

## SELECTION PROCEDURE FOR POSTDOCTORAL RESEARCH STAFF CONTRACTED USING EXTERNAL FUNDING FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES OR UNIVERSITY OF BARCELONA POLICY FUNDING

### Introduction

On 26 June 2020, the University of Barcelona's Governing Council approved the [Principles of the Open, Transparent and Merit-based Human Resources Recruitment Policy \(OTM-R\)](#), as part of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R). In this way, it fulfilled the commitments made when it signed the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

These principles commit the institution to the requirements of publication, free competition, merit and capacity, transparency, rendering of accounts, non-discrimination and respect for the legal provisions and calls for applications of funding entities regarding contracting mechanisms for positions ranging from trainee predoctoral researchers (R1) to consolidated permanent researchers (R4).

This document describes the procedure that must be followed to select postdoctoral researchers (category or level R2 in European nomenclature) financed through project funds; research, innovation or transfer contracts; external programmes for a specific purpose; or University of Barcelona policy financing.

It includes postdoctoral researchers hired with funds from the net profits of research transfer centres or resources that institutes or centres could obtain through external agreements or funds associated with the research programme contracts of institutes or centres.

### Units of reference

#### For aspects relating to the call for applications for the selection process:

- The centres' General Affairs Offices (OAGs)
- The International Research Projects Office (OPIR), in the case of selection procedures in which the source of funding is managed by this office.

#### For aspects relating to formalization of the contract:

- Academic Staff (access unit).
- The centres' General Affairs Offices (OAGs)

### Types of procedure: ordinary or simplified

There are two types of selection procedure: **ordinary** and **simplified**.

To hire postdoctoral researchers, the **ordinary** procedure must be followed unless one of the circumstances occurs that enables a simplified procedure to be carried out.

The **simplified** procedure is used for reasons of urgency, for example the withdrawal of a researcher who has already been hired or any other sudden circumstance that makes immediate hiring

necessary. In all cases, the simplified procedure requires the express authorisation of the office of the vice-rector for research.

The simplified procedure requires offers to be published on the Euraxess portal and for there to be an open selection procedure.

The criteria indicated in this document must be met for a simplified procedure to be used in a selection process. Evidence that the criteria have been met must be provided at the start of the process and monitoring of the requirements must be demonstrated.

## **Ordinary selection procedure**

### **1. Start**

The principal investigator (hereafter PI) of the project or the research, innovation or transfer grant must provide information through its cost centre on the funding available to hire postdoctoral researchers, with the costs covered by the funds allocated to their research project, research grant, innovation or transfer agreement, research programme contract of their institute or centre and, in general, any source of funding that enables this kind of hiring process.

The cost centre must ask the relevant unit for an estimate of the cost of the contract: total pay, social security payments and other concepts (such as the amount of compensation if it is a work and services contract, reserves to pay the increments in the consumer price index, three-yearly increments, etc.), if necessary.

### **2. Registration and approval of the cost**

If the project, grant, agreement or similar has sufficient funding to cover the cost of the contract and the PI has approved, the relevant cost centre reserves the necessary credit to cover the total expected cost of the contract (total pay, social security payments and other concepts, if necessary). If the postdoctoral researcher is to be hired through the UB but the cost is covered by a project whose funds are provided by the Bosch i Gimpera Foundation, the required amount must be transferred to the UB before the necessary credit is reserved.

Then, confirmation of the credit reservation must be processed in the OAG of the relevant centre to inform the head/director of the department/institute that the selection process can be started through the corresponding public call for applications.

### **3. Call for applications for the selection of postdoctoral researchers**

The PI must complete the terms and conditions of the call for applications ([Appendix 1](#)) with the data required to announce the selection process, the details of the selection process and the recruitment sources in which the job offer will be published, which must include Euraxess (or an equivalent) and the UB E-Office, which is the official place for publication for calculating deadlines and other administrative conditions.

The terms and conditions must indicate whether the selection process will take place through the ordinary or simplified procedure, the job start date and any other information that is considered relevant (type of contract, duration, time commitment, salary, etc.).

Below are the requirements that must be defined in the terms and conditions of the call for applications, which candidates must meet and prove:

- Submit a CV indicating research experience in the relevant field.
- Submit a motivation letter.

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- Hold a doctoral degree certificate when the contract is formalized. Candidates whose qualification was issued outside Spain must ensure that the doctoral degree has been officially recognized (*homologado*) as equivalent to the Spanish qualification or provide certification of equivalence issued by the Doctoral School of the University of Barcelona.
- Candidates from non-EU countries and all those who do not fall within the scope of international treaties signed by the European Union and ratified by the Government of Spain must have valid work and residence permits before the contract can be signed.
- Meet all other requirements stated in the conditions of the call for applications.

Calls for applications could stipulate that candidates must provide in their application the contact details of people who can be asked for references or reports (the data provided will be confidential).

If any documentation is missing, candidates will be given a period of ten working days to amend the application. The submission of documentation proving merits to assess is the responsibility of the candidate.

The call for applications must establish the general criteria for assessing the candidates and must state the weighting attributed to each criteria and the minimum score to pass the selection process.

The head/director of the department/research institute to which the PI of the project, grant or agreement is attached or associated approves the conditions of the call for applications for the selection process, which must be adapted to the standardised model in the appendix of this procedure.

In the case of contracts funded through research institutes' research programme contracts, the conditions of the call for applications are approved by the director of the research institute.

The terms and conditions and the document confirming the budget availability must be sent to the OAG, which prepares the resolution of the call for applications and publishes it on the UB E-Office and in all the places indicated in the terms and conditions.

#### **4. Appointment of the Selection Committee and assessment criteria**

The conditions of the call for applications for the selection process must include the composition of the Selection Committee, which must be comprised of:

- A researcher appointed by the head/director of the department/research institute, who acts as chair.
- The PI of the project or research grant used to fund the contract, who acts as secretary.
- A second researcher assigned to the research project or research grant used to fund the contract or, where this is not possible, with experience in the relevant research area.

Wherever possible, the composition of the Selection Committee must guarantee gender diversity and the gender perspective must be considered in applying the assessment criteria. In addition, it must be public information and must be defined for each job offer depending on the category and characteristics of the position. The Selection Committee guarantees proper assessment of all candidates' academic, research and professional qualifications, and international and professional mobility.

The assessment criteria must be public information and consistent with the requirements of the job that is offered.

The OAG prepares the appointment of each member of the Selection Committee according to the model in [Appendix 2](#). The head/director of the department/institute signs the appointments, the OAG communicates them to the members of the Selection Committee and publishes them.

## **5. Publication of the call for applications for the selection of postdoctoral research staff**

The OAG publishes the call for applications for the selection process, along with the corresponding terms and conditions and the application form.

All publications are made on the UB E-Office. Publication of the call on the UB E-Office shall be considered due notification of interested parties, as established in articles 45 and 46 of Law 39/2015, of 1 October, on common administrative procedure in public administrations. Consequently, from this point, the administrative periods begin to be counted. However, the call must also be published on the Euraxess portal (or similar) and additionally at the address <https://www.ub.edu/portaltreball/> and on other noticeboards.

## **6. Submission of applications**

People interested in taking part in the selection process must formalise their application using the application form ([Appendix 3](#)) that is attached to the call for applications.

The documentation must be submitted through the means indicated in the call, within the established period. Candidates must submit a signed application accompanied by the documentation indicated in the terms and conditions of the call for applications.

Documents certifying the qualification and work permits will be requested once the selection has been made and only from the successful candidate.

Consequently, the submission of an application by a candidate implies that they comply with all requirements, under their responsibility, and accept the obligation to submit documentation proving compliance, in accordance with the above conditions.

The period for submitting applications is established in the terms and conditions of the call for applications and is between ten and twenty working days from the day after publication of the call on the UB E-Office.

## **7. Admission to selection process**

All candidates are accepted in the selection procedure, by resolution of the contracting body, without checking the veracity of submitted documentation or compliance with requirements, except for the essential documentation (CV and motivation letter). The call must be specified that only the successful candidate is checked for compliance with requirements before the contract is signed.

Candidates are responsible for the veracity, accuracy and suitability of the information submitted in the application and in the curriculum. Only one application per candidate will be accepted. If more than one application is received from the same candidate, only the last documentation received is considered valid.

If some of the essential documentation (CV and motivation letter) is missing, candidates have ten working days to amend their application, which is published on the E-Office. The candidate is entirely responsible for submitting documentation proving their merits that must be assessed. Candidates who do not amend or rectify the error or omission in documentation within the indicated period will be permanently excluded from the call for applications.

The list of accepted candidates is published on the UB E-Office.

## **8. Preparation of documentation for the Selection Committee**

The OAG prepares an (electronic or printed, as required) file for each Selection Committee with the following content:

- conditions of the call for applications;
- composition of the Selection Committee;
- template for the Selection Committees's meeting minutes ([Appendix 4](#)) and template for the justified contract award proposal ([Appendix 5](#)), and
- applications and supporting documentation submitted by the candidates.

## **9. Evaluation and selection**

For the constitution of the Selection Committee to be valid, all its members must be present in person or online.

The Selection Committee must assess each application in accordance with the general criteria stated in the terms and conditions of the call and draw up an assessment report ([Appendix 4](#)) signed by all its members that must contain at least the following information:

- total number of candidates who submitted applications and the number who meet the requirements of the call's terms and conditions, and
- a ranked candidate shortlist, in which each candidate is identified with their name and surname (from higher to lower score) and their total score. The shortlist contains all candidates who have reached the minimum score established in the terms and conditions of the call.

The Selection Committee shall also write the contract award proposal ([Appendix 5](#)), signed by all of its members. This document must contain the name and surname(s) of the successful candidate and the ranked candidate shortlist with an indication of the total scores received by the candidates, who are identified with their name and surname(s).

## **10. Publication and notification of resolution**

Within two months from the date of announcing the call for applications, the OAG publishes the contract award proposal ([Appendix 5](#)).

The proposal is published on the UB E-Office, and within five working days, the OAG informs the candidate with the highest score that they have been awarded the place, and indicates the deadline for accepting or rejecting the offer. This period must not exceed ten working days and may be reduced to five working days in exceptional circumstances.

If the successful candidate does not accept the offer within the indicated period, the contracting body publishes a notice ([Appendix 6](#)) stating that this candidate has rejected the offer. The next candidate is proposed according to the ranked candidate shortlist, in the order agreed by the Selection Committee. Then, the next candidate is notified of the job offer.

Once the offer has been accepted, the successful candidate has up to three months from the date on which the contract award proposal is published to submit the supporting documentation, sign the contract and take up the position. If the winning candidate does not sign the contract in the established period for reasons directly attributable to this person, the contracting body publishes a notice stating that the candidate has rejected the job offer. The person is notified. In accordance with

the above procedure, the candidates on the ranked shortlist are informed of the job offer, following the established order.

The period for signing the contract and starting work at the University must take into consideration the fact that non-EU nationals and candidates who do not fall within the scope of international treaties operated by the European Union and ratified by Spain must hold a valid work and residency permit by the time the corresponding contracts are due to be signed. As such, the contracting body may extend the period for signing the contract in these cases, as well as in any other duly substantiated circumstances. In all cases, the deadline for formalizing the contract and taking up the position in question is six months from the date of publication of the contract award proposal.

The contract must establish the start date. In no case can this be later than the dates and deadlines set out in the above paragraphs and specified in the terms and conditions of the call for applications, funding entity or funding agreement permitting.

#### **11. Preparation of the contract, submission of the documentation and signature**

The OAG draws up the contract using the model and conditions established by the Academic Staff service. The contract must be for a minimum of three months and a maximum of four years. According to the instructions of the Academic Staff service, the OAG informs the successful candidate of the documentation that he/she must submit to process the contract.

The OAG prepares the documentation described below and carries out procedures for the successful candidate to sign:

- income tax data form
- personal details form
- UB card application

#### **12. Submission of the contract and documentation**

In accordance with the instructions for hiring Academic Staff, the OAG sends copies of the contract and the award documentation to the UB Academic Staff unit to manage the salary and social security registration. All other documentation pertaining to the selection process is stored by the General Affairs Office.

#### **13. Review of contract and documentation**

The Academic Staff service reviews the contract data and the submitted documentation. If it detects the need for amendments, the documentation is returned to the OAG for rectification.

#### **14. Formalization of contract**

If everything is correct, the successful candidate and the vice-rector responsible for teaching staff, on behalf of the rector, formalises the signature of the contract. In addition, the Academic Staff service registers the contracted person with social security, records the data in the Perseu application to process the salary and communicates electronically the content of the contract to the public employment office.

### **15. Submission of the contract**

The Academic Staff service sends the OAG a copy of the contract that is then sent to the contracted candidate.

### **16. Processing the end of the contract**

To process the end of the contract, the OAG will deliver to the contracted person at least fifteen days before the end of the contract a letter communicating the termination of the contract (original and copy).

The head/director of the department/institute and the PI must ensure that the contracted candidate has taken any holidays they are due before the end of the contract. In any case, at the end of the contract, the person must be paid for any holidays that they have not taken. This cost is covered by the corresponding project.

The contracted candidate keeps the original of the termination of contract letter and signs the copy that they return to the OAG.

### **17. Processing of a contract extension**

The contract can be extended by the period established in the call, as long as this is in accordance with the limits associated with the type of contract that needs to be used. Extensions are for periods of at least three months, as indicated in the call.

Through the relevant cost centre, the PI of the project or research grant provides information on the amount of funding available to extend the contract. If funding is available, the PI requests a contract extension and the relevant cost centre reserves the credit for the total expected amount (total pay, social security payments and other concepts, if applicable).

To sign contract extensions, the OAG must process confirmation that the corresponding credit has been reserved, issued by the relevant cost centre, to fund the full cost of the contract extension.

The OAG starts the procedure to process the contract extension.

### **18. Suspension of calculation of contract duration**

Situations of temporary incapacity, risk during pregnancy, maternity, adoption or fostering, risk during breastfeeding and paternity or any other situation that is established in the call for applications or applies according to the type of contract, are excluded from calculation of the contract duration. The OAG processes the corresponding contract extension considering the suspended days and sends the following documentation to the Academic Staff service:

- a letter signed by the interested person requesting an extension due to the calculation of days that the person has been on leave, and
- the extension of the contract corresponding to the period of suspension.

The call for applications must indicate that the cost of any extension due to the situations described in this section are covered by the corresponding project.

**Simplified selection procedure** (no announcement in the UB's E-Office)

A **simplified** procedure is established that enables postdoctoral research staff to be selected in urgent situations or in other circumstances:

- if a postdoctoral researcher withdraws who has already been hired under the same project, grant, agreement or similar with which the contract is funded, or
- for a justified need, given the start and end date of the project, grant, agreement or similar with which the contract is funded, among other reasons.

In addition, in the case of the simplified procedure, compliance must be ensured with the principles of transparency, merit and competition that have been adopted by the University of Barcelona as part of HRS4R. The essential requirements that enable these principles to be implemented are widespread publication of the offer, transparent criteria and public knowledge of the composition of the Selection Committee, which must make a direct proposal of staff provision.

In the case of the simplified procedure, neither the call for applications nor any subsequent procedure need to be published on the UB E-Office. However, at the start of selection processes under this procedure, it must be indicated in the conditions of the call for applications that the necessary information shall be provided to prove that the aforementioned principles are met throughout the procedure, in particular in relation to publication of the job offer. This must be published on the Euraxess portal and through other channels that will be selected according to the nature of the job offer, if necessary. The PI is in charge of publication in these other channels. In the case of the simplified procedure, the relevant vice-rector must authorise the terms and conditions and characteristics of the call for applications ([Appendix 1](#)), once they have been approved by the head/director of the UB department/research institute.

Once the authorisation of the relevant vice-rector has been obtained, the ordinary procedure is followed in all aspects that do not contradict what is stipulated in this document. The rest of the applicable provisions continue to be valid, particularly those that establish a sufficiently long publication period and facilitate the submission of expressions of interest by potential candidates.

The documentation indicated in the corresponding appendices must be drawn up for the simplified procedure, considering the following important aspects:

- The call for applications must be published on the Euraxess portal for at least ten working days from the day after its announcement, and the terms and general criteria that applicants must meet must be clearly indicated, in accordance with point 3.
- The Selection Committee is appointed according to [Appendix 2](#).
- Candidates must submit the documentation through the means indicated in the call, within the established period. Optionally, the application could be accompanied by [Appendix 3](#), which is provided as a model for guidance.
- The proposal of direct provision of the place corresponds to the Selection Committee, comprised of the members indicated in the ordinary procedure. It is the responsibility of the Selection Committee, with the administrative support of the OAG, to guarantee the principles of publicity, competition and transparency in the selection process, according to the best practices accepted internationally in the corresponding area of knowledge. The Selection Committee is also responsible, with the support of the OAG, for communicating with candidates by electronic means and maintaining a record of this communication.
- The Selection Committee chooses a candidate, draws up the ranked candidate shortlist and writes a report ([Appendix 4](#)). Then, it draws up the contract award proposal ([Appendix 5](#)), which must contain the name and surname(s) of the successful candidate and the ranked candidate shortlist, with the total scores obtained by the candidates, their names and surnames. The report and the contract award proposal do not need to be published on any portal.



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- Within five working days, the OAG informs the selected candidate of the existence of an offer from the University of Barcelona, and indicates the deadline for accepting or rejecting the offer.
- The period established to accept or reject the offer can be no longer than ten working days, reduced to five in the case of an urgent selection procedure. If the successful candidate withdraws, the order established in the shortlist is followed and the contracting body issues a resolution ([Appendix 6](#)) with the name of the person who is finally selected.
- Once a person has been selected, the relevant OAG gets in touch with the Academic Staff service to process the documentation required to draw up the contract.

The rest of the points in the procedure are of general application.

#### **Final provisions**

1. The start of the procedure on the basis of the project that has been awarded but still does not have available credit requires processing to determine the University budget execution terms.
2. The procedures established by the Doctoral School are followed regarding the acceptance of doctoral degree certificates obtained in institutions in other countries.
3. Direct hiring (with no selection process) is allowed when a European or international research project is moved and this move implies the hiring of a postdoctoral researcher who was previously contracted by another institution, in which the regulations of publication and competition were followed. The European Union enables these staff to be kept on at the new institution without having to repeat the selection process.
4. This procedure comes into force immediately after approval by the Governing Council. Procedures that on the date of approval of this procedure are at the stage of a published offer or a subsequent stage can continue in the modality with which they were started.
5. In the case of a postdoctoral researcher selection process in which the source of funding is managed by the OPIR, this office shall carry out all tasks relating to the call for applications for the selection process.