



Università di Foggia



## **“OPEN, TRANSPARENT AND MERIT-BASED RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS”**

### **UNIFG Policy**

The University of Foggia,

- in line with the general principles contained in the 'European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for their Recruitment', approved by the European Commission in March 2005 and to the implementation of which Italian universities committed themselves with the signature of a 'Declaration of Commitment' signed in Camerino on 7 July of the same year, at the end of an initiative promoted by the Conference of Italian University Rectors (CRUI);
- on the basis of its subsequent commitment to the implementation of the 'Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R)' for which it was awarded the 'HR - Excellence in Research' award by the European Commission in 2010, which was confirmed after verification by the same Commission at various times, i.e. through an onsite visit in July 2014 and May 2019, as well as through a remote document review in July 2022;
- considering that one of the pillars of the European Charter for Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers concerns the 'Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R)' and that the EU produced a report on this issue in July 2015 to assist universities in carrying out a voluntary review of their policies on these issues - set up in October 2020, within the UniFG organisational model, the HR Strategy Unit, which deals with the administrative management of the Strategy, and in February 2021 the internal University Body for "Human Resources Excellence in Research", made up of 6 members, one of whom, who acts as Chairman, is the Rector's Delegate for the University HR Strategy and the other 5 representing each teaching-scientific area as well as the 4 different job positions established by the C&C (R1, R2, R3, R4) and respecting gender equality;
- A Steering Committee was set up in May 2025, comprising the University governance (Rector, Prorector, Director General, the Head of the Research, Higher Education, Internationalisation and Third Mission Directorate and the Head of the Strategic Management Directorate, Teaching and Student Services), the Area Managers (Human Resources and Research, Internationalisation and Third Mission) and the Rectoral Delegates for Research, HR Strategy and Doctorates, Third Mission, Library System, Faculty Development, as well as a member of the Quality Assurance Committee, in order to oversee the HRS4R process by ensuring its alignment with the C&C; provide strategic advice and support to the technical working groups and other stakeholders involved in the implementation process; make decisions on critical issues related to the implementation of the strategy, such as the approval of the HR action plan and the table of indicators and actions for the OTM-R policy; ensure alignment with the University and Departmental strategic plans; informing the University's governing bodies (Academic Senate, Board of Directors) and the University Internal HRS4R Body on the progress of the HRS4R project and on any issues of particular relevance; constantly analysing the degree to which the University applies good practices in the management of recruitment procedures so that they are in line with the OTM-R principles;

- 5 Technical Working Groups were set up in May 2025, composed of Managers, Rector Delegates, Area and Administrative Services Managers and representatives of R1, R2, R3 and R4 researchers. Of the 5 TWGs, 4 are each in charge of one of the four macro-areas to which the principles of the European Charter for Researchers relate (ethics and professional aspects; recruitment and selection processes; working conditions and social security; research career advancement and training) and 1 is in charge of actions to implement the principles of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers (OTM-R). The TWGs are in charge of planning and coordinating the operational activities for the implementation of the HRS4R Strategy, ensuring that all steps are carried out effectively; monitoring the progress achieved in the implementation of the HR4R Strategy, assessing the effectiveness of the measures taken and making any necessary changes; involving and communicating with all stakeholders, to ensure that their needs and opinions are taken into account; propose the organisation of training and awareness-raising activities to inform the academic community about the principles and practices of the HRS4R strategy; contribute to the creation and implementation of policies for the continuous improvement of the working environment for researchers, in line with the C&C principles; prepare periodic reports on progress and achievements, to be presented to governing bodies and other internal and external stakeholders;

- 4 Focus Groups were set up in May 2025, composed of researchers from the 4 different career profiles of each of the 8 UniFG Departments, from which the representatives of the 4 Working Groups were identified;

adopts the OTM-R policy consisting of the following points:

**1. Has the University published a version of its OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?**

The University of Foggia adopts this document as an internal guide defining the procedures and practices of the OTM-R. The document is published on the University's official website in both Italian and English.

**2. Does the university have a clear internal guide defining OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?**

A single document outlining in a clear and detailed manner the OTM-R procedures and practices adopted by the University of Foggia is currently being developed. At present, the University has regulations based on current legislation. Each document contains specific references and links to the principles underlying the European Charter for Researchers. Where necessary, the University is committed to updating these regulations to ensure that they are consistent with the principles of the OTM-R.

**3. Are all persons involved in the process sufficiently trained in OTM- R?**

The University of Foggia plans to use multimedia technology (e.g. Powerpoint or introductory videos) to inform everyone involved in the process, both inside and outside the institution, about the OTM-R policy adopted by the university. Furthermore, the person in charge of each selection procedure is required to ensure the implementation of the principles of the OTM-R and to make clear mention of them in the selection notices.

**4. Does the university make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?**

E-recruitment tools are used for the selection of researchers of all career profiles (on-line application forms for the submission of applications, telematic modalities for the competition tests, including results).

**5. Does the University have a quality control system for the OTM-R'?**

The person in charge of each selection procedure ensures effective compliance with the principles of the OTM-R. The University Delegate for the implementation of the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers draws up an annual report, assisted by the Steering Committee and the Working Group, illustrating the extent to which the principles of the OTM-R are being implemented. The report is submitted both to the Single Guarantee Committee for Equal Opportunities, the Enhancement of Workers' Wellbeing and Against Discrimination, and to the University Quality Presidium. Candidates participating in the recruitment process and third parties can report possible violations of the rules through an ad hoc, institution-wide complaints procedure, which will be activated in conjunction with the new Service Charter.

## **6. Does the University's current OTM-R policy encourage applications from external candidates?**

Notices for admission to competition procedures are organised in such a way as to encourage the participation of external candidates through the use of e-recruitment tools (see point 4). Specifically, the public selection notices are published on the University of Foggia website, as well as on the websites of the Ministry of University and Research (MUR), on the Official Gazette of the Italian Republic - IV special series Competitions and Examinations and of "Euraxess". UNIFG undertakes to promote, at the European Commission, actions to improve the Euraxess website, in order to make it more user-friendly and streamlined. In addition, the university promotes the use of other ways of publicising calls for applications, such as the professional social network for researchers 'ResearchGate' or the specialised databases Science Careers and Nature-jobs, and undertakes to cover their costs. The University also regularly disseminates notices to the outside world for access to PhD courses, scholarships and research contracts. As regards the recruitment of RTDs (R2) and lecturers (R3 and R4), notices are published on the European Union's 'Euraxess' website, in both Italian and English. Access to RTT positions is, by law, only partially open, because it is limited by the regulatory constraint that requires the possession of a PhD degree or, for the sectors concerned, a medical specialisation school diploma, in addition to the possession of the national scientific qualification for the functions of first or second-rank professor referred to in Article 16 of Law 240/2010, or having held the position for at least three years, even if not consecutive: - of the contracts referred to in Article 24(3)(a) of Law 240/2010; - contracts concluded for the performance of research and supplementary teaching activities at universities, pursuant to Article 1(14) of Law 230/2005; - of research grants pursuant to Article 51, paragraph 6, of Law no. 449 of 27 December 1997, and subsequent amendments (pre-Law no. 240/2010 grants), or research grants pursuant to Article 22 of Law no. 240/2010, or post-doctoral fellowships pursuant to Article 4, Law no. 398/1989, or similar contracts, grants or fellowships in foreign universities.

## **7. Is the University's current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?**

Admission notices for doctoral courses are also drawn up in English and the relevant selection procedures are organised in such a way as to favour the participation of candidates externally through the use of e-recruitment tools. Extracts from the competition notices are published on the European Union's EURAXESS website, also in English. In order to encourage the participation of foreign candidates in the selection procedures for PAs and POs, these calls also provide for the admission of scholars permanently engaged abroad in research or teaching activities at university level in a position at the same level as the one being called, on the basis of the correspondence tables defined by the Ministry of Education, University and Research. In addition, direct call posts have been set up for researchers recruited abroad, with the same position/qualification, for at least three years through a nominative proposal to the MUR (Law 230/2005 Art. 1 co. 9). An annual monitoring of international mobility is also carried out with regard to incoming and outgoing Visiting Professors. The attraction of researchers from abroad is implemented through the increase and optimisation of instrumental and technological resources and the creation of new research laboratories. In order to further involve candidates from abroad in the recruitment of researchers at

UNIFG, we are committed to improving our communication strategy, access to public selection notices and their usability, by preparing templates of public selection notices also in English.

**8. Is the University's current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract people from groups potentially subject to any kind of discrimination?**

The University is committed to improving its information policies that aim to foster the inclusion of people belonging to groups potentially subject to discrimination and the removal of discriminatory barriers to enable the overcoming of stereotypes, in a similar way to what is already happening for the broader inclusion and non-discrimination of students, for example with reference to the removal of architectural barriers and the application of tools for the visually impaired. Furthermore, UNIFG has equipped itself with the 'Sensus Access' service, a tool for the automatic conversion of documents and web pages into alternative and accessible formats, to promote inclusion and accessibility. Some UNIFG departments are equipped with workstations and special devices and technologies to improve access to information according to specific needs.

**9. Is the University's current OTM-R policy in line with policies aimed at providing attractive working conditions for researchers?**

The University regularly monitors wellbeing, safety and perceived quality by administering questionnaires to staff and plans the necessary actions for improvement. The Single Guarantee Committee for Equal Opportunities, Enhancing Worker Satisfaction and Combating Discrimination carries out this monitoring and provides a periodical report. In order to offer stimulating and competitive working conditions, the University invests in the constant updating and upgrading of state-of-the-art technical and scientific equipment and in the creation of new research laboratories.

**10. Does the university have the means to check whether the most suitable people are applying for the positions advertised?**

The competition notices published by the University comply with national legislation on the public recruitment of academic staff and researchers, providing for the verification of the possession of the required qualifications, scientific and teaching qualifications, and any additional requirements specified in the notice itself. Beyond the formal verification of the fulfilment of the above-mentioned requirements, the Selection Boards - appointed according to criteria of competence, impartiality and transparency - carry out the comparative evaluation of the candidates, with the aim of identifying, among those who have applied, the most suitable person for the position on the basis of scientific, teaching and curricular merit.

**11. Does the University have clear guidelines or schemes for the publication of notices (such as those on EURAXESS)?**

The University has clear guidelines contained in the current internal regulations published on the University website, which can be consulted at the following links:  
<https://www.unifg.it/it/ateneo/normativa-e-bandi/regolamenti> (English version)  
<https://www.unifg.it/en/university/regulations-and-announcements/normativa> (English version)

**12. Does the Athenaeum include references/links in the call for tenders to all the elements foreseen in the section of the toolkit? [Chapter 4.4.1 a - Advertising and application phase of the Toolkit\*].**

The recruitment notices include references to national legislation and the link to the internal regulations for teaching and research staff. The Athenaeum undertakes to update the "toolkit" defined by the European document OTM- R, in order to monitor that all the elements foreseen and missing in the notice of issue are guaranteed. 13. Does the University make use of the EURAXESS portal to enable the widest possible dissemination of calls for proposals? Public announcements for

the recruitment of researchers of each career profile are published on the EURAXESS website, as indicated in section 7.

#### **14. Do you use other means to disseminate the calls?**

The public selections for the recruitment of researchers are published in the Official Gazette, on the websites of the MUR, EURAXESS, on the Online Bulletin Board and on the UNIFG website in the section 'Lecturers' notices - Procedures'. The publication of PhD notices is also carried out through the ADI - Associazione dottorandi e dottori di ricerca italiani local section. Public selection notices for Visiting Professors are sent to the academic staff mailing list with a request to disseminate them to the relevant scientific community.

#### **15. Does the university keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the applicant? [see chapter 4.4.1b of the toolkit].**

The University has computerised, through the PICA application, the application compilation and document production phase.

#### **16-17. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees? Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of selection committees? [Chapter 4.4.2 a of the Toolkit].**

The University regulations contain the rules for the appointment and composition of selection boards. A link is included in the notices to enable candidates to acquaint themselves with the relevant sections of the regulations. The national regulations for the civil service provide that the lesser represented gender cannot be less than 30% in the commissions (Article 57, paragraph 1, letter a) and paragraph 1-bis, Legislative Decree 165/2001 and subsequent amendments).

#### **18. Is the composition of the committees balanced with regard to gender?**

National legislation applicable to the civil service states that selection commissions may not include less than 30% of the least represented gender group (Article 5(1)(a) and (1-bis) of Legislative Decree No. 165/2001, as amended). The Single Guarantee Committee for Equal Opportunities, the Enhancement of Workers' Welfare and Against Discrimination is in charge of collecting this data in order to prepare the periodic report.

#### **19. Are there clear guidelines for selection committees in the university to help judge 'merit' so that the best candidate is selected?**

As far as the selection of academic staff is concerned, university regulations lay down the criteria that selection committees must follow when assessing candidates' qualifications and published articles. The recruitment of researchers is based on the criteria laid down in the regulations in force.

#### **20. Does the University inform all candidates of the end of the selection process?**

For all recruitment procedures, candidates are informed of the timetable for the various stages (eligibility check, date(s) of test(s), notification of results, deadlines within which any appeals may be lodged). Candidates are informed, by the same procedure, of how they can access the board's opinions. The competent Administrative Area ensures the publication on the University website of all the minutes relating to the selection procedures. The minutes contain precise references to the assessment criteria and procedures and the results of the assessments for each candidate. All candidates can access the procedure records on the page of the University website.

#### **21. Is the university able to provide adequate feedback for candidates admitted to the last stage of assessment?**

The competent Administrative Area is responsible for publishing on the University website all the documents relating to each stage of the selection process: the public selection notice, the

composition of the selection committee, the evaluation criteria, the call for candidates, the final selection minutes and the approved documents. Therefore, candidates can directly access all the information on the selection.

**22. Does the university have an adequate mechanism for handling complaints?**

The university website already includes a special section for complaints. In its annual report, the University Quality Presidium provides details of its activities in relation to any complaints or grievances from staff or doctoral students. UNIFG undertakes to extend this procedure also to all other matters concerning the OTM-R, regulating the related management and operation modalities in the established Service Charter.

**23. Is there a system in place in the university to assess whether objectives are being maintained in relation to the 'OTM-R' recommendation?**

The University Delegate for the implementation of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers, assisted by the Steering Committee and the Working Group, draws up an annual report on the level of compliance with the principles of the OTM-R (see point 5). The report is submitted both to the Single Guarantee Committee for Equal Opportunities, the Enhancement of Workers' Wellbeing and Against Discrimination, and to the University Quality Presidium. Taking due account of the observations made by the University Quality Presidium and the Single Committee, the University Delegate submits an annual report to the Academic Senate outlining the extent to which the OTM-R policy has been implemented, highlighting any problems that have arisen and suggesting relevant improvement measures.