

# Inclusive Recruitment & Selection Toolkit

## Four steps towards an inclusive and diverse workforce

EUR strives to create conditions for a fully inclusive work environment, an environment where all individuals, with visible (e.g. gender, age, people of color/ people with a non-western migration background) and/or invisible (e.g. personality, work experience, sexual orientation, academic profile, functional impairment) diversity characteristics can thrive and where diversity in perspectives is a distinguishing asset of the university.

### Why this toolkit?

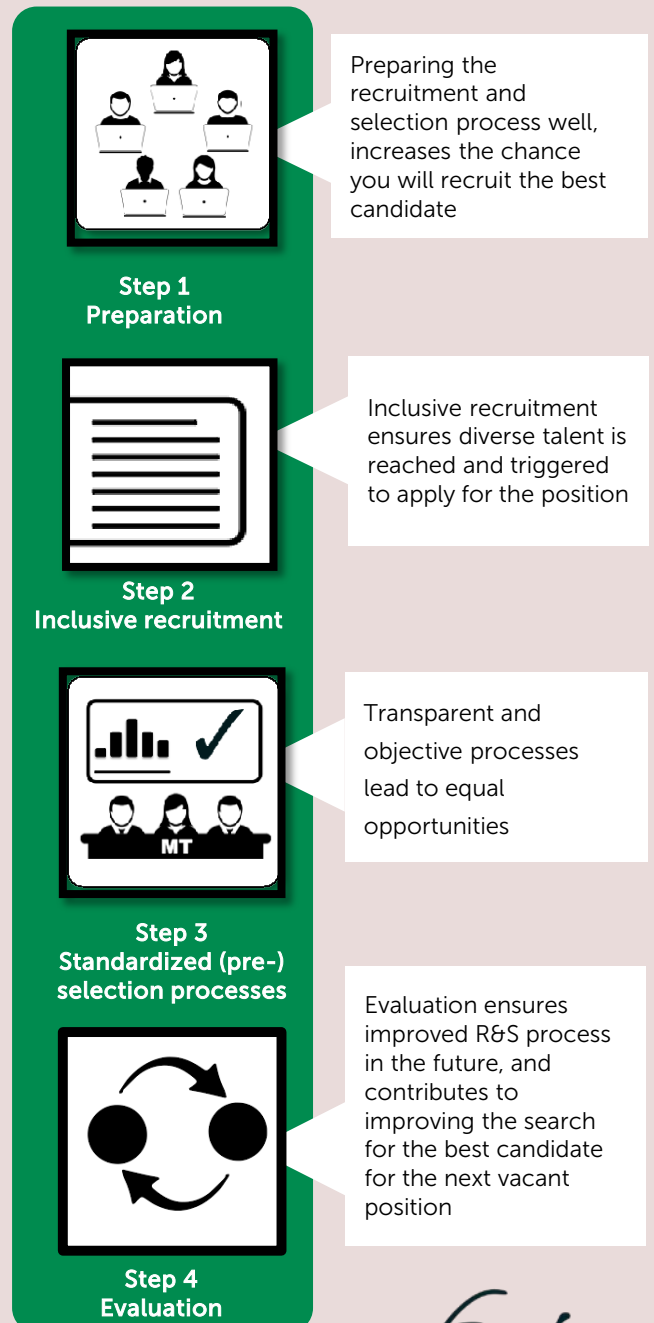
With every vacancy, EUR aims to recruit the most suitable candidate for the position. What the 'best' candidate is, will be determined by the complementarity of the candidate to the existing team composition. HR and Diversity and Inclusion office made this recruitment and selection toolkit to support the ambition of creating inclusive and diverse teams.

### What are the contents of the toolkit?

This toolkit distinguishes four steps in the recruitment and selection (R&S) process. Different tips and tricks are offered per step to promote inclusive recruitment and selection processes. The four steps are described in the green vertical box. The tips and tricks can be used by every vacancy holder and selection committee member within our organization, regardless of the department or the organizational unit and the type of position in the vacancy. Appendices 1-3 offer support in finding the right words for the vacancy text and conducting the screening process and the interview in a transparent and structured way.

### For whom is the toolkit?

Recruitment and selection committee members should consult this toolkit every time they are involved in the process of searching for and/or selecting the candidates for the vacant position. Prior to writing the vacancy text, they should reflect on what kind of (visible and/or invisible) diversity characteristics are lacking in the team, and think about what kind of person they are looking for in terms of skills, educational background, experiences. They should be wary not to fall into the trap of looking for the same person as themselves or person who just left the position. Complementary team members working in an inclusive culture make the 'dream team'. EUR sees inclusivity of talent as the basis of our successes, while the diversity of perspectives and people as a highly valued outcome.



# Step 1: Prepare for the R&S process

## Tip 1. Think about team complementarity

We recommend to use the faculty strategic plan to identify the talent needs for the future. Think about the current available talent in the department / organizational unit and reflect on what kind of skills, competencies, experiences and other visible and invisible diversity characteristics would be complementary to this team and the organizational culture EUR wishes to build. Use this insight to draft the vacancy text (see Step 2).

## Tip 2. Compose a diverse R&S committee

Compose a recruitment and selection committee that is diverse in terms of both visible and invisible diversity characteristics. This will decrease the chance that 'blind spots' or unconscious biases will play a role in any of the phases of the R&S process and will increase the chance that the best person for the job will be selected.

When composing the committee, think for example of the following aspects:

- Visible diversity
  - people of color/ people with a non-western migration background,
  - age: age distribution of at least 10 years difference between the youngest and the oldest member,
  - gender (minimum 30/70 gender diversity ratio, optimal 50/50 ratio).
- Invisible diversity e.g.:
  - specialization/ function,
  - seniority: varying years of work experience or seniority in positions.

## Tip 3. Inform yourself about recruitment and selection process and talk about it in the selection committee

Invest time to learn more about recruitment and selection and possible biases that can play a role in the process. Discuss the entire selection and recruitment process with the rest of the selection committee. Stand still by what you are looking for, how you will look for the best candidate for the team and how you will organize the process to select the best person.

Consider following GoodHabitz module on unconscious bias or [Microsoft e-lesson](#) on it. Consult also [NVP recruitment code](#) concerning recruitment and selection. EUR is also working on developing an online module on inclusive recruitment and selection. Once finalized, the link will be provided here.

## Tip 4. Engage your HR partner/advisor and the Faculty Diversity Officers (FDO) as consultants.

Involve your [HR partner / advisor](#) as early as possible in the recruitment and selection process. They are the experts to consult and can help you identify which diversity characteristic (visible and invisible) the team is still missing and is trying to fill with this vacancy, and can ensure that the recruitment and selection process results in the best candidate. Submit the vacancy text for a final check to the [Faculty Diversity Officer\(s\)](#) before sending it to HR for publication.



# Step 2. Inclusive recruitment

By writing an inclusive and attractive vacancy text you will expand the pool of candidates interested in the position. The more inclusive your recruitment, the more likely the vacancy will reach the best candidate.

## Tip 1. Be critical about the core job requirements

Think critically about the core tasks and competencies needed for the position. Complicated and demanding texts cause confusion and are not attractive for some groups of potentially qualified applicants. Thus, reduce the amount of tasks, competences and skills to a maximum of five each, and distinguish between 'must-haves' and 'nice-to-haves'. For example, is knowledge of Dutch or English language at a particular level a 'must-have', or a 'nice-to-have'? Research indicates that women are less inclined to apply if they do not meet all the requirements, while men apply when complying with a few requirements. With the inclusion of a cumulative list of (unnecessary) requirements for the position, we are potentially excluding valuable candidates. In addition, we know that the five-legged sheep does not exist.

## Tip 2. Make an inclusive vacancy text

A vacancy text written in an inclusive tone, appeals to a larger group of people. In the vacancy text, pay attention to the language use. For example, talk about people with functional impairment rather than 'disabled people' and make sure that functions are written in a gender-neutral way-such as: secretary (m, f, x). Be aware of existence of 'masculine' and 'feminine' words. Research shows that the use of words associated with female gender does not deter any of the genders, whereas words more associated with male gender, deter women from applying. See Appendix 1 for a list of 'feminine' and 'masculine' words. Vacancy texts should be worded in a gender-neutral way as much as possible or, if in doubt, contain terms that are associated with the female gender. Ask for feedback on the vacancy text from various people to make sure the text is attractive for a large group.

### Example of tools for gender neutral language

To facilitate the use of neutral language we recommend:

- [Genderdecoder](#) from Kat Matfield. English texts, including vacancies, can be quickly screened for gender-specific language on this website.
- [Textio](#) detects biases in the vacancy text related to age and gender. This tool is not free of charge but offers a free demo version.
- Use the inclusive language tips on the following [blog post](#).

## Tip 3. Include D&I statement in the vacancy

We urge you to use the following diversity and inclusion statement in all the vacancy texts: Erasmus University Rotterdam aspires to be an equitable and inclusive community. We nurture an open culture, where everyone is supported to fulfill their full potential. We see inclusivity of talent as the basis of our successes, and the diversity of perspectives and people as a highly valued outcome. EUR provides equal opportunities to all employees and applicants regardless of gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, age, neurodiversity, functional impairment, citizenship, or any other aspect which makes them unique. We look forward to welcoming you to our community.

## Tip 4. Spread the vacancy widely among different channels and different groups

Consider using a number of specialized channels to spread the vacancy text, as different approaches may be necessary to reach different target groups. Reach out to [Faculty Diversity Officers](#) with a request to share the vacancy within their faculty and network. See next page tips on the recruitment channels.

## Tip 5. Ensure a diverse applicant pool

While recruiting, monitor the diversity of your applicant pool. Check whether there are sufficient applicants representing a range of visible (e.g. gender, people of color/ people with a non-western migration background), and invisible (e.g. work experience, academic profile) diversity characteristics. If during the recruitment phase you realize that applicants with particular diversity characteristics are missing, or have not been reached sufficiently, intensify the recruitment by approaching the target groups concerned more actively or prolonging the application period.

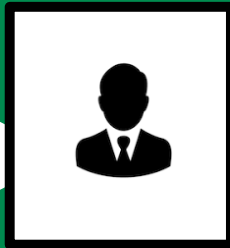
# Tips for the Recruitment Channels

Besides traditional channels, make also use of social media as a recruitment channel. Different groups have different preferences for working conditions. To attract a broad group of applicants, in the vacancy text mention flexible working hours, guidance and career development opportunities, (partially) paid parental leave, fully paid extended birth leave for partners, career coaches, work-life balance coaches and the personal career budget.

Advertise through formal channels and target group-oriented (job)sites. Consider Academic Transfer, LinkedIn, Indeed, the [website of the UWV](#), employment agencies, job fairs and recruitment agencies such as the [Agora Network](#), but also [Diversity Recruitment](#) and [Colourful People](#). Regarding the recruitment of recent graduates or students consider approaching the [multicultural student associations](#).

Advertise through Academic Transfer or [ResearchGate](#) with a broad (international) reach, or via [Academic Positions](#). One or two major American higher education conferences are also visited each year by the EUR. We also place vacancies in specific journals or share via (niche) channels or personal networks. For reaching refugees, use websites of [Refugee Talent Hub](#), [UAF](#) or [Vluchtelingenwerk Nederland](#).

Publish the vacancies via the networks such as [Gender Talent](#), the Rainbow Digest of [ILGA-Europe](#) and [Work Place Pride](#). Furthermore there are recruitment events focused on this target group, such as the one organized by the [Boston Consulting Group](#). Also student associations such as [Erasmus Pride](#) could play a role.



People of color/  
people with a non-  
western migration  
background



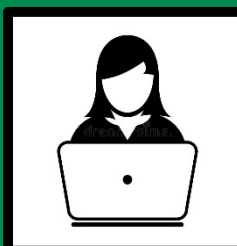
Internationals



Persons with a  
functional  
impairment



LGBTIQ+



Gender

Some applicants might have functional impairment (NL: *arbeidsbeperking*). Specific rules apply within the framework of the Participation law (NL: *Participatiewet*) and the Job agreement (NL: *Banenaafspraak*). The HR policy advisor participation would be happy to assist in exploring the possibilities within a faculty or department. When there is an agreement on hiring a person with a functional impairment for a position, the vacancy, along with the job description, can be sent to the HR policy advisor ([banenaafspraak@eur.nl](mailto:banenaafspraak@eur.nl)). The HR employee(s) belonging to the organizational unit should be informed by the manager about the vacancy.

For persons who do not fall under the above mentioned laws, we advise to advertise through formal channels and to refer to the following in the vacancy text:

- the (digital) [accessibility](#) of the EUR
- the flexible working hours
- the possibility to work in quiet, small, rooms
- the possibility for making necessary adjustments under certain conditions so that the employee can function optimally.

Advertise via specific women's networks such as [FAME](#) and the [LNVH](#). Consider [EPWS](#) or [AWIS](#) for international recruitment. An overview of all women's networks in the Netherlands can be found on the following [page](#). Approach women directly via LinkedIn or request women within our organization to post the vacancy within their (personal) networks. Furthermore, consider recruitment through an agency such as [Female Capital](#).

# Step 3. Standardize the (Pre-)Selection Process

## Tip 1. Anonymous selection

To remove characteristics from the selection process that distract and are not relevant for the job, you may decide to experiment with anonymous selection. In the vacancy text, state that the applicants are expected to submit two documents: one regular CV and one where all personal details are removed (e.g. name and surname, age, nationality, place of living). To avoid deducing someone's age, you could also ask them to provide information on the educational background without mentioning the years when they obtained education and ask for the most relevant work experience. Furthermore, in order not to reveal nationality/non western migration background, you could ask the applicants to report their level of English and Dutch language only (unless other languages are explicitly need for the function). Once the shortlist of candidates is made (Tip 7), unblind their applications to check that there is diversity among candidates.

## Tip 2. Be open and reflective

Nurture an open communication and open atmosphere in the committee. In this context, we recommend that members:

- check that they do not have a favorite candidate beforehand;
- are open to the suggestions and input from other members in the selection committee and / or the HR partner / advisor;
- keep a sharp eye and check whether (visible and invisible) diversity of applicants has been reached via the recruitment strategy and was kept during the (pre-) selection process;
- are aware that everyone has unconscious bias and that these are discussed in an open and friendly way.

## Tip 3. Take collective responsibility for diversity in decision making processes

The selection committee carries collective responsibility for safeguarding that diversity in perspectives is carefully considered in the decision-making process. The vacancy holder assigns in every selection round one of the selection committee members the role of addressing the importance of collective responsibility in shielding against (unintended) bias by raising reflective questions during every step of the process.

## Tip 4. Conduct structured interviews

Conduct structured interviews and use the STARR method (S=Situation, T=Task, A=Action, R=Result, R=Reflection) so that each candidate:

- has the same amount of time (per question),
- gets the same open questions, and
- is assessed in the same objective way.

For example, to assess a certain competence ask the candidate to describe a situation where this competence was needed and explain what the situation was, what they needed to do, how they did it, what the outcome was and what they learned from it.

## Tip 5. Use objective above subjective criteria

Objective selection criteria are hard job requirements. These are transparent and give little room to unconscious biases. Examples are minimum amount of years of work experience, years of teaching experience, and management tasks. Subjective (soft) job requirements, such as a strong (leadership) vision, organizational sensitivity, creativity, high ambition level and excellent (international) reputation, are flexible and context-dependent. As a result, their interpretation is less objective and unconscious biases can play a greater role. When creating a short list of candidates try to use objective, rather than subjective criteria.

## Tip 6. Do not use 'forbidden' questions

It is not allowed to ask questions regarding the following: personal questions about family, family planning and pregnancy; sexual orientation; nationality; financial status; criminal past (unless if it is public); trade union membership \*; health or absenteeism \* (you may ask in general about coping and resilience such as: how one deals with stress, setbacks or how one ensures good work-life balance.); religion and political conviction \*

\* Unless crucial to the function.

## Tip 7. Use scoring when selecting CVs and conducting interviews

To help you examine CVs and motivation letters in a structured manner in the pre-selection phase, please consult Appendix 2. In the selection phase, per candidate, the valuation per competence/job requirement is noted in a form (See Appendix 3). The valuation forms the basis for an objective comparison between the candidates. This form can also be used to provide an insight into the decisions to the applicant and to evaluate and reflect on the selection process.

A method to objectively assess the candidates is to use a check before and after an interview:

- **Beforehand:** Make a list of what you are looking for
- **Afterwards:** Score interviews and check whether you have judged on facts and not on intuition.

## Tip 8. Consider using work samples as part of the selection process

Work samples tests measure job skills required for the function and have good predictive validity. For example, ask the candidates to prepare a lecture if it concerns a teaching position, or to write a policy proposal if it concerns policy advisory function.

## Tip 9. Job offer negotiation

Involve your HR partner / advisor in determining the job offer to ensure that it is consistent with other similar functions in the department. They can provide an advice on determining the salary based on a grading tool. In addition, they can assist during the meeting when job offer negotiations take place.

# Tips for the (Pre-)Selection Process

Be aware of the role that gender can play in how persons present themselves. In general, women are more likely to mention successes as a group effort and men as their own merits. Keep in mind that the actual process of arriving at success may actually not be different. It is just described in different terms.

Stating one's ambition might generally come out easier for men, while women might be more modest about it.

Research shows that gender and cultural background may influence the extent to which one will negotiate salary conditions. As a vacancy holder, do not be influenced by it. Decide your salary conditions based on similar functions within the department beforehand and do not succumb due to the negotiation style.

Take into consideration intercultural differences. An example of intercultural differences concerns the communication and preferred way of working of people from a 'we-culture' and an 'I-culture'.

There are cultural differences when it comes to power distance and one's attitude in relation to hierarchy. Please also be aware that modesty can be very important in some cultures. Be sensitive to these intercultural aspects when scoring the interview.

With regard to the tips for recruiting people with a functional impairment (NL: *arbeidsbeperking*), we advise you to contact the HR policy advisor participation via [banenafsprak@eur.nl](mailto:banenafsprak@eur.nl).

Not all impairments are visible and it is also not allowed to ask about them. Instead ask for example if there are any facilities the person needs to perform the job successfully, but do not make it a weighing point for decision of whether to offer someone a job!

Furthermore, the duration of someone's degree does not indicate anything about a person's intelligence or motivation. Persons with functional impairment can experience obstacles during the study that can lead to study delay.



Gender



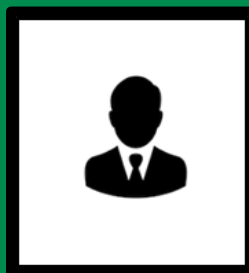
Educational background



Cultural diversity



Persons with a functional impairment



Age

Road to the highest level of obtained education, might be non-linear, which does not make the candidate any less suitable for the job. One's search for the 'right' career may sometimes be a winding, rather than a straight road.

The duration of education to obtain a degree also does not say everything. Sometimes individuals need to support and financially contribute to family life even while studying.

'Stacking degrees' (e.g. VMBO>HAVO>VWO>WO) indicates high level of motivation and perseverance. Our ways of learning, and preferences for learning, also change over time and may be reflected in the process of how we obtain different degrees.

Furthermore, research shows that young people with a migration background receive lower school advice than what they are capable of. Thus, if you notice this in candidate's CV be aware that this may say more about the system rather than a person.

In terms of work experience, sometimes it may seem that a candidate has worked under their education level. A poor connection between education and work level says something about work motivation (every job offer is an opportunity to grow) and not so much about ambitions. It might also reflect the applicant's hard work in finding 'the right' job.

Different generations might have different preferences for organizing work. Be open to it. For example, a wish for part-time work is not related to one's motivation nor ambition, but says something about the way candidates wish to combine work and private life.

Also different generations might prefer different working cultures. During the interview describe the working atmosphere and organizational culture of the EUR.

# Step 4. Evaluate & Report

## Tip 1: Evaluate and draw lessons learned for each filled vacancy

For each vacancy we recommend that the recruitment and selection committee evaluates the entire selection process and shares lessons learned with the HR advisor. As a committee discuss with each other the extent to which you managed to be objective in the process. Also check whether the person you ultimately selected fits description of visible/invisible diversity characteristics of the person you were looking for the team in the first place.

## Tip 2: Conduct yearly evaluations

Ask HR to provide a yearly monitor on whom has joined your faculty/department in the previous year and share an [anonymized] overview of lessons learned.

More information: <https://my.eur.nl/en/eur-employee/hr/vacancies/recruitment-selection-appointment>

Feedback? Please contact HR Policy Advisor Diversity & Inclusion via [diversity@eur.nl](mailto:diversity@eur.nl) or [staff.hr.office@eur.nl](mailto:staff.hr.office@eur.nl)



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# Appendix 1: The Use of Words

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Research shows that words that are generally considered feminine do not deter any of the genders, whereas words that are generally considered masculine, deter women from applying.

## Words that are generally considered feminine

Kind, thoughtful / caring, understanding, helpful, polite, willing (willingness), modest, committed, reliable, flexible / accommodating, communal, communicative, cooperative, creative, honest, emotional, empathy / empathic, enthusiastic, feminine, sensitive, sociable, affectionate, humane, interdependent, interpersonal, customer friendly, loyal, compassionate, human, meticulous / precise, submissive, open, orderly, pleasant, social, support / supportive, quiet / withdrawn, sympathetic, dedicated, versatile, responsible, connecting/ connected, kinship, flattering, docile, friendly, cheerful, warm, gentle, careful



## Words that are generally considered masculine

Active, aggressive, analytical, assertive, athletic, autonomous, adventurous, determine (d), decisive, bluffing / bragging, chemical, commercial, competent, competitive, expert, direct, goal-oriented, purposeful, effective, dominant, energetic, fanatic, driven, eager / greedy, tall, obstinate, handy, hierarchical, impulsive, individual, individualistic, industrial, ingenious, innovative, stubborn / star, strength, critical, leader / leadership, logical, masculine, opinion, courage, courageous, ruthless / reckless, objective, independent, enterprising, practice-oriented, principled, professional, result-oriented, quick, solid, strong, stress-resistant, superior, technical, leading, challenging, hostile, persevering, self-reliant, self-managing, self-assured, self-sufficient

Source: [Direction's research Inclusive Recruitment and selection \(2016\)](#) p 18/19, Vervecken, Verwijvel, Gijbels & Van den Bossche, P. (2015), Pennebaker, Booth & Francis (2007).



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# Appendix 2: Pre-Selection Form

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Template for determining the applicants for the first selection round. The applicants with the highest score will be invited for the interview. Feel free to adjust the column names depending on the function criteria (the document is also available online via [MyEUR](#)).

Requirements [to be filled in per vacancy]

Level of education:  
Relevant years of work experience:  
Language skills [mention language and level]:  
[Core competency for the job]:  
[Core competency for the job]:  
[Core competency for the job]:  
....  
....

Candidate	Appropriate education level Yes=1 No=0	Relevant years of work experience Yes=1 No=0	Adequate language skills Yes=1 No=0	[fill in the core requirement skill here]	[fill in the core requirement skill here]	[fill in the core requirement skill here]	Total score
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							
.....							

# Appendix 3: Interview Form

Name candidate	
Evaluated by	
Position	

To evaluate fill out the form by using: 1-5 (5 being the highest score) Depending on the vacancy, topics may vary. Feel free to adjust the form. The document is also available online via [MyEUR](#).

Motivation:	Score

Core competences (STARR methodology):	Score
[fill in]:	
[fill in]:	
[fill in]:	
[fill in]:	

Diversity deliberations and reflection on person's contribution to team diversity	

Final judgment	Total Score

Motivation final judgment:
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