

European human resources strategy for researchers

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment Policy (OTM-R)

University Paris Nanterre (UPN) is committed to obtaining the "Excellence in Research" label awarded by the European Commission. The European Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) aims to define and implement measures to improve the working and recruitment conditions of academic staff. This quality approach is based in particular on the recommendations set out in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. This strategy demonstrates UPN's commitment to the European Research Area, along with that of member universities of the EDUC alliance.

After an analysis of practices by all the players involved, four working groups prepared a diagnosis and an action plan presented to UPN's governing bodies in September 2024. The process is divided into four phases:

- a) diagnosis of existing practices and identification of difficulties;
- b) proposal of areas for improvement;
- c) definition of actions;
- d) distribution between departments and definition of indicators.

The process is adjusted to the main stages of the professional lives of academic staff, with particular attention paid to the early stages. The working group dedicated to issues of recruitment and working conditions for academic staff (including doctoral and post-doctoral students) was responsible for defining and implementing a policy of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment.

The HR Direction ensures that all applicable French regulations are applied, in particular via the Galaxie platform. Within the university departments and institutes, all recruitment phases are the responsibility of the disciplinary advisory committees set up by the sections of the National University Council. The members of these committees are elected by faculty. Researchers who are awarded doctoral and research contracts are recruited directly by the doctoral schools and research units. The synergy between the HR Direction, the disciplinary advisory committees and the research and teaching staff guarantees both compliance with national recruitment regulations and the recruitment of researchers adapted to the specific needs and functions in UPN's faculties.

The UPN's research, training and partnership policies, backed by its commitment to social responsibility and ecological transition, make it an attractive establishment. Improvements in working conditions and quality of life, supported by the European human resources strategy labelling initiative, also help to create a stimulating environment for staff involved in research, training and the dissemination of research.

The main thrust of the OTM-R policy is to build on existing procedures in the departments and faculties, in order to:

- Strengthen recruitment campaigns for statutory academic staff (lecturers and professors), improve collegiality with regard to the definition of advertised positions; improve information, in compliance with applicable regulations; encourage discussions between all recruitment players on recruitment methods and criteria, drawing attention to OTM-R requirements and non-discrimination;
- formalise the recruitment of other academic staff: temporary research assistants, doctoral contracts, research contracts (post-doctoral or other);
- develop mentoring during the induction phase for new colleagues;
- encourage participation in the national campaign for disability doctoral contracts.

The following actions are planned in particular:

Employment campaign for permanent academic staff

The working group plans to increase the number of requests for funding for research professorships from its ministry, while at the same time raising the employment ceiling of number of positions. The institution will improve the definition of job descriptions and the various stages of the procedures for interviewing candidates: identifying of the need, drafting job descriptions and ensuring collegiality when composing selection committees, and reconsidering the role of disciplinary advisory committees.

In recognition of the fact that certain people are sometimes reluctant to apply, the university will make it explicit on its website that anyone can apply and that all applications will be assessed fairly.

Recruitment of contract faculty

So as to combat discrimination, the university will draw up gender-specific statistics on applications and recruitment of temporary contract researchers.

Recruitment of temporary research assistants (ATER)

With regard to the recruitment of temporary research assistants, research and teaching units will now be asked to formulate and circulate job profiles containing key words on expectations.

In order to improve the process of responding to applications, the development of the SOLEIL application could include a system for automatically replying and requesting documents to the next applicant, in case of withdrawals.

Recruitment of researchers or post-docs

Discussions will be held with the research units on post-doctoral and research contracts in order to facilitate the recruitment of research staff at the start of their



careers. Guidelines based on best practices are envisaged to improve the harmonization of recruitment.

National campaign for disability doctoral contracts

Two actions specifically concern participation in the national campaign for doctoral disability contracts. The first involves strengthening the institution's policy on the management and allocation of disabled doctoral contracts. The second considers whether to republish unfilled disability doctoral contracts the following year and whether to adjust the number of contracts to potential applications from one year to the next. To this end, working with the Mission handicap could help identify the pool of students likely to be encouraged to apply.

Hosting foreign researchers

Visiting professors and researchers are recruited for short stays. Applications are most often received in the context of research or education partnerships between laboratories or departments.

Welcoming new recruits

A mentoring programme will be set up from the start of the 2024 academic year to improve welcoming conditions for new faculty. In addition to the welcome day, which has been maintained and is being expanded from year to year, a lack of arrangements for faculty arriving during the course of the year has been noted. Some, particularly international researchers, encounter administrative difficulties outside UPN. The working group therefore decided to set up a guide and a reception and administrative procedures referent specifically for academic staff. This guide will be specifically dedicated to administrative procedures and useful contacts in this area.