

Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) INTERNAL GUIDELINES

CREI's Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) Policy represents the cornerstone of the “European Charter for Researchers” and the “Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers”. OTM-R ensures that the best person for the job is recruited, guarantees equal opportunities and access for all, promotes the development of an international portfolio (cooperation, competition, mobility) and makes research careers more attractive.

CREI's Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R) Policy includes all phases of the recruitment process, from the job advertising/application phase through to the appointment phase.

1. Advertising and application phase

CREI's recruitment procedure for Junior Researchers involves several stages each year, starting with the authorisation from the Governing Board to recruit Junior Researchers during the next job market season. Once the new positions have been approved, CREI's Director appoints the members of the Recruitment Committee and its Chairperson. Usually, CREI's Recruitment Committee is formed by all CREI researchers and a Chairperson, specifically appointed for each recruitment campaign from among all CREI Senior Researchers.

a) Advertising the post

In autumn, an advertisement is published via the specialised channels, EconJobMarket and Job Openings for Economists, as well as on the CREI website.

The advertisement contains the following information:

- Vacant position.
- Fields of interest.
- Contract conditions: Junior Researchers are offered tenure-track positions subject to an assessment after six years. Terms of appointment are flexible and competitive. CREI researchers have no teaching obligations but are encouraged to participate in UPF and Barcelona School of Economics academic programmes. English is the working language at CREI.
- Seeking to promote a balanced gender representation among its staff, CREI encourages women to apply.
- Deadline for submitting the job application.
- Selection procedure: selected candidates are interviewed at the European Economic Association (EEA) Job Market, which normally takes place in mid-December. The interviews may take place in person at the meeting venue selected for this purpose by the EEA, or online via video-conferencing software.

b) Keeping the administrative burden to a minimum

In order to minimise the administrative burden of the process, applications are submitted via the website <https://econjobmarket.org>, where candidates apply using the e-recruitment software application “Headhunter” (from Editorial Express).

In accordance with the standards applied in international economic research centres such as ours, the following documentation must be submitted in order to complete the application:

- CV
- Recent research paper (commonly known as Job Market Paper)
- Three reference letters, which shall be directly uploaded to the application website by the referees.

All documentation must be submitted online via the website indicated in the job advertisement.

c) Acknowledging receipt and providing additional information

When the candidate submits their application via the website <https://econjobmarket.org> they receive an automatic confirmation that all documentation has been received.

As described in the following sections, all candidates who have passed the screening phase and have therefore been contacted and interviewed in the framework of the EEA Job Market receive an email inviting them to a Recruitment Seminar at CREI or, failing that, an email informing them that their application has been unsuccessful.

2. Assessment and selection phase

a) Setting up selection committees

As mentioned above, the Director of CREI appoints the chairperson for the Recruitment Committee, who will be responsible for leading and coordinating the entire recruitment process. All CREI researchers are members of the Recruitment Committee.

b) Screening and interviewing

Once all applications have been received, the Selection Committee meets to review them and decide on the candidates to be interviewed during the EEA Job Market.

Since the duration of the EEA Job Market is limited (normally about 4 days), a list of about 25 candidates to be interviewed is drawn up.

The criteria considered in deciding which candidates to interview are those required for CREI Junior Researchers, most of which relate to Recognised Researchers (R2), according to the European classification¹:

- The candidate has demonstrated a systematic understanding of a field of study and mastery of research associated with that field.
- The candidate demonstrates critical analysis, evaluation and synthesis of new and complex ideas.
- The candidate has demonstrated the ability to conceive, design, implement and adapt a substantial programme of research with integrity.
- The candidate has made a contribution through original research that extends the frontier of knowledge by developing a substantial body of work, innovation or application.
- The candidate's research merits international refereed publication.
- The candidate's research shall foster and/or create synergies among CREI members.
- The candidate can communicate with their peers and explain the outcome of their research (and value thereof) to the research community.
- The candidate can communicate with the wider community, and with society in general, about their areas of expertise.
- In the near future, the candidate can mentor First Stage Researchers, helping them to be more effective and successful in their R&D career.

3. Appointment phase

Once all the pre-selected candidates have been interviewed, the Recruitment Committee meets to share the results of the interviews. The candidates are assessed on the basis of the established parameters, mentioned above, and a list is drawn up of the candidates who shall continue in the process and are invited to attend a Recruitment Seminar at CREI (often jointly organised with the Department of Economics and Business at UPF). Candidates who do not make it to this stage of the selection process are duly informed by the Recruitment Chair.

Given the high level of competition in the job market in the field of economics (all international research centres carry out their selection processes in a similar way to CREI and on the same dates), an order of priority is established to arrange the Recruitment Seminars. All the Recruitment Seminars are announced on the CREI website, so all candidates who are at this stage of the selection process can see who the other candidates are, when their Recruitment Seminar will take place and what research paper they will present.

¹ <https://euraxess.ec.europa.eu/europe/career-development/training-researchers/research-profiles-descriptors>

On the day of the Recruitment Seminar the candidate, apart from presenting their most recent research at the CREI Seminar, is interviewed by several CREI researchers, depending on their field of research, as well as invited to a working lunch and dinner where job interviews are also held. The seminar and interviews are used to obtain more information about the candidates, which can be analysed in depth by the Recruitment Committee.

After each Recruitment Seminar, CREI researchers who have participated in the Recruitment Seminar, have conducted some of the interviews, or have participated in the working lunch or dinner, send the Recruitment Chair their comments on the candidate, taking into account the aforementioned variables to be considered.

Periodically at least once a month, and more frequently as competitive conditions may require, the Recruitment Committee meets to discuss the assessments of the candidates who have taken part in Recruitment Seminars up to that time. The aim of this meeting is to aggregate the assessments made by all the members of the committee and reach a consensus in order to decide whether to make an offer to one of the candidates assessed to date. CREI's Director sends a letter to the selected candidates establishing the terms of CREI's offer (salary, mid-term review, promotion after 6 years, triennial complement based on the researcher's activity, research funds, etc.).

Given the high level of competition in the job market in the field of economics, it is standard for the different research centres to make offers to candidates as they decide that they fit the profile they are looking for, without having assessed all the applications.

Thus, Recruitment Seminars and regular meetings of the Recruitment Committee are held and possible offers are made until the whole process is completed.

a) Feedback

In the event of a job offer not being accepted by the candidate, CREI contacts the candidate to find out which offer they have selected.

Meanwhile, the Recruitment Chair gives individual and personalised feedback to all candidates who have reached the interview stage in the EEA Job Market.

b) Complaint mechanism

All candidates have the right to make complaints or suggestions about the CREI selection process at any time. To do so, they can simply send an email to the dedicated address: crei.recruitment@crei.cat.

The suggestions and complaints received shall be duly reviewed and answered by the Recruitment Chair, and shall be taken into account in the process of continuous improvement of the CREI Recruitment Process.

4. Quality control mechanism

Each year, CREI prepares and submits to the Governing Board an annual report containing all the information relating to the selection process for the previous year.

Likewise, each year the Recruitment Committee, led by its chairperson, reviews the year's recruitment process and its outcome and assess whether there are any aspects to be improved in the next year's process, taking into account the best practices established for OTM-R policies.

CREI's Business Manager establishes the guidelines and instructions for the recruitment process to be carried out in accordance with CREI's OTM-R policies, as well as for the final assessment process and proposals for improvement.

Gender Balance

Throughout the Recruitment Process, an endeavour is made to attract female candidates. CREI's job advertisement includes a statement to encourage female candidates to submit their application. Moreover, female candidates are included in all the phases of the recruitment process. In addition, the annual CREI recruitment statistics specifically include a gender perspective.