



**Open, Transparent and Merit-based
Recruitment of Researchers by
Ikerbasque**

OTM-R Policy

0. Introduction

Ikerbasque is the organization promoted by the Basque Government to strengthen science in the Basque Country through programs to attract and recruit researchers and to dynamize research, in cooperation with research centers and universities, while remaining committed to excellence. A keystone of our recruitment programs is to make sure that the best scientist is recruited for a research position.

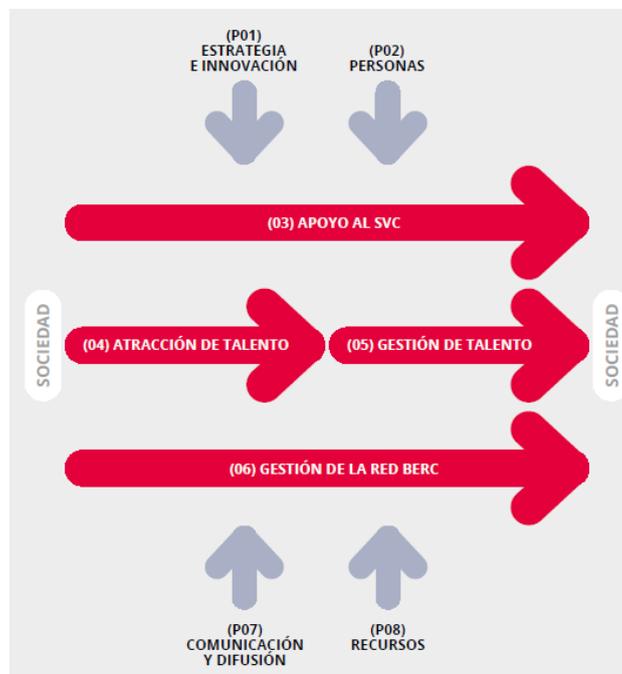
Therefore, since its creation in 2007 Ikerbasque is committed to establish and maintain a recruitment process that is:

- Open
- Transparent
- Merit based

In this policy, Ikerbasque is reviewing its recruitment procedures according to the principles and guidelines set by the EC on what an OTM-R system should look like. As a result of the review, a number of actions are established to improve the recruitment policy.

1. Review of Ikerbasque's current OTM-R policy, practices and procedures

Ikerbasque has carried out a review of the recruitment current system. Ikerbasque's management system is based on 8 processes which are evaluated and updated on an annual basis. **Process # 04 "Attracting talent"** is the key process for Ikerbasque's recruitment policy.



Ikerbasque has used the 'checklist' provided by the EC to review its recruitment procedures. Annex 1 of this policy details the assessment carried out through this checklist.

2. Develop and put in place a revised Ikerbasque OTM-R policy

It is strongly recommended to develop and implement an OTM-R policy that encourages, in particular, external applicants by:

1. providing clear and transparent information on the whole selection process, including selection criteria and an indicative timetable;
2. posting a clear and concise job advertisement with links to detailed information on, for example, required competencies and duties, working conditions, entitlements, training opportunities, career development, gender equality policies, etc.;
3. 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;
4. considering the inclusion of explicit pro-active elements for underrepresented groups;
5. keeping the administrative burden for the candidate (proof of qualifications, translations, number of copies required, etc.) to a minimum;
6. reviewing, where appropriate, the institutional policy on languages.

3. Publishing Ikerbasque's OTM-R policy

The OTM-R policy is published in an easily accessible place on the institution's website, addressing the minimum set of requirements (to be developed in relation to points above) while respecting institutional autonomy and diversity.

For those institutions implementing the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R), this is a requirement.

4. Quality control system

A quality control mechanism is established, including supervision of the whole recruitment process, to be administered by the designated staff. In this process, external reviewers take part within the peer review exercise of the HRS4R.

To monitor and assess the extent to which the OTM-R system is being implemented, it is also developed an internal reporting for the critical phases of a recruitment process.

5. Adapt the internal OTM-R guide

Clear and explicit rules and procedures for each call are defined, tailored to specifications required to candidates.

According to the European Framework for Research Careers which identifies four broad career profiles for researchers, our research categories attend to:

- **Ikerbasque Research Fellows:** R2 Recognised Researcher (PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent)
- **Ikerbasque Research Associates:** R3 Established Researcher (researchers who have developed a level of independence)
- **Ikerbasque Research Professors:** R4 Leading Researcher (researchers leading their research area or field)

While the basic principles of openness, transparency and merit should apply to all positions, the procedures are adapted according to each call attending to the level, nature and type of position. The key point is to ensure that the various procedures or derogations are clear, objectively justified and transparent.

In line with the principle "Recognition of qualifications" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including non-formal qualifications, skills and competences of all researchers, as well as international and professional mobility are provided.

6. Training and awareness raising within the institution

Ikerbasque ensures that appropriate training is provided to all those who are involved in the recruitment process. This should include training on how to brief members of the selection committees.

As our calls are international, candidates are assessed in English. This implies that evaluators and staff are trained to deal with processing and evaluating applicants and conducting hiring processes in English.

7. e-recruitment

In order to avoid discriminating against candidates based on their geographical location and/or financial means, "e-recruitment" tools are used, drawing on the experience of existing platforms and tools.

ANNEX 1

	O	T	M	Answer: <i>Yes completely / Yes substantially / Yes partially / No</i>	Improvement actions	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system						
1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	Yes partially	Translate the policy to Spanish and Basque	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Translated and published: Y/N
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	Yes substantially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the RF call Review the PP call Improve the Welcome Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction of our call candidates Ikerbasque researchers' satisfaction with the integration process
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	Yes partially	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boost the HRS4R strategy in basque research institutions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> # of basque research institutions adhered to the HRS4R strategy
4. Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x		Yes substantially	Strengthen the dissemination of our calls with online tools and in international platforms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants number coming from online Subscribers to our international newsletters
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	Yes substantially	Continuous self-assessment of the recruitment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction of host institutions Research Fellows consolidated
6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend of the share of external candidates in our calls
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in the share of applicants from abroad

8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract underrepresented groups?	x	x	x	Yes substantially	Improve the percentage of women selected	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in the share of applicants among underrepresented groups (frequently women)
9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trend in the share of applicants from outside the institution Overall satisfaction of our call's candidates with the process
10. Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Satisfaction of host institutions
Advertising and application phase						
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g., EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	x	x		Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall satisfaction of our call's candidates with the process
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit?	x	x		Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall satisfaction of our call's candidates with the process
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job adverts posted on EURAXESS Trend in the share of applicants recruited from abroad
14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		Yes substantially	Explore social networks or other platforms to increase visibility of our offers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicants to our calls
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?	x			Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall satisfaction of our call's candidates with the process
Selection and evaluation phase						
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees?		x	x	Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics on the composition of panels

17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees?		x	x	Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written guidelines, published in the web
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?		x	x	Yes substantially	Improve the gender balance in the Scientific Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gender equality in the Scientific Advisory Board
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help to judge 'merit' in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?			x	Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Written guidelines
Appointment phase						
20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?		x		Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share of applicants who receive an answer
21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?		x		Yes completely		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall satisfaction of our calls candidates with the feedback given
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?		x		Yes partially	Review complaints procedure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statistics on complaints
Overall assessment						
23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether OTM-R delivers on its objectives?				Yes substantially	Review assessment process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> OTM-R control panel