

# **University of Rijeka**

**Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of  
Researchers (OTM-R)**

## **Policy Proposal**

**By**

**The OPERATIONAL GROUP FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF EU  
INITIATIVE "HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS"  
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA  
(HRS4R-OG)**

**July 2020**

## Contents

<b>Foreword</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>The policy proposal for the OTM-R of the University of Rijeka</b> .....	<b>4</b>
1. Introduction.....	4
2. Advertising and application.....	5
APPLICATION PROCEDURE.....	7
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RECEIPT AND COMMUNICATION WITH APPLICANTS .....	7
3. Evaluation and selection .....	8
TRANSPARENCY, EQUALITY, INCLUSION, AND MERIT.....	8
LANGUAGE REQUIREMENTS.....	8
EVALUATION COMMITTEES .....	9
ASSESSING MERIT.....	9
APPOINTMENT .....	10
COMPLAINTS MECHANISM .....	10
4. Contact .....	10

## Foreword

The second section of this document contains a policy proposal for the *Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers* (OTM-R) at the University of Rijeka. The proposal has been written by the UNIRI Operational Group for Implementation of the EU initiative "The human resources strategy for researchers" (HRS4R-OG) that was formed by the Rector of the University of Rijeka prof. dr. sc. Snježana Prijić-Samaržija with the decision of the 12<sup>th</sup> November 2019 (KLASA: 003-01/19-01/55, URBROJ: 2170-57-01-19-1).

The proposal has been elaborated by considering the EU guidelines for *Human resources strategy for researches* (EU n.d.), the *OTM-R* guideline (EU 2015), good practises in universities in the EU countries and the national and EU regulative frameworks.

Please note that the following text is written as a statement of the UNIRI OTM-R policy in the form, that, in accordance with the EU guidelines for HRS4R, should be publicly available in the webpages of the University and address possible job candidates and all those interested in the recruiting policies of the University of Rijeka.

This format has been adopted assuming that it will allow a more expedite elaboration, through the different stages of discussion and amendments by the relevant decisional bodies of the University of Rijeka, of the final policy document.

Thus, all the policy statements, although they are formulated as they would appear in a final policy document, are, of course, to be understood as suggestion submitted for discussion by the HRS4R-OG.

Some of the policy suggestions require creating online materials and acquiring or developing dedicated software. These requirements are expressed in commentaries between parentheses and underlined, that are not intended to be part of the final text of the OTM-R policy to be made available online.

To support the process of evaluation of the proposal, is the attachment and the references include a collection of relevant Croatian legislation.

## References

European Union. n.d. *The European Charter for Researchers. The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*. <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/charter/code> .

European Union 2015. *Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers OTM-R*. <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/content/open-transparent-and-merit-based-recruitment-researchers-otm-r>.

Relevant legislation of the Republic of Croatia. [UNIRI Sharepoint HRS4R-GO](#) (Accessible only to UNIRI staff)

# The policy proposal for the OTM-R of the University of Rijeka

## 1. Introduction

The University of Rijeka is the first university in Croatia and one of the first ten in Europe to have signed “The European Charter for Researchers” and “The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”, thereby accepting the initiative of the European Commission, which in 2005 adopted these documents with the aim of increasing employability and promoting careers in research as vital to economic growth, employment, and the setting up of a European research area. We were, what is more, the first to sign the Charter for participation in the European Commission’s Group for Human Resources Strategy Implementation.

By signing the above-mentioned charters, we have committed ourselves to implementing these documents at the University of Rijeka, which is a strategic goal included also in the University of Rijeka Strategy. The “Strategy of Human Resources in Research” project was adopted at University’s Senate meeting in October 2009, while the survey report, internal analysis, and activity report (Human Resources Strategy for Researchers) (HRS4R) were adopted at the Senate’s meeting in June 2010. In July 2010, the University of Rijeka received a formal acknowledgement by EC and the ‘HR Excellence in research’ logo. Thanks to the visit and encouraging assessment by the renewal phase commission for HRS4R in 2019, the University of Rijeka has developed and implemented its HRS4R policy further.

In line with the Code of Conduct for Researchers, the University of Rijeka is committed to ensuring that recruitment and selection procedures are fair and transparent. Furthermore, the researcher’s merit should be measured not only by their publications, but also by a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as education and teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, international mobility experience, and public awareness-raising activities.

There are three main phases in the recruitment process at the University of Rijeka

(The HRS4R-OG proposes this subdivision of the recruiting process to keep in line with relevant HRS4R documents and practice of other universities that implement it).:

- advertising and application,
- evaluation and selection,
- appointment.

## **2. Advertising and application**

The University of Rijeka is a public university. All research positions are advertised through official and public channels. A national regulatory framework determines their terms and conditions.

In accordance with national legislation, research contracts funded by projects, teacher and researcher positions with civil service status are advertised in the Croatian Official Gazette (*Narodne novine*), webpages and newspapers in accordance with the law. In addition, all the calls for position of the University of Rijeka are available in a dedicated centralised website of UNIRI (The HRS4R-OG proposes that these webpages should be created).

The units within the University that issue calls for positions add the job adverts in the centralised repository of UNIRI for advertising positions. All the calls for jobs at the University of Rijeka are also advertised in English through the EURAXESS job portal ([Euraxess Rijeka](#)).

The offers of employment should as a rule include the following details:

1. organisation and recruiting unit,
2. job title, specifications of the position, and starting date,
3. researcher career profiles (specified in accordance of the R1-R4 nomenclature) with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' competencies,<sup>1</sup>
4. selection criteria (and possibly their respective 'weight' or significance), including knowledge and professional experience (distinguishing the 'required' and 'desirable' criteria),
5. number of available positions,

---

<sup>1</sup> It is strongly recommended that in all job offers at the University of Rijeka it is used the European Framework for Research Careers 20, which identifies both necessary and desirable competences for each of the four broad profiles for researchers (R1 to R4).

6. working conditions, workplace, entitlements, with an indication of the approximate salary in Croatian kunas and Euros and indicative table with the costs of living (purchase power parity),<sup>2</sup>
7. type of contract,
8. professional development opportunities,
9. career development prospects,
10. while the application procedure and deadline must by law be 30 days minimum in duration, unless there are practical reasons (as for replacing sudden leaves during teaching period), it is recommended that the period extend at least two months from the publication date and take account of non-working days or holiday periods  
(The HRS4R-OG would like to note that the character of the employment procedure should be taken into account. If the employment in a public service is considered to be an administrative matter, we do not have any discretion in excluding holidays from the course of a deadline, as the Law on General Administrative Procedure provides that neither holidays nor other non-working days "shall not affect the beginning or the course of a deadline". The Constitutional Court recently found that public service employment may be considered an administrative matter:  
[https://sljeme.usud.hr/Usud/Praksaw.nsf/C12570D30061CE54C12584D9003ACEF3/\\$FILE/U-III-4016-2015.pdf](https://sljeme.usud.hr/Usud/Praksaw.nsf/C12570D30061CE54C12584D9003ACEF3/$FILE/U-III-4016-2015.pdf) . Having said this, the University and its constituents could be recommended to provide for a longer deadline in cases where its course overlaps).
11. information about the selection process,
12. contact details.

It is recommended that the description of condition 6 above should mention when it is appropriate:

- possible fiscal advantages,
- distribution of teaching, research, and administration load associate to the position,
- possibility for doctoral students (also those from abroad) to work and have other student rights (accommodation, university canteen etc.),

---

<sup>2</sup> Purchasing power parity is an economic term for measuring costs of living at different locations

- application of positive measures when appropriate: such as, for example, encouraging and positively promoting female candidates or candidates with disabilities.

The University of Rijeka does not stipulate any specific requirements regarding the nationality or country of residence of the applicants. However, in line with the current legislation, the eligibility of non-EU citizens will be subject to the Croatian law.

The UNIRI keeps, in the webpage where positions are advertised, an updated list of links to documents in Croatian and English concerning:

- institutional and national legal requirements that are relevant for the announced job positions (e.g. national and institutional regulations concerning career advancement)
- equal opportunities policies (e.g., positive discrimination, dual careers, etc.).

(The HRS4R-OG, proposes to render available online the relevant documentation, if it is not and to translate it):

#### *1.1.1 Application procedure*

E-administration tools and processes are used to reduce the administrative burden for applicants. (The HRS4R-OG proposes that UNIRI develops a dedicate software for a platform for e-application to calls for positions).

Applications can either be submitted in person, online or by ordinary post.

Original documents and qualifications are only requested in the appointment phase, while copies of original documents, with a self-certification on the veracity of the information in the application, may be provided in previous phases of the procedure. This includes, for applicants who have foreign education qualifications, the proceeding of recognition of the degree by the [Agency for science and higher education](#).

#### *1.1.2 Acknowledgement of receipt and communication with applicants*

Applicants will be notified via email about receipt of the application submission and informed about the schedule of the selection process.

Once receipt has been acknowledged and compliance with the minimum requirements has been verified, the University will inform the candidates who have been admitted to the selection process, as well as those who are required to rectify or correct information in their application for



it be accepted (e.g. given that the information is incomplete or inaccurate). Candidates in this latter situation will be informed as to why their application has been excluded and will be given a deadline to make the necessary modifications.

Applicants must only be excluded from participating in a call if they do not meet the minimum requirements set out in the call.

To ensure transparency, the name, and the resume of the chosen (or appointed) candidate should be published on the website of the University of Rijeka.

### **3. Evaluation and selection**

#### *1.1.3 Transparency, equality, inclusion, and merit*

UNIRI is committed to keep the criteria associated to job positions as inclusive as possible considering the legal and job requirements.

To recruit the best candidate, the selection process must always be fair, transparent and respect merit, ability, equal opportunity, and non-discrimination based on gender; nationality; ethnic or social background; disability; age; religion; sexual orientation; political opinions or their socioeconomic situation. Career breaks, sabbaticals, maternity, or paternity leaves, etc. will not be penalised. (to add that deadlines should be prolonged or the period of leaves for female candidates)

UNIRI supports pro-active elements for inclusive policies as provided by the law.

#### *1.1.4 Language requirements*

If the knowledge of Croatian is a job requirement, for example due to research, teaching or administrative duties related to the position, this must be specified in the call for the relevant position. Thus, unless otherwise specified, job positions at UNIRI are open to applicants who do not know Croatian and know English.

Given its strong commitment at internationalisation, whenever it is compatible with the law and is feasible, UNIRI supports the use of English for internal communication amongst teaching, research, administrative staff, and students.

#### *1.1.5 Evaluation committees*

The size and composition of each committee tends to vary in accordance with the profile and type of contract or post on offer. The proceedings of the selection or evaluation procedure will be transparent and corresponding to the conditions of the call for applications.

The committee will comprise at least three experts in the relevant knowledge areas whose academic qualifications are on a par with those required for the position on offer, or superior. The committee members will be nominated by the relevant institution within the university (Faculty, Department etc,) by means of democratic voting within the relevant body.

To safeguard objectivity, external experts commonly feature in evaluation and selection committees.

The committee should possess the relevant experience, qualifications and skills required to effectively assess candidates. They should operate independently, must declare any conflict of interest, and their decisions should be impartial and based on evidence rather than on personal preference.

Each member of the committee must confirm that they have read the [University of Rijeka Code of Ethics](#), especially the sections pertaining to conflicts of interest and sign a statement of lack of conflict of interests. Diversity and gender awareness are fundamental throughout the entire recruitment process. Gender balance is sought in appointing the members of the evaluation and selection committees as well.

#### *1.1.6 Assessing merit*

The specific evaluation criteria to be used are included in the corresponding call for applications. The committee will consider the applicant's academic record as a primary criterion. These criteria typically include the candidate's research curriculum vitae, professional experience, and specific training related to the position. All applications are pre-screened to check their eligibility (see the "Acknowledgement of receipt" section of this document).

The UNIRI supports the use of interviews or talks with the presentation of research whenever it is possible.

Additionally, sufficient time should be allowed before the interview for external candidates to make the necessary arrangements and prepare properly for the interview. In accordance with the

candidates and committees' preferences, the interview could be done via online conferencing tools or onsite. If there are subsequently significant changes or delays to this process, all applicants should be duly and timely informed by (a standard) e-mail.

Applicants who are selected out of the provisional list of eligible candidates may be called for a remote or face-to-face interview.

Whenever possible, the same evaluation committee will be involved in all the steps of the evaluation process.

#### *1.1.7 Appointment*

The definitive scores obtained by each candidate in the evaluation and appointment process will also be made available to the candidates in the internal repository of the University of Rijeka.

The University of Rijeka offers all its employees working conditions that are in line with national legislation in the Republic of Croatia, including full Social Security coverage. It also provides research staff with the technical resources they require to conduct their teaching and research activities.

Furthermore, the UNIRI is fully committed to the principles established in the European Charter for Researchers, adopting measures to ensure staff members have a healthy work-life balance, sufficient holiday leave, and sufficient support in the event of temporary disability.

#### *1.1.8 Complaints mechanism*

The University of Rijeka has a reliable and transparent complaint procedure in place for applicants who believe they have been treated unfairly or inappropriately.

In accordance with the relevant institutional rules and national legislation, a candidate can complain to the competent body of the institution. The competent body will objectively address all the complaints of the candidate.

## **4. Contact**

The University of Rijeka recognises the importance of continuously updating and improving our recruitment procedures and human resources strategy. If you have any queries or suggestions regarding the University of Rijeka's OTM-R Policy, please contact: [HRS4R@uniri.hr](mailto:HRS4R@uniri.hr) (The HRS4R-OG proposes the creation of this email address and assigning its management to Human resources or other relevant administrative unit)