



## HRS4R

*Human Resources Strategy For Researchers*

*> Since June 2023, the University of  
Toulouse is committed in the process  
of labelization to the HRS4R strategy*

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## *Organizational profile*

The UT stems from the will of its member institutions to build a common strategy in research and education to enhance the visibility of the Toulouse site. With a community of 108,462 students, 4,127 doctoral candidates, and 2,120 faculty members spread across 22 campuses, interdisciplinary research is facilitated in 143 laboratories, including 58 joint units with national research organizations. This community, composed of renowned universities, institutes, and research organizations, fosters collaboration and innovation, prioritizing accessibility, pushing boundaries, and producing actionable knowledge. Engaged in a global commitment, UT strengthens its local ties while positioning itself internationally.

The collective strategies for higher education and research are led by the University of Toulouse, co-constructed in collaboration with stakeholders from education, research, and the socio-economic sphere, and align with an ambitious site policy aiming to build a world-class university, support the international scientific competition of its members, and fulfill all missions of public higher education and research.

The core values co-constructed by UT and its member institutions include promoting access to knowledge and valuing all talents, pushing the frontiers of knowledge, educating socially responsible citizens and professionals, producing actionable knowledge, and engaging globally to better position itself in the territory.

The University of Toulouse distinguishes itself through its interdisciplinary approach serving transitions, carrying a transformative project named TIRIS (Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on society), aimed at accompanying transitions through three key thematic pillars: health and well-being, global changes and their impacts on societies, and sustainable transitions such as mobility, energy, resources, and industrial transformations.

The objectives of TIRIS include developing our scientific potential and new ways of working together to address contemporary global challenges and enhancing the visibility and attractiveness of the University of Toulouse, with the ambition of elevating it to the Top-100 ARWU (Academic Ranking of World Universities) ranking.

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

<https://www.univ-toulouse.fr/recherche-dynamique/label-hrs4r>

The implementation of an Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment (OTMR) policy marks a significant advancement for our organization, providing clear direction for our recruitment processes and highlighting areas for improvement. By aligning our practices with the principles of OTMR, we recognize the importance of formalizing our selection and recruitment procedures to ensure fairness, transparency, and efficiency in hiring processes.

To effectively implement the OTMR policy, we will utilize the Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment Toolkit as a guiding resource. This resource will serve as a comprehensive framework to support our efforts in adopting best practices and implementing OTMR principles throughout our recruitment processes. Here's how we intend to use the resource and implement OTMR principles:

1. **Review and Communication of Recruitment Procedures:** One of the initial steps in implementing OTMR is to review and communicate our recruitment procedures more widely. We will use the resource to assess our current practices and identify areas requiring improvement to comply with OTMR principles. This may include clarifying job requirements, standardizing selection criteria, and establishing clear procedures for candidate evaluation and decision-making.
2. **Enhancing Transparency in Job Advertisements:** Transparency is a key principle of OTMR, and we will ensure that job advertisements provide clear and comprehensive information on job requirements, selection criteria, and the recruitment process. We will go beyond our current practices by developing standardized templates for job advertisements that incorporate best practices in transparency, including detailed job descriptions and information on the evaluation process.
3. **Implementation of Merit-based Selection Criteria:** Merit-based selection is fundamental to OTMR, and we will use the resource to develop standardized criteria for evaluating candidates based on their qualifications, skills, and experiences. This may involve creating evaluation grids or scoring systems to objectively assess candidates' suitability for the position and ensure that hiring decisions are merit-based.
4. **Ensuring Equal Opportunities and Non-Discrimination:** OTMR emphasizes equal opportunities and non-discrimination in recruitment processes. We will review our practices and procedures to identify and eliminate any biases or barriers that may exist in our recruitment processes. This may involve providing training to recruitment staff on awareness of unconscious biases and implementing measures to promote diversity and inclusion in our workforce.
5. **Training and Capacity Building:** To support the implementation of OTMR, we will provide training and capacity-building initiatives for staff involved in the recruitment process. The resource will serve as a valuable tool to develop training materials and organize workshops to raise awareness among staff about OTMR principles, best practices, and their roles and responsibilities in ensuring fair and transparent recruitment processes.
6. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Finally, we will use the OTMR checklist provided in the resource to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of our recruitment processes. This

checklist will enable us to assess our progress in implementing OTMR principles and identify areas requiring further improvement. Regular assessments will be conducted to ensure ongoing compliance with OTMR standards and promote continuous improvement of our recruitment practices.

By leveraging the Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment resource and implementing OTMR principles, we are committed to ensuring fairness, transparency, and excellence in our recruitment processes. This will not only enhance the quality of our hires but also contribute to building a diverse, inclusive, and high-performing workforce that reflects our organizational values and priorities.

## OTM-R Implementation

The implementation of an Open, Transparent, and Merit-based Recruitment (OTMR) policy is crucial for our Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) at the University of Toulouse. Adopting the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers underscores our commitment to promoting a research environment that fosters fairness, openness, and excellence. Our approach to implementing OTMR principles integrates various initiatives and actions throughout our organization, demonstrating a comprehensive commitment to these principles.

First and foremost, our engagement in the HRS4R process necessitates the establishment of an OTMR policy aligned with European standards. Through this policy, we aim to ensure that all recruitment processes are conducted in an open, transparent, and merit-based manner. We use the OTMR Resource provided by the European Commission to guide our implementation efforts. This resource serves as a valuable reference, offering practical guidelines and best practices to enhance our recruitment processes.

A key aspect of our OTMR implementation is the publication of job vacancies through various channels, including our official website and relevant partner platforms. By widely disseminating job openings, we maximize visibility and attract diverse talent pools. This action aligns with the OTMR checklist item related to job advertisement publication.

Furthermore, our commitment to transparency is evident in the publication of recruitment procedures on our website. These procedures outline the steps involved in our recruitment processes, enabling internal and external candidates to understand selection criteria and the application process. This initiative directly corresponds to the OTMR checklist item regarding transparent recruitment procedures.

As part of the TIRIS project, we offer various measures (targeting all levels from doctoral students to senior researchers) to support outstanding proposals that develop interdisciplinary research, which often have more difficulty obtaining funding through traditional channels.

Moreover, our focus on merit-based recruitment is reflected in the establishment of clear candidate selection criteria. We ensure that job descriptions include transparent criteria aligned with job requirements, promoting fairness and objectivity in candidate evaluation. Additionally, the use of criteria grids and interview guides helps maintain consistency and neutrality throughout the selection process. This practice directly addresses the OTMR checklist item concerning the recognition of qualifications and variations in CV order.

Furthermore, our commitment to recognizing mobility experience aligns with the OTMR principle of merit-based recruitment. We value candidates' diverse experiences and backgrounds, including international mobility, and take these factors into account when

assessing qualifications and suitability for positions. This approach promotes inclusivity and supports the free movement of researchers within the European Research Area.

Additionally, our ongoing efforts to improve career development opportunities contribute to a merit-based recruitment environment. By offering training programs and support for professional growth, we empower researchers to enhance their skills and capabilities, thereby strengthening their candidacy for future roles. This initiative underscores our commitment to merit and talent development, as advocated by the OTMR framework.

Overall, our implementation of OTMR principles is integrated into our overall action plan for HRS4R. Each initiative and action listed in our plan contributes to creating an environment that prioritizes openness, transparency, and merit in recruitment practices. By using the OTMR checklist and resource, we ensure that our policies and procedures comply with European standards and best practices, thereby enhancing the quality and fairness of our recruitment processes.

The University of Toulouse (UT), along with its member institutions and national research organizations, reaffirms its commitment to inclusive recruitment, promoting diversity and gender equality, in line with its HR strategy outlined in the orientation letter. This commitment extends to the development of a multi-year plan for the inclusion of people with disabilities. As part of our strategy, we prioritize the recruitment and working conditions of researchers, guided by the HRS4R label. In 2024, we will pay particular attention to these aspects, aiming to improve the recruitment and working environment of researchers. We will facilitate the exchange of best practices among institutions already committed to the label, fostering collaboration and identifying collective actions. Additionally, we will coordinate labeling procedures for other institutions, ensuring they align with HRS4R principles. This initiative could also extend to national research organizations involved in labeling, fostering a culture of continuous improvement in recruitment, onboarding, and support for all staff members, including doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, as well as researchers. Through these efforts, we contribute to building a robust research university committed to excellence, inclusivity, and continuous improvement in our HR practices.

## The Action plan

| N°  | §  | Action   | Responsible Unit  | Targeted Date  |
|---|--|--|---|----------------|
| <i>Section 1 - The European Charter for Researchers</i> |  |  |   |                |
| 1   | Good practice in research & Research environment, co autorship             | Every year, the University of Toulouse organizes a scientific employment conference with higher education establishments and research organizations. This conference leads to the drafting of an HR orientation letter applicable to members of the University of Toulouse, this letter includes exchanges of practices and provides for the creation of an HR observatory. The objective is to perpetuate this new practice and to deploy the actions planned in the letters. Such as, for example, improving the reception of foreign researchers. | DGS   | June 2029      |
| 2   | Professional Responsibility  | In the same way that we inform our new recruits about intellectual property and the protection of scientific and technical potential, write an information notice on plagiarism to be handed out at the beginning of the contract.   | DGS   | June 2025      |
| 3   | Access to research training and continuous development                     | The Ecole des Docteurs has been organizing a training cycle for doctoral students for several years, now that the University of Toulouse is accredited to award the doctorate, the training offer will be strengthened (scientific integrity, program in English...). A new cycle is also planned on entrepreneurship for doctoral students with encouragement for business creation.  | EDT & Communication service   | June 2026      |
| 4   | Access to research training and continuous development                     | Enhance the communication of the SIUP offering towards researchers   | DFVE (siup) & Communication service   | June 2026      |
| 5   | Access to career advice, career development & Evaluation/appraisal systems | As enlighten in the gap analysis, in terms of career advice and appraisal systems, researchers don't benefit the same follow-up as doctorals & post-doctoral students. Université de Toulouse will set up exchanges of good practices between establishment.   | The Human Resources department will lead this topic, with the support of a working group including the ANITI scientific committee, the quality project manager, TIRIS | June 2029      |
| 6   | Public engagement  | Encourage our doctoral students to promote their contributions by leveraging their thesis advisors.  | DGS, EDT  | June 2027      |
| 7   | Working conditions   | The UT hosts the national Atypie-friendly project and offers support to teacher-researchers and students with disorders, as well as awareness-raising activities. Targeted action towards research staff will be organized.  | The Human Resources department  | January 2028   |
| 8   | Complaints/appeals   | As other universities of Toulouse, Université de Toulouse commits to set up a listening cell with a proper complaints/appeals procedure. (testimonials > reports > recommendation by the listening unit > reporting unit if the victim agrees to continue the process > establishment of a committee which decides in a collegial manner the follow-up to be given: investigation, layoff ...)   | The Human Resources department, TES, quality  | January 2026   |
| 9   | Gender balance   | The Equality plan will be updated. Université de Toulouse will study the relevance to widen the action by settling a gender diversity commission at UT and to settle criteria.   | The Human Resources department, TES   | January 2025   |
| 10  | Non-discrimination & Ethical Principles                                    | Université de Toulouse is working on increasing the visibility of services, actions and more widely, improve access to information on international relations. In this context, reviewing and updating translations of Université de Toulouse websites is planned. We will implement committed action on welcoming researchers to be more visible and more attractive. By relying on all the tools we have at our disposal and to build a real reception policy (Cité Internationale, Toulbox, AWD, etc.)  | DGS & Comm  | January 2027   |
| 11  | Non-discrimination   | To enhance the support provided verbally to our new entrants, we plan to write an explanation in English of the documents provided to them.  | The Human Resources department  | June 2028      |
| 12  | Non discrimination, working conditions                                     | Creation of a Doctoral Life Improvement Plan based on conclusion elements from the survey ( <a href="https://doctorat.univ-toulouse.fr/vie-doctorante">https://doctorat.univ-toulouse.fr/vie-doctorante</a> ) and incorporating communication elements. This plan will also enable broader efforts to improve the working conditions of postdocs and researchers, as well as BIATSS staff in general, by drawing inspiration from best practices and determining what can be applied to a wider audience.  | EDT   | September 2025 |
| 13  | Ethical Principles   | Create a note, a charter, or a mandatory training module at the beginning of each contract for research staff at the University of Toulouse to remind individuals of the key points to know and indicate, if necessary, the sources/measures for learning more about ethics.   | DGS   | June 2027      |
| 14  | Access to career advice  | Plan awareness sessions by the School of Doctoral Studies and/or the Europe Unit to encourage doctoral and postdoctoral researchers to seek international funding.   | DGS   | January 2028   |



| N°  | §   | Action  | Responsible Unit  | Targeted Date |
|---|---|---|---|---------------|
| <i>Section 2 - The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers</i> |   |   |   |               |
| 16  | Recruitment, Selection, Judging merit, Variations in the chronological order of CVs, Recognition of qualifications, Transparency, Recognition of mobility experience, Seniority | Université de Toulouse is coordinating various project recruiting researchers. The recruitment process for researchers hasn't been formalized yet. As part of HRS4R, it is planned to describe and publish our selection process. Transparency criteria should be added to the job description as well as the fact that mobility experience is recognized. Criteria grid and interview guide are important tools to stay objective and neutral, they will be written and integrated in the procedure. | The Human Resources department will lead this topic, with the support of a working group including the ANITI scientific committee, the quality project manager, TIRIS | June 2029     |
| 17  | Recruitment   | Publish recruitment announcements on Euraxess, in addition to systematically posting them on the various relevant websites of the UT.   | HR department, TIRIS, ANITI   | January 2029  |
| 18  | OTM-R   | Raising awareness among all our staff about the OTM-R principles.   | DGS & HR department   | June 2025     |



## Action Plan Implementation

The Working Group and the HRS4R Steering Committee (COPIL) play a crucial role in overseeing the progress of our action plan developed as part of the accreditation process. That's why we have chosen to compose our COPIL to ensure the best possible representation of our stakeholders (Director of the House of Human Sciences and Society of Toulouse, UT Director General of Services, ANITI Scientific Director, Vice President Europe/International, Senior Researcher at CNRS, Scientific Coordinator of TIRIS, Vice President "Resources and Institutional Transformation", Director of the School of Doctors). To ensure effective monitoring and evaluation, several mechanisms and practices will be implemented:

**Regular Meetings:** The COPIL will meet at least once a year to review the progress of the action plan. These meetings serve as opportunities to assess the status of each action, identify any challenges or bottlenecks, and adjust strategies as necessary. Additionally, ad-hoc meetings may be scheduled in case of urgent issues or significant milestones being reached.

**Progress Reports:** The operational teams responsible for executing specific actions within the plan will regularly provide progress reports to the COPIL. These reports will include updates on the status of each action, achievements, challenges encountered, and proposed solutions. By regularly sharing information and updates, the COPIL can stay informed about the progress of implementation across various initiatives.

**Key Performance Indicators (KPIs):** The COPIL will establish KPIs to measure the effectiveness and impact of each action in the plan. These KPIs will be aligned with the objectives defined in the action plan and will serve as quantifiable metrics to assess progress. Regular monitoring of KPIs allows the COPIL to track performance, identify areas for improvement, and make informed decisions to optimize results.

**Feedback Mechanisms:** The COPIL will establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from stakeholders involved in the implementation process. This may include surveys, group discussions, or individual interviews to solicit feedback on the effectiveness of implemented actions, identify challenges, and gather suggestions for improvement. By actively soliciting input from stakeholders, the COPIL can ensure that the implementation process remains responsive to the needs and concerns of all involved parties.

**Continuous Improvement:** The COPIL will encourage a culture of continuous improvement by fostering reflection and learning throughout the implementation process. Lessons learned from past experiences, whether successes or setbacks, will be documented and shared within the COPIL and operational teams. This enables refinement of strategies, adoption of best practices, and optimization of processes to enhance overall effectiveness.

Overall, by using these mechanisms, the COPIL will maintain active oversight of the implementation process, ensure alignment with strategic objectives, and promote continuous progress towards the successful achievement of our HRS4R goals.

## Involvement of the research community

To ensure active participation from the research community, our key stakeholders, in the implementation process of the HRS4R strategy, we have developed a comprehensive plan aimed at fostering collaboration, engagement, and participation:

1. **Establishment of a Working Group:** We will create a working group comprising representatives from various member institutions of the University of Toulouse who express interest in participating in the HRS4R strategy. This working group will serve

as a platform for stakeholders to contribute by proposing ideas, viewpoints, and feedback throughout the implementation process.

2. **Implementation of Open Communication Channels:** We will establish open communication channels to facilitate dialogue and engagement with the research community. This includes organizing regular meetings or public sessions where stakeholders can express their opinions, ask questions, and provide input on key aspects of the HRS4R strategy. Additionally, we will use digital platforms such as email newsletters or the institutional website to disseminate information, updates, and participation opportunities.
3. **Solicitation of Feedback and Contributions:** We will actively solicit feedback and contributions from the research community at various stages of the implementation process. This may involve conducting surveys, focus groups, or consultation sessions to gather insights on priorities, concerns, and improvement suggestions. By directly soliciting contributions from stakeholders, we can ensure that their perspectives are integrated into decision-making processes and that the implementation strategy reflects their needs and aspirations.
4. **Collaboration and Co-Creation:** We will encourage a culture of collaboration and co-creation by inviting stakeholders to actively participate in the development and finalization of key initiatives of the HRS4R strategy. This may involve forming working groups or task forces focused on specific areas of interest, such as recruitment practices, career development, or diversity and inclusion. By involving stakeholders in co-designing solutions, we can leverage their expertise and ideas to develop more effective and sustainable strategies.
5. **Training and Capacity Building:** We will offer training and capacity-building opportunities to enable members of the research community to actively participate in the implementation process. This may include workshops, seminars, or webinars focused on topics such as research integrity, diversity awareness, or effective communication skills. By equipping stakeholders with the necessary knowledge and skills, we can enhance their ability to contribute meaningfully to the HRS4R strategy.

Overall, by implementing these strategies, we aim to create a culture of engagement, collaboration, and shared responsibility within the research community, ensuring that all stakeholders have a voice and a stake in the successful implementation of the HRS4R strategy at the University of Toulouse.