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Approved

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**Recruitment and Selection Policy of Personnel at the National
Institute of Materials Physics (Institutul National de Cercetare-
Dezvoltare pentru Fizica Materialelor in Romanian, acronym in
English is NIMP)
(OTM-R policy)**

This document describes the NIMP's policy for recruiting, selecting and hiring personnel in an open, transparent and merit based manner.

NIMP is strongly supporting an open, transparent and merit based recruitment (OTM-R) policy in the research and innovation sector. As such, NIMP has adhered to the principles mentioned in the European Chart of Researchers and in the Code for Recruitment. NIMP will do all the necessary efforts to implement those principles, taking also into consideration the national laws and regulations.

In fact, NIMP is implementing most of the principles mentioned in the Chart and Code since 2008-2010, seeking to recruit the best researchers, ensuring in the same time equality of chances for all the candidates in a transparent and open manner. During the years, the OTM-R policy implemented by NIMP has increased the international visibility of the institute, contributing to attract highly skilled researchers from diaspora or from abroad, or young researchers (PhD students, post-docs) from less developed countries.

The recruitment refers to the process to attract candidates having an expertise that fits to requirements of the open positions, while the selection refers to the process of choosing the best candidates from those competing for the open position, in a fair manner in which the same rules and criteria apply for everybody.

For transparency, the open positions are made public using various channels (e.g. NIMP web page, EURAXESS, newspapers, etc.), with the necessary details regarding the envisaged skills, tasks, education level, working hours, etc. The positions are open for everybody, without any constraint on gender, religion, nationality. However, persons with previous ethic or legal problems, or persons that do not medically fit for the envisaged work will not be considered for the selection process for obvious reasons.

The selection process is based only on the personal merits of the candidates, meaning not only quantitative criteria such as number of publication, patents, amount of money attracted through projects, but also qualitative criteria such as relevant research achievements, ability to collaborate, to develop new research ideas, to train young researchers (if relevant), capacity to involve in other activities for the benefit of the institute.

The main principles for the recruiting and selection process are:

- Transparency, all the necessary information will be made available for everybody interested in a concise and clear manner;
- Use a multitude of channels to make public the open positions;
- Use of proper selection criteria, considering also the national laws and regulations;
- Keep the paper work in reasonable limits;
- Ensuring a gender balance but without derogation from a merit based recruitment.
- Periodic upgrade of the internal rules and regulations, to be in line with EU and national changes.

NIMP has the following OTM-R objectives:

- To respect ethic, transparency and non-discrimination in the recruitment process;
- Seeking best candidates for the open positions;

- Promoting quality in the recruitment and selection process, making available the necessary information about the open positions to all the interested candidates;
- Ensuring measures and funds for a continuous professional development of the researchers;
- Promoting the internationalization of the research by hiring people from abroad;
- Ensuring a proper work environment and infrastructure;
- Promoting collaboration and team work among researchers.

At present, the national institutes in Romania are governed by the Emergency Ordinance (OG) 57/2002, approved by the law 324/2003, with all the subsequent clarifications and modifications.

The former laws 319/2003 regarding the status of researchers and 206/2004 regarding the ethical rules in research activity were replaced this year with a new law for researchers, the law 183/2024 that includes also the ethical rules in research.

According to this new law, there are two options for a researcher:

- Hiring by competition on an open position;
- Promoting by examination on a superior position inside the organization.

For clarification, one has to mention that the new law mention 5 types of positions for a researcher:

1. Principal Researcher (R4), called Scientific Researcher rank I (CS I in Romanian)
2. Dedicated Researcher (R3), or Scientific Researcher rank II (CS II)
3. Recognized Researcher (R2), or Scientific Researcher rank III (CS III)
4. Debutant Researcher (R1) having PhD title or being PhD student, named Scientific Researcher (CS)
5. Assistant Researcher, having bachelor or master degree (not yet enrolled as PhD student) (ACS)

Therefore, the first career stage is ACS and the top one is CS I. The law states that for open positions (new entries in the R&D system) the recruitment is based on competition between the enlisted candidates and the selection is based on a set of criteria to asses both quantitatively and qualitatively the candidates (art. 13), while the promotion on a superior position is for researchers already hired in the institute if they fulfill with at least 50 % up, at least 2/3 of the same set of criteria as for hiring (same art. 13). For CS I and CS II there a minimum set of criteria with quantitative thresholds set at national level by Ministry Order (at present is still valid the Ministry Order OM 6129/2016). Each research organization can add supplementary criteria, taking into account its specificity. For CS III, CS and ACS the criteria are set by the research institutions. All these criteria as well as the description of the entire recruitment and selection process are included in the institution's rules to hire/promote the research personnel. These rules apply equally to all candidates for hiring or promotion.

At present, the main steps are the same for hiring on open position and for promotion on a superior position:

- Advertising the open positions and informing the candidates on the documents they have to add in the dossier; informing the candidates about the internal rules and regulations of the research organization, especially for those applying for open positions;

- Collecting the dossiers and assessing the eligibility of the candidates (the required studies and diploma, the medical certificate that it is fit for research activities, the legal certificate that has no ethical or legal issues);
- Evaluation of the dossiers by the commission designated to make the selection (5 members out of which at least two members are from other research organizations);
- Interview with the candidates;
- Final evaluation of the commission and ranking of the candidates, communication of the preliminary results;
- Appeal if some candidates consider that the results are not correct; the appeal is judged by a separate commission;
- Final results, nominating the candidates that are hired on the open positions or promoted on a superior position;
- Signing of the new work contract.

NIMP has rules for hiring and promotion since 2010, last updated in 2017-2018, most probably will be updated again to comply with the new regulations for hiring and promotion as derived from the new law 183/2024 and the new Ministry Order for minimum standards and thresholds to be fulfilled by CS I and CS II.

According to the present laws, the evaluation commission is proposed by the Scientific Director of NIMP and approved by the Scientific Council and the Administration Council. The commission to judge the appeals is proposed and approved separately.

The evaluation commission has access to the internal rules and regulations for hiring/promoting ACS, CS, CS III, CS II, CS I. It has also access to all the dossiers of the candidates. In their work, the commission is assisted by a secretary from the Human Resources (HR) office of NIMP, having the qualification of HR inspector.

The appeal commissions access only to the dossiers of the candidates making the appeal. Their decision, if it is in contrast to that of the evaluation commission, has to be approved by the governing bodies of NIMP.

The implementation of the OTM-R policy is supervised by the Scientific Council on all aspects related to the scientific content of the dossiers and procedure, and by the HR office on all aspects related to compliance to national laws as well to EU documents concerning HRS4R.

The fact that OTM-R policy implemented up to now by NIMP was open, transparent and correctly applied is demonstrated by the following numbers:

- 10 researchers from diaspora hired in NIMP in the last 5-7 years
- 8 researchers from other countries (Portugal, Brazil, France, Morocco) are hired and work in NIMP
- Between 3 and 8 young researchers from abroad are coming to work in NIMP with fellowships (from 3 months up to one year), funded from different sources (Eugen Ionesco-AUF, ICTP Trieste, grants from home countries, even own money).

Promotion exams are held regularly, every year if necessary, to ensure a rapid promotion in the research career for all fulfilling the criteria set in the national and internal regulations.

Competitions for open positions are organized when necessary.

A special case is temporary hiring on projects. The new law stipulates that a competition in this case is not compulsory if the person is nominated in the project proposal and the proposal is accepted for funding. For the positions declared vacant in the project proposal, the recruitment and selection is based on competition that can be launched immediately after signing the funding contract.

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