



**INSTITUTE OF ORGANIC CHEMISTRY
POLISH ACADEMY OF SCIENCES**

PROCEDURES AND PRINCIPLES OF OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED
RECRUITMENT (OTM-R) PROCESS OF RESEARCHERS
AT THE INSTITUTE OF ORGANIC CHEMISTRY PAS



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The Institute of Organic Chemistry PAS has established recruitment procedures, which are open, efficient, transparent, supportive and internationally comparable, along with being tailored to the type of positions advertised.

The OTM-R policy (Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment for Researchers), is based on the internal regulations which were established according to Polish Academy of Science regulations and other national level acts. The indicated document includes specific criteria and knowledge, which should be known by candidates for the research positions at the IOC PAS.

Recruitment for PhD School at the Institute of Organic Chemistry is conducted in accordance with the PhD School terms and conditions and with the principles stipulated in this document.

The Present document describes detailed information of the individual elements of the recruitment process, such as:

- job advertisement and receiving applications
- selection committees
- selection of the candidate: analysis of submitted documents
- screening and interviewing
- preparation of a report / memo from the recruitment procedure conducted
- making a decision about employment
- feedback
- complaints mechanism

JOB ADVERTISEMENT AND RECEIVING APPLICATIONS

At the first stage, the Head of Unit/Grant submits a *request to initiate the recruitment process* on the basis of which, a job advertisement is created. According to the principles of "Recruitment" and "Transparency" within the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (<https://www.euraxess.pl/pl/poland/pracodawcy/karta-i-kodekspracodawcy>), IOC PAS includes the following information within the job advertisement:

- organizational and recruiting unit
- job title, specifications and starting date
- competencies
- selection criteria, including knowledge and professional experience
- number of available positions
- working conditions, workplace, entitlements (salary, other benefits, etc.),

- researcher career profiles (R1-R4)¹, with the respective 'required' and 'desirable'
- type of contract
- professional development opportunities
- the application procedure and deadline
- contact details

If required, the application deadline is set at a minimum of two weeks from the publication date, and takes into account holiday periods. All vacancies are published on the IOC PAS career website <https://www.icho.edu.pl/zatrudnienie/> (wersja polska i angielska), na portalu EURAXESS <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/search> (English and Polish language), EURAXESS <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/search>, and (if required) website of the Polish National Science Center <https://www.ncn.gov.pl/baza-ofert/> and the Polish Ministry of Science and Higher Education <http://www.bip.nauka.gov.pl/nabor-kandydatow-do-jednostek-podleglych-pan-oraz-instytutow-badawczych/>.

All applicants which meet the formal requirements will receive an e-mail, acknowledging that their application has been received and providing further information on the recruitment process, indicating next steps and providing an indicative timetable (interview period, appointment date).

It is important for the IOC PAS, to allow sufficient time before the interview, so that external candidates can make the necessary travel arrangements and fully prepare for the interview. If there are subsequently significant changes or delays to this process, all applicants are duly and timely informed by (a standard) e-mail.

SELECTION COMMITTEES

The selection committees at the IOC PAS are characterized by diverse specialist knowledge and competences. Whenever possible and feasible, the members are appointed with the view to maintain gender balance and a variety of represented scientific disciplines. The criteria of multi-nationality and experience suitable for assessing candidates are also used.

According to the principle "Selection" of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, selection committees are established for all profiles (R1-R4). The selection committees are independent, members are not in any conflict of interest, and the decisions

¹**R1 First Stage Researcher** (up to the completion of PhD)

R2 Recognized Researcher (PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent)

R3 Established Researcher (researchers who have developed a level of independence)

R4 Leading Researcher (researchers leading their research area or field)

are objective and evidence-based. Members of the committee are diversely selected, and in order to achieve this, the following criteria are applied:

- a minimum of 3 members,
- gender balance (not less than one third of one gender in the committee if possible),
- including at least one expert from various units of the IOC PAS in all external committees.
- inclusion of international experts, who are proficient in the language(s) in which the process will be conducted,
- the committee must include members who display experience, qualifications and competences in the field in which a candidate is assessed.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES

Candidates submit the following application documents:

- an academic *curriculum vitae* and a list of publications,
- a cover letter,
- diplomas corroborating qualifications,
- course completion certificates,
- references and credentials from previous employers and/or science mentors or co-workers

The Selection Committee reviews all submitted applications in substantive and formal terms. Particular attention is paid to the following, while analyzing documents:

- candidate's educational background,
- career path,
- experience in a particular area, including publications and patents,
- qualifications (courses, diplomas),
- position change frequency.

The IOC PAS abides by the provisions of the Labour Code, particularly Article 18^{3a} Section 1, which stipulates that “employees shall be treated on equal terms with regard to employment and termination thereof, conditions of employment, promotion and access to training so as to improve professional qualifications, particularly in terms of gender, age, disability, race, religion, nationality, political views, trade union affiliation, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, as well as irrespective of definite or indefinite, full-time or part-time employment”.

The non-discrimination principle is respected at each and every recruitment stage, from posting a job advertisement, throughout the recruitment process, the duration of

employment and its termination. Employees are treated equally and reasonably without any differences at each stage.

Once the documentation has been analyzed, preliminary selection ensues, in the course of which candidates are divided into two groups: intended for further recruitment (so-called short-list) and rejected.

INTERVIEWING AND DECISION ABOUT EMPLOYMENT

Appropriate preparation is the cornerstone of a professionally conducted job interview. Prior to the interview, the members of the Selection Committee carefully review the candidate's documents, highlighting every item of particular interest according to our requirements, including issues that raise our doubts. The Selection Committee, if possible, sees to it that the job interviews have a structure planned in advance. Questions asked during the interview must always refer to particular circumstances, actions or examples. The Institute sees to it that both its offer, and the requirements posed for candidates, are attractive.

The selection of candidates is open, competitive and non-discriminatory. All candidates should be treated equally and in the same way. Article 22¹ Section 1 of the Labour Code stipulates which information an employer may require of a candidate, which is: name(s) and surname, date of birth, residence (mailing) address, education and career path to date. A recruiter may not ask for personal information, such as as: marital status, parenthood plans, religion, diseases, etc.

A job interview typically comprises of, a preliminary presentation prepared by the candidate (e.g. a presentation of recent / current research, plans as to performing the tasks at the position offered), and a conversation with the Commission members.

During the Selection process, the complete professional experience of a candidate is taken into consideration. It is also based on a wide range of criteria. Depending on the specific profile of the position , the selection committee may judge:

- ability to obtain funding;
- laboratory skills,
- experience in research project management / organizational skills and experience;
- Prepared to lead and mentor;
- research performance;
- international portfolio (mobility is an important element of the academic career. the IOC PAS highly appreciates such experience in the process of selecting candidates and internal promotions;
- creativity and a degree of independence;
- knowledge transfer and exchange, teamwork;

- language skills;
- consistency of expression.

PREPARATION OF A REPORT

Having completed the interviews with candidates, discussed and voted on each/particular candidate, the committee shall reach a decision regarding recommending the candidate to be hired or declining such recommendation. The committee will draft a report after each interview, to which candidate assessment questionnaires shall be appended.

Information about recruitment and its results are available on the Institute's website.

FEEDBACK

Information regarding the closure of recruitment is sent to all candidates meeting the formal requirements. Extending gratitude for participating in the recruitment process is a rule which ought to be always observed. An e-mail to every candidate is a sign of respect to those who spent their time contacting the Institute.

Feedback is drafted on the basis of the candidate assessment questionnaire, and includes information regarding the maximum number of points scored by an individual (individuals) recommended for hiring.

Declining information is received by candidates who were not short-listed, which is determined after interviews. Each candidate is treated individually, and in the event of a rejection, their strengths and areas of expertise are highlighted, which may not necessarily be aligned with the IOC PAS interests.

A declination is a pointer which supports a candidate in them developing particular skills and competences, and also makes it easier for them to focus on seeking employment in a different research area.

Candidates who are turned down, must feel that they are being treated professionally, and their frustration can be minimized with the decision being explained. Such manner of building relations with candidates, and presenting the IOC PAS image this way, is deemed as beneficial in terms of employer branding.

COMPLAINTS MECHANISM

the IOC PAS has established a procedure to deal with complaints made by applicants who believe that they have been treated negligently, unfairly or incorrectly. Any candidate who is not satisfied with the result of the recruitment decision, and has claims about the evaluation made by the committees, may contact the Institute's Director. Each case is considered individually.

GUIDELINES FOR SELECTION COMMITTEES

The Selection committee plays a vital role in recruiting, evaluating, and recommending the most qualified candidates for employment by the IOC PAS. Selection committee members are often the first IOC PAS representatives that a candidate will meet. Each member has an opportunity to represent the IOC PAS as a diverse and welcoming community, while carrying out the search in accordance with the Institute policies and procedures.

COMPOSITION OF THE SELECTION COMMITTEE

The Selection Committee shall comprise of at least three members. They are occasionally appointed by the Director of the IOC PAS. This shall also apply to appointing the president of the committee. The committee shall have the following obligatory members: head of a Unit/grant or other appointed by him/her representative.

The structure of search committees will vary depending upon the position to be filled. The composition of a committee is the key to a broad and inclusive search. The committee should:

- Include individuals with different backgrounds, perspectives, and expertise,
- Include individuals with knowledge of the substantive area and the technical expertise to effectively evaluate candidates' qualifications.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

In the event that a committee member knows a candidate, or there is a conflict of interest between them, the member is obliged to:

- notify the president of the committee, and its members, of the nature of the relationship; and
- if they are unable to conduct an objective and fair candidate selection, disqualify themselves from the commission; or
- following the presidents' approval, and that of the remaining committee members, refrain from assessing and participating in the interview with the candidate whom they know.

Information regarding what transpired will be duly noted in the commission proceedings report.

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

A selection committee is responsible for recruiting for the position, evaluating applicants, participating in the interview process, and recommending finalists. Members should be

available to participate fully and consistently in the entire process and to perform duties as assigned by the selection chair.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Members of the selection committee need to maintain a strict level of confidentiality, to protect the privacy of the candidates, and to preserve the integrity of the whole search process. Each committee member is obliged to keep any information obtained in the course of the recruitment process in strict confidence, and to refrain from disclosing any information regarding said recruitment, to any individual who is not a committee member.

RECRUITMENT

Selection committees are responsible for fulfilling the Institute's requirement to demonstrate "good faith efforts" to diversify the applicant pool, by proactively and assertively recruiting for all open positions. A recruitment plan should include strategies for attracting a diverse and qualified pool of applicants.

All selection committee members should be actively engaged in executing the recruitment plan, including utilizing professional contacts, engaging in formal and informal networking activities, utilizing non-traditional advertising such as on-line publications, discussing the position among members of relevant membership in professional organizations, and attending conferences.

Selection committee members should also be aware of recruitment goals for the position, in order to determine recruitment strategies and sources to attract applicants from these underrepresented race and gender groups.

APPLICANT EVALUATION

Members should discuss and agree on the criteria to be used in evaluating each qualification, prior to reviewing application materials. While assessing the received applications, the committee members may only take into consideration the previously defined requirements. All applicants must be objectively screened against the same criteria

There is no rule regarding the number of candidates a search committee must interview. Only candidates meeting or exceeding minimum qualifications should be ranked as "Interview invited".

ASSUMPTIONS IN CANDIDATE EVALUATION

The evaluation of applicants should be objective and equitable, based solely on the qualifications in the job description/advertisement, and the quality of the application materials.

Good practices to counterbalance the effects of inherent bias include:

- Learning about research on biases and assumptions, and striving to minimize their influence on the evaluation of candidates;
- Developing criteria for evaluating candidates, and applying them consistently to all applicants;
- Spending sufficient time evaluating each applicant;
- Evaluating each candidate's entire application, and not focussing too heavily on one element, such as the prestige of the degree-granting institution or postdoctoral program or the letters of recommendation;
- Explaining the decision for rejecting, or retaining a candidate, based on evidence in the candidate's file as related to the qualifications;
- Determine whether underrepresented groups are considered for positions at the Institute, and whether prejudices and assumptions may have a bearing on these decisions.

INTERVIEWS

All members of the committee are to participate in all interviews², to provide an objective and consistent assessment of each candidate. Prior to conducting each interview, all members of the committee ought to discuss the goal(s) of the interview, principal issues and areas to be addressed in the course of the interview, along with its plan and arrangements regarding each candidate. Questions asked during the interview must refer to work, and be instrumental in determining qualifications for the position.

Committees should develop a core set of questions for all applicants. Such questions ought to require detailed answers, to be able to ascertain the qualifications of candidates and compare them objectively. In order to ensure a fair recruitment process, the interviews ought to be consistent, so that the candidates have an equal opportunity to present themselves. The members of the committee must be made aware that certain questions are illegal, and may not be asked during the interview.

Everyone participating in the interview process should be made aware of inappropriate topics and questions³. Also, one should bear in mind, that the same questions that are

²Barring the situations referred to in the committee proceedings report and pertaining to a private relationship of a committee member with a candidate and/or a conflict of interests.

³Article 22 Section 1 of the Labor Code stipulates which information an employer may require of a candidate, i.e.: name(s), surname, date of birth, residence address (mailing address), education and course of career to date. A recruiter may not ask personal questions regarding, e.g. marital status, family planning, religious views, diseases, etc.

inappropriate or unlawful during a formal interview, are also inappropriate and unlawful in a social or less formal interview session with an applicant.

RECOMMENDATION OF FINAL CANDIDATES

While assessing a candidate, the members of the selection committee shall use the „candidate assessment questionnaire” form, which describes and standardizes the scope and model of candidate assessment.

In the report, following the conclusion of the interview stage, the committee ought to indicate the candidate(s) recommended to the Director of the IOC PAS for hiring. Depending on the guidelines for the committee, the recommendation may be in the form of a ranking list, and may include explanations regarding each candidate’s strengths and weaknesses, in terms of the qualifications for a particular position.

The candidates who were not selected ought to be notified of this fact as soon as such a decision is made, if possible, prior to the conclusion of the recruitment process.

Candidates from the ranking list recommended to be hired, are notified of the refusal, as soon as the offer is officially accepted by the highest scoring candidate.

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