

## THE BEST RESEARCHER FOR THE JOB

*Secured your research funding?  
Congratulations! But  
who are you  
hiring?*



*Tips for  
promoters of (early stage)  
researchers at Ghent University*



## STEP 2. SCREENING

**Have you adopted the five key elements under “advertising”? That’s half your screening work done!**

Advertising internationally means: processing lots of applications. Clear information increases your chances of receiving high-quality applications. **ACKNOWLEDGING RECEIPT** demonstrates respect to candidates, especially if the procedure takes long to complete. In this, you can share information on the timing for interviews, decision and feedback. Candidates that do not pass the first screening round can be informed after this round.

## STEP 1: ADVERTISING

### KEY ELEMENTS:

#### 1. Minimal degree requirements

Remember you are addressing an international audience (e.g. “MA degree in Geology”).

#### 2. Level of research position

Do you know the European Framework for Research Careers? R1 = PhD niveau; R2 = postdoc niveau

#### 3. Essential competencies and desired competencies

Have you told candidates which languages they can apply in and which languages are used in the research team?

#### 4. Required documentation

A personal letter of motivation, a description of one’s contribution to a collaborative paper provide a better insight than just the cv and list of degrees.

#### 5. The selection criteria and the selection process

e.g. Ph.D. topic, teaching experience,...

**“Never simply hire on the basis of a written application!”**

### “H2020 PROJECT? OPEN RECRUITMENT IS COMPULSORY”

#### COMPOSE A SUFFICIENTLY DIVERSE SELECTION COMMITTEE.

Make sure you have experts in the field on board. Why not involve other supervisors, future colleagues, externs from other faculties or non-academic stakeholders from your network? Two pairs of eyes observe more than one. Three pairs even more so!

Is the committee **GENDER BALANCED?** Are there no **CONFLICTS OF INTEREST?**

Discuss **THE SCREENING PROCESS** well in advance. Ask colleagues with experience of drawing up a shortlist.

Have the selection criteria from **THE JOB VACANCY NOTICE** at hand; you’re guaranteed to get through the stack of cv’s faster! Personal impressions will no doubt vary but **THE CRITERIA MUST BE TRANSPARENT.**

**“Worthwhile considering”**

**INFORMATION** on salary, fellowship, work environment and training opportunities is crucial to attract top candidates. Remember that in Flanders the fellowships and training opportunities at PhD and postdoc level are very competitive.

A short **DEADLINE** does not reach many candidates: 6-8 weeks is an internationally acceptable period to prepare an application. Do you already know **THE INTERVIEW DATE?** Tell them! If you aim at top candidates, take into account their busy timetable. If a face-to-face conversation isn’t feasible, skyping might be an alternative.

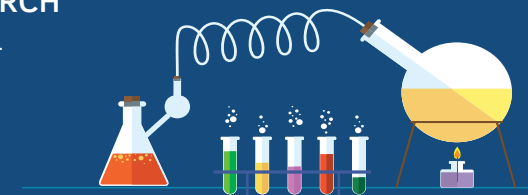
**REFERENCES** give you crucial information but only ask for referees’ names if you will actually contact them, e.g. in the shortlist phase.

Have you posted the vacancy on the **Ghent University JOBSITE?** Are you recruiting for H2020 projects? In that case, definitely post the vacancy on the English-language Ghent University job site. It will be automatically transferred onto **ACADEMIC POSITIONS** and **EURAXESS.**

Additionally, ResearchGate and **FIELD-SPECIFIC JOB SITES,** though perhaps costly, target candidates more specifically. A **SOCIAL MEDIA** message however costs you nothing!

Be open-minded about **ATYPICAL CAREERS.** Non-academic work experience can be highly relevant; long absences in the past do not necessarily signal poor performance.

Quantitative criteria are easy, but dare to assess the **QUALITY** of someone’s **EXPERIENCE** or **RESEARCH RESULTS.**



# STEP 3. INTERVIEWING



## 1. Before

All previous tips under "screening" still apply here! **IS "THE CLICK"**

**IMPORTANT TO YOU?** Why not involve your entire team in the interview, a guided tour or lunch?

1. Inform candidates early enough about the **TIME, PLACE, PROCEDURE AND LANGUAGE OF THE INTERVIEW**.
2. Organise a **FACE-TO-FACE INTERVIEW**. A **GUIDED TOUR** within the research unit can be a great help in assessing a candidate's motivation and social skills, and helps applicants to tune their own expectations.
3. Is a personal meeting not feasible? Organise a **SKYPE INTERVIEW** or conference call. Take different **TIME ZONES** into account!

## 2. During

1. Appoint a rapporteur for the interview and the selection meeting. **MEETING MINUTES** are useful when giving feedback, or in case anyone questions the selection procedure.
2. Make sure the panel members **AGREE ON THE SELECTION CRITERIA**. A structured interview can be very helpful, but leave room for spontaneous questions as well.
3. Dare to dig deep into **KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERTISE**. Ask, for example, how particular publications were generated. Is specific **LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY** required? Make sure you hold part of the interview in that language.
4. Test **GENERAL COMPETENCIES**. Ask for explanations and concrete examples and go into sufficient detail.
5. Turn the interview into a **DIALOGUE!** Give candidates the opportunity to ask their own questions or share their expectations. This will ensure you are all on the same wavelength.

## 3. After

1. After the interview you can contact **REFEREES** for specific questions.
2. **ARE NONE OF THE CANDIDATES SUITABLE** for the job? Don't recruit anyone if you have no faith in their potential. Perhaps you have overlooked other promising applications. Or perhaps you prefer to launch a new and better vacancy notice.
3. **NEED MORE TIPS?** Take a look at the extensive Ghent University guide for selection interviews (Dutch only):  
<http://www.ugent.be/intranet/nl/administratie/aanwerving-per-soneelskosten/handleiding/overzicht.htm>

# STEP 4. FEEDBACK requires time... but demonstrates professionalism.

Is the application not eligible because the candidate does not meet essential requirements? **A SHORT MESSAGE SUFFICES**.

**FOR CANDIDATES WHO DO NOT MAKE IT TO THE INTERVIEW STAGE**, a standard answer suffices. If anyone asks for specific feedback, give it! You can highlight strengths and weaknesses in their cv.

**CANDIDATES WHO ARE NOT SELECTED AFTER BEING INTERVIEWED** deserve spontaneous feedback. General feedback on the profile of the successful candidate is already very useful for them. If anyone asks for specific feedback you can highlight strengths and weaknesses in their cv.

Good **COMMUNICATION** keeps strong candidates on board.

If the selection procedure takes a long time, **INFORM CANDIDATES REGULARY** about the procedure.

**CONTACT THE SUCCESSFUL CANDIDATE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!** If anyone is ranked second, tell them. The highest ranked candidate may decline the offer.

If you are waiting for an official endorsement from e.g. the faculty, department or board, **BE HONEST AND TRANSPARENT**. Inform candidates about the scheduled decision date.

# STEP 5. HIRING AND WELCOMING

Are you appointing researchers with project funds? Complete the **ELECTRONIC RECRUITMENT PROPOSAL** (eVTA) in Apollo (document in Dutch).



The Human Resources Department invites new staff members for a **WELCOME MEETING**, during which they receive their personnel card and information on administration, social security, rights and entitlements, etc. All new staff members are also invited to a **BREAKFAST MEETING** with the (vice)rector.

Provide your new colleague with a warm welcome and **INTRODUCTION IN YOUR RESEARCH TEAM**. Make time for formal as well as informal meetings.

<http://www.ugent.be/en/work/career/welcome/welcome-by-department.htm>

Why not appoint a buddy in your team to take care of the new colleague?

<https://www.ugent.be/en/work/career/welcome/workplace-checklist-buddy.htm>

Does your new colleague speak Dutch? If not, discuss with the entire team when and how to switch to English to ensure a good process of integration. Inform non-Dutch speakers of the **UNIVERSITY LANGUAGE CENTRE** where they can register for Dutch classes at reduced rates.

<http://www.uct.ugent.be/en>

**ON THE GHEENT UNIVERSITY WEBPAGES YOU FIND MORE INFORMATION AND GOOD PRACTICES ON WELCOMING NEW STAFF MEMBERS:**

<https://www.ugent.be/en/work/career/welcome>

## i | Need Help?



Recruiting and selecting new staff members

[Selecties@UGent.be](mailto:Selecties@UGent.be)



Welcoming staff members to Ghent University:

[welkom.dpo@UGent.be](mailto:welkom.dpo@UGent.be)



H2020 obligation regarding open recruitment

[EU-cel@UGent.be](mailto:EU-cel@UGent.be)

Useful links:

Euraxess jobs

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/index.cfm/jobs/index>

European Framework for Research Careers

[http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research\\_policies/Towards\\_a\\_European\\_Framework\\_for\\_Research\\_Careers\\_final.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/Towards_a_European_Framework_for_Research_Careers_final.pdf)

Open, Transparent & Merit-Based Recruitment

[http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research\\_policies/OTM-R-finaldoc.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/pdf/research_policies/OTM-R-finaldoc.pdf)

Rather a professional videoconference than skype?

<http://icto.ugent.be/nl/content/videoconferentie>