MUNI SCI

HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Employee Survey

What is it like to work at SCI MUNI?

September 2026

What the 2026 staff survey revealed and what we will do next



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In September 2026, 540 colleagues shared their experiences with us. Thank you for taking the time to respond and for your detailed comments. Your answers show that we have a strong foundation to build on, particularly in the way we work together day to day. They also highlight areas where experiences differ and where changes could help.

Why we are revisiting some topics

We received 327 responses in 2020, 422 in 2023 and 540 this year. The questions varied between surveys, which limits direct comparisons over time. Even so, staff have repeatedly raised career development, administrative workload, communication and equal opportunities. Balancing work and caring responsibilities also featured prominently in 2023.

In recent years, the Faculty has introduced or updated its recruitment rules, Career Code, bilingual communications and staff portal. It has also expanded training for managers and support for parents taking leave and returning to work (read more). Despite these steps, some barriers remain. This year's survey shows how staff experience the workplace today and what we still need to investigate or change.

Strong day-to-day support, less say in decisions about change

Of those who responded, 88.3% said they could turn to their manager for help with work matters, 84.1% rated the clarity of their priorities positively and 73.5% gave a positive rating for feedback that helps them develop. A further 78.3% agreed that people at the Faculty treat one another with respect and professionalism. Yet 17.0% disagreed that they could raise a concern without fear.

Staff involvement in change showed the most room for improvement. Only 48.9% agreed that staff are involved, while 24.6% disagreed and 26.5% chose the midpoint. Staff can have good working relationships and still feel they have little influence on decisions.

Asked how the Faculty responds to staff suggestions, 198 of 540 respondents (36.7%) felt unable to judge. Of the 342 who gave a rating, 61.4% rated the response positively.

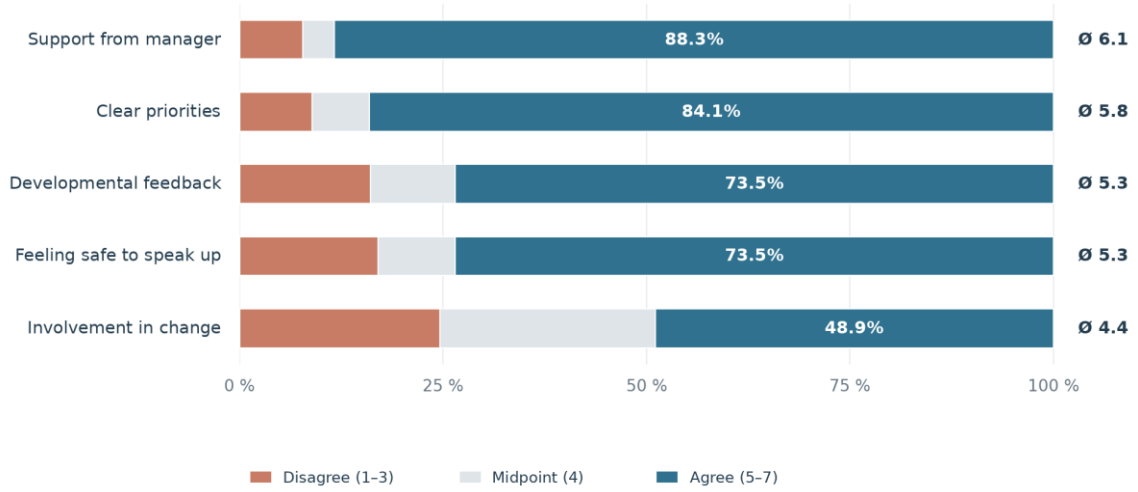


Figure 1 · Distribution of ratings on a scale of 1–7. All 540 respondents rated each statement. Ø = mean rating.

Where everyday procedures make work harder

Overall, 69.3% found administrative information and instructions easy to navigate, and 80.4% rated communication between administrative teams and departments positively. Alongside praise for the support they receive, staff repeatedly mentioned scattered guidance, uncertainty about whom to contact and unclear procedures for HR, finance, projects and purchasing. The aim is to simplify the tasks that cause difficulty, without assigning blame.

Of the 65 international staff who rated the availability of information in a language they could understand, 73.8% agreed it was accessible. Their comments also described situations where language barriers persist.

Career opportunities differ across groups

Overall, 74.1% rated access to development opportunities positively. The most frequently reported barriers to career progression were lack of time for development (31.1% of those answering this question), balancing a career with caring responsibilities (30.9%) and reconciling mobility with personal commitments (20.1%). Among respondents with caring responsibilities, 52.5% identified care as a career barrier, compared with 18.3% of other respondents.

Among staff in more senior academic and research roles (R3/R4), 55.9% of women and 86.5% of men agreed that career opportunities were equal regardless of gender. The survey shows a marked difference in perceptions, but cannot establish its cause.

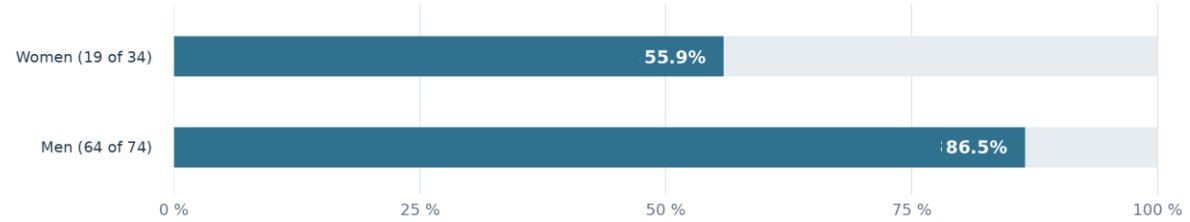


Figure 2 · Agreement (ratings of 5–7) among those who rated the statement: 34 women and 74 men. The full R3/R4 groups also include those who selected “Unable to judge”.

What counts as good work, and what gets recognised?

Of the 330 researchers and academic staff assessing whether evaluation takes account of the quality and contribution of research, 61.7% agreed, 26.3% disagreed and 20.5% selected “Unable to judge”. Comments also raised recognition for teaching, student supervision, preparing project proposals and work in support or combined roles. Staff also discussed whether the EVAK staff evaluation process gives them useful feedback.

The open-ended question “If you could change one thing…” drew 453 responses. The most frequent themes were how people are managed, how work is allocated and whether staff can speak up (18.8%), communication and support (15.0%), and administrative procedures (12.8%).

What happens to your suggestions?

The survey results are not an end in themselves, but a starting point for preparing the next HR Excellence in Research Action Plan. In choosing priorities, we drew primarily on this year's ratings and comments, alongside the Faculty's SWOT analysis and the European Commission's recommendations. Even in areas that staff generally rated positively, they repeatedly described specific obstacles. These are the issues we want to address.

Four working groups will turn staff experience into practical proposals

The working groups will begin their work in November 2026. Their membership is being coordinated with the Faculty leadership and individual departments to ensure that different roles and experiences from across the Faculty are represented.

Each group will select a few priority problems, investigate their causes and propose up to five measures. For each measure, the group will identify who should take responsibility and how we can tell whether it helped. Members can draw on their own experience to shape the proposals from the outset.

Simpler administration and effective support. Work with the people who use and manage procedures to remove unnecessary steps, clarify instructions and make information easier to find.

Managing people and creating an open working environment. Help managers give useful feedback, allocate work fairly and make it safe for staff to raise concerns and take part in decisions about change.

Career prospects and equal access to professional development. Identify the barriers women face in progressing to R3/R4 roles and examine the prospects for doctoral students and postdocs moving towards independent research.

Meaningful evaluation and fair recognition of work. Examine how useful staff evaluations and the feedback they provide are, and how fairly they recognise the quality of research, teaching, project work and support work.

How we will address other topics

We will work with specialists on three areas: open science and research data management, recruitment criteria and communication with applicants, and support for preparing demanding international grant proposals (particularly ERC grants) and working with external partners. We will pass comments on pay, funding and facilities to the Dean and the extended Dean's Board for consideration.

The working groups are not intended to be the only opportunity for employees to get involved. We also want to provide opportunities for further input and feedback during the preparation and implementation of specific measures. The most suitable forms of involvement will be chosen according to the nature of each topic.

How to read the results

On the seven-point scale, ratings of 5–7 indicate agreement, 4 is the midpoint and 1–3 indicate disagreement. Averages include numerical ratings only and exclude "Unable to judge". The number of ratings varies by question. The results describe respondents' experiences and may differ from the views of the workforce as a whole. The detailed analysis gives counts, distributions and methodology.

Detailed analysis

1. Methodology and respondent profile

The analysis covers 540 responses to the September 2026 survey. For each statement, N is the number of numerical ratings. Blank responses and “Unable to judge” are excluded from the mean and the percentage agreeing. Some questions were intended for specific groups only. For some follow-up questions, responses are available for only some participants.

On the seven-point scale, 1 means strongly disagree and 7 means strongly agree. Ratings of 1–3 indicate disagreement, 4 is the midpoint and 5–7 indicate agreement. Choosing the midpoint does not necessarily indicate a neutral view. Respondents could select several options in multiple-response questions, so the percentages cannot be added together. Differences between groups have neither been tested for statistical significance nor adjusted for other characteristics.

Characteristic	N / share
R1/R2 roles	195 · 36.1%
R3/R4 roles	158 · 29.3%
Support roles	156 · 28.9%
Unsure of role category	31 · 5.7%
Managers	94 · 17.4%
International staff	65 · 12.0%
Staff with caring responsibilities	198 · 36.7%
Women / men / other or not stated	294 / 227 / 19

2. Ratings on the seven-point scale

The tables show the percentages who disagreed (1–3), chose the midpoint (4) or agreed (5–7), and the mean rating.

Leadership, working relationships and environment

Statement	N	Ø	1–3	4	5–7
11 · Clear priorities from manager	540	5.8	8.9%	7.0%	84.1%
12 · Access to support from manager	540	6.1	7.8%	3.9%	88.3%
13 · Feedback that supports development	540	5.3	16.1%	10.4%	73.5%
14 · Respect and professionalism	540	5.4	10.4%	11.3%	78.3%
15 · Feeling safe to speak up	540	5.3	17.0%	9.4%	73.5%
16 · Staff involvement in change	540	4.4	24.6%	26.5%	48.9%
17 · Response to staff suggestions	342	4.8	22.8%	15.8%	61.4%
18 · Sharing good practice	540	4.8	20.4%	18.5%	61.1%
19 · Realistic expectations	540	5.5	10.6%	10.6%	78.9%

Administration, information and support

Statement	N	Ø	1–3	4	5–7
21 · Finding information	540	5.0	14.6%	16.1%	69.3%
24 · Explanation of new procedures	540	5.2	10.6%	15.9%	73.5%
25 · Effective support from administrative units	330	5.2	11.5%	18.5%	70.0%
27 · Communication between administrators and departments	540	5.4	8.1%	11.5%	80.4%

Careers and development

Statement	N	Ø	1–3	4	5–7
29 · Transparent career progression	330	5.1	16.7%	11.2%	72.1%
30 · Knowing what progression requires	330	5.2	19.7%	8.2%	72.1%
31 · Access to professional development	540	5.2	14.1%	11.9%	74.1%
33 · Making use of skills	540	4.9	15.4%	18.1%	66.5%
34 · Scope for new ideas	540	5.1	14.8%	13.4%	71.8%
35 · Equal opportunities regardless of gender	387	5.5	16.5%	6.2%	77.4%

Research environment and digital support

Statement	N	Ø	1–3	4	5–7
39 · Recognition of research quality and contribution in evaluation	268	4.7	26.2%	12.1%	61.7%
40 · Support for responsible AI use	493	4.6	22.9%	18.7%	58.4%
41 · Sharing capacity and resources	330	4.6	19.9%	24.5%	55.6%
42 · Interdisciplinary collaboration	330	4.9	17.9%	17.2%	64.9%
43 · Support for ambitious research goals	330	4.9	18.2%	13.6%	68.2%

Language accessibility and caring responsibilities

Statement	N	Ø	1–3	4	5–7
6 · Onboarding support for international staff	65	5.1	9.2%	24.6%	66.2%
7 · Language accessibility of information	65	5.4	10.8%	15.4%	73.8%
9 · Working conditions for carers	198	5.5	9.6%	9.1%	81.3%

For the statement on responses to staff suggestions, 342 people gave a rating and a further 198 selected “Unable to judge”. For recognition of research quality, 268 gave a rating and 62 selected “Unable to judge”. For equal career opportunities, 387 gave a rating and 153 felt unable to judge.

3. Multiple-response questions: what staff reported

Each percentage is the share of respondents to that question who selected the option. Respondents could choose more than one option, so totals may exceed 100%.

What makes administrative information hard to navigate? (N = 166)

Option	N	Share
Information is scattered across several places	98	59.0%
I do not know where to look for the right information	80	48.2%
Too much information	78	47.0%
Unclear whom to contact	61	36.7%
Unclear which version is current	54	32.5%
Information is hard to understand	37	22.3%
Information arrives too late	37	22.3%
Some information or guidance is missing	33	19.9%
Different sources give conflicting information	33	19.9%

Where is it difficult to find the correct procedure? (N = 166)

Option	N	Share
HR and employment matters	69	41.6%
Finance, budgets and expense reporting	67	40.4%
Grants and project administration	50	30.1%
Purchasing goods and services	44	26.5%
IT and information systems	39	23.5%
I usually know how to proceed (positive response)	64	38.6%
Occupational health and safety, operations and security	15	9.0%

Where do staff feel support is insufficient? (N = 248)

Option	N	Share
I do not know whom to contact with my request	75	30.2%
HR and employment matters	60	24.2%
Grant and project administration	59	23.8%
Finance and expense reporting	47	19.0%
Research and data management support	44	17.7%
IT and information systems	39	15.7%
Purchasing and public procurement	37	14.9%
Teaching support and student administration	36	14.5%
Knowledge transfer and external partnerships	34	13.7%
International mobility and international colleagues	31	12.5%
Operational and technical support	31	12.5%

This question also drew positive and unrelated comments. The percentages therefore cannot be interpreted as the share of dissatisfied staff or as a measure of how often a particular unit failed to provide support.

What further development support do staff need? (N = 416)

Option	N	Share
Digital skills and AI	139	33.4%
Grant and project skills	118	28.4%
Further specialist development	115	27.6%
Career planning	104	25.0%
Leadership and people management	83	20.0%
External partnerships and knowledge transfer	82	19.7%
I do not currently need additional support	62	14.9%
Transferable skills	61	14.7%
Teaching skills	56	13.5%

What hinders or could hinder career progression? (N = 492)

Option	N	Share
Lack of time for my own development	153	31.1%
Balancing a career with parenting or caring responsibilities	152	30.9%
No significant barrier	100	20.3%
Difficulty reconciling mobility with personal commitments	99	20.1%
Unclear progression criteria	85	17.3%
Limited access to opportunities	83	16.9%
Few opportunities to take on responsibility	72	14.6%
Lack of mentoring and networks	67	13.6%
Impact of career breaks	65	13.2%
Lack of support from managers	43	8.7%

4. Research, responsible assessment and open science

Respondents rated their own familiarity with emerging topics. These answers measure awareness and cannot, on their own, establish professional competence or the quality of someone's work.

Topic (N = 330)	Unfamiliar	Know the basics	Use in practice	Not applicable
Open Science	11.3%	45.7%	39.4%	3.6%
FAIR principles	34.1%	35.4%	26.8%	3.6%
Research Data Management	16.6%	51.0%	29.5%	3.0%
CoARA / responsible research assessment	66.2%	21.5%	6.3%	6.0%
Responsible use of AI	8.6%	50.0%	38.4%	3.0%

Views on open science principles (N = 330)

Response	Share
Beneficial, with adequate conditions in place	31.8%
I know too little to judge	28.5%
Beneficial, but conditions are inadequate	18.2%
Reservations about the principles or conditions	12.9%
Irrelevant to my work	5.6%
Free-text response	3.0%

Perceived importance of future priorities (scale of 1–5)

Topic	N	Ø	Ratings of 4–5
Collaboration with external institutions	295	4.3	82.8%
Collaboration with alumni	296	3.9	66.0%
Knowledge transfer and applied research	305	4.2	78.0%
Innovation and entrepreneurship	297	4.1	78.1%
Societal impact of research and education	303	4.2	78.9%
Helping address societal challenges	296	4.1	73.1%

The question was put to 330 respondents. N is the number who rated each topic on a scale of 1–5. The difference between 302 and the N shown represents respondents who selected "Unable to judge". These responses are excluded from the mean (Ø) and from the percentage giving a rating of 4–5.

5. Differences between groups

The selected comparisons help identify priorities for further work. They describe differences among respondents. Statistical significance has not been tested, and the results cannot establish causes or show whether these differences hold across the workforce.

Statement / group A	Agreement A	Statement / group B	Agreement B
R3/R4: women (N=34)	55.9%	R3/R4: men (N=74)	86.5%
Career development: support roles (N=156)	67.9%	R3/R4 (N=158)	79.7%
Involvement in change: up to 2 years (N=92)	69.6%	Over 2 years (N=448)	44.6%
Safe to speak up: up to 2 years (N=92)	91.3%	Over 2 years (N=448)	69.9%
Information: managers (N=94)	60.6%	Other staff (N=446)	71.1%
Equal opportunities: international staff (N=40)	60.0%	Domestic staff (N=300)	79.7%
Involvement in change: carers (N=198)	42.4%	Other staff (N=342)	52.6%

A further 7 women and 25 men in R3/R4 roles selected "Unable to judge" on equal career opportunities. Interpret this comparison using the number who gave a rating, as shown in the table, rather than the total number of staff in each category.

6. Open-ended responses and recommending the Faculty as an employer

When asked what they would change first, 453 people responded. The most frequent themes identified in the responses were management and allocation of work (18.8%), information and support (15.0%), administrative processes (12.8%), pay and remuneration (10.4%), and funding, strategy or organisational structure (10.4%). A response could cover several themes. Frequency alone does not indicate the seriousness of an issue.

Comments also addressed the usefulness of EVAK, career uncertainty, conditions for carers, international colleagues, teaching, external partnerships and the physical working environment. We have omitted individual quotations to protect respondents from indirect identification.

Recommending the Faculty as an employer (N = 540)	Share
Rating of 0–6 out of 10	23.5%
Rating of 7–8 out of 10	45.6%
Rating of 9–10 out of 10	30.8%
eNPS (= % rating 9–10 minus % rating 0–6)	+7.3 points (scale from −100 to +100)

Of those who responded, 30.8% gave the highest ratings (9–10 out of 10), while 23.5% gave a rating of 0–6. The resulting employee Net Promoter Score (eNPS) was +7.3. Although staff rated many aspects of their working environment positively, fewer were ready to give the Faculty their strongest recommendation as an employer.

These findings give us a reason to focus on areas that staff rated less positively than others, even where views were broadly favourable. Improvements in those areas could help staff feel more positive about the Faculty as an employer overall, as well as about individual aspects of their work.

7. Links to earlier surveys and sources

The surveys included 327 responses in 2020, 422 in 2023 and 540 in 2026. Recurring themes include career development, working conditions, information sharing and administrative processes. In 2023, for example, staff valued bilingual communication and the staff portal, while also calling for improvements in support, development opportunities and the balance between work and care.

The questions, target groups and scales changed between surveys, which limits direct comparisons of percentages over time. The comparison shows which themes recur and how the Faculty has responded. It cannot establish a trend for each indicator.

Recurring themes and action already taken

Recurring theme	Support or policy introduced	What the 2026 responses add
Careers and development	Career Code and development programmes	Time for development and differing perceptions of opportunities in R3/R4 roles
Internal communication	Staff portal and information updates	Finding the right procedures and getting involved in change early enough
International staff	Bilingual websites and documents	Generally positive ratings for language accessibility, alongside specific barriers
Leadership and a safe working environment	Management training and procedures for handling concerns	Support from managers, alongside some staff members' fears about speaking up
Evaluation and recognition of work	EVAK and staff evaluation rules	Research quality, recognition of teaching and the usefulness of feedback
Caring responsibilities and returning to work	Support during and after maternity or parental leave	Caring responsibilities remain a career barrier for some staff

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