



**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI  
DELL'INSUBRIA**



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

**UNIVERSITY OF INSUBRIA**

**OTM-R POLICY**

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

**2021**



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## **1. Preface and general conditions**

In 2019, the University of Insubria received the European Commission's Human Resources Excellence in Research Award for its on-going commitment to participating in the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) process for the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers in its policies and practices.

This award will increase the international profile of the University and attract researchers from abroad, offering them a favorable working environment. It will also enhance international cooperation and support researchers' proposals to international funding organizations.

Since February 2019 our Institution has been actively pursuing the implementation of the Action Plan with 20 specific actions aimed at filling the gaps which were identified in the preliminary phase of the HRS4R process (gap analysis), which also included Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) aspects.

We are currently at the stage of conducting an internal self-assessment process aimed at verifying the state of the actions and developing an improved version of our HR Strategy with an updated Action Plan for the next 3 years.

In this context, taking inspiration from the hints contained in the European document "Report of the Working group of the Steering group of Human Resources management under the European research area on OTM Recruitment (July 2015)", the University of Insubria has been improving its procedures and practices and implementing its own OTM-R policy, which is described in this document.

The implementation of a human resources strategy for researchers has been acknowledged as a milestone in the University Strategic Plan 2019-2024 and this OTM-R policy, together with other recruitment strategies and policies described in the strategic document, aims at improving the quality and reputation of our Institution as well as enhancing researchers' careers and mobility.

As part of the strategy to guarantee the academic community the best conditions to accomplish their duties in the fields of training new generations of students and producing outstanding research results, the University of Insubria is committed to anchor the recruitment of researchers at all levels of experience on open, transparent and merit-based procedures. A first step towards this goal was taken by the Governing Bodies of the University of Insubria with the approval in October 2020 of a new version of the Code of Ethics, Professional Conduct and Research Integrity.

This policy is therefore intended to provide the guidelines that must be followed at each stage of the recruitment process for the recruitment of researchers, namely:

1. Selection call and Application.
2. Evaluation and Selection.
3. Appointment.

The document published by the European Commission in 2011 "Towards a European

Framework for Research Careers" identifies the following 4 main profiles, which are used in the frame of HRS4R and in this document:

- R1: First Stage Researcher (prior to PhD - PhD students)
- R2: Recognized Researcher (PhD holders or equivalent researchers who are not yet fully independent – research fellows)
- R3: Established Researcher (researchers who have developed a level of independence - fixed-time junior and senior researchers)
- R4: Leading Researcher (researchers leading their research area or field – associate and full professors)

## 2. Selection call and applications

Public universities, such as the University of Insubria, openly publish the regulations determining the terms and conditions of the recruitment procedures, in compliance with Italian employment legislation. Regulations are fully accessible in Italian at the following URL: <https://www.uninsubria.it/statuto-e-regolamenti>. An extract from the regulations on researchers recruitment, is now available in English at the following URL: <https://www.uninsubria.eu/research/era-researchers-recruitment>.

All research position announcements are published on the Ministry of Education, University and Research website (<https://bandi.miur.it/>), on the University website and on the EURAXESS job portal. The announcement for R1, R3 and R4 are published also on the Italian Official Gazette (GUI). All calls for R1, R2, R3 and R4 positions may be found on the University website in Italian <https://www.uninsubria.it/concorsi> and in English <https://www.uninsubria.eu/contests>. To attract excellent candidates also from foreign countries, all calls are also published on the Euraxess portal (<https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/>).

Considering that the whole set of employment conditions being offered to applicants represents a key element of attractiveness, in accordance with open and transparent recruitment practices, all selection calls must include the following information:

- description of the specific role, its functions and duties
- duration of the contract (and whether it is full-time or part-time etc.)
- minimum requirements and skills (including language requirements, if necessary), not too specific (otherwise it could discourage participation)
- application procedure, rules, opening date and deadlines
- selection criteria including score determination (specifically for R1 and R2 positions, for R3 and R4, according to the national legislation, these are defined by

the Selection Committee during a preliminary meeting and are promptly published on the web page of the selection)

- work placement in terms of department, university branch and building
- type of contract and salary (specifically for R1 and R2 positions, while for R3 and R4 these are regulated by national laws). However, the web page <https://www.uninsubria.eu/research/era-researchers-recruitment> provides information on gross salary

In order to reduce the administrative burden for applicants, applications at all levels of qualification (R1-R4) should be submitted through the on-line portals (<https://idp.uninsubria.it/idp/profile/SAML2/Redirect/SSO?execution=e1s2> for R1; <https://pica.cineca.it/uninsubria/> for R2, R3 and R4) with no fees.

All documents should be produced as scanned copies and uploaded to the application portal. The original documents will have to be produced only in the appointment phase.

An Administrative Procedure Referee (RPA) is appointed for all recruitment procedures; their names and contact details should be clearly provided in the call.

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

Transparency and openness of all the selection phases is mandatory to guarantee that the best candidate for the job is recruited.

For all selection procedures remote interview protocols have been implemented, in order to maximize the openness of the procedure and facilitate candidates' participation regardless of their region or country of residence.

All phases of the selection procedure will be published on the University website together with a list of the candidates who were selected in the different phases of the process.

Evaluation committees are implemented on the basis of national legislation and of the University's regulations that identify the specific criteria for their composition, on the basis of quality standards. The committees are nominated by a Rectoral decree and are published on the University website at the URL of the related selection procedure. The committee will comprise at least three experts, some external, in the relevant knowledge areas, who hold academic qualifications of the same or higher level as those required for the position on offer. Gender balance in the composition of committees is mandatory for R3 and R4 positions and this obligation has been recently extended to R1 and

R2 positions with the approval of the updated regulations. However, data confirm that compliance with gender balance was an already established practice also for R1 and R2 selections.

Any connections between candidates and evaluators will be checked by the Administrative Procedure Referee (RPA) and the candidates' identities will be made public only after the nomination of the committee and, in the case of procedures for R3 and R4 positions, after the preliminary meeting of the committee when evaluation criteria are defined (*vide supra*).

A recent update of the internal regulations for the recruitment of R3 and R4 positions states that part of the selection committee should be selected on the basis of a list of different names, in accordance with recent ministerial guidelines and the principles contained in the European Charter and Code.

Details on the composition of Selection Committees are included in the regulations published at the following url: <https://www.uninsubria.eu/research/era-researchers-recruitment>.

The committees should operate independently, must declare any conflict of interest, and their decisions should be impartial and based on evidence rather than on personal preference. The committee members will be supplied with a committee-kit containing all pro-forma reports, relevant national legislation and University regulations, and the Code of Ethics, Professional Conduct and Research Integrity.

The specific evaluation criteria and their relative weights should be included in the corresponding call for applications (R1 and R2) or made public after the preliminary meeting of the selection committee (R3 and R4, *vide supra*).

The administrative offices will give all their support in arranging the assessment scheme for a correct evaluation, which will be included in the selection tool kit.

Once verified that applicants meet the requirements for the applications, assessment criteria normally include the evaluation of the applicant's CVs, their professional experience, research publications and training activities, and specific training. Expertise is generally more deeply examined during the interviews, when provided for.

#### **4. Appointment phase**

A final report containing the final rankings and the selected candidates will be made public on the University website within the deadline established, in order to guarantee transparency and the possibility to complain or appeal.

Detailed reports for the different phases of the selection can be accessed upon written request. The procedure can be found on the University website (<https://www.unin-subria.it/servizi/diritto-di-accesso>). Some information is also available in English at this url: <https://www.uninsubria.eu/research/era-researchers-recruitment>.

Applicants who believe to have been treated inappropriately can retrieve all the information they need in order to clarify their position and eventually act.

#### **5. Action to be developed**

In an effort to continuously improve the Human Resources Strategy, particularly as far as recruitment procedures are concerned, and in consideration of the actions that need to be completed, the University of Insubria will focus in the next three years (2021-2024) on the following measures:

- Development of a Gender Equality Plan, in line with the objectives of the Horizon Europe program, which consist in monitoring gender balance, setting specific actions and providing training within the University
- Realization, monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the Training Plan of Researchers
- Increasing the quality of the information in English regarding recruitment procedures and employment (i.e. more detailed information on selection announcements on the Euraxess website), but also providing more specific information on the research carried out by the researchers working at the University of Insubria, with the aim of fostering international collaboration

#### **Contacts:**

For more information or any other requests please contact [hrs4r@uninsubria.it](mailto:hrs4r@uninsubria.it)