

## **HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS (EURAXESS - HRS4R)**

### **OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT POLICY FOR RESEARCHERS (OTM-R 2019)**

#### INTRODUCTION

The Catholic University of Louvain (UCLouvain) has signed, through the Council of Rectors (CRef), the "European Charter for Researchers" (the "Charter") and the "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" (the "Code") from January 2006. In July 2010, it formally reiterated her commitment emphasizing her determination to support the European Commission's initiative to promote and foster the mobility of researchers in Europe (Euraxess).

In accordance with the recommendations of the European Commission, the University conducted an internal analysis of its practices in order to identify areas of progress and defined its "HRS4R 2011-2015" strategy, which was recognized by the Commission in March 2011. Under the direction of the "Strategy Committee", the "Steering Committee" has implemented the various actions planned in its strategy. In accordance with the defined process, UCLouvain also conducted an internal mid-term evaluation in March 2014 and the final internal self-assessment in March 2016. Both evaluations showed that very significant progress has been made in different areas.

UCLouvain continued to improve the working and career conditions of researchers. In July 2015, the Board of Directors approved the strategic project of the University: "Louvain 2020". The University expresses, in particular, its desire to extend its position as a research university and to strengthen its internationalization.

With clear strategic lines, UCLouvain continued its process of continuous improvement, taking into account the recommendations made in the "reinforced HRS4R process" defined by the European Commission. It has therefore put in place a new action plan currently in progress until 2021 (HRS4R 2018-2021).

Thanks to the significant work done for nearly 15 years, UCLouvain is recognized by the European Commission for the excellence of its process of managing its human resources for researchers (HR excellence in research).



UCLouvain is a multicultural and multilingual research university that welcomes more international scientific staff every year.

Within UCLouvain, whether it concerns academic freedom and research, ethics or professional responsibility, the principles and practices in force are in line with those set out in the "Charter" and the "Code".

UCLouvain's HR policy is integrative, respectful of equal opportunities and favourable to diversity, within all categories of personnel. Fairness and impartiality are present at every step of these procedures. These are conducted in an objective manner, without any discrimination on the basis of, among other things, sex, gender, sexual orientation, ancestry, national or ethnic origin, alleged race, skin color, nationality, language, religious beliefs, philosophical or political convictions, age, marital status or state of health.

Thus, while selection and recruitment procedures may vary depending on the categories of researchers (academics, temporary scientists, research logisticians, fellows and research assistants), they are each conducted in all transparency and with the constant concern for respect to people.

The primary objective of these procedures is to identify the candidate who has the required qualifications, is able to integrate into the institution, adhere to its values and progress in different facets of his profession and to follow the evolution of the institution.

These procedures are carried out with respect for the rights and the dignity of the person without applying any method that could harm it or its dignity, in particular in the choice of the questions asked or the tone used. The information requested, reduced to a minimum, is only intended to assess his ability to take up the proposed job or his professional skills.

The implementation of the e-recruitment platform (SuccessFactors) helps to increase the quality and transparency of recruitment procedures for academic staff, temporary scientific staff and research logisticians, in addition to those of the administrative and technical staff.

Candidates are informed as objectively as possible about the position to be filled and the profile required for it to be able to assess the opportunity to participate in the selection procedure. They are also informed about how the collected data will be used, how any decision will be made, how long it will take and who will be involved in the procedure, as well as the recruitment tools used. Feedback is given to successful and unsuccessful candidates. A written reply is sent to them within a reasonable time.

The University therefore fully adopts the initiative of the European Commission and reaffirms its commitment to apply the principles of the "Charter" and the "Code". UCLouvain is convinced that the recognition of the quality of its "HRS4R 2018-2021 strategy" will be an additional factor of attractiveness for researchers and will contribute to improving their international mobility.



## THE OTM-R INITIATIVE WITHIN UCLouvain

As mentioned in the HRS4R 2018-2021 strategy and in order to comply with the Commission's recommendations in the reinforced process, UCLouvain set up a working group led by the Vice-Rector for Personnel Policy to analyse the different processes and practices of selection and recruitment within it.

In concrete terms, the managers involved in the implementation of the procedures specific to the different categories of staff carried out an in-depth diagnosis by applying the OTM-R checklist to each category of researchers. Four distinct recruitment processes were analysed. They concern doctoral students, postgraduates and researchers on external resources, temporary scientists, research logisticians and academics.

This institutional analysis, validated by the Euraxess strategic committee and the Euraxess steering committee, showed the quality of these processes and highlighted the few possible improvement points that will be the subject of new actions in the next human resources strategy for researchers.

UCLouvain nevertheless wanted to make immediate progress with regard to information publishing concerning its recruitment policy and to increasing the visibility of all its job offers for researchers. It has created a brand new website: the "Site emploi UCLouvain - Jobsite UCLouvain" - <https://jobs.uclouvain.be/>. This website centralizes all open positions for scientific and academic staff. It allows each candidate to create its profile and apply directly online, but also to easily access all information about the selection process. It contains the details of people who can answer directly and concretely any question that these candidates might have. Beyond this, it includes several sections designed to increase the information given to candidates. It presents the HR values underlying UCLouvain's recruitment process, the practices it recommends and provides a range of relevant information for candidates for international mobility. To encourage applications from abroad, this site was designed in French and English from the start.

