HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

Staff Recruitment and Selection Policy INCDFT-IFT Iași

(OTM-R Policy)

The document sets out the policy of the National Institute for Research and Development in Technical Physics – IFT Iași (INCDFT-IFT Iași) regarding the recruitment, selection, and employment of staff in an open, transparent, and merit-based manner.

- 2026 -

Approved,
Director General,
Dr. Nicoleta LUPU

Preamble:

Considering that EU Member States have decided to create an open labor market for researchers working in institutions within the European Research Area (ERA), the adoption by research institutions of an open, transparent, and merit-based policy for the recruitment and selection of research staff has become a priority.

In this context, in order to obtain European recognition regarding the adoption of the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, INCDFT-IFT Iași has committed to adopting the principles set out in the European Charter for Researchers and to implement the Code of Conduct in the recruitment and selection of research staff.

The INCDFT-IFT Iași policy on transparent and merit-based recruitment, selection, and employment of staff (OTM-R Policy) represents an important component. Its development is based on the guidance provided by the European Commission in the OTM-R Package, taking into account both the existing legal provisions in Romania and national and international best practices.

OTM-R guarantees the recruitment of the most suitable person for the position, equal opportunities and access for all, facilitates the development of an international portfolio (cooperation, competition, mobility), and makes a research career more attractive.

INCDFT-IFT Iași POLICY

(OTM-R Policy)

The INCDFT-IFT Iași Policy on open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment of researchers (*OTM-R: Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment of Researchers*) aims to create the institutional framework for the effective implementation of recruitment, selection, and integration processes for researchers.

Recruitment is the process of attracting most suitable candidates for vacant positions, while **selection** focuses on choosing the best candidate, ensuring equal opportunities and fair treatment for all applicants participating in the competition.

The **integration process** of new employees aims to facilitate researchers to adapt to the new working team, as well as to the values, principles, and formal or informal rules specific for the institute.

Open recruitment refers to ensuring the visibility of recruitment announcement both internally and on the public domain, as well as to disseminating information on vacant positions through communication channels commonly used by researchers (such as the EURAXESS online platform).

Transparency refers to full access to information both internally and externally, ensuring that individuals outside the institute have access to NIRDTP recruitment procedures and rules.

Merit-based selection is defined in the "*Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers"* as follows:
"The selection process should take into account the entire area of candidates' expertise. While the focus will be on research potential, creativity and the level of independence will be also considered. This means that merit should be judged both qualitatively and quantitatively, focusing on outstanding results within diversified career paths and not solely on the number of publications (...)."

The principles governing the recruitment and selection processes within INCDFT-IFT Iași are:

- transparency of recruitment and selection processes, by providing clear, easily accessible information that endorses equal opportunities;
- the use of a mix of communication channels for advertising vacant positions, ensuring maximum visibility among potential candidates;
- the use of concise and clear recruitment announcements, including references to materials containing detailed information;
- the use of selection criteria that allow for the selection of the best candidate, in line with the institute's needs and the level of the position;
- keeping administrative requirements to a minimum;
- ensuring gender equality at all stages of recruitment and selection;
- periodic updating of internal methodologies and regulations to increase inclusiveness and promote internationalization in recruitment and selection processes.

INCDFT-IFT Iași is a public-law legal entity (a national research and development institute). Vacant research positions are filled through open competition, in accordance with national and European legislation and with the institute's own regulations, methodologies, and procedures, which are accessible to all interested parties on the institute's website (https://www.phys-iasi.ro/en/careers).
In line with national and European legislative requirements and internal regulations, this document strengthens the institutional framework necessary for the application of the principles of the "Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers," structured around three defining process stages:

1. the stage of announcing vacant positions and receiving applications;
2. the evaluation and selection stage;
3. the appointment/employment stage.

INCDFT-IFT Iași has established the following OTM-R objectives:

- compliance with ethical, transparent, and non-discriminatory principles in human resources recruitment;
- improving the quality of human resource attracted to the research field by requiring competencies and skills aligned with the needs of research positions, and by creating tools to assess each candidate's creative and innovation potential, etc.;
- promoting a culture of quality in all recruitment processes by making all information related to the recruitment and selection of researchers available in a transparent manner to all those involved;
- ensuring equal opportunities for all candidates, especially for underrepresented groups, such as women employed in research in technical fields;
- encouraging researchers to participate in continuous professional development programs and international mobility, and providing constructive feedback based on annual evaluation procedures;
- eliminating language barriers by promoting multiculturalism in the formation of research teams and by recruiting valuable national or international specialists;
- ensuring an adequate infrastructure, optimal working conditions, and technology transfer facilities in order to support researchers' professional development and the sustainability of research projec

Transparency and Openess

1. **INCDFT-IFT Iași staff involved in recruitment, selection, and employment must comply with the internal regulations, methodologies, and procedures in force and communicate transparently with all candidates.** All documents related to OTM-R will be published on the institute's website, and, when necessary, dedicated training sessions will be organized for staff involved in recruitment, selection, and employment processes (for example, the publication of vacant positions on EURAXESS and other European researcher recruitment platforms).

2. **In addition to *Regulations governing the competitive recruitment of vacant positions corresponding to the Professional Grades in Research, Development and Innovation: Scientific Researcher, 1st Degree (CS I) -R4, Scientific Researcher, 2nd Degree (CS II)-R3, Scientific Researcher, 3rd Degree (CS III)-R2, Scientific Researcher (CS)-R1, and Scientific Research Assistant (ACS)) positions***, the internal rules on open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment are made available to all those involved in the employment process on the institute's website: https://www.phys-iasi.ro/en/rules-and-regulations.

3. **Candidates will receive assistance throughout the recruitment process** and will be guided to consult the recruitment rules published on the institute's website: https://www.phys-iasi.ro/en/rules-and-regulations, which are accessible to all interested parties.

4. **Transparent communication of all vacant positions** – In accordance with the provisions of the ***Regulations governing the competitive recruitment for vacant positions***, announcements will be published as follows:
(a) by posting on the institute's website; (b) on specialized websites managed by the Romanian Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digitalization; (c) on specialized websites managed by the European Commission.

5. **Quality control and the provision of good working conditions** for all employees represent a priority for INCDFT-IFT Iași.

6. **Fairness, inclusion, diversity, and equal opportunities** are core values of our institute. As of January 2024, the Gender Equality Strategy and Plan 2024–2027 is also in place.

7. **All candidates will be directly informed of the results of the selection process**. The rules regarding appeals are communicated to candidates at the time of application. Details are included in the Methodology for conducting competitions for the awarding of professional grades. If a candidate holds evidence that may demonstrate non-compliance with the legal competition procedures, they may submit an appeal within 3 days of the communication of the result. The appeal must be submitted in writing, registered with the INCDFT-IFT Iași registry, and resolved by the Appeals Committee. The composition of the Appeals Committee is established following the same procedure as for the Competition Committee. Upon approval by the Board of Administration, the Appeals Committee is appointed by decision of the General Director.

Merit-Based Selection (Performance-Based Selection)

1. **All members of the recruitment and selection committees (competition committees) have access to the** *Methodology for conducting competitions for the awarding of professional grades*; therefore, each member of the competition committee is fully familiar with the criteria applicable to each research field.

2. Members of the competition committees are selected with the aim of ensuring gender balance and carry out their activity in accordance with the internal regulations and the applicable national and European legislation.

3. The competition committee deliberates based on the merit of each candidate, assessed against the performance criteria established for each research field by CNATDCU/CCCDI.

4. Dissatisfied candidates may submit appeals by following the instructions set out in the ***Regulations governing the competitive recruitment for vacant positions***.

Monitoring and Implementation of the OTM-R Policy

For the OTM-R policy implementation of the at INCDFT-IFT Iași, the Scientific Secretary and the HR department will continuously monitor compliance with the provisions of this policy.

Additionally, the existing quality monitoring system ensures that all legal requirements are respected in every competition organized for the employment of research staff.

Each competition file is verified with regard to its content, in accordance with the provisions of Article 10(1) of *the Methodological Rules on the organization of competitions for filling vacant positions for research, development and innovation personnel within research organizations, approved by Government Decision No. 1,568/2024, implementing Law No. 183/2024 on the status of research, development and innovation personnel*, with subsequent amendments and completions. The competition file must also include a resolution established by a committee appointed by decision of the General Director, upon the proposal of the Scientific Secretary. The resolution must certify whether the candidate meets the requirements set out in the *Order of the Ministry of Education and Research No. 4,688/2026 approving the minimum and mandatory standards required for the awarding of the Principal Researcher (R4) grade – Scientific Researcher, 1st Degree – and the Established Researcher (R3) grade – Scientific Researcher, 2nd Degree.*

The Scientific Secretary, together with the heads of departments/divisions/laboratories/research groups, proposes the composition of the competition committees in a transparent manner, taking into account gender balance, expertise, qualifications, and experience of the members in the relevant field, as well as their independence and lack of conflicts of interest. The procedure for establishing the composition of competition committees is described in *the* ***Regulations governing the competitive recruitment for vacant positions***.

Vacant positions are communicated through traditional channels, namely: (a) posting on the institute's website; (b) on the EURAXESS platform or other recruitment platforms. The HR department of INCDFT-IFT Iași is responsible for coordinating the publication of announcements regarding vacant positions.

The results of the selection process are communicated to candidates within the deadlines established in the competition calendar, usually by posting at the institute's premises and on the institute website, in compliance with applicable personal data protection regulations.

All competitions within the institute include a mechanism for managing appeals. Candidates are informed about the deadlines for submitting potential appeals, the method of submission, and the timeframe for publishing the results of the appeals.

Final Provisions

The application of the provisions of the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers and the adherence to the principles established by the OTM-R Policy represent a strategic approach formally embraced by the institute's management and involve the entire scientific community within the institute.

INCDFT-IFT Iași aims to improve research performance, increase the degree of internationalization by attracting researchers from abroad, to ensure a better balance between quantitative and qualitative criteria in the evaluation of research results, and to develop a working environment that is both competitive and inclusive.

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