



E-BOOK
RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS
A GUIDE
FOR
RECRUITERS

FOREWORD

OBJECTIVES

- The aim of this e-book is to support you in the (e-)recruitment of your future employees.
- It complies with the provisions of the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”, in accordance with the OTM-R principles for open, transparent and merit-based recruitment.
- These principles provide you with recommendations to help you select the ideal candidate for a job vacancy.
- All the different stages of the recruitment plan are covered in detail, with a view to providing you with the best HR recruitment tools.


The references used to prepare this guide are listed at the end of the document.

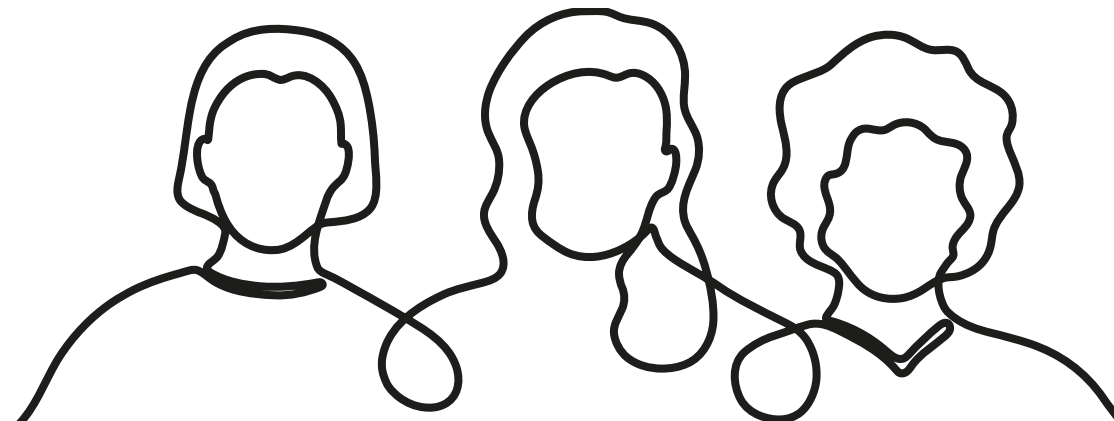
Acknowledgements

The entire OTM-eR project is being carried out with the financial support of “Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles”,




How to use this guide

- In this e-book, you'll find an interactive Contents page that will enable you go directly to the section of your choice. On each inside page, you can return to the “Contents” by clicking on the icon  at the top right.
- The main recruitment tools are listed in the “Toolbox”, which you can access from the Contents section and from certain pages of the e-book with links shown in bold and underlined.
- You can print out this entire e-book.





TIPS

Click on the name of the section to go to the corresponding page. On each page, click on the icon  to return to the Contents page.

BEST PRACTICES

IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS

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BEST PRACTICES

IN THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS



EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

OBJECTIVES

Universities in the “Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles” proudly boast “Human Resources Strategy for Researchers” (HRS4R) certification, awarded by the European Commission!

This certification requires adherence to “The European Charter for Researchers” and “The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”, drawn up by the European Commission.

The European Charter for Researchers is a set of fundamental principles aiming to promote scientific careers, with the goal of supporting excellence in the area of research and innovation across Europe. It highlights the rights and responsibilities of all stakeholders, setting out a total of 20 principles revolving around four pillars.

By adhering to an action plan, researchers, from PhD level to full professors, as well as authorities and government agencies, can implement these principles to boost their institution’s attractiveness and promote professional well-being.

[View the charter](#)





There are 4 separate profiles that apply to all researchers, regardless of their status and work sector, carrying out research activities:

R1 - First Stage Researcher:

Researchers carrying out research under supervision up to the point of PhD, or with an equivalent level of skills and experience.

R2 - Recognised Researcher:

Researchers with a PhD or an equivalent level of skills and experience who are not yet fully independent in their ability to develop their own research, obtain funding, or lead a research team.

R3 - Established Researcher:

Researchers with a PhD or an equivalent level of skills and experience who have developed a level of independence in their ability to develop their own research, obtain funding, or lead a research team.

R4 - Leading Researcher:

Researchers with a PhD or an equivalent level of skills and experience who are recognised by their peers as leaders in their field of research.



TIPS

- R1 and R2 profiles should be considered as researchers starting their careers, while R3 and R4 profiles should be considered as experienced researchers.
- With the exception of the “First Stage Researcher” (R1), these profiles should not necessarily be considered as steps in a progressive career pathway.
- **In all job postings specifically intended for researchers, Member States are advised to encourage references to these profiles.**



In the area of recruitment, “The European Charter for Researchers” describes the following six principles:

Process

The recruitment process should be open, transparent, appropriate and merit-based (OTM-R). It should aim for excellence, gender equality and diversity without penalising career breaks or inter-sectoral mobility.

Writing position descriptions

Advertisements should include a comprehensive description of the knowledge and competencies required.

They should also include information on working conditions and entitlements, including career development prospects.

Lastly, advertisements should include an overview of the timeline including the stages of the recruitment process and the deadlines.

Fair recruitment

Members of the selection committee should receive awareness-raising and training on the principles of fair recruitment to ensure the implementation of fair and inclusive recruitment processes.

Career breaks or variations

Career breaks or variations in the chronological order of CVs should not be

penalised. They should be regarded as an evolution of a career, and consequently, as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers towards a multidimensional career track.

Candidates should therefore be allowed to submit evidence-based CVs, reflecting a representative array of achievements and qualifications appropriate to the post for which application is being made.

Pre-screening information

Candidates should be informed, prior to selection, about the recruitment process, the selection criteria, the number of available positions, and career development prospects.

Seniority

The levels of qualifications required should be in line with the needs of the position and should not be set as a barrier to entry. Evaluation of qualifications should focus on judging the achievements of the person rather than their circumstances or the reputation of the institution where the qualifications were acquired.

As professional qualifications may be gained at an early stage of a long career, the pattern of lifelong professional development should be encouraged and recognised.



In the area of selection, “The European Charter for Researchers” describes the following four principles:

Selection process

The selection process should take into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. While focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence should also be considered.

Strengths and weaknesses

All candidates should be informed after the selection process about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications.

Non-discrimination

Employers and/or funders of researchers should not discriminate against researchers in any way **based** on gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, or social or economic condition.

Selection committees

They should:

- Bring together diverse expertise, competences and experience relevant to assess the candidate.
- Reflect adequate gender balance and, where appropriate and feasible, include members from different sectors (public and private) and disciplines, and other countries.
- Use a wide range of selection practices, such as external expert assessment and face-to-face and online interviews.
- Be adequately trained, especially for minimising gender or any other possible unconscious biases.





OTM-R PRINCIPLES

The OTM-R principles, which are highly recommended but in no way mandatory, accompany the work of recruiters, all throughout the recruitment process, in parallel with the legal framework. This process is broken down into three phases:



PHASE 1

Advertising the post
and application



PHASE 2

Evaluation and selection



PHASE 3

Appointment



PHASE 1: Advertising and application

Advertising the post

It is recommended to keep the job posting and description of requirements **as concise as possible**. Candidates should be able to find information on:

- the institution, research unit or lab;
- the job title;
- the contract starting date;
- researcher career profiles (R1-R4) with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' skills;
- selection criteria, including knowledge and professional experience (distinguishing between the 'required' and 'desirable');
- the number of available positions;
- terms of employment, the work environment, salary, etc.;
- career development opportunities;
- a reference to the OTM-R policy;
- contact details.

The application procedure and deadline should be at least two months from the publication date and should take account of holiday periods.

All vacancies should be published on EURAXESS. This implies that the advert should be published in the national language and in English.

Administrative burden

The request for supporting documents should be strictly limited to those necessary to ensure **a fair, transparent, and merit-based selection of candidates**.

In cases where certain documents are legally required, it is advisable to **adopt a flexible approach**. Candidates should be permitted to submit a declaration committing to provide the necessary proof once the selection process has been completed. This measure would prevent the exclusion of potentially qualified candidates who may be experiencing temporary difficulties in gathering certain documents while ensuring compliance with legal obligations and verifying the selected candidates' qualifications.

It is strongly recommended to allow the transmission of supporting documents by electronic means and possibly to develop an e-recruitment tool.

Acknowledging receipt of the application

All candidates should receive an (automated) email **acknowledging that their application has been received** and indicating the next steps of the recruitment process, including an indicative timetable.

Care should be taken to **allow sufficient time before the interview** for external candidates to make the necessary travel arrangements and prepare properly for the interview. This additional time period is necessary not only for logistical reasons but also so that candidates may take the time required to understand the position and prepare relevant responses to potential questions.

If there are **significant changes or delays to this process**, all candidates should be timely informed by (a standard) email so they may manage their schedules.



PHASE 2: Evaluation and selection

Selection committee

- Selection committees should be **established for all profiles** (R1-R4) of researchers. The size and composition of the committees may differ according to the profile and type of contract. The process for nominating and appointing the committee should be transparent and publicly available.
- **Members** should not have any conflict of interest. The decisions must be objective and evidence-based rather than based on personal preference.

Whenever possible, the following **elements should be considered** when setting up the selection committee:

- a minimum of 3 members;
- gender balance, i.e not less than one third of one gender in the committee;
- inclusion of external expert(s) in all committees (external meaning outside the institution);
- inclusion of (or contribution from) international experts, who should be proficient in the language(s) in which the process will be conducted;

- inclusion of experts from different sectors (public, private, academic, non-academic), where appropriate and feasible;
- the committee as a whole should have all the relevant experience, qualifications and competencies to assess the candidate;
- any exceptions for specific positions, contract types, or disciplines should be explicitly outlined.

Screening and interviewing

All applications should be screened. Depending on the number of applicants as well as the human resources available, the **process may involve one or more steps**, for example:

- pre-screening to check eligibility;
- shortlisting of candidates for interviews;
- remote interviews by telephone/video-conferencing);
- face-to-face interviews.

While remote interviews may be appropriate, particularly at the initial interview stage, they should not fully replace face-to-face interviews. All candidates should be treated equally and in the same way.

It is recommended that the same selection committee is involved in all steps, although it is recognised that this may not always be feasible. This is why **the process itself should be transparent and communicated to the candidates, including all the steps.**

Ideally, the institution should cover the travel and accommodation expenses of the interviewees in the event of face-to-face interviews,



Assessing merit and future potential

The criteria for selecting researchers should focus on both the candidate's past performance and their future potential. The emphasis is likely to change according to the profile of the post, e.g. when recruiting an R1 researcher, future potential is likely to outweigh past performance.

In line with certain principles, the evaluation criteria should be consistent with the requirements of the position as regards research, supervision or, for example, teaching skills.

Merit should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on results within a diversified career path, taking into account career breaks, lifelong professional development and the added value of non-research experience.

A wide range of evaluation criteria should be used and balanced, according to the position being advertised. Depending on the specific profile of the post, this may include (in alphabetical and not hierarchical order):

- acquisition of funding;
- generation of societal impact;
- international portfolio (including mobility);
- knowledge transfer and exchange;
- management of research and innovation;
- organisational skills/experience;
- outreach/public awareness activities;
- research performance;
- supervision and mentoring;
- teaching;
- teamwork.





PHASE 3: Appointment

Feedback

- In line with the "Transparency" principle of "The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers", all candidates should receive written or electronic notice at the end of the selection process, within approximately one month, avoiding unnecessary delays.
- It is strongly recommended to inform all candidates who were admitted to the interview about the strengths and weaknesses of their application.
- Other candidates, who did not make it to the final stages, should receive a standard email informing them of the outcome.
- All candidates must be entitled to further feedback upon request.

Process of appeal

- The institution should establish a procedure for handling complaints from candidates who believe they have been treated negligently, unfairly, or incorrectly.
- This procedure should be transparent and made public.
- The procedure should specify a response timeframe, ideally no longer than one month





LEGAL FRAMEWORK

Four essential acts have governed the legal framework for recruitment since 1978:

Employment Contracts Act

Act of 3 July 1978 on employment contracts

1978

1981

Anti-racism Act

The Act of 30 July 1981, amended by the Act of 10 May 2007, aimed to criminalise certain acts inspired by racism or xenophobia.

2007

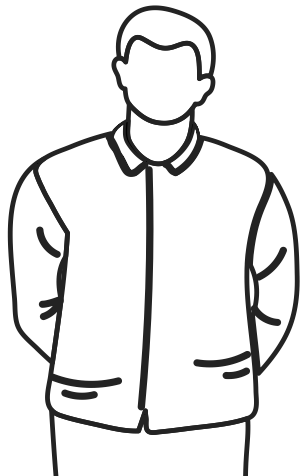
"Gender" Act

The Act of 10 May 2007 aimed to combat gender discrimination.

Act on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data

The Act of 30 July 2018, on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data, implemented the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). It repealed the Act of 8 December 1992 on privacy. Respect for privacy is also guaranteed in the Constitution (Art. 22).

2018





The rights and duties of recruiters and candidates

Recruiters and candidates alike have to follow certain rules:

Details to be specified in the job posting

The job posting should specify:

- the area of activity;
- the nature of the job;
- the job requirements;
- the place of work (unless this cannot be determined in advance, or if the job is not linked to a specific workplace);
- the intention to form a reserve list for future recruitment, if necessary;
- the application method.

Actions that must be taken by the candidate

As for the candidate, they must:

- participate in the selection process with diligence;
- provide all relevant information concerning their professional and academic background (this information should be exhaustive), especially when this is relevant to the nature and conditions of the job.



GDPR

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) also applies to recruitment.

- It is a European regulation governing the collection, processing and retention of personal data.
- Compliance with the GDPR principles is essential during the recruitment and selection process.
- Candidates' data should be processed in a transparent and secure manner and for the purpose for which they were collected.
- Candidates have the right to access and request the deletion of their personal data.
- Adhering to GDPR principles ensures the confidentiality and security of candidates' personal data.



TIP

Each institution follows its own GDPR compliance procedures; therefore, inquire about standard practices in advance.





The GDPR's six data protection principles must be followed, and compliance measures must be implemented. These are associated with a few actions and best practices.

	Actions	Best practices
Right to portability and information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ensure transparency for users regarding their data.○ Make personal data readily available and usable upon request.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Candidates may request access to their selection report.○ In such cases, you should:<ul style="list-style-type: none">• provide clear and objective information;• communicate the details in a neutral and professional tone;• offer an oral debrief to avoid sending the full report.
Consent to data processing	Candidates' consent must be obtained before integrating their information into databases.	Obtain explicit consent from candidates before adding their data to your databases.
Right to be forgotten	Candidates have the right to request the complete deletion of their personal data.	



	Actions	Best practices
Data leak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Notify all candidates within 48 hours ○ Get immediately in touch with your institution's data protection officer and legal aid department 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ If data are disclosed, you must be able to promptly and effectively inform all candidates as set out in the current regulations.
Secure data storage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Restricted internal access to sensitive information ○ Limit data access based on roles and responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Save data to your computer, in a password-protected folder. ○ Create a dedicated folder in your inbox that you can delete at a later time. ○ Only share information with members of the selection committee. ○ Do not use shared servers.
Gathering references	<p>Request candidates to specify which organisations and individuals they authorise for contact.</p> <p>Collecting references without the candidate's consent is considered a violation of privacy.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Do not disclose information gathered from referees to the candidate without the referee's prior consent. ○ If the referee requests proof of the candidate's consent, send the request via email and make sure to CC the candidate.

The background image shows a laboratory or industrial setting with various pieces of equipment, including large tanks and complex piping. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent purple filter. The text is centered in the middle of the image.

THOROUGH PREPARATION

OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS



CHALLENGES



OBJECTIVES

To ensure the success of your recruitment process, start by carrying out an in-depth assessment of requirements and expectations for the vacancy to be filled.

This crucial stage lets you define the target profile of the ideal candidate and clearly determine the search criteria and the essential information to be collected.

Thorough preparation helps you maximise your chances of succeeding in your recruitment and in the onboarding of your researcher.





JOB POSTING: WRITING AND POSTING

Before writing a job posting, it is essential to draft the job description.

Job description

- It provides a realistic and factual description of the position (characteristics, environment, etc.).
- It helps you:
 - understand the role and establish a clear framework for the job;
 - determine the candidate's profile;
 - facilitate the interview by aligning questions with the job's specific requirements;
 - be clearer and more precise and transparent when writing a job posting.

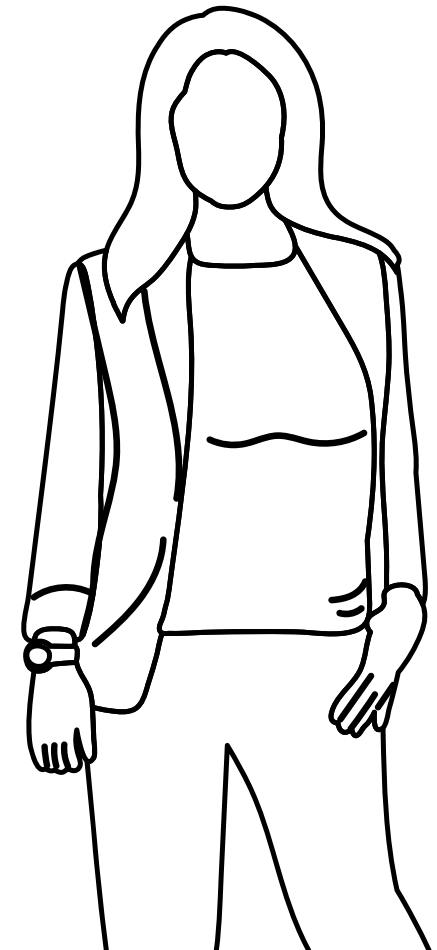
See a job description

Job posting

It helps you:

- make initial contact with the candidate;
- act as a showcase for the university, laboratory or research centre, in support of overview videos and web pages;
- clearly and precisely present the position;
- highlight the key selection criteria to help you choose a candidate and justify your decision;
- refer candidates to additional information online.

See the sections of a job posting





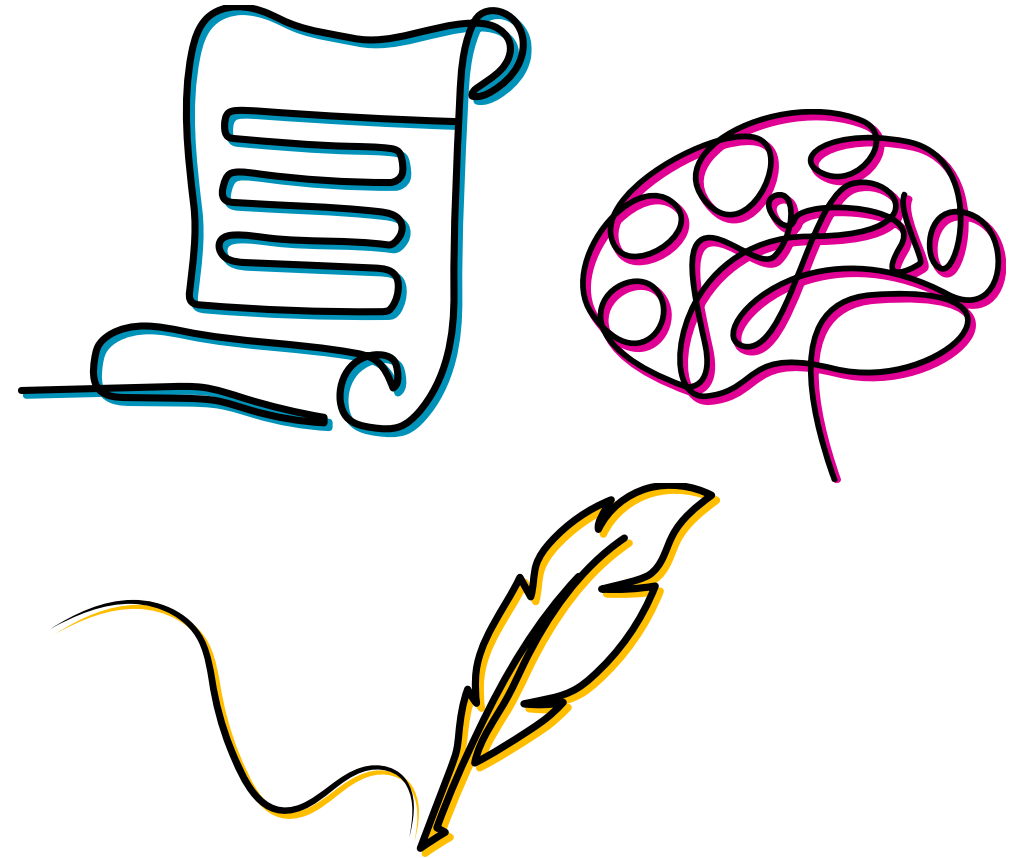
Here are some tips for writing a job posting:



TIPS

- Write short paragraphs, avoiding long lists.
- Do not copy-paste the job description.
- Eliminate potentially discriminating cognitive biases.
- Consider the advertisement in its entirety to make it visual, readable and attractive, combining explanatory text and key ideas.
- Watch out for discriminatory information with regard to age, gender, physical appearance, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, origins, political opinions or state of health, for example.
- Gender-neutral writing.

Contact your institution's Human Resources Department, which has formatted templates and possibly a guide to gender-neutral writing.





JOB POSTING: BEST PRACTICES

Adhering to best practices when writing a job posting is crucial to prevent any form of discrimination.

“GENDER”

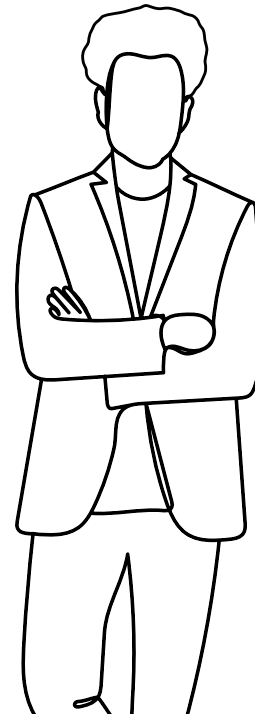


TIPS

Any exclusive reference to gender for a position is strictly prohibited.

It is mandatory to use gender-neutral job titles and pronouns, while taking account of different approaches to inclusive writing. For example, avoid using “he” or “she”. Instead, use “you”, “they/them”, “people” or “the candidate”. In addition, use “Chair” instead of “Chairman” and “spokesperson” instead of “spokesman”.

“DISABILITY/STATE OF HEALTH”



TIPS

It is prohibited to mention any reservation of or exclusion from a job for a disabled person, or to include any reference to a person's state of health.

On the other hand, you can mention particular work constraints, the possibility of special accommodations or assistance, or the level of accessibility of the workplace for people with reduced mobility, for example.

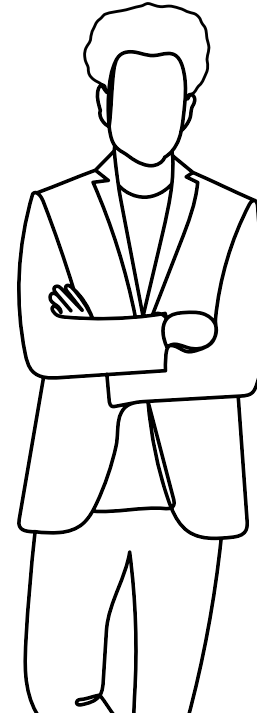


“ETHNIC-SOCIAL ORIGIN”



TIPS

During the recruitment process, you are not allowed to mention an ethnic-social origin, whether this is a nationality, a national or regional origin, or an ethnic group.



“AGE”



TIPS

It is prohibited to mention a required age for a job, or even a maximum number of years of professional experience, which could provide an idea of the candidate's age.

Phrases such as “first experience” and “junior/senior profile” should be avoided.





JOB POSTING: DISSEMINATION

Various channels can be used to advertise a job posting. Their complementary nature is essential in terms of national and international exposure:



- The EURAXESS online platform
- Job boards
- University websites
- Career centres
- Social media
- Other relevant platforms, etc.



TIPS

For further details about the procedure, please contact your institution's Human Resources Department.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

- The [EURAXESS](#) online platform provides, among other things, information about funding and hosting opportunities, administrative formalities, and job vacancies, for researchers working or wanting to work in Europe.
- Alongside posting on your institution's website, sharing job postings on EURAXESS enhances their visibility.
- These job posting should be written in the national language and in English.





METHODICAL IMPLEMENTATION

OF THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS



CHALLENGES



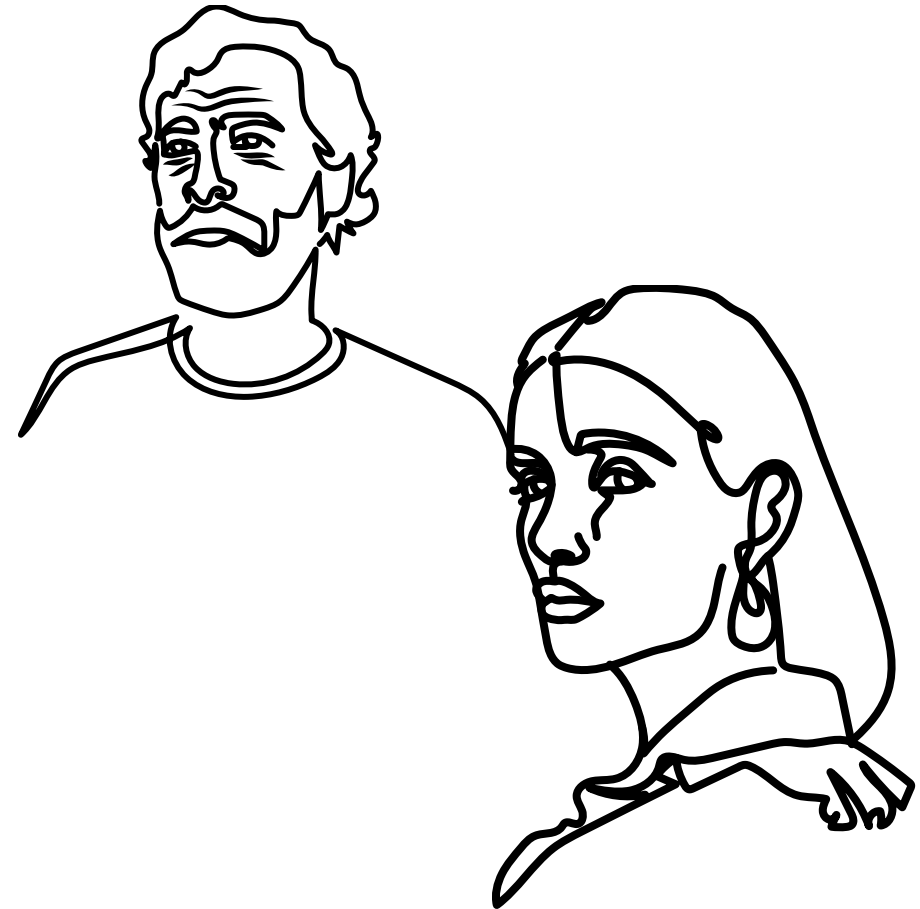
OBJECTIVES

During your investigation and exploration phase, you **collect detailed data by holding rigorous interviews** with the shortlisted candidates.

These data, which are essential for determining the **most relevant profiles, rely on the key selection criteria** that you have defined in advance.

You will use appropriate **methods of questioning** to obtain decisive information related to the applications. These methods are designed to get to the heart of candidates' skills, experience, and personalities.

All throughout this interviewing stage, it is important to create an **inclusive and respectful environment**. Special attention should be paid to the wording of questions, to guarantee an objective assessment.





PRE-SCREENING

Pre-screening involves eliminating candidates who do not meet the minimal criteria. This might be due to an incomplete application, a missing diploma, non-proficiency in a language, or the absence of relevant keywords in the cover letter and CV. Its objective is to shortlist candidates who match the job requirements. To this end, there are some practices you should implement when reading candidates' CVs and cover letters.

SCREENING PHASE

1. Check for the presence of the key essential criteria mentioned in the job description.

If a CV does not contain these criteria, the candidate will be rejected.

2. Identify inconsistencies.

These could include a candidate with a course of study that does not fit with the job.

3. Look at the way the CV is presented.

Is the CV readable and attractive? Is it divided into separate paragraphs? Is the chosen font clear? Are colours and fonts used harmoniously?

4. Sort CVs into three separate categories: unqualified, potentially qualified, and qualified.

Depending on the number of "qualified" candidates, you can recover CVs from the "potentially qualified" category.

5. Send a response to all candidates whose CVs have not been selected.

It is important to respond to all candidates, including those who are not selected. You can do this by email or phone. Be brief and concise.



TIPS

It is advisable to create a table listing the various criteria set out in the job description. You will find an **example** in the toolbox. For GDPR compliance reasons, it is also advisable to not build up a reserve of CVs.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

The effectiveness of this pre-screening stage depends on 3 essential key actions:

- Clearly define the key selection criteria, as soon as the job is created. These will allow you to assess all the candidates on an equal basis.
- Then draw up a tracking sheet for applications based on these criteria.
- Next, complete the assessment of researchers' careers and bibliometric indicators, referring to the CoARA Agreement.

**TIPS**

Your institution's Human Resources Department has a tracking sheet template.

More information about the CoARA Agreement

See a sample tracking sheet





INTERVIEWING

To ensure an interview runs smoothly, four areas must be organised beforehand: information, timing, welcome, and logistics.

Information



Remember to gather:

- the candidate's application;
- the recruitment sheet;
- questions to ask;
- the key expectations outlined in the job description;
- positive, negative, or unclear points.

Logistics



- Arrange for a quiet place
- Have the candidate's application on hand.

Timing



- Set aside a time slot of 30 minutes to one hour.
- Assess the candidate immediately after the interview, if possible.
- Avoid scheduling consecutive interviews, whether remote or in-person.

Welcome



- Be on time for the interview.
- Personally greet the candidate.
- Welcome them and thank them for their interest.
- Introduce yourself by clearly stating your role and responsibilities.



TIPS

Bring a notepad and pen to take notes during the interview. Define each selection committee member's role in advance.

Limit interviews to a maximum of four succession to:

- Allow time for reflection between interviews
- guarantee the same level of attentiveness for all candidates.



To be fully effective and productive, the interview could follow a methodical structure broken down into five key stages:

1. INTRODUCTION

- Begin by stating **your position**.
- Provide the **names and roles of the selection committee members**.
- Present the **stages of the interview process**.
- Outline the **interview schedule**, including time for the candidate's questions.



TIPS

Ensure the candidate is responsible for managing their own time by discussing the interview schedule at the beginning.

2. MOTIVATION

- Evaluate the **candidate's motivation**.
- Avoid disclosing too much information at first to prevent influencing the candidate's responses.
- **Explore the candidate's career choices**, including integration into academia, professional experience after graduation, and any career changes.
- Be sure to **ask a variety of questions**:
 - Ask them, for example, what job tasks they find appealing, to evaluate their interest in the position.
 - Ask about their overall understanding of the job, and invite them to describe or summarise the key points.
 - Try to find out how they approached the application process, to see if their application is targeted and motivated.



TIPS

Interpret answers carefully without drawing premature conclusions.



3. HARD SKILLS

- Assess the candidate's **theoretical and practical knowledge**, including their expertise.
- Refer to the **skills outlined in the job description**.



TIPS

Inform candidates that performance feedback will be provided along with other candidates.

4. SOFT SKILLS

- The **soft skills** assessed during the interview will **depend on the candidate's profile analysis**.



TIPS

Evaluate soft skills using tools like the STAR method, presented in a **dedicated sequence**.

5. CLOSING

- This fifth and final closing stage ends the interview.
- Encourage the candidate to ask questions, but keep them brief and focused.
- Inform the candidate about the **next steps**.



TIPS

Inform candidates that performance feedback will be provided along with other candidates.





Both you and the candidate need to thoroughly prepare for the interview if it is to run smoothly. It is essential that you carefully **prepare your questions**, in order to **collect** enough feedback from the candidate. This is especially in remote recruiting, where silences can feel particularly **uncomfortable**, tempting the recruiter to overtalk. **Managing stress** in this context can also be more challenging. There are therefore certain behaviours and attitudes that are required during an interview.



TIPS

Always be accompanied by another colleague (preferably an external, impartial colleague), according to the recommendations of the European Charter for Researchers.

DO

- Be well prepared for the interview, reviewing the application and underlining strengths, weaknesses and lines of questioning.
- Let the candidate express themselves without interrupting them, even if there are gaps in conversation.
- Adopt a neutral attitude.
- Take stock at the end of the interview to be sure you have not forgotten anything.
- Create a friendly atmosphere. Chat with the candidate about topics that concern them.

DON'T

- Show up for the interview without having prepared your questions or consulted the other members of the selection committee.
- Fill silences with insignificant comments.
- Respond to something the candidate has said with criticism or approval.
- Take notes that are too brief, omitting several details that you might end up forgetting.
- Engage in unnecessary debates.
- Delay the assessment, which could increase the lack of precision.
- Ask questions that are too personal.



A remote interview can take the form of **asynchronous video interview**. It allows candidates to respond to a series of predefined questions set by the recruiter, within a specific timeframe, by recording their answers on video.

UTILITY

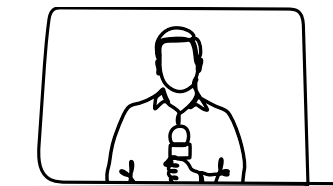
The **pre-qualification** stage occurs before the in-person interview.

ADVANTAGES

- **Innovative** in terms of interactivity, and more **effective** than a phone interview.
- Focuses more on soft skills and candidates' personalities.
- Reduces pressure on the candidate, giving time to prepare their answers.
- **Saves time**, as it lasts less than four minutes and helps in pre-screening, minimising the need for physical interviews.
- **Offers greater flexible** from an organisational standpoint, especially for international recruitment.
- Guarantees a **fairer and more objective** candidate assessment.

PROCESS

- **Select asynchronous interviewing software** (Visio Talent, InterviewApp, etc.).
- Prepare a **timed questionnaire** of 3 to 5 questions in video, audio, or text format.
- **Send an invitation email** , either upon receipt of the application or at any other point in the recruitment process.
- **Receive the candidates' videos**
- **Share** the videos with the selection committee members to identify the most relevant profiles for the next steps of the process.



DISADVANTAGES

- Requires the use of **fee-based software**.
- Can be **unsettling** for candidates or recruiters who are taking part for the first time.
- May be **unequal** due to differences in Internet connections or video equipment quality.
- Reduces human contact, making the application process **less personal and stripped of emotion**.
- Makes it **difficult to assess** certain social skills and potential for integration into the work environment.
- Does not allow the candidate to be as spontaneous, due to the lack of real-time interaction.

Targeted interviewing questions



A remote interview can also be held via **video-conferencing**.

UTILITY

Provides for the possibility of a **group interview**.

Facilitates international recruitment, eliminating the need for travel.

ADVANTAGES

- Saves time, as it is **shorter** than a face-to-face interview.
- Can be **recorded**.
- More **flexible** from an organisational standpoint, especially for international recruitment.

PROCESS

- **Select a software application** (Teams, Zoom, Skype, etc.) and **adjust the meeting's technical settings**.
- Send reassuring **information** to candidates before the interviews, regarding the interviewing process.
- Send a **reminder email** the day before the interview, including the meeting link.
- **Have a plan B** ready in case of technical problems.
- **Prepare your questions**, as you would for a face-to-face interview.

DISADVANTAGES

- Risk of technical and connection uncertainties, requiring tolerance toward the candidate.
- Assessing non-verbal communication can be challenging.



TIPS

For each of these stages, ensure you consider time differences!



TIPS

Please refer to your university's DPO for more information about the GDPR's implications for remote interviews, especially when they are recorded!





THE STAR METHOD

STAR (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) is a method used in job interviews that helps you structure the interview and collect as much information as possible about a person's behaviour in specific situations.

The STAR method has 4 objectives:

- **"Structure the job interview"**

"Its four-part structure is effective for obtaining complete answers"

- **"Effectively assess candidates"**

"You can refer to past situations to assess the candidate's hard and soft skills"

- **"Be more objective"**

"Reducing recruitment biases helps you read between the lines of the CV to understand the candidate and analyse their experiences"

- **"Identify talent"**

"This will make it easier for you to select your future employee"

SITUATION

Context of past experience?

- Provide an overview of the previous situation

TASK

Objective to be achieved?

- Define the tasks in advance

ACTION

Actions taken?

- Find out what the candidate has done on a daily basis to achieve their objective

RESULT

Results obtained?

- Take stock of the project undertaken (figures, data, precise supporting information)

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

“To use the STAR method on the day of the interview, there are a few things you should prepare in advance:

- **Review the desired skills**, defined in the job description. These will enable you to ask relevant questions based on which you can assess the candidates.
- **Find out about various ways of asking questions**. You will want to ask open-ended questions to implement the STAR method.
- **Prepare an assessment sheet** that will serve as a guide during the job interview. You will be able to refer to the main headings and a few questions as you go”

See some examples of questions asked using the STAR method

See an assessment sheet





QUESTIONING

Interview questions should be targeted based on their objective and the type of information that needs to be collected. In addition to traditional questions, questions exploring the candidate's sociability, surprise questions, and other more specific or job-related questions will enable you to check specific points relating to the application. Some questions will be better suited to a remote interview.

Regardless of the type of question, your questions should be adapted based on the specific job requirements and the needs of the institution and research unit.





There are several types of questions: some are job-related, others are more specific, and still others focus on career prospects.

JOB-RELATED QUESTIONS

- Ensure the candidate has thoroughly researched the institution, lab, or research unit.
- Find out if the candidate has made convincing connections between their profile and the job posting.
- Allow the candidate to express their motivations for working in an international environment.
- Explore the candidate's previous collaborations with researchers, institutions, or projects abroad.
- Assess the candidate's adaptability to international research environments.
- Evaluate their ability to manage research projects independently, even in remote settings.

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Identify professional values in relation to management. These include values such as integrity, transparency, respect, responsibility, empathy and collaboration.
- Gain insights into the candidate's self-image, strengths, weaknesses, and level of self-confidence.
- Understand their limitations and values to evaluate their decision-making abilities in challenging situations.
- Explore their life plans to determine their long-term career goals and aspirations.

RECORDED QUESTIONS

- Focus on the candidate's personality, skills, experiences (e.g., through role-plays), and career prospects. These questions can also address critical elements in the job description.
- Contextualize the questions so candidates can evaluate how well they match your needs and vice versa.



TIPS

Regardless of their type, your questions should remain open-ended, concise, clear, and minimal in number!

See some targeted interviewing questions



REPORT

Like the job description, the advertisement, and the interview, best practices should be followed when writing the interview report to avoid any risk of discrimination.

Criteria	What you can mention, and best practices	What you can't mention
Age	Mention the lack of professional experience.	Examples: They are too old, too young, they will have a hard time fitting into a senior team.
Ethnic-social origin	Mention language skills relating to the job/position.	Statements relating to nationality, ethnic origin, accent, etc. Examples: They had an accent, they are native to..., they come from this country...
Family situation/ pregnancy	Mention availability for the job or geographical mobility.	Information relating to the candidate's family situation, pregnancy, desire for children, etc.
Disability State of health	If the candidate brings up their disability for the purposes of accommodation, mention their status of disabled worker. This is also true for medically verified impairments mentioned by the candidate.	Mention a visible disability or the candidate's state of health. Example: They are obese, they have a hard time getting around, etc.
Trade union activities Political opinions Religion	Do not mention.	Mention religious affiliation. Mention trade union opinion or political convictions. Example: She's wearing a veil.
Physical appearance	Do not mention.	Observations concerning the candidate's physical appearance. Assessments of the candidate's body.

See an interview report



CLOSING

THE RECRUITMENT PROCESS



CHALLENGES



OBJECTIVES

All the data collected during your exploration phase must be carefully documented and then **thoroughly analysed and assessed**.

They enable you to draw conclusions, in **strict compliance with the regulations in force**, at each stage of the investigation process.

Every detail should be taken into account in order to present **objective and and well-supported elements**, thus ensuring that they may be used to make the final decision.

By complying with these high documentation and analysis standards, you ensure the quality and reliability of the information presented, **making it easier to make a final decision**.

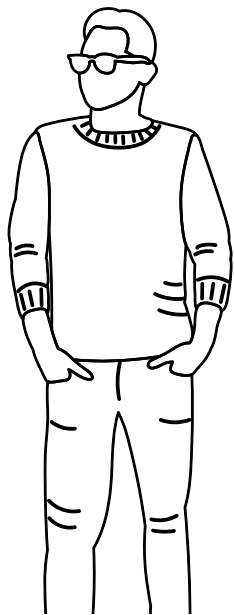




ASSESSMENT

As a recruiter, it can be difficult to be aware of your cognitive biases and remain objective. A good understanding of these biases can help you avoid traps in the assessment process.

HALO EFFECT



“This candidate graduated from a prestigious school! They don’t have any experience, but I imagine they have a strong work ethic, they’re intelligent, and they possess the qualifications required for this job”.



TIPS

First impressions can positively or negatively influence the assessment process. This bias occurs when the recruiter has a generally positive impression of a candidate, based on a positive detail. They are then likely to overlook other negative aspects.

TOKENISM



“She was the only female candidate I interviewed out of the four; the other three were men. She has the same skills as them, but a male profile might be better suited for the position”.

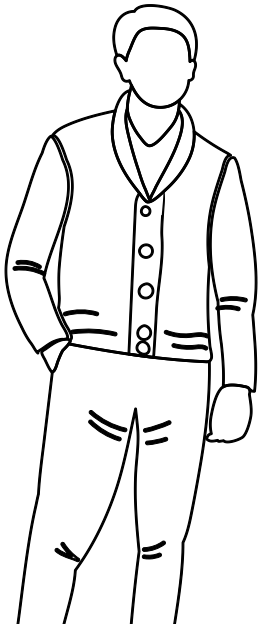


TIPS

Being the sole member of a category in a group makes a person particularly vulnerable and open to criticism. For example, a female candidate among a group of male candidates risks being assessed according to gender stereotypes.

AFFINITY BIAS

“This is incredible - this candidate studied at the same university as me in England. We had the same professors and we attended the same courses”.



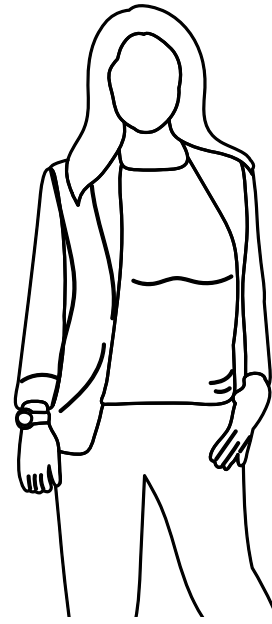
TIPS

The recruiter will tend to favour candidates who are like them or have things in common with them. Complicity with the candidate will lead the recruiter to assess them with kindness.

This is also known as “similar-to-me” bias.

RECENCY BIAS

“I don’t exactly remember all the details from the four interviews I’ve conducted over the past month. I need to go over my reports. But the last candidate I met the day before yesterday seemed to meet all the selection criteria for the job”.



TIPS

The most recent event influences the decision made by the recruiter. Indeed, people tend to remember the latest information. The recruiter will undoubtedly more clearly remember the last candidates interviewed during the recruitment process.

CONFIRMATION BIAS

“To confirm this candidate’s skills, I suggest focusing in particular on their experience at this prestigious university by asking targeted questions”.



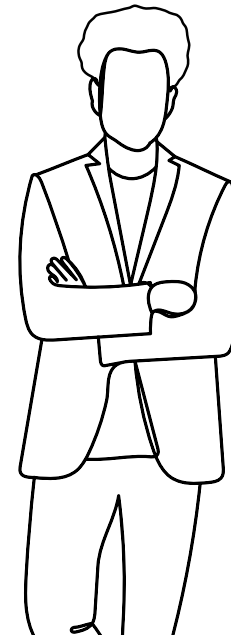
TIPS

With this bias, the recruiter will prefer information that confirms their ideas or beliefs over information that runs contrary to them.

The recruiter’s feedback indicates confirmation bias, as they suggest the selection committee focus specifically on the candidate’s experience at a prestigious university to validate their skills, thereby demonstrating a prior preference for this particular characteristic.

HERE-EXPOSURE EFFECT

“I’ve already talked to this candidate three times since the recruitment process started. They really seem trustworthy compared to the one I interviewed yesterday”.



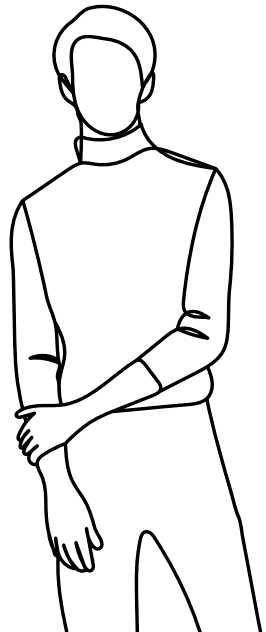
TIPS

Repeated exposure to an individual will increase the likelihood of developing positive feelings for them.

If the recruiter has met a candidate several times, they will trust the candidate more and the candidate will seem nice compared with someone they are meeting for the first time.

FUNDAMENTAL ATTRIBUTION ERROR

“The candidate was late to our virtual interview. This could suggest a lack of professionalism or commitment to the position”.



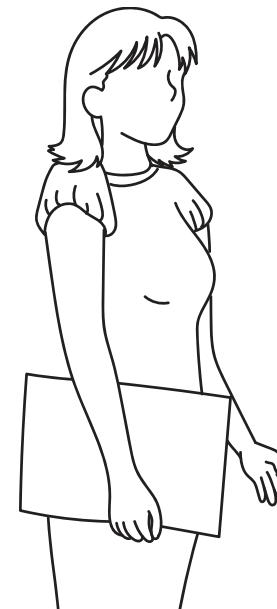
TIPS

Refers to the widespread tendency to attribute behaviours to personality traits instead of the context.

Here, to minimise this error, the recruiter should be open to considering situational factors such as technical problems, unforeseen personal issues or time constraints, before jumping to conclusions about the candidate’s professionalism.

BIAS BLIND SPOT

“This candidate has a Master’s degree from a given institution. I know very well that their education isn’t sufficient for the job”.



TIPS

This is our tendency to not recognise our own prejudices.

For example, a recruiter with major stereotypes and prejudices against a group will more negatively assess a candidate belonging to that group.



CONTRAST EFFECT

“The first of the two candidates is really brilliant! Their background is full of significant experiences. The professional experience of the second candidate seemed slightly less convincing”.



TIPS

This involves comparing two candidates.

For example, when a truly talented candidate is interviewed, the following candidate might be judged more severely by the recruiter.





Some non-verbal communication behaviours, observed during a remote interview, can cause a recruiter to make unconscious judgments. Here are some examples:

- Arrogance
- Aggression
- Self-importance
- Sense of superiority
- Impression of being an expert
- Stubborn
- Indecisive
- Cynical
- Negative
- Self-centred
- Lack of interest
- Passiveness
- No questions asked by the candidate
- Being late for the interview

**TIPS**

While this information can sometimes unconsciously affect your evaluation of a candidate, it is crucial to conduct the interview until the end without focusing excessively on non-verbal communication.



**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Non-verbal communication should not be a major factor when assessing a candidate, in particular due to:

- A lack of scientific evidence as to popular beliefs.
- The difficulty of drawing formal conclusions.

During remote interviews, the recruiter's perception can be altered by technical factors such as the position of the camera, the lighting, or a poor connection, which can be misleading and influence their judgment. This is especially true considering that only the candidate's face and upper chest are visible.

The candidate may also be experiencing additional stress as a result of poor command of the technical tool, a poor connection, or distractions at home.

It is therefore essential to be understanding and empathetic in such situations.





THE ASSESSMENT CENTRE

The assessment centre is an optional method aimed at evaluating a person's abilities in a specific professional context. This approach focuses on cognitive skills, personality, and performance during group exercises, while minimizing factors that could introduce bias, such as age, level of education, or qualifications. The goal is to analyse candidates' behaviors and responses during role-plays to observe their personalities, skills, and, above all, their potential for future roles.

UTILITY

- Evaluate **soft skills**.
- Provide **insight into hard skills**.
- Benefit from **an HR firm's** objective and impartial view of the candidate or the employee already working in the institution.
- Better identify **their strengths, areas for development, and potential for growth**.

OBJECTIVES

- **Respond** in an unforeseen situation.
- **Make decisions** in any type of situation.

- **Organise and plan** one's time.
- **Communicate** within a group.

FORMATS

Individual: Analyse a candidate's capacity for reflection, in particular via personality tests, interviews and workplace role-plays.

Collective: Evaluate teamwork, managerial potential or behavioural skills, in particular through collective or individual exercises.

Face-to-face: on the premises of the institution or the selected HR firm.

Remote: via digital tools, online exercise and testing platforms, and video-conferencing interviews and conversations.

EXERCISES

Individual interview: Provide an opportunity for discussion with the assessor.

A questionnaire assessing motivations, values and workplace behaviours: Take stock of the candidate's personality and motivation.

Reasoning tests: Test cognitive skills.

Role-plays, which can be individual, collective or interactive.

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

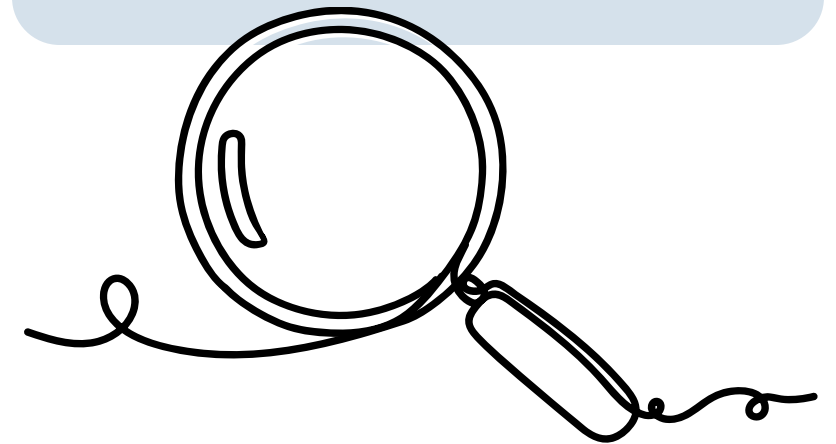
- Online assessments (personality tests, virtual role-plays and games) should be adapted based on the skills to be assessed.
- Personality tests, which are widely used by recruiters, focus on a candidate's human qualities and interpersonal skills, assessing their compatibility with the institution's values and their new work environment.
- Workplace role-plays analyse specific job-related technical skills, providing a realistic overview of expectations for the candidate as an employee.
- Logic and reasoning tests, which are often timed, assess a candidate's capacity for reflection in the context of mathematical logic problems.

**TIPS**

These tests can assist in decision-making, but they must be interpreted carefully.

While they offer overviews and general insights, they should not serve as the sole basis for decisions. Human impressions and intuition remain invaluable.

Nonetheless, these tools can prove particularly useful for facilitating decision-making during fully remote recruitment processes.





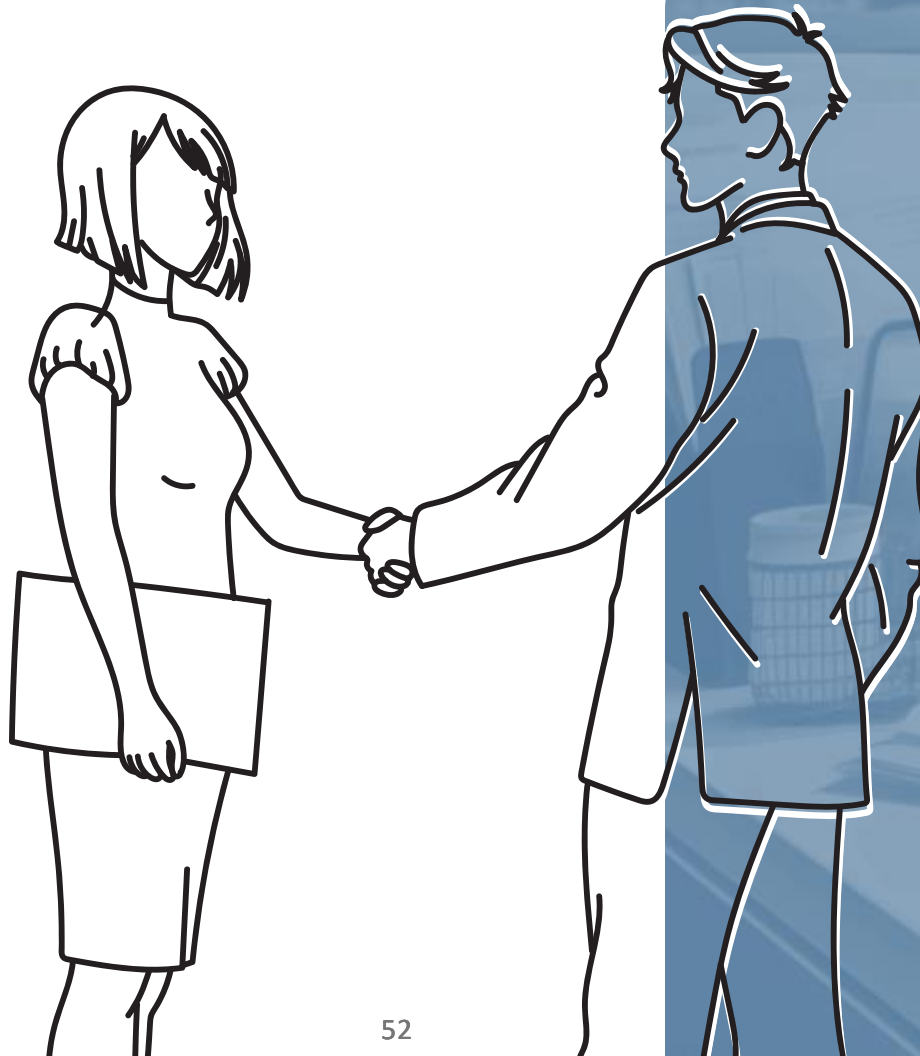
FINAL DECISION

The information collected by the recruiter in the investigation stage will enable them to make their final decision. To do this, they will need to be able to answer the following two questions:

Will the candidate succeed in this position?

Which of the remaining candidates should be selected?

There might not be any appropriate candidates for the job to be filled. Deciding not to hire anyone is difficult given the time devoted to this process, but sometimes it is the best solution.





Four types of data enable the recruiter to make the final decision.

THE CV:

Check that the candidate's education and experience match the job requirements.

THE QUESTIONS ASKED BY THE CANDIDATE:

Decide between candidates.

THE RECRUITER'S QUESTIONS:

Confirm the match with the job description.

THE SELECTION CRITERIA:

Objectively assess all candidates.

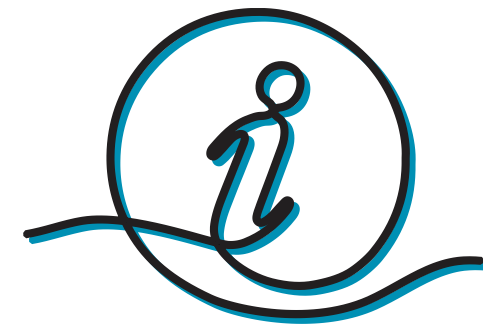
See a recruitment report



TIPS

Holding several interviews can be useful for the decision-making process, as it allows you to compare your interpretations of the information collected.

This makes the assessment less subjective and provides for more rigorous intersubjectivity.





As a recruiter, you need to implement some best practices when providing a candidate with feedback.

VERBAL NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

When giving negative feedback, prioritise delivering it verbally whenever possible. Follow up with a simple letter to inform the candidate that they were not selected. This approach helps to maintain a positive impression of the recruiter, encouraging the candidate to consider applying again in the future.



TIPS

Explain your decision directly, while answering any questions the candidate may have and dealing with potential objections.

Promote the employer brand.

DIRECT ANNOUNCEMENT

Deliver the news straightforwardly and without hesitation. Inform the candidate within 48 hours of making the decision. Then, ask for their thoughts and how they feel about it.



TIPS

Promote the employer brand and the institution's image.

INTERVIEW FEEDBACK

Ask the candidate for feedback on the interview and the process.

Did you make them feel comfortable enough? Were any “role-plays” clearly explained? What about the welcome and technical conditions? Etc.

Candidates who were not selected can express their surprise or disappointment and have an explanation.



TIPS

Assess the recruitment process.



REASONS FOR THE DECISION

First review the job requirements, the key selection criteria and the institution's values.

Then demonstrate why they do not fit with the candidate's profile and/or answers.



TIPS

Clearly determine the key selection criteria in advance.

Keep your interview tracking file up to date using the recruitment report.

STRENGTHS AND AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Start by listing the candidate's strengths.

Example: "You had very good perspective with regard to this question. You're a good communicator. Your technical skills are really on par with our expectations but..."

Then constructively address their areas for improvement.

Example: "When I asked you about the project to be undertaken, you were confused, and it gave us the impression you didn't fully grasp the extent of the tasks at hand. Maybe you should have started by presenting a reverse schedule to help me understand".



TIPS

Provide the candidate with avenues for follow-up action.

VISIBILITY AND NEXT STEPS OF THE PROCESS

Once a candidate has been selected based on their CV, remind them of the different stages of the process, the number of interviews to be held, and the people they are going to meet.

After each interview, explain what will be expected for the next stage.

If there are any delays or unexpected challenges during the recruitment process, notify the candidate and inform them of the reasons.

Example: "Prof X, a member of your selection panel, is unfortunately abroad at the moment. We are scheduling your interview for ... , when he is expected to get back".



TIPS

Avoid any withdrawal on the part of the candidate if the process will be long.



You must provide the candidate with feedback, at every stage of the recruitment process.

1. Before pre-screening

Acknowledge receipt of the application.

3. Before the interview

Invite the shortlisted candidate to an interview.

2. After reviewing the application

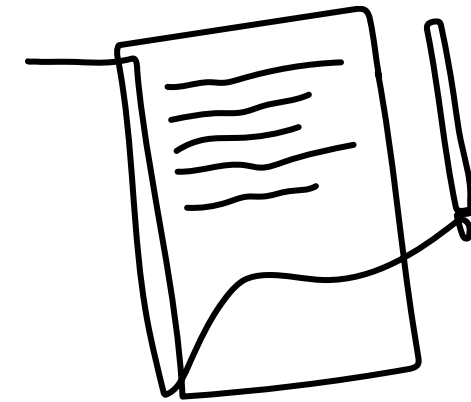
Respond to the candidate who has not been selected.

- Following the pre-screening of CVs
- Following the interview

4. Once the decision has been made

Confirm that their application was selected following the interview.

See feedback letters



TIPS

This feedback for the candidate, at every key stage of the recruitment process, is very important for boosting the university's reputation as an employer.



ONBOARDING

To ensure that the onboarding of your new employee is seamless and effective, you can check the successful completion of the various tasks on your onboarding checklist.

1. BEFORE THEIR ARRIVAL

- Send them an email three or four days in advance to confirm their arrival details, including the address and time for their first day. This helps them feel expected and well-informed.
- Ensure that a workspace, necessary tools, login credentials, work-related documents, and a contact list of relevant team members are ready and available.
- Plan the first day ahead of time to ensure everyone involved is prepared and available.
- Inform the team of their arrival, specifying the role they'll take on, and provide instructions on how to make them feel welcome.
- Make sure the appointed reference person is available and engaged during the whole onboarding day.



TIPS

The new hire needs to feel welcomed and well-informed with clear and practical details.



2. THE DAY OF THEIR ARRIVAL

- Ensure the person responsible for welcoming them is fully prepared and available.
- Show them their workspace, and together confirm that all the necessary equipment is present and functioning properly.
- Take the time to provide them with all the essential information and documents they need for their role and address any questions they may have.
- Offer broader information, such as departmental habits and details about the colleagues they'll be interacting with.



TIPS

This stage is decisive for the new employee's first impression of the university, laboratory or research unit.

3. THREE MONTHS AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL

Have them fill out an astonishment report.

They will be asked three main questions:

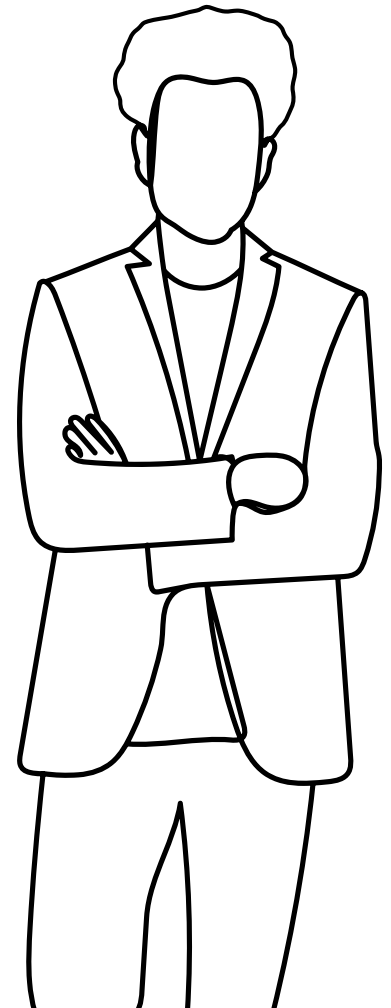
- Is their onboarding going well?
- Do they feel comfortable and in the right place ?
- Have they fully understood their tasks?



TIPS

An astonishment report can also be filled out six months after their arrival.

See an astonishment report





You can also take some additional measures during the onboarding of your new employee, to ensure the full success of your recruitment process.

1. Organisation of a welcome breakfast

- Introduce the team

2. Creation of a welcome booklet

- Share it in advance in video or webinar format.

3. Assignment of a mentor or buddy

- Provide in-depth integration and support.

4. Scheduling of regular meetings

- Monitor and observe strengths and identify areas for improvement

5. Provision of an onboarding kit

- Ensure a smooth and welcoming onboarding experience.



TIPS

In the case of remote onboarding, the welcome breakfast can be replaced by a virtual e-breakfast! The buddy should be someone other than the manager, serving a complementary role. They will assist the new employee in settling into their position and ensure they feel supported, avoiding feelings of isolation or difficulty.

TOOLBOX





1. Basics Information

Job Title:	
Researcher profile	<input type="checkbox"/> R1: Research Assistant <input type="checkbox"/> R2: Post-doctoral Researcher <i>The researcher is not yet fully independent.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> R3: Senior post-doctoral researcher <i>Established researcher who has a level of independence.</i> <input type="checkbox"/> R4: Confirmed Researcher <i>Principal Investigator who leads in their area of research</i>
Manager = PI:	
Research Area	<input type="checkbox"/> Arts & Humanities: Choose an item. <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering & Technology: Choose an item. <input type="checkbox"/> Life Sciences & Medicine: Choose an item. <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Sciences : Choose an item. <input type="checkbox"/> Social Sciences & Management : Choose an item.
Selection Committee	
<i>People who will need to be involved in the recruitment process</i>	
Team Members	

2. Tasks Description

Describe the tasks, objectives, and expected results required to achieve the mission(s). These can later serve as evaluation criteria.

-
-
Goal(s):
Expected Result(s) :



3. Conditions

Type of Contract :	<input type="checkbox"/> Fixed term contract – From Click or tap here to enter text.to Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> Renewable Click or tap here to enter text.
Employment status	<input type="checkbox"/> Full-time <input type="checkbox"/> Part - time <input type="checkbox"/> Negotiable <input type="checkbox"/> Others
Funding sources	
Expected start date :	
Salary Range :	
Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> No
Schedule / week	
Remote Working	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> No

4. Profile

Degree required	<input type="checkbox"/> Bachelor's degree or equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> Master's degree or equivalent <input type="checkbox"/> PhD or equivalent
Research experience required:	
What seniority/experience:	<input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 4 years <input type="checkbox"/> 4 to 10 years <input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 years
Languages Level: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - N/A (no specific language) - Basic - Good - Excellent - Native 	<input type="checkbox"/> English, level: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> French, level: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> Deutsch, level: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> German, level: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> Others: Click or tap here to enter text. Level: Click or tap here to enter text.



➤ <u>Hard Skills / Knowledge (what should be known)</u>		
	Essential skills: Core competencies required for the candidate to effectively perform the role.	Desired skills: Additional competencies that would be beneficial but are not mandatory.
Programming languages (R, Python, Bash, Perl, ...)		
Microscopy image processing		
Use of lab notebooks		
Knowledge of early medieval history		
...		
➤ <u>Soft skills (behavioral skills)</u>		
	Essential(s)	Desired
Team spirit		
Be Organized		
Pedagogy, teaching		
Autonomy		
...		
➤ <u>Professional Experience(s)</u>		
	Essential(s)	Desired
➤ <u>Mandatory requirement(s) (without these requirement(s) the candidate cannot occupy the position)</u>		

5. Additional information

Contact Details	Last Name, First Name, function : Click or tap here to enter text. Email(s) : Click or tap here to enter text. Phone : (+32) Click or tap here to enter text.
Number of positions available	
Deadline to apply	
Possible evolution of the function and the candidate	
Eligibility criteria	Click or tap here to enter text.
Training opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes : Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> No:
Selection process:	Detail the different steps ... if it is remote, explain the means used to do the interview
Is the job funded through the EU Research Framework Programme? Reference number?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes: Click or tap here to enter text. <input type="checkbox"/> No:
Other comments?	Click or tap here to enter text.
URL to add: website, Euraxess, others, ...	Click or tap here to enter text.

**Job title**

- The job title should include a compelling hook to attract candidates and differentiate your organization from other recruiters.
- Why should you work with us and not elsewhere?

Overview of the university/research institution

- This section is purely descriptive and factual. The aim is to provide potential candidates with information about the general environment within the organisation.

Information concerning the research project

- Here, you can also highlight the people with whom the candidate will be interacting. Present the team, its role, and the PI.

What is your role?**Your tasks?**

- Describe the expected tasks, objectives, and outcomes for these tasks. They may later serve as assessment criteria.
- This point can be included in point 4, “Job”.

Your profile

- Based on the job description.
- Specify skills in the form of a situational checklist. This can be more concrete and allow you to expand your target base of candidates.

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- Specify skills in the form of a situational checklist. This can be more concrete and allow you to expand your target base of candidates.

**Our terms of employment**

- Type of contract
- Work schedule
- Contract duration
- Expected start date

What we can offer

- Outlined the benefits mentioned in the job description
- Describe the work environment and the training programs available at the institution.
- Remote working

How to apply

- Mode of contact: phone or email
- Contact person (last name, first name, role)
- Documents/references to be provided
- Application deadline

Selection process

- Break down the various selection stages + dates.
- Add the last names, first names and roles of the people holding the interviews.

Additional information



1. Can you tell me about the most complex situation you have had to manage in your career as a researcher to date?
 - SITUATION: Could you describe the situation in detail?
 - TASK: What was your role or responsibility in managing this complex situation?
 - ACTION: What specific measures did you take to address this complex situation?
 - RESULT: What were the outcomes of your actions in managing this complex situation?
2. Could you provide an example of a successful collaboration with other researchers or research teams?
 - SITUATION: What was the context of this collaboration?
 - TASK: What was your role in this collaboration?
 - ACTION: How did you contribute to the collaboration and research?
 - RESULT: What were the outcomes or achievements of this collaboration?
3. Describe a research project where you had to adapt your methodology due to specific constraints.
 - SITUATION: What were the constraints or challenges you faced?
 - TASK: What were your research objectives despite these constraints?
 - ACTION: How did you adjust your methodology to overcome these obstacles?
 - RESULT: What were the results of your research despite the constraints?
4. Tell me about a time when you presented your research results to an external audience or at a conference.
 - SITUATION: What was the occasion or event for presenting your results?
 - TASK: What was your objective or role in this presentation?
 - ACTION: How did you prepare and deliver your presentation?
 - RESULT: What were the feedback and reactions to your presentation?



5. Can you give me an example of a situation where you had to solve a methodological problem in your research?
 - SITUATION: What methodological problem did you encounter?
 - TASK: What was your goal in solving this problem?
 - ACTION: What solutions did you consider and implement?
 - RESULT: What was the impact of your outcome on your research?
6. Tell me about a situation where you had to manage a conflict within your research team.
 - SITUATION: Describe the context in which the conflict arose. For example, it could be a disagreement on methodological approaches, data interpretations, or contributions of team members.
 - TASK: What was your role within the team and in resolving this conflict? Was it hierarchical or collaborative in nature?
 - ACTION: What specific actions did you take to manage the conflict and facilitate the outcome? This could include organising mediation meetings, encouraging open communication, or seeking compromises.
 - RESULT: What was the impact of your actions on resolving the conflict and on the dynamics of the research team? Did relationships between team members improve? Did the research work progress positively?

These questions should be adapted based on the specific job requirements and the needs of the institution and research unit.



Traditional questions (personality – strengths – weaknesses)

- Can you tell me about yourself?
- In what ways do you think you differ from other candidates?
- Can you describe your main success? A major failure?

Questions about professional background and career plans

- Could you describe your long-term vision for your research career and how you plan to contribute to the research field in the coming years?
- Can you explain your professional journey and the motivations behind your choices?
- What are the key moments in your professional journey that have shaped your passion for research and how do these experiences influence your future goals in your field of expertise?

More specific questions

- To identify professional values in relation to management:
 - Can you share a professional experience where a lab manager had a significant impact on you?
 - If they mention a lab manager who positively influenced them, ask them what struck them the most negatively, and vice versa.
- To better understand the candidate's self-image:
 - What qualities do you possess that would enable you to succeed in this position?
- To understand their limitations and values:
 - What could prevent you from succeeding in this role?

¹ PARISSE Johan (2022) *Recrutement – Les techniques et savoir-faire dans la sélection* [course notes].



Job-related questions

- Allow you to know if the person has really researched the institution/research unit.
 - Why do you want to join our institution/research unit?
- Does the candidate manage to make convincing connections between their profile and the job offer?
 - What motivated you to apply for the job?
- This question allows for the sharing of motivations for working in an international environment.
 - What are the reasons motivating your interest in this overseas position?
- Explore the candidate's previous collaborations with scientists, institutions, or projects abroad.
 - Tell us about your experiences with international collaboration in research.
- Evaluate the ability to adapt to international research environments.
 - How has your previous experience prepared you to work in an international context?
- Evaluate the ability to manage research projects autonomously, even when not physically present.
 - Do you have experience in managing research projects remotely?



Questions related to the candidate's sociability

- Can you share a previous experience where you successfully integrated into a new work environment abroad?
- Generally speaking, what do your colleagues say about you?
- If you were to lead a team, what would be your most important values?
- What qualities do you think make a good lab manager?
- Are you an ambitious person? How does that manifest in you?
- What did you enjoy most about your previous job? Why?
- Can you give us an example of a project or mission that you particularly enjoyed? What were the main difficulties you encountered?
- Could you describe a difficult situation you experienced when carrying out a task? How did you resolve it? What could you have done to prevent it? What would you do if a similar situation occurred in the future?

“Surprise” questions

- What question(s) would you like me to ask?
- It's said that we learn from our mistakes. What failure have you learned the most from?
- If you had a magic wand, what would you do to change the world?
- What was your dream job when you were a child?

These questions should be adapted based on the specific job requirements and the needs of the institution and research unit.



Function

Function	
Job title	
Faculty/department/laboratory	
Rank	
Contract duration	
Personnel category	
Position/Source of funding	
Job reference	
Job vacancy publication date	
Deadline for receiving applications	
Closing date of the vacancy	
Channels for posting job vacancies	
Hiring manager's name or composition of the recruitment committee	
Selection criteria	
Criterion 1 (with explanation)	
Criterion 2 (with explanation)	
Criterion 3 (with explanation)	

Administrative follow-up

First name	Last name	Email	Dates received (application and/or video of asynchronous interview)	Acknowledgement of receipt dates	Dates for interview invitations	Dates of candidate's answers	Status of the application after each stage	Dates of candidate's answers	Date and reason for selection or rejection	et c.



Phone screening or recorded interview

Name	Last name	Diploma	Motivation for the Vacant Position	Professional Background + Reasons for Departure from Current (or Previous) Employer	Another On going Recruitment Procedure	Comments		

Ranking in relation to selection criteria

		Name 1	Name 2
Key Criteria			
C1.			
C2.			
C3.			
C4.			
STRENGTHS			
A1.			
A2.			
A3.			

A = Acquired - L = Gap that can be quickly filled - N.A. = Not Acquired



Analysis of applications

Last name	First name	Email	Diploma(s)	Other diploma(s)	Relevant experience(s)	Other experience(s)	Selected by the recruitment committee	Comments from the recruitment committee	HR department comment (if involved)	etc.



	Interview Report	Date :
		Page 1/2

Recruitment of a researcher in the Faculty of XXX

Composition of the selection committee

	Full names of the selection committee member	Faculty/Research Unit/Laboratory/...
President		
Member		
Member		
Member		
Member		

General information about the candidate

First name, Last name of the candidate	
Significant experiences relevant to the position (Summary of screening)	
Date of availability of the candidate	

Summary of the evaluation based on the required criteria

These criteria are provided for illustrative purposes. The criteria will be set by the project's supervisor who is hiring. They should be identical to those published in the job vacancy.

KEY CRITERIA	COMMENTS	
	Level of satisfaction	
C1. Quality of academic background (degree relevance to the position, obtained grades, and length of the academic journey)		
C2. Research experience		
C3. Knowledge of the relevant disciplines		
C4. Motivations		
Strengths		
A1. English language proficiency (if required)		

	Interview Report	Date :
		Page 2/2

TS = Very satisfactory; S = Satisfactory; F = Weak; I = Unsatisfactory

General assessment of the candidate (key arguments)

-
-
-



	Recruitment of a researcher [specify type of contract and employment status]	Date :
		Page 1/4

Summary of the recruitment process	
Dates of advertisement	
Number of received applications	
Number of candidates selected based on application review	
Number of candidates interviewed by the selection committee	

The application files were analyzed based on the following criteria:

- Academic background (degree, grade, duration of studies)
- Relevance of the background to the proposed position (research experience or other)
- Quality of the application file (completeness, substance, and format)

The interview process included [select the applied steps and remove the others]:

- A brief presentation by the candidate and their motivations
- Technical/theoretical questions
- Practical part: presentation on a defined topic/execution of a laboratory manipulation...

Evaluation summary based on the required criteria

These criteria are provided for illustrative purposes. The criteria will be set by the project's supervisor who is hiring. They should be identical to those published in the job vacancy announcement.

	Candidat			
	A	B	C	D
KEY CRITERIA				
C1. Quality of academic background (degree relevance to the position, obtained grades, and length of the academic journey)				
C2. Research experience				
C3. Mastery of relevant disciplines				
C4. Motivations				

TS = Very satisfactory; S = Satisfactory; F = Weak; I = Unsatisfactory

	Recruitment of a researcher [specify type of contract and employment status]	Date :
		Page 2/4

Evaluation argumentation based on the required criteria

CANDIDATE A :

C1. Quality of academic background (degree relevance to position, obtained grades, length of study)

- ...
- ...

C2. Research experience (internship, thesis, ...)

- ...
- ...

C3. Mastery of relevant disciplines

- ...
- ...

C4. Motivations

- ...
- ...

A1. English language proficiency - if required

- ...
- ...



	Recruitment of a researcher [specify type of contract and employment status]	Date :
		Page 3/4

CANDIDATE B:*C1. Quality of academic background (degree relevance to position, obtained grades, length of study)*

- ...
- ...

C2. Research experience (internship, thesis, ...)

- ...
- ...

C3. Mastery of relevant disciplines

- ...
- ...

C4. Motivations

- ...
- ...

A1. English language proficiency - if required

- ...
- ...

	Recruitment of a researcher [specify type of contract and employment status]	Date :
		Page 4/4

CANDIDATE C:*C1. Quality of academic background (degree relevance to position, obtained grades, length of study)*

- ...
- ...

C2. Research experience (internship, thesis, ...)

- ...
- ...

C3. Mastery of relevant disciplines

- ...
- ...

C4. Motivations

- ...
- ...

A1. English language proficiency - if required

- ...
- ...



Acknowledgment of application receipt

Subject: Acknowledgment of application receipt

Dear sir, dear miss,

We inform you that your application has been successfully received and thank you for your interest in [name of the institution].

We will review it carefully and will not hesitate to contact you if your profile meets our expectations. A reply will be sent to you either at the end of the pre-selection process, or at the end of the selection procedure as a whole, after the pre-selected candidates have been interviewed.

[Name of the institution] is committed to promoting gender equality and preventing discrimination in its recruitment activities.

We remain at your disposal for any further information.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Negative response to a job application

Subject: Response to your application for the position of [position name]

Dear sir or dear miss [name of the person],

You applied for the position of [position title].

We would like to thank you for your interest in [name of the institution].

After careful consideration of your application, despite its merit, we regret to inform you that we have selected a candidate whose profile aligns more closely with the requirements of the position. Therefore, we are unable to proceed with your application. We wish you success in your job search and in finding a position that matches your professional goals.

Best regards,

[Signature]



Response to unsuccessful candidates on CV submission

Madam, Sir,

Firstly, we thank you for your interest in our university by responding to our job offer.

We regret to inform you that your application was not selected for this position.

However, we encourage you to regularly visit our website [university job site] to stay informed about our vacancies.

Please accept, Madam, Sir, our best regards and we wish you to find a job opportunity that meets your professional aspirations.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Invitation to an interview

Dear [name of the person],

As mentioned in my voicemail left on your phone, I am pleased to invite you for an interview with the recruitment committee on [date] at [time].

The interview will take place at [address, map] – please check in at the reception.

Could you please confirm your attendance for this interview?

Best regards,

[Signature]



Response to candidates not selected after an interview

Madam, Sir [name of the person],

Your application has been carefully reviewed following your interview with the selection committee.

However, I regret to inform you that you were not selected for this position.

Please accept, Madam, Sir [name of the person], our best regards and we wish you to find a job opportunity that meets your professional aspirations.

Best regards,

[Signature]

Response to candidates not selected but placed on back-up list

Turn to the Human Resources Department before forming a reserve list for future recruitment

Madam, Sir, [candidate's name]

We thank you for your participation in the interview for the position of [position] within [institution].

However, despite this very pleasant exchange, we regret to inform you that we will not be proceeding with your application, as the selected candidate has a background and/or experience that is more closely aligned with what we are seeking.

Nevertheless, as the decision was relatively difficult for the members of the jury, we would like, with your agreement, to place you in our recruitment pool for a period of [months].

We also encourage you to regularly check our job website: [site link]

We hope that you will soon find a position that matches your aspirations. Please accept, Madam, Sir, [candidate's name], the expression of our best regards.

Best regards,

[Signature]



Positive response to the application

Dear [name of the person],

Following your various interviews and phone conversations, I am pleased to confirm that your application has been accepted for the position of [position title] within [name of the institution].

We are looking forward to welcoming you to the team. The next steps in the process include [details about the next steps, such as integration].

If you have any questions or concerns, we will be happy to assist you, so please feel free to contact [contact person's name].

Best regards,

[Signature]



Last name:
First name:
Laboratory name, research unit, faculty, ...:

Example of an astonishment report

You have recently joined our university, and we would like to give you the opportunity to express yourself about your experience. Please share your feedback, suggestions, and needs so that we can support you better in your integration within our university. We thank you in advance for your collaboration!

Part 1: Observations and remarks on the recruitment process

1. How long have you been in your current position to date?
.....
.....
2. What were your impressions of the university's recruitment process?
.....
.....
3. Did you find the recruitment process well-organized?
.....
.....
4. Were there any aspects of the recruitment process that surprised or confused you (positively or otherwise)? If yes, which ones and why?
.....
.....
5. Does the job description match your current responsibilities? Explain.
.....
.....

Part 2: Observations and remarks on your integration

1. How would you describe your integration thus far?
.....
.....
2. Whom did you meet when you started your position? Do you think that the way you were welcomed was ideal?
.....
.....

3. Could you quickly access useful information when you started your position?

- ☐ YES
☐ NO

Any comments :

-
.....
.....
4. Generally speaking, what surprised you, positively or negatively, when you took up your new position?
.....
.....
 5. What helped you when you started your position? What did you particularly appreciate?
.....
.....
 6. What difficulties did you encounter? What did you dislike or find disappointing?
.....
.....
 7. When did you feel like you were part of the team?
.....
.....
 8. What reinforces your decision to work at our university?
.....
.....
 9. What would cause you to decide not to continue the collaboration?
.....
.....
 10. Do you have any remarks or suggestions to help us improve the welcoming and integration process for new collaborators?
.....
.....

**Part 3 : Mission and work environment**

1. What do you particularly enjoy about your work?
.....
.....
.....
2. What do you like less (or find difficult) about your work?
.....
.....
.....
3. How would you describe the interactions with your colleagues?
Do you feel integrated?
.....
.....
.....
4. Do you receive feedback on your work and from whom?
.....
.....
.....
5. Do you feel your supervisor is sufficiently available for you? Explain.
.....
.....
.....
6. Do you have sufficient instructions to work with? Explain.
.....
.....
.....
7. Do you have adequate equipment to carry out your mission?
.....
.....
.....
8. Do you know who to contact in case of problems related to your work?
.....
.....
.....

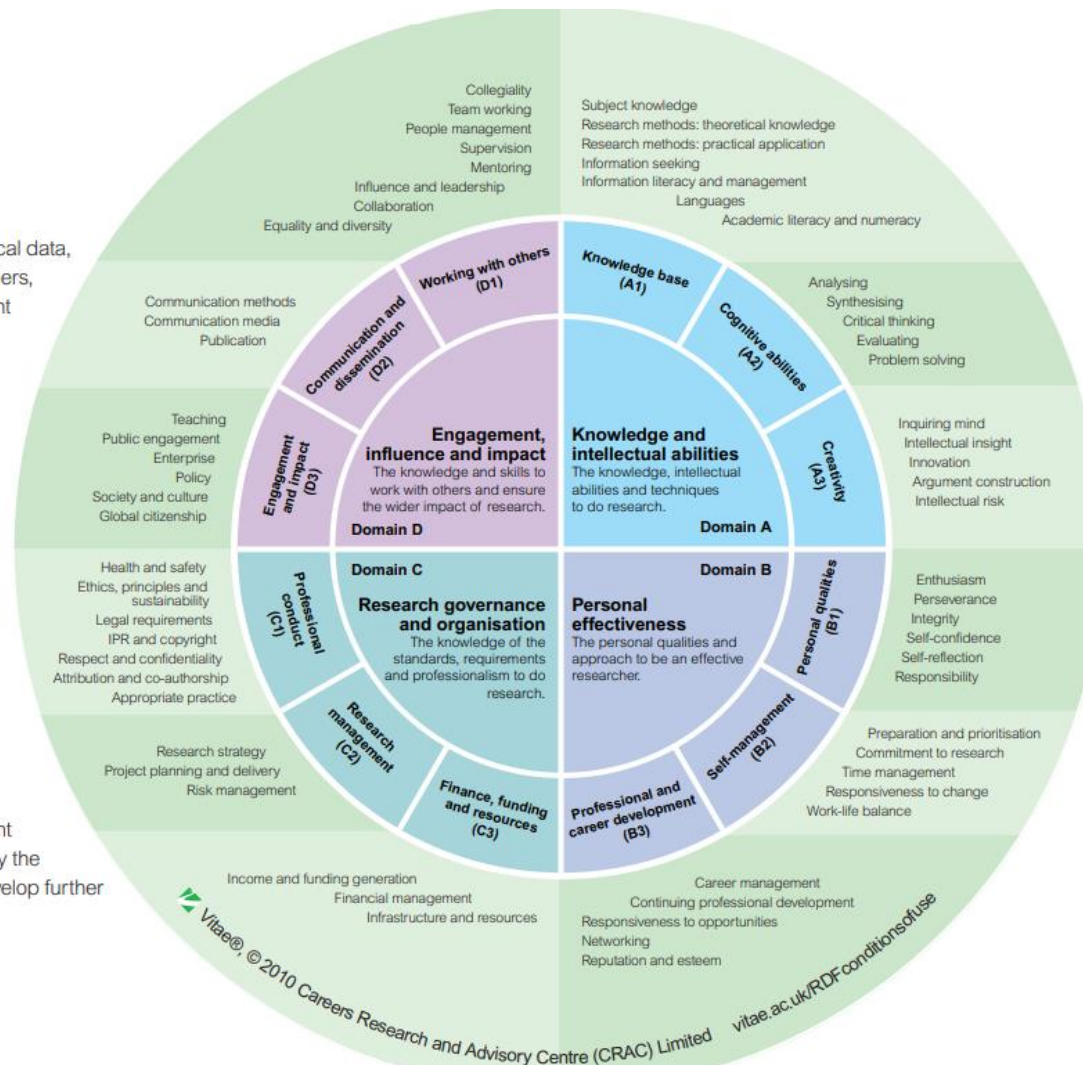


Vitae Researcher Development Framework* (PhD/PostDocs)

Structure

The RDF has been created from empirical data, collected through interviewing researchers, to identify the characteristics of excellent researchers expressed in the RDF as 'descriptors'. The descriptors are structured in four domains and twelve sub-domains, encompassing the knowledge, intellectual abilities, techniques and professional standards to do research, as well as the personal qualities, knowledge and skills to work with others and ensure the wider impact of research. Each of the sixty-three descriptors contains between three to five phases, representing distinct stages of development or levels of performance within that descriptor.

The RDF has been incorporated into a downloadable Professional Development Planner to enable researchers to identify the areas in the framework they want to develop further and to create an action plan.





European Competence Framework for Researchers



https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2023-04/ec_rtd_research-competence-presentation.pdf



NPA Core Competencies Quick Guide * (PostDoc)



THE NATIONAL POSTDOCTORAL ASSOCIATION'S

CORE COMPETENCIES



DISCIPLINE-SPECIFIC CONCEPTUAL KNOWLEDGE

An overall understanding of implications of work on broader field, the importance of innovation & creativity, & grasp of cultural, language & technical discipline-specific knowledge.

- Analytical approach to defining scientific questions
- Design of scientifically testable hypotheses
- Broad based & cross-disciplinary knowledge acquisition
- Interpretation & analysis of data



RESEARCH SKILL DEVELOPMENT

Ensure that postdocs are adequately equipped to carry out independent research, whether in bench- or non-bench related professions.

- Research techniques & laboratory safety
- Experimental design
- Data analysis & interpretation
- Statistical analysis
- Effective search strategies & critical evaluation of the literature
- Principles of the peer review process



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Postdocs should master communication skills which ensure that messages are heard & understood by the appropriate audience.

- Writing (scientific publications, grants/applications, career documents)
- Speaking (presentations, interviews)
- Teaching
- Interpersonal Skills (style, negotiation, reviews/feedback, networking, conflict resolution, media management)



PROFESSIONALISM

Postdocs instill and enforce the virtues of honor, integrity, compassion, cooperation, reliability, & enhance the perception of this work in society.

- Workplace professionalism (diverse teams)
- Institutional professionalism (connecting at/across/with institutions as employees or representatives)
- Collegial professionalism (engaging as a citizen to scholarship)
- Universal professionalism



LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT SKILLS

Postdocs should understand which leadership styles are appropriate for any given time & situation increase performance & productivity. Leaders must also be able to competently manage projects, budgets, & staff.

- Management Skills (research staff management, project management, data & resource management, general management)
- Leadership Skills (Identifying & clarifying goals, motivating/inspiring others, serving as a role model)



RESPONSIBLE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH (RCR)

The pursuit & advancement of knowledge depend on openness, honesty, objectivity, & trust. Therefore, postdocs are responsible for upholding & engaging the ethical norms of their fields.

- Data ownership & sharing
- Publication practices & responsible authorship
- Research with human subjects or animals (where applicable)
- Identifying & mitigating research misconduct
- Conflicts of interest

15800 Crabbs Branch Way Ste 300
Rockville, MD 20855
(301) 984-4800



**Legal texts:**

- French Act of 3 July 1978 on employment contracts
- French Act of 30 July 1981 criminalising certain acts inspired by racism or xenophobia
- French Act of 10 May 2007 to combat certain forms of discrimination
- French Act of 30 July 2018 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data
- CCT 38: Collective work agreement concerning the recruitment and selection of workers.

Books:

- PARISSE Johan (2022) – Meaningful – “Recrutement – Les techniques et savoir-faire dans la sélection” [course notes]
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