiences: seniors and new arrivals, as well as all the spectrum.	1
Build synergies	3
Acknowledging limits and strengths of others.	1
Avoid antagonism among groups. Strengthen intragroup cooperation and take care of the workers at ICTA.	1
Create community service request board + prior information effort (e.g., a video).	1
We are strategic and meaning-full	**11**
We clarify duties and responsibilities and anticipate others needs	2
Anticipate other's needs.	1
Expectation management: state clear responsibilities for each professional categories.	1
Stick to decisions and monitor	2
Respect decisions and not change policies and guidelines all the time.	1
Stick to goals and try to achieve them without rush.	1
Nurture meaning and potential	5
Do what we have dreamt to do well.	1
Seeing the big picture that makes our day-to-day tasks meaningful.	1
Showing what amazingness is possible. Encouraging people where they are at in their journey.	1
Support younger scholars for long-term career development.	1
Working together we create and share emotions.	1
Encourage social impacts from research and practice	1
Dedicate time to societal contributions.	1

Capacity building	1
More training sessions that build on these trainings.	1
Diversity and equity	**15**
We practice awareness	**6**
We respect peoples boundaries and diversity needs	4
Mindfulness.	1
Respect boundaries of intimacy, and personal space.	1
Respect people's personal context.	1
Self-care, self consciousness, and communication.	1
We continuously learn and support diversity and inclusion	2
Celebrate April 2nd: Autism awareness day.	1
Encourage disable people to do their "coming out".	1
We welcome people	**9**
Welcoming environment	9
Actively welcoming newcomers: Use and awareness of social networks (WhatsApp group).	1
Break clicks. Organize a buddy system to meet people from different groups.	1
Developing and improving the welcoming of new comers - info point.	1
Make people feel welcome by being a good host: greeting, introducing yourself, having conversations.	1
Saying hi and smiling.	1
Sharing humour/laughter.	1
Specifically engage students coming from outside Spain.	1
Stop to greet one another, and check in.	1
Welcoming inclusive conversations, introducing yourself.	1
Integrity	**9**
We perform beyond numbers	**3**
We apply performance indicators beyond numbers	2
Expand ICTA performance indicators beyond number of publications, projects and money.	1
Implementing student evaluation of PhD supervisors in elements of personal care, scientific development.	1
Create awareness of the value of performance beyond numbers	1
Yearly vote for the most supportive or empathic ICTA member.	1
We do community service	**6**
Participation in care activities	3
Everyone at ICTA contributes something to the caring activities.	1
Participating in the care commission group.	1
Sharing care work better.	1
Everyone does it's share of management work	3
Management sharing.	1
Participation in decision-making and commitment.	1
Sharing responsibilities in managing ICTA.	1
Grand Total	**80**

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