CREAF's
OTM-R policy

This document describes CREAF's OTM-R policy and explains, in chronological order, information on the three phases of the recruitment process: (1) advertising and application phase, (2) evaluation and selection phase and (3) appointment phase. In line with the HR Excellence in Research Award our OTM-R policy aims to build on the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

This policy will be applied to all CREAF regular staff positions beyond research positions (technical staff, research management staff, etc.).

There are two specific cases that deserve particular attention:

- job positions awarded through public competitive calls: the recruitment process will be conducted by the specific funding body (MINECO, European Commission ,etc.).

- job positions linked to a particular funded project: the recruitment process will be conducted by the principle investigator of the project and thus, regular training on OTM-R will be offered to them.

The People Management Department will be responsible for monitoring the advertising and application phase (1) as well as the appointment phase (3) to ensure a quality control system for OTM-R in place. The monitoring of the evaluation and selection phase (2) and the overall policy coordination will be carried out by the Talent and Gender officer. Regular audit of administrative procedures by Public Administration (Board of Trustees) and periodic assessment of the CERCA institution (to which CREAF belongs) will also contribute to ensure correct policy compliance.

1. Advertising and application phase

Responsible: People Management Department

1.1 Advertising the post

In line with the principles "Open" and "Transparency" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, vacancies will be regularly posted by People Management Office at the specific job advert section on the CREAF webpage (for both local and international calls), EURAXESS portal (for international calls) and over different widely accessible media (Twitter, newsletter, etc.) to ensure reaching to a wide audience. Job vacancies of researcher positions will be always published in English.

We will keep the job advertisement and description of requirements as concise as possible and include links to more detailed information online. The following information will always be provided:

- organization and recruiting unit

- job title, tasks and tentative starting date

- number of available positions

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- researcher career profiles with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' competencies as defined by the European Framework for Research Careers1

- selection criteria and their respective 'weight'

- the application procedure and deadline (as a general rule, at least one-two months since the publication date).

- contact details

- working conditions, workplace, entitlements (salary, other benefits, etc.), type of contract

- career development prospects

- a reference to the institution's OTM-R policy

- a reference to CREAF's Gender Equality Plan and stating that woman and other minorities underrepresented in academia are specially welcome.

All vacancies will be written without gender bias.

The People Management Department will provide standardised online templates for job advertising (with mandatory fields containing the aforementioned job specifications and details) in order to ensure a quality control and transparency in the advertising process and to keep administrative burden to a minimum.

1.2. Keeping the administrative burden to a minimum

The request for supporting documents will be strictly limited to those which are really needed in order to make a fair, transparent and merit-based selection process. In cases where certain documents are legally required, applicants will be allowed to make a declaration in which they commit to provide them as proof after the selection process. Supporting documents will be sent by electronic means as specified by the People Management Department.

1.3. Acknowledging receipt and providing additional information

All applicants will receive an e-mail by the People Management Department (or message in case of filling out a form) acknowledging that their application has been received and providing them with further information on the recruitment process, indicating the next steps and including an indicative timetable. Moreover, the definitive list of applicants who have been admitted to or excluded from the selection process will be published on the website following data protection standards.

Within the constraints given by the information included in the CVs, the People Management Department is committed to aiming for an anonymous selection process.

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2. Evaluation and selection phase

Responsible: Talent and Gender Officer

2.1. Setting up selection committees

In line with the principle "Selection" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, selection committees will be established for all profiles. The size and composition of the committees may differ according to the profile and type of contract. In all cases, the process to nominate and appoint the selection committee will be transparent and made public on the job board offer, clearly stating the criteria that have been followed. Selection committee criteria will be determined by the Management Team and the Scientific Board for academic positions, by the Severo Ochoa Panel and the Scientific Board for positions under the Severo Ochoa project, and finally by the Management Team for positions regarding technical staff.

All committee members will have relevant experience, qualifications and competencies to assess the candidates and they will evaluate them based on clear selection criteria. All committee members will adhere to the principles of impartiality and will sign a declaration of honour to this fact. Members with a conflict of interest of any kind with candidates will be substituted by an alternative member of the evaluation committee whenever possible or, in all cases, committee members will not take part in a decision in which they have a conflict of interest. Conflicts of interest will include members with a close personal relationship with de candidate, members that have supervised the candidate's thesis, members that are from the same research group at the moment of the selection process, members with common research interests with the candidate (e.g. co-supervision of a thesis).

Training in bias in evaluation and selection procedures will be offered on a yearly basis to all CREAF staff (and thus potential members of selection committees). A video on Recruitment Bias in Research Institutes created by the Catalan Research Centres Institute (CERCA) will be shown immediately before each call deliberation.

In order to achieve a diverse composition of the committee, and thus minimize potential bias, the following elements will be considered:

- A minimum gender balance will be set, specifically, at least one person of each gender in committees formed by 3 people and a minimum gender balance of 40/60 in committees formed by more than 3 people.

- Whenever appropriate and feasible, selection committees will include external experts from outside the institution and/or experts from different sectors (public, private, academic, non-academic).

- When appropriate, selection committees will include international experts (CREAF Scientific Advisory Board or others)

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2.2 Assessing merit and future potential

As a general rule, the evaluation of candidates will be blind in order to avoid unconscious bias. However, in order to avoid vertical segregation in academic careers, positive action (legally defined as action to make education or employment available to members of groups who have traditionally been treated unfairly) could be decided to ensure gender-equal opportunities in those positions where clear gender inequality exist within the Centre.

The criteria for selecting researchers will focus on both the candidates' past performance and their future potential. Depending on the specific profile, future potential will be measured through a research plan and/or interview phase according to CREAF's specific selection protocols published on the website.

In line with the principal "Judging merit" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, merit will be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, although research quality (by criteria such as innovation, originality and methodological rigor, etc.) will be prioritized over quantity (such as bibliometric indices).

A wide range of evaluation criteria will be used and balanced, according to the position being advertised. Selection criteria will be defined and published using inclusive language, the reviewing process will be data-driven, and the interviews structured to avoid bias.

If appropriate, positive action will be used to ensure gender-equal opportunities. This action will be particularly relevant in leading job vacancies to avoid vertical segregation in academic careers.

According to the principle "Variations in the chronological order of CVs" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, merits will be weighted taking into account career breaks and thus, periods of inactivity in research (e.g., unemployment, periods of employment outside research, parental or long-term sick leave) will not count towards the time of research experience.

Depending on the specific profile and in order to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate, selection criteria (in alphabetical order, not importance) in a research position (R1-R4 Euraxes profiles) may include:

- acquisition of funding (number of successful and non-successful applications and applied funding)

- generation of societal impact (research results that led to changes or were incorporated in management plans, programs or strategies, research results and knowledge informed or influenced decision or policy making processes, research included in impact case studies, research developed through citizen science or participatory projects, etc.)

- international portfolio

- knowledge transfer and exchange

- leadership (leadership in projects and contracts, team building and management of research and innovation

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- mobility and networking (stages in other centres, participation in international workshops and work teams, representation in scientific and/or academic societies or institutions, etc.)

- organizational skills/experience (Involvement in collective actions (e.g. Centre Strategic Plans, Cross-cutting projects, Event (congresses and workshops) organization)

- outreach/public awareness activities

- scientific production (number of citations, quality of most relevant publications, SCI Q1 articles, invited conferences, participation in research projects, communications in congresses and workshops, etc.)

- supervision and mentoring (PhD and MSC supervision, supervision of other academic works)

- teaching

Relevant transversal skills such as communication or diversity-sensitive leadership skills or the ability to integrate gender aspects into research and teaching, will be explicitly stated in the job description and weighted in a gender-balanced way.

The question of whether the proposed set of evaluation criteria is gender-balanced should be discussed, and the opinion of a gender officer on proposed sets of criteria should be invited.

Only the agreed criteria will have an impact on the decision and will be weighted equally for every candidate.

3. Appointment phase

Responsible: People Management Department

3.1 Feedback

In line with the principle "Transparency" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, all applicants will receive notice by the People Management Department within one month of the end of the selection process.

In case the selection process includes an interview phase, all candidates that were admitted to that phase will be informed about the strengths and weaknesses of their application.

3.2 Complaints mechanism

All vacancies will clearly establish and publish in the advertising post the procedure to deal with complaints made by applicants indicating the timeframe within which a complainant will receive a response which will be always under one month.

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4. Overall assessment

Responsible: HRS4R Working Group coordinated by the Talent and Gender Officer

In order to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives an OTM-R commission coordinated by CREAF Talent and Gender Officer will be created. This commission will be responsible for reviewing the various life cycle processes of CREAF research staff with the aim of making improvements and ensuring that the procedures comply with the specifications of the OTM-R system.

A yearly report will be published in CREAF webpage showing the following Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) among other relevant information:

(1) Advertising and application phase

- Ratio of applicants from outside the organization in CREAF calls.

- Ratio of women/racial or other minorities' applicants in CREAF calls.

- Number of job offers where positive actions in terms of gender-equality have been applied.

(2) Evaluation and selection phase

- Training courses within CREAF Training Program for OTM-R processes (courses carried out, number of hours).

- Number of staff following training in OTM-R.

- Overall rate of the satisfaction survey on training courses regarding OTM-R policy

- Gender ratio on the composition of panels.

- % interviews with feedback.

- % selection committees with external experts.

- Ratio of selected applicants from outside the organization in CREAF calls.

- Ratio of women/racial or other minorities' selected applicants in CREAF calls.

(3) Appointment phase

- Proportion of complaints made that have been dealt with.

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