

Human Resources Strategy For Researchers

(HRS4R)

2024 – 2027 Action Plan

Index

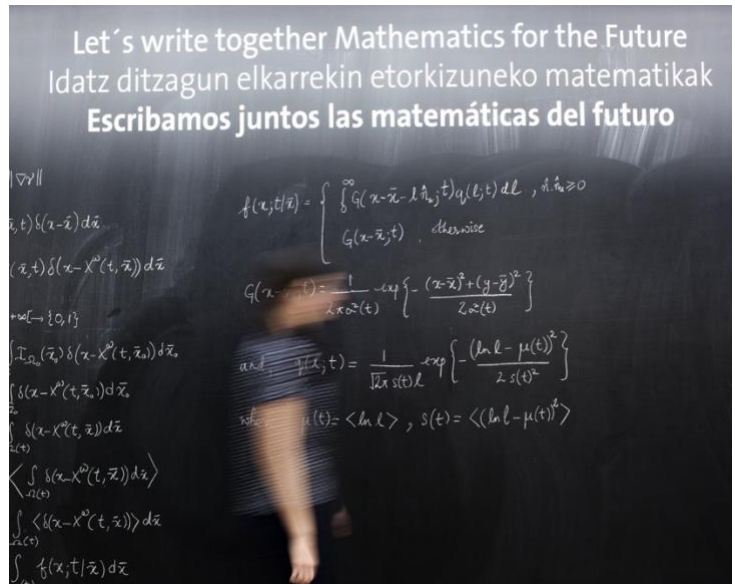
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1. Introduction

1.1. The Center

In the realm of mathematical inquiry, the late Fields Medalist Maryam Mirzakhani once remarked: “The beauty of mathematics only shows itself to more patient followers”. These words encapsulate not only the ethos but also the journey of the Basque Center for Applied Mathematics (BCAM) as it continues to push the boundaries of mathematical research and its applications.

As we embark on this journey of reflection and progress, we are proud to present the annual activity report of BCAM, a reflection to our unwavering commitment to excellence and innovation. In the past year, BCAM has achieved significant milestones, underscoring our position as a premier hub for mathematical research and collaboration.



BCAM is a research center of excellence in the field of Applied Mathematics that is part of the BERC (Basque Excellence Research Centers) network. It was created in 2008 by the Basque Government, the University of the Basque Country UPV/EHU and Ikerbasque, the Basque Foundation for Science. It also has the support of the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, Innobasque, Petronor Innovación S.L. and and more recently of the Bilbao City Council.



From the inception of humanity, Mathematics has always been the basis on which all natural and social sciences have been supported. Reciprocally, sciences have been the source of inspiration for most mathematical developments throughout history. In recent decades, technology has joined science in promoting Mathematics, demanding new mathematical developments capable of modelling such technology and predicting its behavior. Like the case of science, modern Mathematics is resulting in new technological advances. In BCAM, our goal is to be leaders in the discovery of the necessary Mathematics that contribute to a scientific and technological development oriented towards social welfare. That is, our goal is to write together the Mathematics of the future.

BCAM Scientific Strategy

BCAM Scientific Platforms

Core in Applied Mathematics

- Fourier Analysis
- Algebraic Geometry
- Discrete Mathematics
- Probability and Statistics
- Partial Differential Equations

Computational Mathematics

- Numerical Analysis
- Computer Simulations
- Mathematical Modelling
- Algorithm Development

Application of Mathematics

- Energy
- Biosciences
- Sports Industry
- Advanced Manufacturing
- Other applications: Finance, Insurance, Telecom, Social ...



1.2. Employee Structure

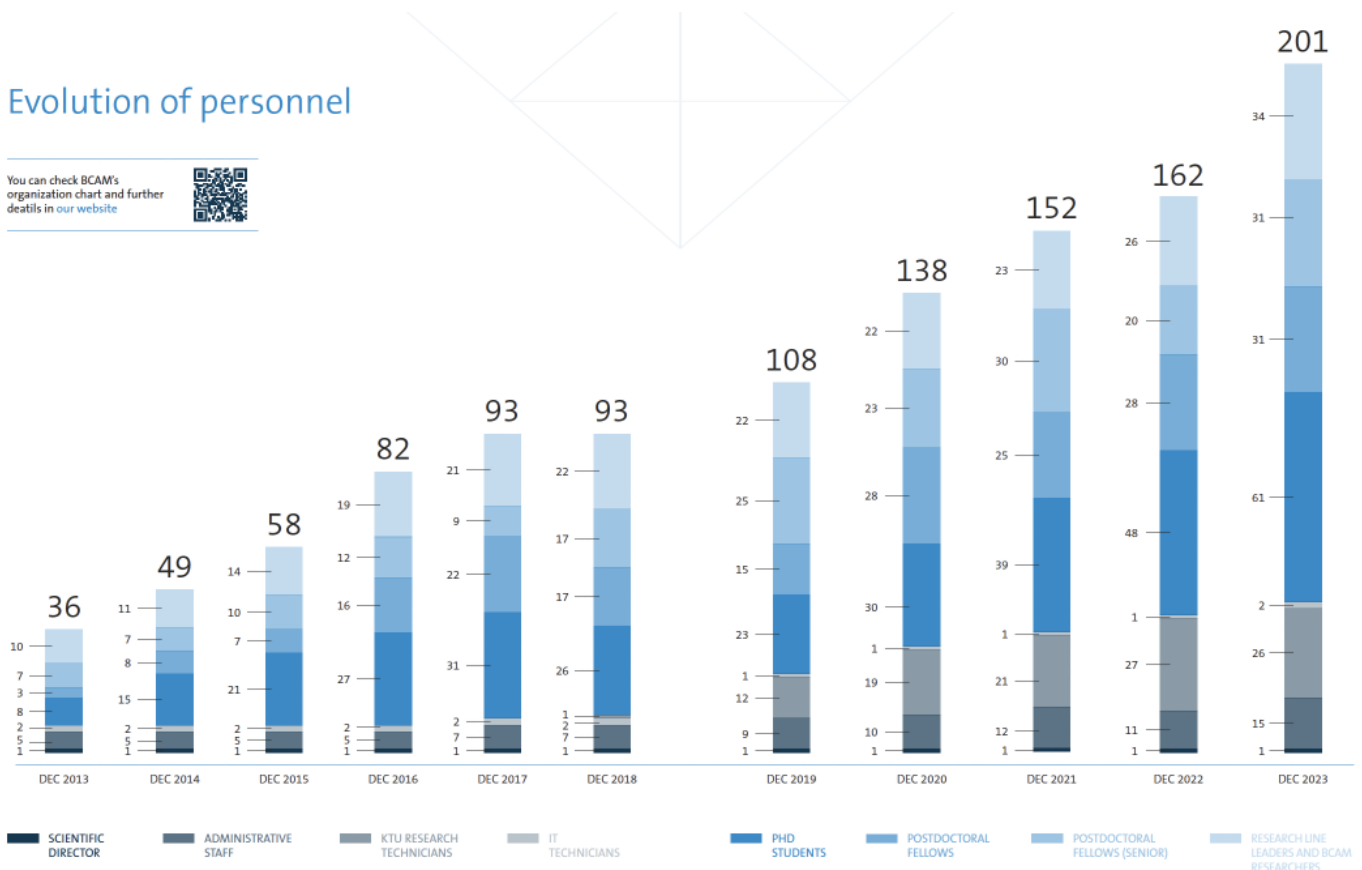
Since its creation, BCAM has experienced remarkable growth, with our ranks swelling to over 200 researchers by December 2023. This expansion speaks volumes about the vitality of our institution and underscores our commitment to fostering a vibrant intellectual environment where ideas flourish and collaborations thrive.

According to the previous graphic, the employee structure is divided into the following categories:

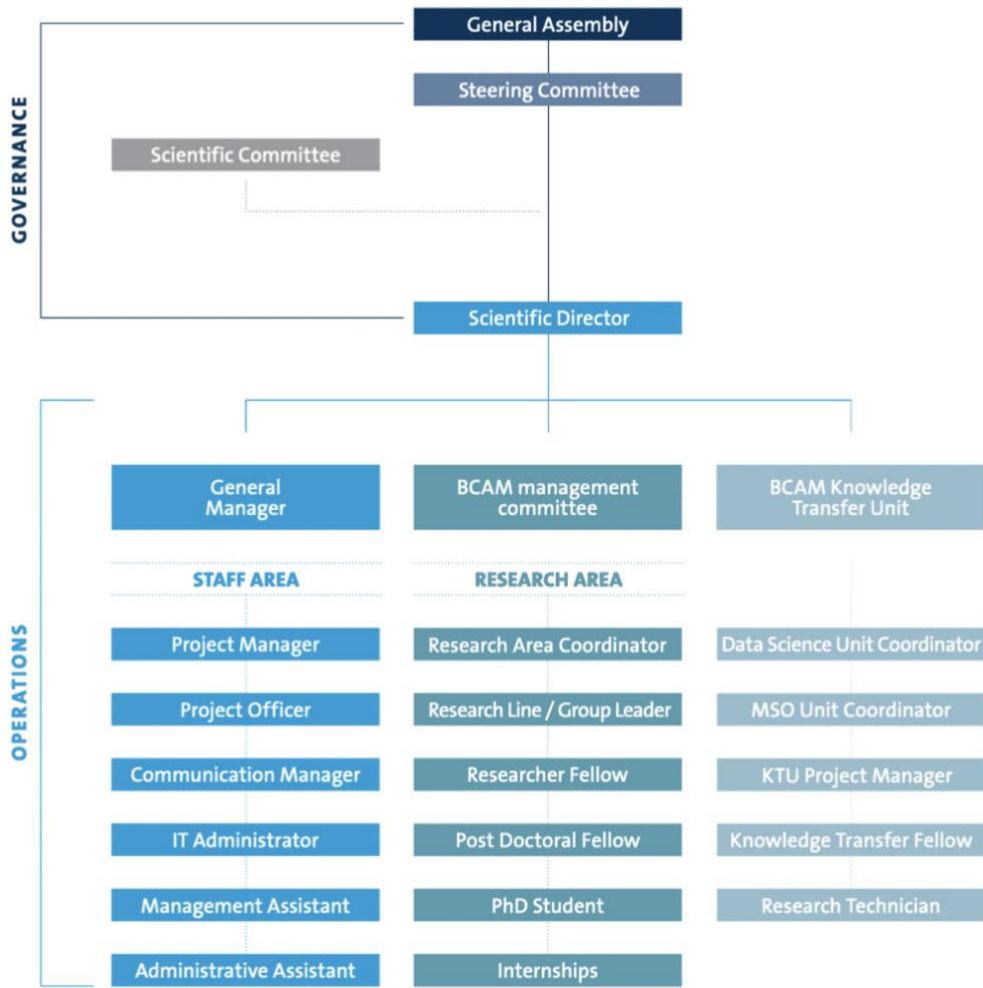
- Research staff: 201 research staff at December 31, 2023
- Administrative staff: 17 administrative staff at December 31, 2023

Evolution of personnel

You can check BCAM's organization chart and further details in our website



Also, BCAM's organization chart follows the following structure:



2. HRS4R Strategy

2.1. HRS4R Strategy timeline

Regarding the HR Logo process timeline, BCAM has achieved the following milestones:

- 2008: The BCAM Strategy for attracting talented researchers was established back in 2008 and reflects the commitment for excellence, openness, flexibility, pan-European focus, ethical awareness and ethical and human values. Below is a summary of the steps that have been taken at BCAM to further the development of the HRS4R strategy:
- 2008: BCAM signed its commitment to the 40 principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C) 2008.
- 2015: BCAM decided to go one step forward in its compromise with people management and it started the internal analysis process of "the Human Resources Strategy For Researchers (HRS4R)" promoted by the European Commission. The outcome of that process was the Internal Analysis and the Action Plan 2016.
- 2016: Before the Internal Analysis and the Action Plan 2016, BCAM was awarded the "HR Excellence in Research" logo and recognition.
- 2018: Interim assessment from the European Commission renewal of the award and the Revised Action Plan 2018-2021.
- 2022: BCAM shares the Improved action Plan for 2021-2024.
- 2023: BCAM receives a visit from the HRS4R European Committee.
- 2024 BCAM works on the elaboration of the HRS4R Internal Review document and on the implementation of the recommendations of the assessment team for the next period.

Because of the renewal process, BCAM received the site-visit based assessment, establishing the following strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths

- The high number of international researchers is a clear indicator of talent attraction, and quality of recruitment and hosting practices.
- Innovative use of EFQM in this case. However, the perspectives of Team, Innovation, and Coherence need to be clearly linked to the HRS4R, ensuring immediate visibility, and understanding.
- Establishment of an Equality Commission, Health and Safety at work policies, and Ethics Committee (though the operational details are unclear).
- Offerings of various training programs to enhance skills.
- The English website of BCAM is excellent.
- Very good internal communication, strong involvement of the research staff (for ex. through surveys)

Weaknesses

- The HRS4R methodology and formal organizational principles are not fully implemented. There is no explicit mentioning of dedicated Steering Committee. No hyperlinks to regulations, internal procedures, internal methodologies regarding HR were introduced in the Internal Review.
- Access to career advice is limited.
- The involvement of all categories of researchers (R1-R4) in the HRS4R process is not clear.
- Weaknesses themselves are not outlined, making it unclear whether the institution is fully operational without any issues or if they choose not to disclose weaknesses or other reasons.
- The AP targets and indicators are not adequately composed. They should be clear, understandable, preferably measurable, provable, and quantifiable. Some actions are overly vague and unclear.
- The Action Plan is rather broad/vague, and the indicators should be more appropriate.
- The OTM-R Policy is not in place or at least not publicly available.
- The level of ambition of BCAM about its HR strategy for researchers is lagging a bit behind its high standing in the European research landscape and could be a bit stronger.

In summary, the general assessment concluded that, regarding the award renewal application, BCAM is for the most part, progressing with appropriate and quality actions as described in its Action Plan, but could benefit from alterations as advised through the Assessment process. Thus, minor modifications must be made moving forward.

2.2. HRS4R Working Group

To execute the implementation of the HRS4R Strategy at BCAM, the HRS4R Working group was created in 2016 with the first Action Plan and its members have been changing due to the variations in the BCAM Team. The main tasks of this team are to:

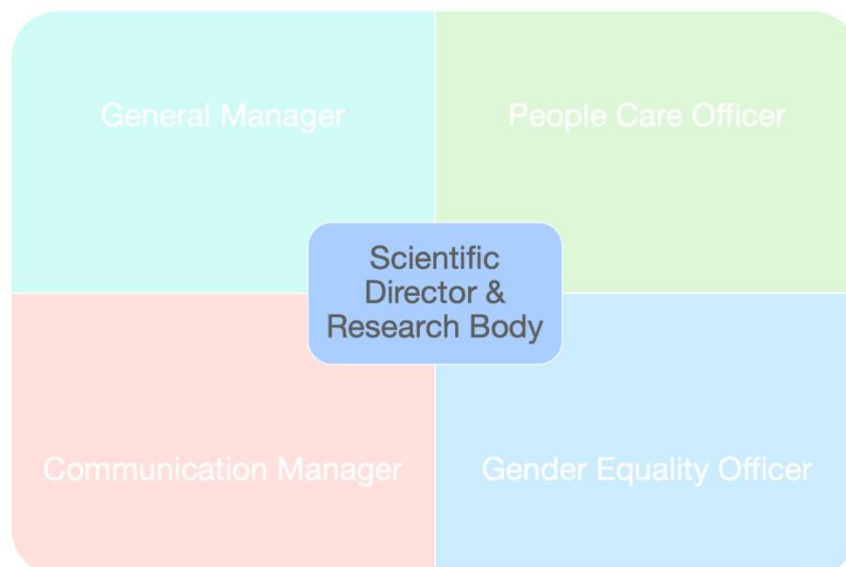
- Assess the adequation and impact of the actions
- Supervise the execution of the actions
- Be a canal of communication towards the Researchers

Currently, the group's structure is the following:

- Lorea Gómez (General Manager)
- Ana López (People Care Officer)
- Estibaliz Gutiérrez (Communication Manager)
- Oriana Elejalde (Gender Equality Officer)



Additionally, the group counts on the support of the Research Body and the Scientific Director.



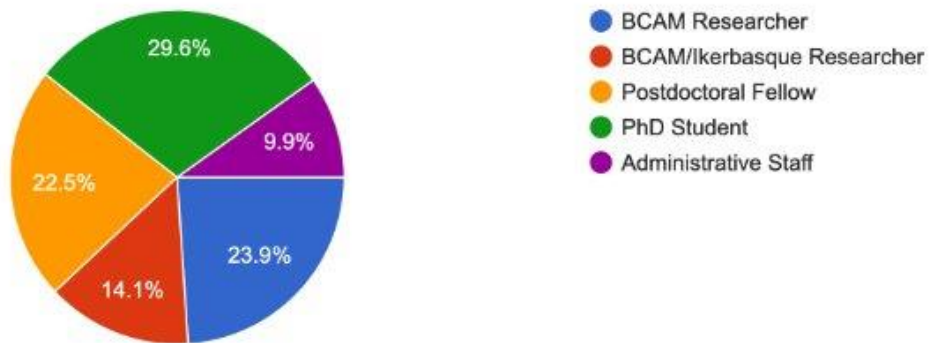
2.3. 2021-2014 Action plan, main conclusions from its evaluation

As in previous phases, the 2018-2021 action plan has developed different initiatives throughout its four years of implementation, framed in 5 strategic axes. All the initiatives together represent a compendium of all BCAM's actions in Human Resources (both strategic and operational) and include initiatives with a clear focus on the research group as well as others aimed for all employees in general.

The evaluation of the results of the Action Plan is intended to show the effects it has had on employees, as well as the areas of work on which it has been considered necessary for further action. In this regard, the participation on the survey was the following:

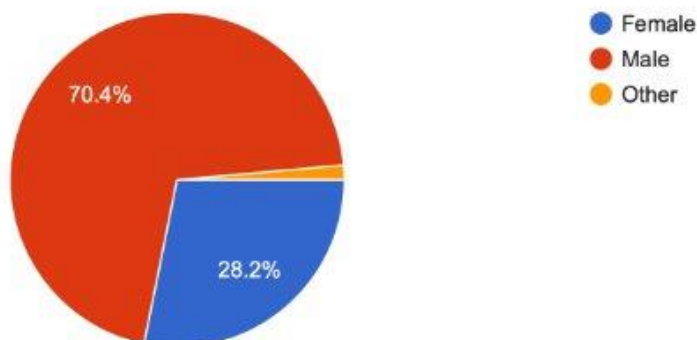
Position at BCAM

71 responses



Gender

71 responses



On the other hand, these were the obtained results:

	Principle	Score	
General Principles and Requirements applicable to Researchers	Research Freedom	8,11	7,99
	Ethical principles	8,45	
	Professional attitude	8,08	
	Contractual and legal obligations	7,89	
	Accountability	8,16	
	Good Practice in research	8,26	
	Dissemination, exploitation or results	8,07	
	Public Engagement	7,76	
	Relation with supervisors	7,48	
	Supervision and managerial duties	7,63	
	Continuing Professional Development	7,97	

General Principles and Requirements applicable to Employers and Funders	Recognition of the profession	8,13	7,56
	Non-discrimination	8,48	
	Research environment	7,85	
	Working conditions	7,76	
	Stability and permanence of employment	6,61	
	Funding and salaries	6,64	
	Gender balance	7,32	
	Career development	7,16	
	Value of mobility	8,11	
	Access to research training and continuous development	8,01	
	Access to career advice	7,45	
	Intellectual Property Rights	7,95	
	Co-authorship	8,33	
	Supervision	8,05	
	Teaching	6,66	
	Evaluation/appraisal systems	7,32	
	Complaints/appeals	7,27	
	Participation in decision-making bodies	6,82	
Recruitment	7,77		

The Code of Conduct for Recruitment: General Principles and Requirements	Recruitment (Code)	8,22	8,05
	Selection	8,1	
	Transparency	7,67	
	Judging merit	8,04	
	Variations in the chronological order of CVs	8,23	
	Recognition of mobility experience	8,51	
	Recognition of qualifications	7,94	
	Seniority	8,13	
	Postdoctoral appointments	7,64	

Analyzing the survey's results, we can conclude that as a whole, BCAM has performed well in the last Survey. However, there are a few areas that need improvement. This internal review process will serve as a starting point to determine which will be the action areas for the next 4 years to come.

3. Improved action plan 2024-2027

In view of the outcome of both the internal survey and the renewal visit, BCAM will continue to work improving the Center's HRS4R Strategy. In this sense, the strategic axes will continue to be fundamentally the following five:



Ethical and professional aspects

Respect the ethical practices recognized and the essential ethical principles related to their specialties and the labor conditions of R&D careers.



Recruitment

Improve the recruitment methods and career evaluation/appraisal systems in order to create a more transparent, open, equal and internationally accepted system of recruitment.



Working conditions and social security

Develop and maintain a supportive research environment and working culture, ensuring adequate social security coverage according to their legal status.



Training

Design training and career development plans to encourage the progress of researchers at any stage of their careers.

However, we intend to deepen in each one of them, designing more specific actions adapted to the needs of each type of employee and work area, as well as considering their interests and aspirations. Having said that, the planned strategy for the upcoming period will revolve around the following actions:

		2024												2025												2026												2027											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Ethical and professional aspects	Review and improve BCAM policies	[Grey bar]																																															
	Update BCAM Gender action plan	[Grey bar]																																															
	Renew BCAM's equality commission	[Grey bar]																																															
	Elaboration of the LGTBIQ+ Plan	[Grey bar]																																															
	Strategic Plan Follow-up	[Grey bar]																																															
	Strengthen of the Aula BCAM - UPV/EHU & promote international aulas	[Grey bar]																																															
	Promote women scientific vocations & contribute to women scientist career	[Grey bar]																																															
Recruitment	Elaborate the operating rules and guidelines for the HRS4R Working Group	[Green bar]																																															
	Review the OTM-R policy	[Green bar]																																															
	Encouraging the promotion of women workers to all categories and positions in which they are under-represented	[Green bar]																																															
	Including annual quantitative data on the workforce in the panel of indicators and analysing them: horizontal and vertical segregation, recruitment, departures, types of contracts, leaves of absence, internal promotions, work-life balance measures, training in equality by occupational category...	[Green bar]																																															
	Development of the international reception office.	[Green bar]																																															
	Design and implement a work-life balance plan taking into account the opinion of employees	[Green bar]																																															
	BCAM Manual for the use of IT Resources	[Green bar]																																															
Working conditions and social security	Review the working conditions of the researchers	[Blue bar]																																															
	Develop of the BCAM Talent Hub	[Blue bar]																																															
	Strengthen the HRS4R Working Group	[Blue bar]																																															
	Develop a Mathematics Graduate school in the north of Spain	[Blue bar]																																															
	Develop the ADA intranet	[Blue bar]																																															
	Update the "Health and Safety at work" policies to ensure the safety working in labs	[Blue bar]																																															
	Promote international joint positions programme	[Blue bar]																																															
	Improve the internal communication	[Blue bar]																																															
	Development of a video interview with BCAM women as means of addressing different topics	[Blue bar]																																															
	Establishing an internal activation procedure in cases of victims of gender-based violence, with coordinators within the company.	[Blue bar]																																															
	Elaboration of information manuals Bilbao cultural city	[Blue bar]																																															
	Create a CSR plan and identify the ODS	[Blue bar]																																															
	Elaboration of material (graphic and audiovisual) to promote BCAM's presence in the media.	[Blue bar]																																															
	Preparing and disseminating a plan for the reconciliation of personal, work and family life, by taking into account the opinion of all BCAM employees and the best practices of partner institutions, beyond legal measures, incorporating the criteria and issues that are applied on a day-to-day basis as ways of caring for the team and taking into account work-life balance, care and digital disconnection.	[Blue bar]																																															
Training	Participate in socio-cultural activities	[Blue bar]																																															
	Design and implement a specific training program	[Blue bar]																																															
	Training for all employees	[Blue bar]																																															
	Training for administrative staff	[Blue bar]																																															
	Provide training in transferable soft skills	[Blue bar]																																															
	Training on risk prevention	[Blue bar]																																															
	Organize specific training for the Equality Commission in order to promote their training and experience in the field of equality in the workplace	[Blue bar]																																															
	Coaching sessions to promote BCAM participation in international projects	[Blue bar]																																															
	Promotion of scientific and mathematical outreach activities with BCAM members for both general and scientific audiences.	[Blue bar]																																															
	Creation of MathLab and MathLabTxiki for the promotion of mathematical vocations.	[Blue bar]																																															
	Creation of a STEM Scientific Vocations Working Group at BCAM and plan the strategy for future activities.	[Blue bar]																																															
	Joining the BBKunaKideak network, a multi-sector alliance to accelerate collaboration and innovation through the 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals.	[Blue bar]																																															