

POLICY OF OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS

I INTRODUCTION	1
II OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY.....	2
III BASIC PRINCIPLES	3
Criteria of research staff recruitment	3
Working conditions	4
IFJ PAN’s scientific categories	4
IV RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR RESEARCH STAFF	4
1. Advertising and application phase.....	5
2. Evaluation and selection phase.....	6
3. Appointment phase.....	9
V COMPLAINTS MECHANISM	9
VI QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM	9

I INTRODUCTION

On the 20th April 2015, the Director of the Henryk Niewodniczanski Institute of Nuclear Physics Polish Academy of Sciences (IFJ PAN) signed the Declaration of Commitment on the Adoption of the European Charter for Researchers and on Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

In 2017, the Institute gained the HR Excellence in Research Award in recognition of the IFJ PAN’s ongoing commitment to adopt the principles of The European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

Open, transparent and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R) is one of the pillars of the European Charter for Researchers and, in particular, of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. OTM-R is an important component of the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), which supports research institutions and funding organisations to put the policies and principles of the Charter & Code into practice.

OTM-R ensures that the best person for the job is recruited, guarantees equal opportunities and access for all, facilitates developing an international portfolio (cooperation, competition, mobility) and makes research careers more attractive.

The focus of an OTM-R system is on ensuring that institutions always aim that all recruitment procedures are based on principles of equal opportunities for all candidates (including internal and external).

Pursuant to provisions of the Declaration, the IFJ PAN hereby adopts the following POLICY OF OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS.

II OBJECTIVE OF THE POLICY

The Institute's OTM-R process objective is to attract and retain top-ranking scientists and promising researchers and keeping an attractive working environment. IFJ PAN is aware that open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers increases the appeal of careers in research, ensures equal opportunities for all candidates and promotes mobility.

In drafting these Instructions, IFJ PAN 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 IFJ PAN refers to all researchers irrespective of their career stage (including early stage researchers, postdoctoral fellows, etc.) and/or their role and position at the IFJ PAN. 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, providing more detailed information on the recruitment process for researchers and the various steps, from the job advertising/application phase through to the appointment phase.

The IFJ PAN's OTM-R policy aims to encourage, in particular, external applicants by:

- a) providing clear and transparent information on the overall selection process, including selection criteria and an indicative timetable;
- b) posting a clear and concise job advertisement or with links to detailed information on, for example, required competencies and duties, working conditions, entitlements, training opportunities, career development, gender equality policies, etc.;
- c) ensuring that the levels of qualifications and competencies required are in line with the needs of the position and not set as a barrier to entry, e.g., too restrictive and/or requiring unnecessary qualifications;
- d) considering the inclusion of explicit pro-active elements for underrepresented groups;
- e) keeping the administrative burden for the candidate (proof of qualifications, translations, number of copies required, etc.) to a minimum;
- f) reviewing, where appropriate, the institutional policy on languages.

The Institute is aware that OTM-R is a condition precedent for strengthening its competitive position and excellence. The IFJ PAN is therefore committed to increasing the appeal of careers in research, promoting inter-sectoral, geographic, interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and virtual mobility, as well as mobility of researchers between the public and private sector, as one of the means of improving scientific discoveries and the career development.

The IFJ PAN is committed to implementing the non-discrimination principle and principle of equal treatment of candidates and staff.

The IFJ PAN is committed to continuing the integration of the principle of gender balance, in particular with regard to selection procedures, the composition of selection committees and decision-making bodies, recruitment, training, promotions, salaries and working conditions.

III BASIC PRINCIPLES

Faithful to the commitment of the IFJ PAN to the Human Resources Strategy of the EU, the procedures applied for selecting and hiring personnel are governed by a set of basic principles that guarantee all persons equal access to employment in accordance with the constitutional principles of equality, merit and ability, while respecting the Polish (Labor Code, The Constitution for Science, Act on Polish Academy of Sciences, etc.) and international regulations in this area, specifically the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (C&C).

Criteria of research staff recruitment

Recruitment of staff of all categories is done through a competitive selection process to which the following criteria apply:

a) **Publishing:** Information about the open vacancies is published on the Institute's website. The job offers must include a broad description of the knowledge and competencies required, state the specific title of the position offered, the main functions to be performed, the criteria applied for evaluating the applications, and the deadline for application.

b) **Transparency:** The published job offers shall define the minimum requirements and evaluation criteria, and the relative importance of each of the requirements.

c) **Equality:** The job offer must ensure that no applicant is excluded, except when the requirements outlined in the offer itself are not met. All applications fulfilling the application requirements are reviewed, by not discriminating in any way the applicants' gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion, beliefs, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic status.

d) **Merit and ability:** The selection must be based on the evaluation of the CVs using predefined evaluation templates, scoring scale, interviews or any other system to ensure the objectivity of the process. Career interruptions or chronological variations of curriculum vitae are not penalized, but are considered as part of professional evolution and, therefore, as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers towards a multidimensional career path.

Working conditions

The Institute offers its employees working conditions in line with the Polish labor law and the principles of the C&C, with full social security coverage and the modern technologies to carry out high-quality research or technical activities. The IFJ PAN is committed to ensuring proper working conditions that allow for high quality and efficient performance of researchers and their well-being at work, ensuring that researchers are able to balance professional and family life, and striving for the stability of employment. The IFJ PAN provides its employees with lifelong training opportunities and opportunities to strengthen skills and competencies.

IFJ PAN's scientific categories

IFJ PAN's scientific positions are divided into two big categories, Senior level positions, and Junior level positions. The description of each category is explained in the table below (Table 1).

Senior level scientific positions:

- Professor • institute's professor • Associate professor **(R3-R4)**.

Junior level scientific positions:

- Postdoctoral researcher (adjunct) • Research assistant **(R1-R2)**

IV RECRUITMENT PROCESS FOR RESEARCH STAFF

There are three phases to IFJ PAN's recruitment process for research staff:

1. Advertising and application phase.
2. Evaluation and selection phase.
3. Appointment phase.

If you have any questions about IFJ PAN's OTM-R policy or any other HR Research policies please contact The Personnel Department at jobs@ifj.edu.pl.

1. Advertising and application phase

The job offer must be aligned with the Institute's Strategy and IFJ PAN must ensure that counts with the economic resources, facilities or any other resource to guarantee the successful integration of the researcher in our Institute.

The deadline for the submission of applications: there should be at least a 1-month time limit for the submission of applications, as this will make it possible for a wide group of potential candidates to become familiar with the notice and properly prepare their applications along with a complete set of the documents required.

Appointment profile: The appropriate advertising strategy and deadlines for the different stages of the recruitment process are drawn up together with the Personnel Department. When preparing new recruitment, the head of department needs to prepare a draft appointment profile where specific duties and specific requirements in terms of assessment criteria are outlined.

Announcement: Decisions on announcing a vacancy are made by the Director.

All vacancies for research staff positions are being advertised both internally and externally. The job advertisement shall be published at:

- the Employment Service of the Ministry of Higher Education and Science,
- Euraxess Jobs portal
- Institute's website (in Polish and English)

IFJ PAN can extend the publication to other sources such as ScienceCareers.eu, AcademicPositions.eu, InSpire, etc. The appointment profile determines the way in which the advert is worded. When advertising, target group and budget is taken into account.

For foreign candidates, job advertisements shall also contain information on conditions of employment and work at IFJ PAN, and reference to matters candidates need to take care of prior to recruitment, to ease the transition of selected candidates into a new living and working environment.

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

- a) Organisation and recruiting unit;
- b) Job title, specifications and starting date;
- c) Researcher career profiles (early to experienced R1-R4) with the respective 'required' and 'desirable' competencies;
- d) Selection criteria, including knowledge and professional experience (distinguishing the 'required' and 'desirable');

- e) Number of available positions;
- f) Working conditions, workplace, entitlements (salary, other benefits, etc.), type of contract;
- g) Professional development opportunities; but can be discussed in the interview stage or post the appointment stage;
- h) Career development prospects;
- i) The application procedure and deadline;
- j) Reference to the institute's OTM-R policy;
- k) Reference to the institute's equal opportunities;
- l) Reference to the contact person competent to provide information on the vacancy.

Each candidate shall receive a note acknowledging the receipt of his or her application. All candidates will receive an email informing them of the various stages of the process.

2. Evaluation and selection phase

a) Selection committee

The selection committees should be established for all profiles (R1-R4), though the size and composition of the committees may differ according to the profile and type of contract, as explained in Table 2. The main selection committee has fixed members. There are also the committees appointed in relation to particular job competition within external funds.

The size and composition of committees may differ, however, the following elements should be considered:

- a minimum of 3 members;
- independent;
- members should not have any conflict of interest;
- gender balance, if possible;
- the relevant experience, qualifications, and competencies to assess the candidate;
- the awareness of the HRS4R and OTM-R principles.

IFJ PAN is obligated to provide selection committee members with appropriate training and ensure conditions for committee members to attend relevant training. The Selection Committee ensures the appropriate assessment and evaluation of academic and professional qualifications, including non-official qualifications, especially in the context of international and professional mobility.

Their decisions must be objective and evidence-based rather than based on personal preference.

Full information on the presently acting IFJ PAN's Selection Committees can be found at the Institute's web page.

b) Candidate evaluation and interviews

Depending on the number of applicants, the process may involve one or more steps, e.g., pre-screening to check eligibility, shortlisting of candidates for interviews, remote interviews by telephone or skype, face-to-face interviews. The process itself is transparent and made known to the applicants, including the various steps. The entire evaluation procedure shall be conducted in accordance with the principle of equal opportunities for all candidates who are subject to assessment. All applications are screened. The committee establishes which applications are complete and have arrived on time; makes a list of candidates who fulfil the formal conditions and whose applications have arrived on time and are complete; organizes interviews with the candidates and conducts them in order to check their knowledge and skills.

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

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

Evaluation of achievements

The evaluation criteria should be consistent with the requirements of the position as regards research, supervision or teaching competencies. The criteria for selecting researchers should focus on both the candidates' past performance and their potential.

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.

The selection procedure is competitive and consists of two phases: first, assessment of the merits based on the application, and second, an evaluation of the skills based on personal interview. The second phase will not be necessary if the selection committee considers.

Merit Assessment Phase:

Each offer establishes the minimum score in the first phase to access to the second one. The maximum score that can be awarded is the sum of the points obtained in each of the merits evaluated according to the offer's criteria.

For the selection of university graduates with a PhD degree or an MSc degree or equivalent, and of undergraduates with a BSc degree or equivalent, who are to carry out research, the application and curriculum vitae must be supplied together with the relevant documentary evidence, as well as letters of recommendation from researchers to enable evaluation of:

- the research career in the specialization area of the post;
- the scientific and/or technological contributions made;
- the active collaboration with research groups;
- the experience or stays in international research centres;
- the experience in organizing and managing research.

Judging merit

The selection process takes into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. While focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence are also considered. This means that merit is judged focusing on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications, taking into account career breaks, lifelong professional development and the added value of non-research experience. Teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management of research and innovation and public awareness activities are also taken into account. Candidates from an industrial background receive particular attention.

Recognition of mobility experience

Any mobility experience, e.g. a stay in another country/region or in another research setting (public or private) or a change from one discipline or sector to another, whether as part of the initial research training or at a later stage of the research career, or virtual mobility experience, are considered as a valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher.

Skills Assessment Phase and interview

This will take place in Polish or English, and will focus on any aspect related to the curriculum of the applicant and the post to be assumed. Interview questions should be connected to the appointment profile and the duties involved with the aim of determining whether the candidate has the competence and skills required for the position announced.

During the interview, the candidate's competence should be assessed as objectively as possible. An evaluation of whether the person in question matches the requirements and expectations of the Institute as a whole should also be made. The selection committee may seek to obtain any clarifications concerning the alleged merits it considers relevant or the appropriate presentations or seminars.

Candidates may submit photocopies of all documents during the selection phase, and the original documents will only be required when being selected and prior to the formalization of the contract. The request for supporting documents should be strictly limited to those, which are really needed in order to make a fair, transparent and merit-based selection of the applicants. Moreover, in cases where certain documents are legally required, applicants should be allowed to make a declaration in which they engage to provide the proof after the selection process is concluded.

3. Appointment phase

In-line with the principle of "Transparency" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, all applicants receive written or electronic notice at the end of the selection process, indicatively within one month and without any unnecessary delays.

All applicants who were admitted to the interview are informed about the strengths and weaknesses of their application.

Other applicants, who did not make it to the final stages, receive a standard mail informing them of the outcome. All applicants are entitled to further feedback upon request.

The date of announcing the competition results

The competition notice should indicate the expected date for the results of the competition to be announced. This time limit should be so evaluated as to ensure that the competition procedures are conducted in a proper and reliable manner, including potential interviews with candidates and consultation of experts.

V COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

After the result of the recruitment process, all candidates are given a 14-day deadline for filing a complaint. The IFJ PAN have established a procedure to deal with complaints made by applicants who believe that they have been treated negligently, unfairly or incorrectly.

VI QUALITY CONTROL SYSTEM

The Institute identified measurements of the effectiveness of the OTM-R Policy and they are reviewed on the regular basis. IFJ PAN has established a quality control mechanism, including supervision of the whole recruitment process, to be administered by the HR department or designated staff. It is combined with a periodical review. To monitor and assess the extent to which the OTM-R system is being implemented, IFJ PAN has adopted some forms of internal reporting for all phases of the recruitment process.

Table 1

Scientific categories				
Position	Level	Education	Requirements	Main duties and responsibilities
Junior level				
Research assistant	R1	MSc, MA, MTech	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline. • Knowledge of research processes, methods and techniques. • Capability of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas, and ability to produce scientific results under supervision. • High language and communication skills, especially in an international context. • Knowledge of English language allowing presentation at conferences and preparation of scientific articles. • Working towards a higher research degree. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist an individual research leader or team to conduct a particular study. • Conduct literature and database searches and interpret and present the findings of the literature searches as appropriate. • Plan and manage own day-to-day research activity within the framework of the agreed project. • Support and co-supervise the work of undergraduate students. • Continue to update knowledge and develop skills with the aim of achieving excellence. • Attend and contribute to relevant meetings/conferences. • Participate in outreach activities.
Postdoctoral researcher (adjunct)	R2	Doctoral degree	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possession of sufficient breadth or depth of specialist knowledge in the discipline and of research methods and techniques. • Ability of critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas to create new ways of understanding. • Desire to pursue an academic career. • High communication skills with the wider community, about their areas of expertise. • Be able to develop and maintain effective relationships with colleagues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct individual and/or collaborative research projects in a variety of settings; determine appropriate methodologies for research under general guidance of a member of the staff or Principal Investigator/ Project Leader. • Develop their research skills and independence. • Present information on research progress and outcomes at local group meetings, workshops, conferences. • Write up results from own research activity, prepare scientific articles.

Table 1

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be able to work in a collaborative environment. • Have a broad awareness and knowledge of key relevant funding sources and grant application procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep up to date with research related methods and techniques, in particular, developments in the specific research area. • May identify sources of funding and pursue the process of securing funds. • Mentoring First Stage Researchers (R1), helping them to be more effective and successful in their research, supervise bachelor and master theses, act as a co-supervisor of PhD theses. • Participate in outreach activities.
Senior level				
Institute's professor	R3	<p>habilitated degree or the academic title of professor</p> <hr/> <p>Doctoral degree (if permanent residence abroad)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possess sufficient specialist knowledge in the discipline to i) develop research programmes and methodologies, ii) to act in a leadership role. • Possess an established reputation based on research excellence in their field, as demonstrated by publication record, invited plenary conference presentations and other scientific achievements. • Excellent skills to provide high quality research-based teaching and thesis supervision. • Significant organizational achievements, including management of or participation in the implementation of research projects. • International visibility, successfully initiating and leading research projects. • Commitment to professional development of the own career. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define research objectives and carry out original and significant research, which supports research activity in the Institute. • Develop methods and techniques appropriate to the type of research pursued that add to the intellectual understanding of the field. • Decide on research programmes and methodologies, often in collaboration with colleagues. • Contribute to the dissemination of research findings as appropriate to the discipline in high quality/impact peer reviewed publications, conference presentations, knowledge share events. • Input into identifying and securing research funding of a large scale. • Organize and conduct meetings, workshops, conferences. • Supervise the work of students e.g., PhD Students where possible. • Provide expert advice on research issues to research fellows and other colleagues.

Table 1

				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer review manuscripts for publication and/or research bids.
Professor	R4	Academic title of professor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An established international reputation for the quality of their research work, based on research excellence in their field. • Outstanding research achievements and successes in academic work. • Extensive experience of initiating, designing and implementing research projects. • Possess sufficient specialist knowledge in the discipline to act as a research leader and to be able to manage major projects. • Ability to provide high-level research-based teaching and guidance. • Evidence of national and international cooperation in the respective field of research. • A proven record in securing significant research funding / budgets / resources. • Serves on workshop and conference organizing committees and delivers invited talks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Define research objectives and carry out substantive, original and top-level research, which supports research activity in the Institute. • Develop methods and techniques appropriate to the type of research pursued that add to the intellectual understanding of the field. • Play a leading role in national/international collaborative research projects. • Publish and present influential papers and books. • Contribute to major research grant applications to support research projects. • Attract through reputation sources of income as appropriate. • Play a leadership role in mentoring junior colleagues and co-ordinating the work of research staff. • Make a significant contribution to the institute's research reputation. • Contribute to the development of research strategies within Research Institute. • Peer review manuscripts for publication and/or research bids. • Help to create opportunities for their junior researchers, advising them on possible sources of research funding, providing expert advice on their projects, and generally overseeing the development of their careers. • Take the executive and administrative assignments at the IFJ. • Where appropriate, develop relations with public.

Selection committees for scientific positions

position	type	Selection committee	
		size	composition
Research assistant	statutory fund	8	Heads of Scientific Divisions and Cyclotron Centre Bronowice and Chairman of Scientific Council (RN) or a member of the RN Board appointed by Chairman
	External funds	3	Head of the Project, a person appointed by Head of the Project and representative of General Director
Postdoctoral researcher (adjunct)	statutory fund	8	Heads of Scientific Divisions and Cyclotron Centre Bronowice and Chairman of Scientific Council (RN) or a member of the RN Board appointed by Chairman
	External funds	3	Head of the Project, a person appointed by Head of the Project and representative of General Director
Institute's professor/ associate professor	statutory fund	3	Head of the Division, representative of Scientific Council and representative of General Director
	External funds	3	Head of the Project, a person appointed by Head of the Project and representative of General Director
professor	statutory fund	3	Head of the Division, representative of Scientific Council and representative of General Director
	External funds	3	Head of the Project, a person appointed by Head of the Project and representative of General Director