

Recruitment guide

Guide for an OTM-R
(Open, Transparent, Merit)
based recruitment
and selection procedure

Version April 2021



Introduction

Dear reader,

Thank you for consulting this recruitment guide.

The purpose of this guide is to aid you in making balanced decisions when it comes to recruiting new personnel, so as to ensure a compelling candidate experience. To realize such an experience, it is important to point out the following:

#betterTUgether

At TU Delft we believe inclusivity is a cornerstone in fostering a healthy, innovative and successful academic environment. As such, we welcome candidates of various backgrounds not only with an open mind but also with open arms.

This is to say that – in order to achieve effective recruitment – we have to strive to be as objective and biased-free as possible in our recruitment process. This way, we are not only more likely to ensure a fair and pleasant candidate journey but also increase our chances in attracting the right kind of people for the right job.

This recruitment guide can be used by whomever is curious to know more about our recruitment process. However, in practice, it can be most effectively used by stakeholders such as managers, selection committee members and of course vacancy holders.

In short, this guide offers references to relevant information and also elaborates on the various stages of the recruitment process. We hope that it will help you in achieving your future endeavors by allowing you to find the right person for the right job and, if otherwise, making rejection a palatable experience for both you and the candidate. Of course, in the end...



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1. Selection committee

The composition of selection committees (or AACs) should be broad-based. In other words, their members should represent a wide spectrum of our community. This involves aspects such as gender, age, stage of academic career, time at the university, breadth of knowledge of the field and ethnicity. This is because a narrowly based selection committee will most of the time be a hindrance to diversity. Diversity is one of our key values at the TU Delft. As such, the aim is that selection committees should strive to reflect the TU Delft community as accurately as possible.

It is recommended that selection committees be composed of three to max. seven people, who have a great understanding of the job and the place where the candidate will be working. It is also recommended that at least one woman (that is, where there are more than three members) should sit on the committee. In addition, stakeholders should be given the opportunity to share any specific advice with the selection committee. For example, this can include advice on a publication list or specific questions about the candidate's CV.

It is advisable to take a training course that makes us aware of unconscious prejudices and offers methods for objectivity. HR also offers the option of intervision by a coach who can make the committee members aware of implicit bias. Contact the HR Talent and Development for more options / latest developments regarding this subject

Schedule

Plan the recruitment process carefully in order to pass through and complete all the procedural stages in time. It is recommended that every stage, such as meetings, should be scheduled as early as possible. This will prevent conflicting agendas between the selection committee members.



CHECKLIST Selection committee

- In principle, a selection committee has three to seven members. The aim is always an odd number.
- For more information about the composition and size and the current appointments procedure of the Advisory Appointment Committee, see:
✦ [Checklist for professor appointment proposals to the EB 28-11-2018.](#)
- One member of the selection committee should be assigned the specific task of looking out for unconscious biases in the recruitment and selection process.
- TU Delft provides the opportunity for faculties to have their own recruitment and selection policy for academic staff and tenure trackers - you can ask your faculty HR what the policy is.



Roles and responsibilities of selection committees

Chair

- Makes sure that the procedure is conducted according to the following:
 - a. the [NVP recruitment code](#) (drawn up by the Netherlands Association for Personnel Management and Organisation (NVP) with rules of conduct to which every employer and job applicant should adhere when taking on staff; see <https://www.nvp-hrnetwerk.nl/sollicitatiecode>).
 - b. the professor appointments procedure (Single or Multiple Candidate procedure).
 - c. the faculty Tenure Track policy.
- Prevents selection committee participation of members who could have a conflict of interest.
- Together with HR, plans the procedure and ensures the presence of relevant documentation.
- Chairs the selection interviews.

Selection committee members

- Help ensure that the selection process properly covers the relevant subject matter and is procedurally correct.
- Attend every selection interview in order to be able to compare candidates on the basis of all the available information.

Talent Acquisition Specialists

- Advise and can assist the selection committee during the preparation of the entire recruitment and selection process, once the decision to recruit has been taken.

HR Advisor

- Provides – if requested – HR-related information to applicant (collective labour agreement, other schemes and regulations, and any additional terms and conditions of employment).



Additional information on the intranet

The following information forms the basis for the TU Delft recruitment and selection process. Interpretations by faculties or departments may differ in certain areas, but this recruitment guide is the overall basis. Check with the relevant faculty or departmental HR to see if they have any specific interpretation of the procedure.

See also the files on how to appoint / promote professors. They can be found on the intranet page: academic staff recruitment and selection procedures.

➤ [External route - Multiple Candidates Procedure \(MCP\)](#)

➤ [External route - Single Candidate Procedure \(SCP\)](#)

➤ [Procedure for promoting professors](#)

For a specific checklist, see:

➤ [Checklist for professor appointment proposals to the EB](#)

For more information, see:

➤ [Recruitment & selection of PhD candidates](#)

➤ [PhD selection guide 2016](#)

➤ [Recruitment & selection of associate and assistant professors, including tenure trackers](#)

2. The vacancy text

Once the vacancy has been approved, it is important to get the most out of the vacancy text. To realize this, one must compose an attractive and factually correct vacancy text.

A vacancy text is an invitation and a business card. Not only should the text and layout look attractive, the layout should look good as well. In addition, the content should appeal to the reader - the reader needs to be enthused about the position and about TU Delft as an employee. The vacancy text can therefore be used as a pull factor. This is why it is important to explore as to what motivates the candidates. Questions that should be considered are: why would the best applicant want to work with you? What is he or she looking for in terms of their career? What teaching/research ratio are they aiming for? What terms and conditions of employment do they find important?

Tips

- Avoid formal or official language, abbreviations, and jargon.
- See [here](#) for synonyms / alternative phrases in Dutch, or [here](#) for English.
- Avoid **the passive voice** wherever possible.
- The ideal vacancy text contains 600 to 700 words.
- Remember too that almost half of all vacancies are nowadays viewed on mobile devices, so make your vacancy text mobile-friendly as well (in terms of length, for example).

Additionally, the text must give a clear description as to what the position entails. Use:

- Short paragraphs
- Blank lines
- Sub-headings
- Bullet points¹

Limit the summary of competencies to requirements (not wishes) that are essential – the greater the number of competencies, the more you will rule out potential candidates or discourage them from responding. Be concise, position-oriented and realistic about what the position entails. During the selection process, actually assess the candidates on the requirements of the position mentioned in the vacancy. Use a tool, such as <http://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com> or <https://www.totaljobs.com/insidejob/gender-bias-decoder/> to ensure the text is gender neutral.



CHECKLIST Vacancy text

- Make sure the vacancy text is an accurate reflection of the job profile.
- Describe the duties, responsibilities, requirements, and any other additional information in a concise, realistic and job-oriented way.
- Give a clear picture of the position and the environment in which your future colleague will operate.
- Encourage members of the selection committee or AAC to provide input for the text. Involve HR also and make sure the vacancy holder has approved the text.
- Vacancies for academic positions are always published in English. Vacancies for support positions are published in Dutch and if necessary in English also. If necessary, have English texts checked or written by the translation agency.

1. To be as inclusive as possible, consider to use a maximum amount of bullet points.

3. Recruitment

It can be a real challenge to bring the vacancy to the attention of that one candidate you are looking for. Your HR advisor can help in coming up with ideas on how to do achieve this and name the best channels for doing so. Talent Acquisition Specialists bring additional expertise - they can, for example, refer you to a suitable job marketeer, who in turn can help you out finding that one special candidate.

The selection committee members' and other colleagues' networks may also be worth exploring, of course, as can social media and LinkedIn networks. Deploying your own employees as ambassadors – *referral recruitment* – is also considered a significant and effective method.

Actively approaching potentially suitable candidates – *sourcing* – is valuable when recruiting from a thinly-populated labour market. Suitable potential employees may not themselves be actively looking to take a new step in their careers, but if the right job were to present itself, they may well be interested. In case a potential candidate is not interested themselves, they might just know someone in their network who is. It is important in this context to observe the OTM-R rules listed on the right.



CHECKLIST Recruitment

- Consult with a Talent Acquisition Specialist about the most appropriate recruitment channels. A job marketeer may be useful here (by identifying the target group based on data).
- All vacancies are automatically posted on our homepage www.tudelft.nl, as well as on Academic Transfer and LinkedIn (up to a maximum of 70 vacancies a year).
- All support position vacancies are simultaneously published internally and externally; however, checks are made beforehand to see whether there are any preferential candidates on the basis of restructuring schemes or supervision on work-to-work schemes.
- Announce the vacancy and the composition of the committee to departmental employees.
- Ask colleagues to share vacancies in their own professional online and offline networks. Contact Talent Acquisition Specialists if you need help or examples.
- If the group of candidates is insufficient, in terms of number or diversity, contact your faculty's recruiter in order to find out how to broaden the scope of the recruitment process. Do not forget to inform the current applicants if this alters the timetable or procedure.
- Ask members of the selection committee and colleagues to also pass on vacancies to (female) candidates in their networks and invite them to apply.

4. Selection and invitation

Before selecting the candidates, first determine the criteria on which they are to be assessed and ensure that the committee is in agreement with the criteria as well. Determine also in what way scores for each criteria are to be measured and determined. This could be done by giving the candidate(s) an assignment (such as a trial lecture or a business case), or by having them give a presentation about their research. Also, do not forget to include the job criteria that are mentioned in the vacancy text.

Our recruitment system (ATS) has a great tool to rate candidates in process. If there is a large number of candidates, you can arrange a pre-selection round to be carried out by HR or part of the selection committee, during which only the basic minimum criteria will be assessed. Candidates who do not meet these basic criteria can be rejected, after which the entire selection committee can carry out the remaining selection process and select the candidates they want to invite.

Make sure the response time is as short as possible, especially for support positions. Given the current state of the labour market and the fact that other organisations are responding more quickly, it is vital not to keep candidates waiting longer than necessary.

It is recommended to have interviews with at least three candidates (if possible), but try to limit the total to five. Always be as transparent as you can be about the steps in the process.

The rejection of candidates whose application has been discussed by the selection committee should preferably be done by phone and e-mail. These candidates should also receive a well-substantiated explanation as to why they haven't been hired by us (at this point in time). University employees who apply may object to being rejected (they must do so in writing, stating their reasons).



CHECKLIST Selection criteria

- Determine the job criteria in advance and how they are to be measured and assessed. For example during the interview or a presentation or guest lecture.
- Use the 5 star rating in the recruitment system (ATS) to score candidates for the initial letter based selection and for determining which candidates are to be invited for an interview on the basis of their ranking/scores.
- Inform the candidates as soon as possible about the outcome of this step.



CHECKLIST Who do you invite for an interview?

- In the case of internal candidates, rejections must always be accompanied with a well-reasoned explanation. If necessary, consult your HR advisor.
- Every member of the selection committee may give a score to the candidates and rank them on the basis of the format in the recruitment system.
- Consider diversity when selecting the candidates. If possible, invite the same number of men and women and aim for diversity in terms of age, phase of academic career, breadth of knowledge of the field and the like.
- In compliance with the NVP recruitment code, inform candidates as quickly as possible (within two weeks) about their applications. This may take the form of an interim update explaining that a detailed response will follow.
- Invite the candidates by phone or e-mail for the interview. Describe clearly what is expected from the candidate during the interview.
- Use the format e-mail in the recruiting system as a template for confirming the invitation.

5. Reception and selection interview

Reception

A job application is always a special event. It is often the person's first introduction to TU Delft, the faculty, the department or service. The principle is that every candidate should be treated equally and with the same respect – even if a candidate is unsuccessful, you would like them to refer to you and the university in favourable terms.

To realize such an experience, try to make the introduction a memorable one (whether it is face-to-face, or online due to pandemic restrictions), thereby creating a positive impression of the position and our organisation. A guided tour, a personal chat over coffee or lunch is a great suggestion. This also provides the opportunity to talk about the TU Delft, the department, facilities, terms and conditions of employment, culture, and the options for living in or around Delft. Here too, each candidate should be informed and approached as similarly as possible, apart – of course – from any specific questions they may have. Do not hesitate to ask help from Coming to Delft Services for international candidates.

To ensure a good reception, you may use a host or hostess to guide the process and ensure, for example, that the candidates do not meet among themselves (unless of course you decide that you want this to happen). In the invitation letter, inform all candidates clearly about the procedure. Make sure also that the e-mail confirmation of their application is done accordingly.



CHECKLIST Reception

Logistics

- Plan all interviews in due time and decide how long each one will take.
- Assign a host or hostess.
- Make sure the environment is appropriate in terms of temperature, fresh air and lighting. In case of an online interview, try to test the connection before the interview takes place and make sure the candidate is well briefed – because an online job interview may just be experienced as more challenging than usual, so make sure everything is set up accordingly.

Reception

- Make sure the candidate feels welcome before the interview starts.
- Share some extra information about the university, faculty, department or service.

Selection interview

Make sure the first impression does not determine the subsequent course of the interview. In order to ensure that the most apt candidate is selected, be aware and try to let go of any initial bias.

This is why you should prepare the same set of questions – based on the selection criteria – for all candidates.

- Make sure that the questions cover all of the relevant information as regards the position.
- During the interviews, write down your thoughts about the candidates' answers to your questions. This way, the conclusions to these questions can be easily transferred to the recruitment system (ATS).
- Always try to stick to the timetable.
- Make sure you'll have time left for questions from the candidates. Every candidate has the same amount of time.

Make sure you are not always the one who is talking - a situation where the candidate is speaking for around 75% of the time is about right. The STAR method is a good tool to help you formulate your questions. For more information about the STAR method, see [here](#).

You can assign a member of the selection committee to monitor the above aspects and to intervene where necessary. Write down your thoughts and insights directly after the interview has taken place. Use the score cards from the recruitment system (ATS) to make a transfer of that data back into the system even more easily.



CHECKLIST Interview

Selection interview

- Be aware of the possibility of your own (implicit) bias. Assign a member of the selection committee to pay particular attention to bias, agreements and pitfalls.
- Conduct the interview based on the format that you are using. This enables you to make good comparisons between candidates.
- Questions about past behavior, by using the STAR method for example, give a better indication than using a case study in a selection interview. Read about the STAR method [here](#).
- Give candidates enough time to ask questions.
- If you wish, ask the candidates if you can contact references if you have not done so during the course of the application process.
- Write down your thoughts and conclusions about each interview, so that you can easily transfer the most important information into the recruitment system.



6. Selection

At the selection stage, it is decision time. You now face the task of selecting a suitable candidate. The selection committee member who has been assigned to monitor pitfalls during the application procedure must continue to do so even after the interviews. Ensure the said committee member pays close attention to assumptions as well.

Discuss the candidates on the basis of the format, the job requirements, and their questions and answers given during the interview. Compare and rank each question and answer. Talk explicitly about any bias that could exist. This way, you can rate each question on its own merits. Do not be tempted to cut corners and give ratings only as pertaining to the candidates (rather than the individual questions). Otherwise, prejudice and impressions will cloud the actual quality of the answers.

The total ratings for the individual questions/job requirements of every selection committee member then leads to a scoring list.



CHECKLIST Selection

- The selection committee member assigned to monitor pitfalls (bias, assumptions, questions) and any agreements made should continue to do so during the selection phase.
- Start by comparing candidates' scores for each question or job requirement before comparing the overall scores of the candidates.
- Where suitability levels are similar, select on the basis of diversity.
- Contact references only after the candidate has given their permission.



7. Rejection

Giving appropriate and well-substantiated feedback on why a candidate is rejected is key. A candidate who is unsuccessful after having attended an interview deserves a proper, clear, and well-reasoned explanation. Ideally, the rejection should be accompanied by tips and tricks for future interviews. This way, you will – even if the candidate has been rejected – also create an ambassador for TU Delft.

Make sure that your personal notes and writings (including CV's and application letters) from rejected candidates are destroyed after you have finished the process in our recruitment system.

Applications will be automatically deleted from the recruitment system 4 weeks after the process is closed. Candidate data may only be retained with the written consent of the candidate in question.



CHECKLIST Rejection

- The chairman of the selection committee personally informs each of the invited candidates about the outcome of the procedure. This should preferably be done by telephone or face-to-face, immediately after the deliberations. Take no more than about two days to do so; make sure to inform the candidates in advance of this timeframe also. If a candidate cannot be reached by phone (after several attempts) and does not call back, sending an e-mail may be considered, stating that various attempts at trying to reach the candidate by phone have been made and that they should contact you.
- Candidates who are rejected have the right to a detailed explanation and, if necessary, useful tips for the future. Make sure the tips you give are genuinely useful and worthwhile. This will help rejected candidates retain a positive memory of their application and of the TU Delft. Well-reasoned explanations for a rejection with tips for future job applications are rarely taken in a bad way.
- Files in our recruitment system (ATS) are automatically destroyed. Ensure that any files outside of the ATS (held by the members of the selection committee and advisors) are destroyed as well. Written notes, e-mails, SharePoint, SURFdrive documents are examples of such files.
- TU Delft will respond to any complaints concerning to the procedure within a month, in writing. Discuss with your HR advisor how such complaints may be resolved.
- Internal candidates who are rejected always receive a written and well-reasoned explanation. Rejections may be appealed against and objected to. Stick to the conclusions from the format and the deliberations on this matter. If necessary, consult your [HR advisor](#).

8. Day 1 at TU Delft

Consult the procedures on the intranet page 'recruitment selection and internal procedure of academic staff' and discuss the process leading up to the onboarding stage with your HR advisor. Apply the process diligently and inform the candidate about the procedure leading up to their first day at TU Delft. Keep in touch with the candidate, even before their first day at TU Delft (pre-boarding). For example, in case the starting date has been postponed – the candidate should be notified of this in due time. HR will (re)arrange the starting date.

During their pre-boarding and onboarding period (the period before their first work-day and the first 100 days at the TU Delft respectively), it is important for the employees to be excited and enthusiastic about starting a new job. It is even more important for them to retain their enthusiasm during their first period at the TU Delft.



CHECKLIST Day 1

- Keep in touch with the candidate.
- Make sure the entire process for the first day at TU Delft is aligned with both the candidate and your HR advisor.
- Set a realistic starting date for the newly hired employee (bear in mind that work permits may need to be arranged).