

HRS4R - Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

Working Paper for the Development and Implementation of an Open, Transparent, and Merit-Based Recruitment (OTM-R) of Researchers at the University of Bremen

With the "European Charter for Researchers" and the "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers"¹, the European Commission has created a framework to improve the working conditions of researchers in Europe. The University of Bremen uses the initiative established by the EU towards its own "Human Resources Strategy for Researchers" (HRS4R).

The university aims towards establishing HRS4R to shape the further development and learning processes as a scientific institution in a structured, responsible manner and in a participatory process together with scientists at all career levels. A central topic is the open, transparent and merit-based recruitment (OTM-R) of personnel in science (R1-R4)².

Development of an own OTM-R strategy

The University of Bremen intends to review the existing procedures for personnel recruitment with regard to the OTM-R principles and to develop and implement targeted actions for optimization. By personnel recruitment we understand selection up to successful hiring. A procedure according to OTM-R at the University of Bremen should ensure the following points:

- A fair and transparent personnel recruitment procedure is ensured.
- Jobs are advertised externally/internationally (internationally if the job profile allows it).
- The EURAXESS portal is used for job advertisements.
- Applicants are provided with all necessary information in the job advertisement (e. g. selection criteria and procedure, remuneration, duration, job share, place of work, contact person).
- Required qualifications are commensurate with the content and duties of the position.
- Individuals from underrepresented groups are strongly encouraged to apply.
- Selection decisions are made by an independent selection committee according to OTM-R principles.
- All applicants will be informed of the outcome of the selection process.
- Candidates to be hired will be informed of the terms and conditions of employment in a timely manner prior to signing a contract.

¹ Both documents can be downloaded here: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/useful-information/brochures>

² The EU defines four research profiles R1 to R4: R1="First stage researcher up to PhD": R2 = „Recognized“ researchers: PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent: R3 = Established researchers (who have developed a level of independence); R4= „Leading researchers (leading their research area of field“. For further information see: <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/career-development/training-researchers/research-profiles-descriptors>. These four profiles are very diverse at the University of Bremen, for details see HRS4R-report which can be downloaded here: <https://www.uni-bremen.de/wissenschaftliche-karriere/hrs4r>

Implementation to date during the initial phase

The University of Bremen is already implementing personnel recruitment according to OTM-R criteria in the job categories R3 and R4, for example for professorships (including tenure-track professorships) and for the newly created personnel categories (Senior) Researcher and (Senior) Lecturer. Extensive material (guidelines, handouts, templates) has already been made available to the faculties for this purpose and is being applied.

In the course of the HRS4R process, all procedures are continuously reviewed and, if necessary, expanded. The strong diversification of job categories in science at the University of Bremen is taken into account as well as the different disciplinary cultures. Common to all subject cultures at the University of Bremen is that research and teaching are closely connected, also in the recruitment of scientists. For the University of Bremen, this means that a "researcher" is a scientist with responsibilities in both research *and* teaching.

Recruiting personnel also includes clarifying in due time the steps leading up to employment as well as the possibilities of continued employment for scientists employed on a temporary basis during the qualification phase. Transparency and appreciation are the guiding principles here.

Next steps in the implementation phase (2022-2023)

- Review current policies, procedures, and processes related to OTM-R.
- Create initial information for applicants: Basic, application and procedural information on selection and recruitment procedures at the University of Bremen and on working as a scientist.
- Create / adapt an internal OTM-R guide (for R1 and R2) for persons involved in the recruitment of scientists in the faculties and in the faculty administrations.
- Ensure awareness of OTM-R within the University of Bremen, for example with regard to the following aspects
 - Diversity competence in selection and hiring procedures
 - Assessment of scientific achievements
 - Information on the legal basis, in particular on the German Academic Fixed-term Contract Act (WissZeitVG) for applicants and for persons involved in the hiring of scientists in the faculties and in the faculty administrations.
 - Recruitment of international scientists
- Investigate possibilities for professionalizing appointment and selection committees
- Improve the quality assurance system
- Create, implement, and publish an OTM-R strategy
- An e-tool for recruitment will be developed.
- Connect the OTM-R strategy to the existing Strategy 2018-2028 of the University of Bremen and link it to the Framework on the Contractual Situation and Conditions of Employment at Bremen State Universities³ to give proof of the university's strong commitment towards HRS4R

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³ Bremen state universities agreed on a common framework on the contractual situation and conditions of employment, as regulated by law (§ 14a Higher Education Act of the State of Bremen), https://www.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user_upload/sites/personalrat/Dienstvereinbarungen_Gesetze/Rahmenkodex.pdf (German language only).