



On the basis of Article 314 of the Statute of the University of Maribor (UM Statute -UPB 12, Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 29/2017) the Senate of the University of Maribor at its 26th regular session of 24 October 2017 adopted the following

INSTRUCTIONS FOR OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARIBOR

I INTRODUCTION

Under the Rectors Conference of Slovenia of 19 November 2008, the University of Maribor (hereinafter: UM) signed the Declaration of Commitment by Slovenian Universities on the Adoption of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (hereinafter: Charter & Code). As the holder of the *HR Excellence in Research* award, the University of Maribor is committed to the implementation and realization of principles of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers, as defined by the Charter & Code.

UM is aware that open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers (hereinafter: OTM-R) increases the appeal of academic careers and careers in research, ensures equal opportunities for all candidates, promotes mobility, may optimize the cost efficiency of investments into research, and, most of all, materially contributes to the quality of research.

In drafting these Instructions, UM followed the guidance of the working group of the Steering Group of Human Resources Management under the European Research Area on Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment of Researchers.

In referring to “researchers”, the Instructions on open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers at the University of Maribor (hereinafter: Instructions) refer to all researchers irrespective of their career stage (including doctoral students and early stage researchers, postdoctoral fellows, etc.) and/or their role and position (researcher, higher education officer or higher education teacher, etc.) at the University of Maribor.

The HR Manual of the University of Maribor shall be aligned with these Instructions within six months after the adoption of the Instructions. The HR Manual shall apply to any and all subject matters not expressly regulated by these Instructions.

II PUBLICATION OF JOB ADVERTISEMENT

1. Decision on vacancy

After determining the need for the recruitment of a new researcher, the responsible officer at UM shall issue a decision on publishing a job advertisement.



2. Preparing the public job advertisement

The public job advertisement for the research vacancy at UM shall be structured as follows:

- a) The job advertisement shall contain transparent and open information on the entire selection procedure, including selection criteria and a timeline estimate.
- b) The job advertisement shall be clear and concise, with links to further details, e.g. required skills and competencies, tasks and duties, working conditions, rights, training opportunities, career development, gender quality policies, etc.
- c) The job advertisement shall ensure that all required education and competencies levels comply with the needs and requirements of the advertised position. Requirements shall not be defined in a manner that prevents or may prevent candidates from applying, i.e. shall not be overly restrictive and/or unnecessary. Requirements shall, however, comply with national legislation and UM regulations (Staffing table of UM).
- d) The job advertisement shall expressly reference proactive elements for underrepresented groups.
- e) The job advertisement shall not present an unreasonable administrative burden for candidates (e.g. unnecessary certificates of qualifications, translations, required number of copies, etc.) – pursuant to Article 28 of the Employment Act, the employer shall only request of candidates to deliver data directly related to work.
- f) If necessary, the job advertisement shall contain reference to the institution's language use policy.¹
- g) The job advertisement shall ensure equal treatment of candidates, irrespective of their ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political orientation, geographic location, social or economic condition or gender.
- h) The job advertisement shall ensure that the best candidate will be selected.

It is recommended that the job advertisement also contain details professional development opportunities and career development prospects.

The job advertisement shall define the manner in which candidates can submit applications for the vacancy (the recommended submission manner is by registered mail and/or email) and the closing deadline. As per the general rule of OTM-R, the call for applications shall be open for at least two months after the publication so that candidates from the most geographically remote locations have the opportunity to apply as well. The University shall take account of holiday periods and extend the deadline accordingly, if necessary.

Each candidate shall receive a note acknowledging the receipt of his or her application (e.g. auto reply email or letter; the reply shall be consistent with the manner of application).

The job advertisement shall contain reference to the contact person competent to provide information on the vacancy.

The job advertisement documentation shall contain clear reference to the party covering the cost of travel and accommodation incurred during face-to-face interviews with non-resident candidates, *if interviews are a mandatory part of the recruitment process and referred to as such in the job advertisement*. It is recommended that the University of Maribor or the faculty managing the selection

¹ This can apply to a series of different questions, e.g. is Slovene language proficiency necessary or does it represent only added value for a particular position? Will this language proficiency become necessary in time? If yes, will the candidates need to take part in a language course? In case of foreign candidates, do staff/selection committee members have the necessary skills and competencies to conduct interviews in English?

process cover (international) travel and accommodation expenses of interviewees in the aforementioned case.

3. Publication of public job advertisement

The job advertisement for the research vacancy at UM shall be published at the Employment Service of the Republic of Slovenia, websites of UM and faculties in Slovene and English, and on the EURAXESS portal (<https://www.euraxess.si/>).

For foreign candidates, job advertisements published on the website of UM and its faculties shall also contain information on conditions of employment and work at UM, and reference to matters candidates need to take care of prior to recruitment, so as to ease the transition of selected candidates into a new living and working environment. For said purpose, the websites shall also contain links to relevant institutions (e.g. links relating to work permits, visas, insurance, health care, accommodation, schools and day-care for children, etc.). Candidates are also advised to visit the national EURAXESS portal <https://www.euraxess.si/> that, in addition to key information on employment, also contains contacts to EURAXESS network members from over thirty countries, who can assist and support researchers and their families in transitioning from one living and working environment to another.

In the job advertisement, candidates should be able to find information on the following matters, either directly or as links to relevant websites:

- Organisation and recruiting unit;
- Job title, specifications and starting date;
- Researcher career profiles (R1-R4) with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' competencies;
- Selection criteria (and possibly their respective 'weight'), including knowledge and professional experience (distinguishing the 'required' and 'desirable');
- Number of available positions;
- Working conditions, workplace, entitlements (salary, other benefits, etc.), type of contract;
- Professional development opportunities;
- Career development prospects;
- The application procedure and deadline, which should, as a general rule, be at least two months from the publication date;
- Reference to the institution's OTM-R policy;
- Reference to the institution's equal opportunities policy (e.g. positive discrimination, dual careers, etc.);
- Contact details.

III SELECTION PROCEDURE

1. Selection committee

The selection committee shall be appointed by the responsible person of UM or faculty, who shall also appoint the screening committee (responsible for screening the completeness of applications in terms of eligibility and meeting of criteria, etc.). Committee appointment procedures shall be transparent and public. In line with the selection procedure laid down in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, selection committees should be established for all researcher profiles (R1-R4), though the size and composition of the committees may differ according to the profile and type of contract.

UM and its faculties are obligated to provide selection committee members with appropriate training and ensure conditions for committee members to attend relevant training. If applications in a foreign language are expected, committee members shall have the necessary skills and competencies to screen and evaluate applications in English, and conduct candidate interviews in English.

Selection committees should be independent, members should not have any conflict of interest and their decisions must be objective and evidence-based rather than based on personal preference.

The size and composition of committees may differ according to the researcher profile and type of contract for the position, however, the following elements should be considered:

- A minimum of 3 members;
- Gender balance, i.e. not less than 40% of one gender in the committee, if possible. If not possible, the derogation shall be duly reasoned;
- Inclusion of at least one external member not employed with UM or its faculties to any degree of employment, who has the requisite competencies and is proficient in the language in which the process will be conducted. If not possible, the derogation shall be duly reasoned;
- Inclusion of experts from different sectors (public, private, academic, non-academic), if appropriate and feasible;
- The committee as a whole should have all the relevant experience, qualifications and competencies to assess the candidate.

If a committee member:

- Is in a family relation with the candidate;
- In a straight line relation or relation in collateral line up to and including fourth removed;
- In a marital relationship or relationship by marriage up to and including second removed, even if the marriage has terminated;
- Is living or has been living in a non-marital partnership with the candidate;
- Is the caretaker, adopting parent or foster parent of the candidate; and
- In case of conflict of interest under Article 13 of the Code of Conduct of Civil Servants;

the person is not allowed to serve as a member of the selection committee. The committee shall be made quorate with a different, neutral member.

Pursuant to the Code of Conduct of Civil Servants, committee members have the duty to declare any conflict of interest to the appointing body.

Each derogation from requirements relating to a particular position, type of contract or specific scientific discipline shall be duly reasoned.

2. Candidate evaluation and interviews

The entire selection procedure shall be conducted in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities for all candidates who are subject to assessment. Depending largely on the number of applicants, as well as the internal human resources available, the process may involve one or more steps (e.g. pre-screening of applications in terms of completeness, invitations to interviews (remote interviews by telephone or skype, face-to-face interviews), organization of interviews, etc.).

While remote interviews may often be appropriate, in particular at the first interview stage, they should not altogether replace face-to-face interviews in cases where these are being conducted for internal candidates.

With regard to scheduling face-to-face interviews with candidates who are not Slovenian residents, the institution shall take into account the time they need to make arrangements to take part in the interview (travel, preparation for interview).

In case of face-to-face interviews, UM or the faculty conducting the interview should cover the (international) travel and accommodation expenses of the interviewees.

With regard to the requirements of the advertised post and the number of candidates, the selection committees should be independent in choosing the selection method (e.g., face-to-face interviews, evaluations by external experts, etc.).

All candidates shall be evaluated in terms of them meeting the criteria and requirements set out in the job advertisement.

3. Evaluation of achievements

The selection committee shall assess, both in qualitative and quantitative terms, all professional, research and teaching achievements of each candidate, focusing on the full potential of the candidate for the researcher post and taking into account his or her creativity and level of independence. Any career breaks or endeavours to develop a multidimensional career shall not be regarded as negatives, but rather as an evolution of a career and a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher towards a multidimensional career track ("Variation in the chronological order of CVs").

In line with the principles "Judging merit", "Variations in the order of CVs", "Recognition of mobility" and "Seniority" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, the evaluation criteria should be consistent with the requirements of the position as regards research, supervision or teaching competencies.

Merit shall be clearly defined in advance (in the job advertisement) and aligned with the requirements of the advertised vacancy. Depending on the specific profile of the post, this may include:

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

It is strongly recommended to make use of the European Framework for Research Careers, which identifies both necessary and desirable competences for each of the four broad profiles for researchers (R1 to R4).

4. Appointment phase

All applicants **shall receive** written or electronic notice at the end of the selection process, indicatively within one month and without any unnecessary delays.

Applicants who did not make it to the final stages shall be provided written feedback within 8 days after the end of the selection process (as per Article 30 of the Employment Act ZDR-1), and shall, by request of the candidate, be returned all documents they presented during the course of the application. It is strongly recommended to inform all applicants who were admitted to the interview about the strengths and weaknesses of their application.

All applicants must be entitled to further feedback upon request

IV Complaints mechanism

Candidates who believe that they have been treated negligently, unfairly or incorrectly shall be provided with an opportunity to launch an adequate complaints procedure. This procedure should be transparent and made public, and define the manner in which the candidate can file a complaint. It should include an indication of the timeframe within which the complainant will receive a response, which should, in principle, be no longer than one month.

V Additional information and notes

In case the preparation and publication of job advertisements for researchers and the researcher selection process at UM and its faculties derogates due to justified reasons (e.g. regulations applicable to funders, internal rules and regulations, other written rules) from provisions laid down in these Instructions, principles of OTM-R, and the Charter & Code, all derogations shall be duly and promptly recorded and notified to the HR Management Committee of UM at hrs4r@um.si. Derogations shall be notified to the Committee no later than at the time of the Committee's continuous (semi)annual monitoring of the implementation of principles in order to ensure due preparation of remedial measures.

Rector of the University of Maribor

Prof. dr. Igor Tičar