

# OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS – THE OTM-R POLICY

## Development of researchers' career and position – HR Excellence in Research

Community Well-Being is one of the strategic goals of the University of Turku. Our recruitment is based on thorough human resources planning. Our recruitment process is open and fair. We provide our employees with the necessary orientation and create opportunities for career development, internationalisation and for achieving success in work. We encourage our community to learn, to engage in entrepreneurial activities and to develop their own work. In recruiting researchers, the University is committed to advancing the principles presented in the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers.

## Practices related to the recruitment of researchers

The majority of the researchers at the University of Turku work in an employment relationship. Research is also conducted with grants.

The University of Turku recruits researchers in accordance with the strategy, the Personnel Policy and the regulations of the Procedure in staff recruitment. The aim is to recruit the most talented and motivated researchers and teachers to the University of Turku and to promote researchers' career progress. International mobility is acknowledged and encouraged.

University of Turku recruits researchers to fixed-term and permanent positions in accordance with the Employment Contracts Act. Recruitments are based on open human resource planning where the necessity and the duration of tasks is carefully assessed.

University's practices in the recruitment of researchers are based on openness, transparency and judging the merits in a way that lead to the selection of the best candidate.

## Calls for application and the application process

The University of Turku recruits researchers primarily through international application procedures. Calls for application are published in Finnish and English via various Finnish and international channels, such as Euraxess, Academic Positions and Research Gate. In the calls for application, attention is paid to non-discrimination.

A call for application includes:

- job description,
- presentation of the recruiting unit,
- duration of the employment,
- required qualification criteria,
- language skills requirements,
- matters considered as merits for applicants,
- information on salary,
- possible trial period,
- contact details for more information and
- the application period.

The electronic recruitment system used in the application procedure enables applying for a position from all over the world. Only relevant information is requested and the application can be supplemented during the process. Representatives of the Faculty, discipline or project from the University participate in the recruitment process. Applicants are actively informed of the progress of the recruitment in different phases of the process. University's Human Resources Services offers the supervisors guidelines, advice and training in conducting a successful recruitment.



The purpose of a possible trial period is to ensure suitability from both the employee's and the employer's perspectives.

The University of Turku offers all researchers, irrespective of their contract situation, good possibilities to develop in their work and to proceed in their career. The opportunities for competence development include a wide selection of internal staff training and transferable skills courses offered by the UTU Graduate School and the faculties to all doctoral candidates.

Community well-being is a strategic goal of the University: the University is committed to promoting the well-being of the entire university community. The comprehensive occupational health care services belong to the benefits of those employed. Since 2017 the University has a special unit for the promotion of well-being of both staff and students, and the Early Support and work well-being services are also available for the non-employed researchers.

### **Selection and evaluation of applicants**

Selection is based on the requirements mentioned in the application advertisement and a careful and non-biased comparison of applicants, of which a selection memorandum is created. The selection criteria and application data of other applicants are public for certain parts in compliance with the Act on the Openness of Government Activities. The selection process at the University of Turku, including the appointment and composition of selection committees, is described in internal instructions, which also define the persons authorised to make selection decisions depending on the researcher position.

At the University of Turku, employment contracts are made in writing and the University's signer varies based on the researcher position as regulated in the University's internal instructions. According to the instructions, the authorised decision maker can define the selection procedure of doctoral candidates and postdoctoral researchers, however, adhering to the principles of recruitment at the University of Turku.

The calls for doctoral candidate positions are organised twice a year simultaneously in all doctoral programmes of the Graduate School. Each doctoral programme has its own application instructions. The right to study for a doctoral degree and in the autumn the funded doctoral candidate positions are applied for by filling in an application form in the electronic application system and submitting the application documents required by the doctoral programme. Since 2018, the University has also a recruitment system for fixed-term postdoctoral research positions which covers the whole university and places special emphasis on international recruitment. The post doc positions are opened and filled in by the two research collegia.

University uses an expert evaluation procedure when recruiting professors, assistant and associate professors and research directors. The best experts in their fields are invited to act as assessors. The procedure promotes openness, for example, by submitting the experts' statements for information to the evaluated applicants.

University also uses preparatory groups in separately defined situations when researchers are recruited for a tenure track or for a post of a professor. In these cases, the members of the preparatory group are selected in compliance with the University's internal guidelines. Preparatory working groups can also be used for other recruitments, but in such cases there is no University-level definition for the composition of the group.

### **Appointment of a tenure track**

University of Turku has a tenure track system for teaching and research personnel. The basis of the procedure is that an individual is recruited at first for a fixed-term employment relationship as an assistant professor, during which his or her work is followed and evaluated by the criteria defined at recruitment. Success in the evaluation leads to a new fixed-term employment relationship and the aim is obtaining the tenure of a professor. Qualification requirements of positions and other matters taken into account when assessing merits are defined in the University of Turku Regulations and in the Rector's order concerning the Tenure Track.



### **Proceeding on the researcher's career**

The research career path at the University of Turku is described as the researcher's opportunities for proceeding on the career. The path also describes the prerequisites and evaluation criteria that enable moving from one phase of the researcher's career to another. Part of the duties in the researcher's career are fixed-term. When proceeding on the path, positions may become permanent.

A research career path starts from the position of a doctoral candidate and may proceed step by step to a professorship. The progress is described in a separate document. It is the duty of the supervisor to support an employee's research career progress in all of the positions. This can be promoted, for example, by monitoring the implementation of work plans and regular development discussions.