

CIC bioGUNE

MEMBER OF BASQUE RESEARCH
& TECHNOLOGY ALLIANCE

OTM-R Policy

HR Excellence in Research



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1. CASE INFORMATION

CASE NUMBER: 2024ES229159

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2. INTRODUCTION

The bioGUNE Research Centre (hereinafter referred to as **CIC bioGUNE**), a member of the Basque Research & Technology Alliance (BRTA), whose headquarters are in the Bizkaia Science and Technology Park, is a biomedical research organisation that carries out cutting-edge research at the interface between structural, molecular and cellular biology, with special emphasis on the study of the molecular basis of disease for use in developing new diagnostic methods and advanced therapies.

Our **core mission** is to conduct excellent research in the field of life sciences, covering the entire value chain of R&D&I, including technology transfer and the commercial exploitation of scientific results.

The cornerstone of the Centre's strategy is its commitment to specialisation and excellence. Its strategic challenges are:

- Excellence in research
- Technology transfer
- Collaboration with stakeholders in the Basque Science, Technology and Innovation Network (RVCTI)
- International recognition
- Training and retaining talent

- Communication and outreach
- Excellence in management
- Attracting and retaining talent

With regard to **competitiveness**, CIC bioGUNE is outstanding not only in its state-of-the-art infrastructures, technical and administrative support, attractive salaries and target-based incentives, but also in its human capital.

All this highlights how important selection processes are to CIC bioGUNE, in which it consistently guarantees its commitment to principles such as:

- Openness
- Transparency and
- Merit

3. BACKGROUND

The European Commission has developed a Human Resources strategy in the field of research, based on the 40 principles in the **European Charter for Researchers** and the **Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers**, with the aim of contributing to the development of a more attractive European labour market for research staff.

The label grants recognition to institutions that align with this strategy, allowing them to highlight their commitment to fair and transparent recruitment and evaluation procedures in the field of research.

It is a voluntary process requiring long-term commitment from institutions, which involves coordinated, joint efforts among various internal and external stakeholders.

Aware of the importance of these good practices in the field of Human Resources, CIC bioGUNE has initiated the process for obtaining the HR Excellence in Research label in order to continue improving and growing as a Centre. The aim is to obtain the accreditation in the first half of 2025.

This document contains the OTM-R Policy drawn up by CIC bioGUNE, whose purpose is to gather information on the application of open, transparent and merit-based recruitment practices, with the aim of making research careers more attractive while promoting mobility and equal opportunities among candidates.

4. PRINCIPLES OF THE OTM-R SYSTEM

4.1. Reviewing the current OTM-R policy, practice and procedures

CIC bioGUNE has carried out a review of its recruitment system.

Specifically, in 2016, the Centre started to improve its people management policies and processes, among them the “P-16-04 Procedure Manual for Human Resources Management at CIC bioGUNE”. This procedure, considered essential to the Centre’s recruitment policy, is evaluated and updated each year.

In addition, CIC bioGUNE has used the checklist provided by the European Commission to review its current recruitment process. Section 5 of this policy describes the evaluation carried out using the checklist.

4.2. Developing and implementing a revised OTM-R policy

CIC bioGUNE has developed and applied an OTM-R policy that especially encourages external candidates in the following way:

a) Providing clear and transparent information on the entire selection process, including selection criteria and an indicative timeframe; This is reflected in the document “P-16-04 Procedure Manual for Human Resources Management at CIC bioGUNE” that the centre has published on its intranet ([link](#)). With this, CIC bioGUNE aims to ensure employees joining the staff have an adequate level of training to perform the functions inherent in their job. Furthermore, the selection criteria and timeframe are included in the job offers that CIC bioGUNE publishes both on its website and in Euraxess, among other sites.

b) Publishing a clear and concise job offer with links to detailed information on, for example, the required competencies and functions, the working conditions, rights, training opportunities, career development, gender equality policies, etc. All these requirements are included in the job offers that, as stated above, are published on the website and in Euraxess.

c) Ensuring that the required level of qualifications and competencies match the needs of the position and are not a barrier to access, by being too restrictive or demanding unnecessary qualifications; The specifications requested in each job offer are fully aligned with the document “Career Development in CIC bioGUNE”, produced in accordance with Decree 109/2015, 23 June, regulating and updating the composition of the Basque Science and Technology Network and published on the Centre’s intranet ([link](#)). The document establishes the criteria required for the proper performance of each position at CIC bioGUNE.

d) Considering the inclusion of specific proactive elements for under-represented groups; CIC bioGUNE has drawn up an equality plan whose purpose is to eliminate any kind of gender-based inequality or discrimination that may arise in the Centre, while integrating equal treatment and opportunities between men and women as a basic principle of the Centre and the cornerstone of its management procedures. CIC bioGUNE is also committed to integrating women into the work environment and, especially, into the world of research and technical and scientific careers through participation in a variety of science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEAM) projects. These programmes consist of mentoring, especially for school-aged girls, and aim to develop talent and promote technical and scientific careers (traditionally associated with men) in such a way as to raise awareness, attract and empower future generations of women in these fields.

e) Minimising the administrative burden for candidates (proof of qualifications, translations, number of copies required, etc.); As shown in the job offers published by CIC bioGUNE, candidates only need to fill in a brief form consisting of four mandatory fields, (first name, surname, email address and reference) and attach their CV when applying. No other information is required from them, unless strictly necessary, as aspects such as level of education, experience, doctoral thesis, publications and languages are shown in the CV. In this sense, it is worth stressing that all the above information is subject to the stipulations in Organic Law 3/2018, of 5 December, on personal data protection and guaranteeing digital rights, whereby candidates must accept the processing of their personal data.

f) If necessary, reviewing the institutional policy on languages; CIC bioGUNE has implemented various measures related to its reference languages, Spanish and English. Firstly, it ensures that selection processes are conducted in both languages. Secondly, the document “P-16-04 Procedure Manual for Human Resources Management at CIC bioGUNE” is also available in both languages. Finally, the website is in English to ensure accessibility for all users.

4.3. Publication of the OTM-R policy

The OTM-R policy is published on an easily accessible page on the CIC bioGUNE website and addresses the minimum requirements included in the above point, while respecting institutional autonomy and diversity.

This is a requirement as a centre applying the HR Excellence in Research.

Its use is also promoted throughout the CIC bioGUNE.

4.4. Quality control system

A quality control mechanism has been established that includes supervision of the whole recruitment process, which will be administered by the People Management Department.

This is combined with a periodic external review by independent persons as part of the verification of the HR Excellence in Research.

To supervise and assess the degree of implementation of the OTM-R system, there also various internal documents to evaluate candidates, safeguarding the most critical phases of the recruitment process.

4.5. Establishing or adapting an internal OTM-R guide

As previously stated, CIC bioGUNE has published on its intranet the document “P-16-04 Procedure Manual for Human Resources Management at CIC bioGUNE” ([link](#)), which governs the recruitment process, from the job advert/application phase to the appointment of the candidate.

In addition, clear and specific rules and procedures are established for each selection process, adapted to the specifications required of the candidates.

Specifically, in accordance with the European Framework for Research Careers, which identifies four major professional profiles for research staff, the professional categories are:

- **G1 A Principal investigator and G1 B unit manager:** R4 Leading researcher (researchers who lead their area or field of research)
- **G2 Senior researcher:** R3 Established researcher ((researchers who have developed a level of independence)
- **G3 Junior researcher:** R2 Recognised researcher (PhD holders or equivalent who are not yet fully independent)
- **G4 Predoctoral researcher in training:** R1 First-stage researcher (up to the point of PhD)

Thus, although the basic principles of openness, transparency and merit must be applied to all positions, procedures are adapted to each recruitment process according to the level, nature and type of position. The key is to ensure the different procedures or exceptions are clear, objectively justified and transparent.

In this respect, in line with the principle of “Recognition of Qualifications” in the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, an appropriate evaluation and recognition of academic and professional qualifications is outlined, including the non-formal qualifications, skills and competencies of all research staff, as well as international and professional mobility.

4.6. Training and awareness-raising in the institution

CIC bioGUNE guarantees that adequate training is provided to all staff participating in the selection processes. This must include training on how to report to members of the Selection Committee.

Specifically, within the scope of research staff, these committees are made up of **the Principal Investigator or the Unit Officer, a member of his/her laboratory or unit and a third person of the selection process leader's choice**, occasionally supported by external figures (e.g. psychometric tests), in addition to that provided by CIC bioGUNE's Administration/Human Resources department.

It should also be stressed that the committees receive support from the people responsible for the documents "P-16-04 Procedure Manual for Human Resources Management at CIC bioGUNE" ([link](#)) and "Career Development in CIC bioGUNE" ([link](#)), published on the Centre's intranet, who are the:

- Director General
- Scientific Director
- Head of Finance and People Management

Given that CIC bioGUNE selection processes are international, they are conducted in English. Consequently, staff members are trained in processing and evaluating candidates, and conducting interviews in this language.

4.7. Electronic recruitment

To avoid discrimination against candidates based on their geographic location and/or financial means, e-recruitment tools are used, leveraging experience of existing platforms and tools. Specifically, as well as the website, CIC bioGUNE uses email, video calls and various document management systems.

5. OTM-R CHECKLIST

Next, CIC bioGUNE identifies the measures of the effectiveness of its OTM-R policy, which must be reviewed periodically and, if necessary, adapted accordingly, using the following checklist:

OTM-R checklist					
	Open	Transpa rent	Merit- based	Answer: ++ <i>Yes, completely</i> +/- <i>Yes, substantially</i> -/+ <i>Yes, partially</i> -- <i>No</i>	Suggested indicators (or form of measurement)
OTM-R system					
1. Have we published a version of our OTM-R policy online (in the national language and in English)?	x	x	x	-- <i>No</i>	1. Publish the OTM-R policy in English and Spanish on both the website and the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update.
2. Do we have an internal guide setting out clear OTM-R procedures and practices for all types of positions?	x	x	x	+/- <i>Yes, substantially</i>	1. Existence of the P-16-04 Procedure for Human Resources Management published on the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update.
3. Is everyone involved in the process sufficiently trained in the area of OTM-R?	x	x	x	-/+ <i>Yes, partially</i>	1. Provide training programmes for OTM-R. 2. Number of participants in training programmes for OTM-R.

4. Do we make (sufficient) use of e-recruitment tools?	x	x		<i>++ Yes, completely</i>	1. Percentage of online applications (number of online applications/total number of applications).
5. Do we have a quality control system for OTM-R in place?	x	x	x	<i>+/- Yes, substantially</i>	1. Percentage compliance with the indicators in P-16-04 Human Resources Management Procedure (point 13) published on the intranet/extranet in all the open selection processes. 2. Valid ISO certificates (e.g. ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO, 56002) available.
6. Does our current OTM-R policy encourage external candidates to apply?	x	x	x	<i>++ Yes, completely</i>	1. Trend in the share of applicants from outside the organisation (number of applicants from outside the organisation in the last 3 years). 2. Number of places covered by internal staff (exceptions to the selection procedure).
7. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract researchers from abroad?	x	x	x	<i>++ Yes, completely</i>	1. Trend in the share of applicants from abroad (number of applicants from abroad in the last three years). 2. Percentage of employees from abroad in the Centre (number of employees from abroad in the Centre/total number of Centre employees).
8. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to attract under-represented groups?	x	x	x	<i>++ Yes, completely</i>	1. Existence of an up-to-date Equality Plan on the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update. 4. Number of STEAM initiatives in which the Centre has participated.

					<p>5. Trend in the proportion of applicants among under-represented groups (number of female applicants in the last three years).</p> <p>6. Percentage of female employees in the Centre (number of female employees in the Centre/total number of employees in the Centre).</p>
9. Is our current OTM-R policy in line with policies to provide attractive working conditions for researchers?	x	x	x	<i>+/- Yes, substantially</i>	<p>1. Existence of a Working Time Guide, including its structure, flexible working arrangements and time tracking system published on the intranet/extranet.</p> <p>2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff.</p> <p>3. Date of latest update.</p> <p>4. Existence of the Career Development document published on the intranet/extranet.</p> <p>5. Date on which the publication is sent to staff.</p> <p>6. Date of latest update.</p> <p>7. Trend in the share of applicants from outside the organisation (number of applicants from outside the organisation in the last 3 years).</p>
10. Do we have means to monitor whether the most suitable researchers apply?				<i>-/+ Yes, partially</i>	<p>1. Number of times a job offer is published because the position was not filled the first time.</p> <p>2. Percentage of completed application evaluation documents (number of completed application evaluation documents/number of closed selection processes).</p>

Advertising and application phase					
11. Do we have clear guidelines or templates (e.g. EURAXESS) for advertising positions?	x	x		<i>+/- Yes, substantially</i>	1. Existence of the P-16-04 Procedure for Human Resources Management published on the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update. 4. Existence of a template for job offers.
12. Do we include in the job advertisement references/links to all the elements foreseen in the relevant section of the toolkit?	x	x		<i>-/+ Yes, partially</i>	1. Existence of a template for job offers.
13. Do we make full use of EURAXESS to ensure our research vacancies reach a wider audience?	x	x		<i>-- No</i>	1. Percentage of offers published in EURAXESS (number of offers published in EURAXESS/number of offers published by the Centre).
14. Do we make use of other job advertising tools?	x	x		<i>++ Yes, completely</i>	1. Percentage of offers published on the website (number of offers published on the website/number of offers published by the Centre). 2. Percentage of offers published on job portals (number of offers published on job portals/number of offers published by the Centre). 3. Percentage of offers published through external selection companies (number of offers published through external selection companies/number of offers published by the Centre).

					4. Percentage of offers published on social media (number of offers published on social media/number of offers published by the Centre).
15. Do we keep the administrative burden to a minimum for the candidate?	x			<i>++ Yes, completely</i>	1. Existence of a form on the website with the essential information for candidate applications. 2. Compliance with Organic Law 3/2018, of 5 December, on personal data protection and guaranteeing digital rights.
Selection and evaluation phase					
16. Do we have clear rules governing the appointment of selection committees?		x	x	<i>-- No</i>	1. Existence of the P-16-04 Procedure for Human Resources Management published on the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update. 4. Publish the OTM-R policy in English and Spanish on both the website and the intranet/extranet. 5. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 6. Date of latest update.
17. Do we have clear rules concerning the composition of the selection committees?		x	x	<i>-- No</i>	1. Existence of the P-16-04 Procedure for Human Resources Management published on the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update. 4. Publish the OTM-R policy in English and Spanish on both the website and the intranet/extranet.

					5. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 6. Date of latest update.
18. Are the committees sufficiently gender-balanced?		x	x	-- <i>No</i>	1. Percentage of women on the selection committee (number of women on the selection committee/total number of people in the Centre).
19. Do we have clear guidelines for selection committees which help judge "merit" in a way that leads to the best candidate being selected?			x	-- <i>No</i>	1. Existence of the Career Development document published on the intranet/extranet. 2. Date on which the publication is sent to staff. 3. Date of latest update.
Appointment phase					
20. Do we inform all applicants at the end of the selection process?	x			-/+ <i>Yes, partially</i>	1. Percentage of responses to applications (number of responses to applications/total number of applications).
21. Do we provide adequate feedback to interviewees?	x			-/+ <i>Yes, partially</i>	1. Percentage of responses to applications (number of responses to applications/total number of applications).
22. Do we have an appropriate complaints mechanism in place?	x			-- <i>No</i>	1. Number of complaints received.
Overall assessment					
23. Do we have a system in place to assess whether the OTM-R delivers on its objectives?				-/+ <i>Yes, partially</i>	1. Percentage compliance with the indicators in P-16-04 Human Resources Management Procedure (point 13) published on the intranet/extranet in all the open selection processes.