

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

## **Open, Transparent and Merit-Based Recruitment Policy (OTM-R)**

### **1. Introduction**

“Victor Babeş” University of Medicine and Pharmacy Timișoara (UMFVBT) recognizes that human resources represent one of the most important strategic assets for the development of excellence in education, scientific research, innovation and healthcare. In alignment with the principles of the European Research Area (ERA), the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, UMFVBT is committed to implementing a Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) based on Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) principles.

The present strategy establishes the institutional framework through which UMFVBT aims to ensure fairness, transparency, equal opportunities and excellence throughout all stages of the recruitment and career development process for researchers and academic staff involved in research activities.

The strategy reflects the institutional commitment to:

- promoting excellence in research and innovation;
- attracting and retaining talented researchers at national and international level;
- ensuring equal opportunities and diversity in recruitment and career progression;
- strengthening internationalization and mobility;
- fostering an ethical, inclusive and collaborative research environment;
- aligning institutional policies with European standards and best practices.

The implementation of OTM-R principles contributes to increasing the attractiveness, visibility and competitiveness of UMFVBT within the European Higher Education and Research Area.

### **2. Institutional Context**

UMFVBT is a leading Romanian higher education institution in the fields of medicine, pharmacy and biomedical sciences, with a strong commitment to research excellence, interdisciplinary collaboration and international cooperation.

The university actively supports:

- scientific research and innovation;
- evidence-based medical education;
- interdisciplinary and translational research;
- international academic and scientific partnerships;
- mobility and professional development of researchers;
- digitalization and modernization of institutional processes.

Within this context, the implementation of a coherent OTM-R policy represents an essential component of the university’s institutional development strategy and contributes to the continuous improvement of research quality and organizational culture.

### **3. Strategic Objectives**

The main objectives of the UMFVBT HRS4R and OTM-R Strategy are:

#### **3.1 Ensuring Open Recruitment**

UMFVBT commits to publishing all research and academic vacancies in a transparent and accessible manner, ensuring equal access to information for internal and external candidates.

#### **3.2 Ensuring Transparent Procedures**

The university aims to guarantee clarity, consistency and predictability throughout all recruitment and selection stages.

#### **3.3 Promoting Merit-Based Evaluation**

Selection and promotion procedures will be based on objective, qualitative and quantitative criteria, focusing on scientific excellence, professional competencies, future potential and ethical conduct.

#### **3.4 Strengthening Internationalization**

UMFVBT supports the recruitment of international researchers and promotes international mobility, interdisciplinary collaboration and participation in European research networks.

#### **3.5 Promoting Equal Opportunities and Diversity**

The institution ensures non-discrimination and equal treatment regardless of gender, age, nationality, disability, ethnicity, religion or social background.

#### **3.6 Supporting Career Development**

The university promotes continuous professional development, mentoring, career guidance and lifelong learning opportunities for researchers at all career stages.

#### **3.7 Ensuring Ethical and Responsible Research**

UMFVBT promotes research integrity, professional ethics, open science and responsible research practices.

### **4. Principles of the OTM-R Policy**

The UMFVBT OTM-R policy is based on the following principles:

#### **4.1 Openness**

All vacancies related to research and academic positions shall be publicly advertised through institutional and international channels, including EURAXESS, when applicable.

Job advertisements shall include:

- job title and description;
- required and desirable competencies;
- eligibility and evaluation criteria;
- type and duration of contract;
- salary and benefits, where applicable;
- career development opportunities;
- application procedure and deadlines;
- contact information.

## **4.2 Transparency**

The recruitment process shall be conducted according to clear procedures and predefined criteria. Applicants shall receive:

- information regarding recruitment stages and timelines;
- acknowledgement of application receipt;
- communication regarding selection outcomes;
- feedback upon request.

The university shall ensure that all relevant procedures and policies are publicly accessible through institutional platforms.

## **4.3 Merit-Based Recruitment**

Selection decisions shall be based on objective evaluation criteria considering:

- scientific achievements;
- research potential;
- teaching and supervision competencies;
- innovation and societal impact;
- interdisciplinary collaboration;
- international mobility;
- professional experience;
- leadership and teamwork skills;
- ethical and professional conduct.

UMFVBT recognizes diverse career paths and supports balanced evaluation approaches aligned with European recommendations.

## **4.4 Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination**

UMFVBT guarantees equal treatment for all candidates.

Selection committees shall:

- respect gender balance principles;
- avoid conflicts of interest;
- ensure impartiality and confidentiality;
- include members with relevant expertise.

The institution promotes diversity and inclusion in recruitment and career progression.

## **4.5 Quality Assurance**

Recruitment procedures shall be periodically reviewed and monitored through internal quality assurance mechanisms.

UMFVBT commits to:

- monitoring recruitment indicators;
- evaluating the effectiveness of OTM-R implementation;
- collecting feedback from applicants and staff;
- identifying and addressing institutional gaps;
- continuously improving institutional procedures.

## **5. Recruitment and Selection Process**

### **5.1 Advertising Phase**

Research and academic vacancies shall be advertised:

- on the UMFVBT website;
- on national recruitment platforms;
- on EURAXESS and international platforms, when applicable;
- through professional and scientific networks.

Vacancies shall normally be published both in Romanian and English.

The institution aims to minimize administrative burden by promoting digital and electronic application procedures.

### **5.2 Selection Committees**

Selection committees shall:

- consist of qualified members with relevant expertise;
- include external experts whenever possible;
- ensure gender balance;
- comply with ethical and conflict-of-interest regulations.

Committee members involved in recruitment activities shall benefit from periodic training regarding OTM-R principles, evaluation methods and unconscious bias awareness.

### **5.3 Evaluation and Selection**

The evaluation process may include:

- eligibility verification;
- scientific portfolio evaluation;
- interviews;
- presentations or practical assessments;
- competency-based evaluation.

Evaluation criteria shall consider both past achievements and future research potential.

The institution recognizes:

- career interruptions;
- interdisciplinary experience;
- mobility;
- non-linear career paths;
- non-academic experience.

### **5.4 Appointment and Feedback**

All applicants shall be informed regarding the outcome of the recruitment process.

Candidates participating in interviews may receive feedback regarding:

- strengths of the application;
- areas for improvement;
- evaluation outcomes.

UMFVBT shall maintain a transparent complaints mechanism allowing candidates to report concerns related to recruitment procedures.

## **6. Research Career Development**

UMFVBT supports researchers across all career stages (R1-R4) according to the European Framework for Research Careers.

The university commits to:

- supporting doctoral and postdoctoral development;
- promoting mentoring and supervision activities;
- facilitating participation in mobility programs;
- encouraging participation in international research projects;
- supporting grant writing and project management skills;
- promoting interdisciplinary and translational research;
- supporting leadership development and innovation skills.

Continuous professional development opportunities shall include:

- workshops and training sessions;
- scientific writing support;
- ethics and research integrity training;
- digital competencies;
- open science and data management training;
- career counseling and mentoring.

## **7. Ethical Standards and Research Integrity**

UMFVBT promotes a research culture based on:

- academic integrity;
- ethical responsibility;
- transparency;
- accountability;
- respect for human dignity and scientific rigor.

The university shall ensure:

- implementation of ethical regulations;
- operation of institutional ethics committees;
- prevention of research misconduct;
- protection of research participants and data;
- promotion of responsible research and innovation.

Training in ethics and integrity shall be integrated into professional development activities for researchers and academic staff.

## **8. Internationalization and Mobility**

UMFVBT encourages international collaboration and researcher mobility as key elements of academic excellence and institutional development.

The university supports:

- participation in Erasmus+, Horizon Europe and other European programs;
- international research partnerships;

- mobility of researchers and doctoral students;
- recruitment of international researchers;
- participation in international scientific events and networks.

Institutional measures shall aim to reduce administrative barriers and facilitate integration of international researchers into the academic community.

## **9. Digitalization and e-Recruitment**

UMFVBT recognizes the importance of digitalization in ensuring efficient and transparent recruitment procedures.

The institution aims to:

- expand electronic recruitment systems;
- simplify online application procedures;
- ensure digital accessibility of recruitment information;
- improve institutional communication;
- facilitate remote participation in selection procedures where appropriate.

Digitalization contributes to reducing administrative burden and increasing accessibility for international candidates.

## **10. Monitoring and Continuous Improvement**

The implementation of the HRS4R and OTM-R Strategy shall be monitored periodically through:

- institutional self-assessment exercises;
- quality assurance mechanisms;
- internal audits and reviews;
- consultation of researchers and staff;
- monitoring of recruitment indicators.

Key performance indicators may include:

- number of vacancies published internationally;
- proportion of international applicants;
- gender balance in recruitment committees;
- recruitment timelines;
- applicant satisfaction;
- participation in mobility programs;
- professional development activities.

The strategy shall be periodically reviewed and updated in accordance with:

- European Commission recommendations;
- ERA priorities;
- institutional strategic objectives;
- feedback from the academic community.

## **11. Final Provisions**

Through the implementation of this Human Resources Strategy for Researchers and OTM-R Policy, UMFVBT reaffirms its commitment to excellence, transparency, fairness and international competitiveness.

The university recognizes that attracting, developing and retaining talented researchers is essential for strengthening research performance, innovation capacity and institutional reputation.

By aligning its human resources policies with European standards and principles, UMFVBT aims to consolidate a modern, inclusive and internationally competitive research environment that supports scientific excellence, professional development and societal impact.

## **References**

The present strategy is based on:

- The European Charter for Researchers;
- The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers;
- Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R);
- European Research Area (ERA) priorities;
- OTM-R Toolkit for Research Performing Organisations;
- European Framework for Research Careers (R1-R4);
- EURAXESS principles and recommendations.

Relevant European principles and recommendations regarding OTM-R implementation, transparency, equal opportunities, mobility and quality assurance were considered throughout the development of this strategy.