



Policy of Transilvania University of Brasov on open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers

Preamble

In 2021, Transilvania University of Brasov (UNITBV) adhered to the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers¹. UNITBV is committed to the implementation of the "HR Strategy for Researchers - HRS4R" - an approach based on the continuous evaluation of the implementation of the 40 principles of the European Charter and Code for Researchers. In 2023 UNITBV received the "HR Excellence in Research Award" certification from the European Commission, which is both a recognition of the progress made in the implementation of the 40 principles and a commitment to continue and expand its efforts to align itself with the European standards of good practice.

The policy of Transilvania University of Brasov on the *Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers* (OTM-R) aims to create the institutional framework for the efficient implementation of the recruitment, selection and integration of researchers. Recruitment is the process of attracting the most suitable candidates for vacant positions, while selection aims at choosing the best candidate, ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment of all applicants. The integration process for new staff aims to familiarise researchers with the new team, the values, principles and formal or informal rules of the University.

„Open” recruitment refers to ensuring that the recruitment message is visible both internally and in the public space and that information on vacancies is communicated through channels commonly used by researchers (such as the Euraxess online platform). **Transparency** refers to ensuring access to information, both internally, but especially to ensuring that those outside the organisation have access to internal procedures and rules. **Merit-based selection** is defined in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers as follows: "The selection process should take into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. While focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence should also be considered. This means that merit should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications" (p.25).

The principles governing the recruitment and selection processes at Transilvania University of Brasov are:

- ▣ transparency of recruitment and selection processes, by providing clear, easily accessible information that promotes equal opportunities;
- ▣ using a mix of communication channels to advertise vacancies, ensuring maximum visibility among potential candidates;

¹ https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/sites/default/files/brochures/am509774cee_en_e4.pdf

- ▣ the use of concise and clear recruitment advertisements, including references to materials offering detailed information;
- ▣ the use of selection criteria that allow the best candidate to be selected, according to the needs of the organisation and the level of the job;
- ▣ keeping administrative demands to a minimum;
- ▣ ensuring gender equality at all stages of recruitment and selection;
- ▣ regularly updating internal methodologies and regulations to increase inclusiveness and promote internationalisation in recruitment and selection processes.

Transilvania University of Brasov is a public law institution, and the filling of vacant research positions is carried out through competition, according to national legislation and its own regulations, methodologies and procedures. In accordance with national legislative requirements and internal regulations, this document consolidates the institutional framework necessary to apply the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, in three defining process sequences:

- 1) the stage of vacancy announcement and the receipt of applications;
- 2) the evaluation and selection stage;
- 3) the hiring stage.

The stage of vacancy announcement and the receipt of applications

In accordance with the national legislation and its own methodology, vacant research positions at Transilvania University of Brasov are filled through competition. Announcements for research vacancies are published through various communication channels: the University's website, the Official Journal of Romania, dedicated national platforms (e.g., <http://jobs.edu.ro>; <https://jobs.research.gov.ro>); national newspapers, Euraxess platform, institutional social media accounts, etc. In addition, announcements for Research Scientists Grade II and Grade I (*Established Researcher - R3* and *Leading Researcher R4*) are published both in Romanian and English. Recruitment notices shall contain at least the following information:

- ▣ the name of the employer and of the structure in which the vacancy exists;
- ▣ job title and level, number of vacancies and starting date;
- ▣ competition calendar;
- ▣ the job requirements and the skills needed;
- ▣ selection criteria, highlighting mandatory knowledge and experience and desirable requirements (highlighting the weighting of each selection criterion where appropriate);
- ▣ the duration of the individual employment contract (fixed-term or indefinite) and the duration of the working time (full-time or part-time);
- ▣ pay levels;
- ▣ the procedure for applying for the competition and the closing date for applications;
- ▣ contact details for further information.

The following information shall be included into recruitment notices:

- ▣ working conditions and other benefits;

- ▣ training and career development opportunities;
- ▣ the university's policy on open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers;
- ▣ the university's policy on equal opportunities (e.g. Gender Equality Plan).

Transilvania University of Brasov aims to gradually implement the following best practice rules:

- ✓ publication of all research vacancies on the Euraxess platform;
- ✓ publication of all vacancy notices in Romanian and in English or another language of international circulation;
- ✓ setting the closing date for applications at a minimum of two months after the publication of the recruitment notice, taking holidays into account and in compliance with the applicable legislation;
- ✓ keeping administrative demands to a minimum, while respecting the legislation in force. Whenever possible, candidates will be allowed to submit certain documents after the selection process has been completed, on the basis of a written undertaking and with the assumption that the application will be disqualified if the mandatory requirements are not met.
- ✓ facilitating the submission of the application by electronic means;
- ✓ communicating with candidates during the recruitment and selection process by electronic means (email, dedicated platform, etc.): confirming the receipt of applications, informing candidates of the stages and timetable of the competition, informing candidates of any changes or delays, etc.

Evaluation and selection

Selection panels are established in a transparent manner, in accordance with the applicable legal framework and depending on the type and level of the vacancy (e.g. fixed-term jobs funded from research grant/project budgets, indefinite period jobs funded from the state budget, research assistant or senior researcher posts, etc.). The following guiding principles underpin the determination of the composition of the selection boards:

- ▣ the expertise, qualifications and experience of the members of the selection panels;
- ▣ independence of evaluators and absence of conflicts of interest;
- ▣ ensuring gender equality in the composition of panels, taking into account the specific constraints and limitations of certain sectors;
- ▣ the inclusion, whenever possible, of experts from outside the university and in particular international experts;
- ▣ inclusion of experts from different sectors: public, private, academic, industry, etc., in committees where possible and appropriate.

Verification of compliance with the legal conditions for participation in the competition is carried out in a transparent manner, with candidates being informed of each stage of the selection process. The following principles guide the **evaluation of applications**:

- ▣ assessment, depending on job level, of both the performance and expertise and the potential of the candidates;
- ▣ the use of both quantitative and qualitative criteria;

- use of a balanced mix of criteria, in line with the specifics of the job and the tasks required, which may include: attracting research funding, research performance, coordination and mentoring, technology transfer, research management, international experience, community impact generation and collaboration with industry, teamwork, teaching experience, etc.
- use of European tools and frameworks to identify the necessary and desirable competences (e.g. European Competence Framework for Researchers - ResearchComp, European Framework for Research Careers).

Hiring

Candidates will be informed of the results of the selection process within the time limit specified in the competition timetable, usually by publication on the University's website, in accordance with the applicable rules on the protection of personal data. All competitions within the University have a mechanism for managing appeals; candidates are informed of the deadline for submitting appeals, how to submit them and the deadline for publishing the results of appeals.

The gradual integration of the following best practices into the feedback process and the integration phase is supported:

- providing individualised feedback to all successful candidates in the final selection stage, detailing the strengths and weaknesses of the application;
- facilitating the integration of new employees by developing a procedure detailing the main steps, the persons responsible, the flow of documents as well as the actions necessary to acquaint new staff to the rules, values and principles governing the work of the academic community of Brasov.

The application of the provisions of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and the respect of the principles set out in the OTM-R Policy is a strategic approach taken institutionally by the University management involving the entire academic community. Transilvania University of Brasov aims to improve research performance, increase internationalisation by attracting researchers from abroad, ensure a better balance between quantitative and qualitative criteria in the evaluation of research results and develop a working environment that is both competitive and inclusive.

These Policy of Transilvania University of Brasov on open, transparent and merit-based recruitment of researchers were approved in the meeting of Transilvania University Senate of Braşov on 29.09.2023.

Prof. Dr. Eng. Mircea Horia Țierean,
President of Transilvania University Senate of Braşov

