

Recruitment Procedure ATHOR - Full description

Initially, the search for the appropriate candidates is based on normal recruitment strategies (i.e., publication on ec.europa.eu/euraxess, Researchgate, LinkedIn ads, etc.; personal and professional contacts). The selection is made in a collective, fully transparent process, led by the Recruitment and Skill Progress Committee (RSPC). The candidates apply for a maximum of three specific ESR projects and list their order of preference. Applications are made using an on-line form on the <http://www.etn-athor.eu> website. The supervisors provide the names of their preferred candidates to the RSPC, which in its turn produces a short list of candidates. As such, a maximum of 40 potential ESRs are invited to the Recruitment Event. Each candidate gives a presentation and is interviewed by the RSPC. The candidates are ranked and a collective decision is made. Here, the objective is to assemble a complementary team of ESRs. In order to facilitate their travel, preselected candidates (from outside Belgium) will be reimbursed, up to a maximum of 250 euro, by the prioritised Supervisor.

In the event that not all 15 ESRs can be recruited during the collective Recruitment Event, the recruitment procedure is “decentralised”, meaning that the involved Supervisors continue the search for good candidates. Recruitment problems are also, if still needed, discussed during the kick-off meeting (M4), the Supervisory Board (SB) meeting (M6) and the weekly web meetings in order to deliver specific action plans to target specific networks relevant for the missing ESR positions. All details concerning the Recruitment Procedure principles are communicated on the on-line application portal, so that potential ESRs know exactly what to expect and are stimulated to apply. All recruitment (pre and final selection) is in line with the European Charter for Researchers, providing the overarching framework for the roles, responsibilities of both researchers and employers. The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers functions as a set of principles and ensures that the selection procedures are transparent and fair. The recruitment strategy of ATHOR fully complies with the Code of Conduct definition of merit. Merit being not only measured on researcher’s grades, but on a range of evaluation criteria, such as team work, interdisciplinary knowledge, soft skills and awareness of the policy impact of science. The RSPC has members of each gender and considers the promotion of equal opportunities and gender balance as part of the recruitment strategy. In view of the Responsible Research and Innovation (RRI) principles, special efforts are made to attract women and ESRs from new EU member states. Among equally qualified applicants, women receive preferential consideration. Researchers are employed on fixed-term contracts and are registered as staff candidates for PhD degrees. Therefore, they are entitled to pension contributions, paid holidays, and other employment benefits, as governed by the universities and industrial companies.

Recruitment and Skill Progress Committee: The RSPC involves the General Coordinator (M. Huger), one representative per Beneficiary (D. Madej, T. Tonnesen, D. Gruber, E. Blond, J. Pereira.), the Industry Advisory Board (IAB) Chair (H. U. Marschall), the Training and Knowledge Transfer Committee (TKTC) Chair (S. Sinnema) and the Federation for International Refractory Research and Education (FIRE) chair (C. Parr). The RSPC is responsible for developing and implementing an effective recruitment strategy and oversee the overall recruitment of the 15 ESRs. Being chaired by one of the Beneficiary (AGH - Dr. D. Madej), the RSPC also meets during Workshops 1, 2, 4 and 6. These workshops will thus allow to follow up the training progress of each ESRs and look at their career planning. During the Recruitment Event additional Supervisors may be present.

Recruitment Statistics: During the recruitment period (between 26/05/2017 and 23/07/2017), the RSPC received a total of 260 applications. It should be noted that from that total, 13 applicants were European and 247 were from outside Europe. Also, 46 applicants were women while 214 were man. After carefully reviewing all applications according to the eligibility criteria, candidates were ranked according to their CVs, needed competencies for the ESRs subject, motivation and future potential.

The RSPC received from the ESR Supervisors a shortlist of 40 candidates for the 15 ESR positions. All applicants were contacted and informed of the decision regarding their application. The shortlist of candidates was invited to participate in the recruitment event in Brussels.

Recruitment Event: The recruitment event will take place between the 12th and the 14th of September 2017 in Brussels, Belgium, at:

*Représentation de la Région Nouvelle-Aquitaine à Bruxelles
21, rue Montoyer - 1000 Bruxelles (Belgique)*

During these three days, all interviews will be conducted and the selection of the candidates for each ESR will be made. These interviews will be led by the RSPC and assisted by the ESR Supervisors and the Industrial Mentors. Each candidate will be informed of the specific day and time of their interview by the RSPC.

The interview will have a total duration of 25 minutes and will be structured as follows:

- 10 minutes presentation (assisted with PowerPoint), where the candidate must address the following: background (CV), Master research project, motivation and suitability for ATHOR project, ATHOR project work and long-term career plans (after PhD).
- 15 minutes questions and/or discussion.

For those applicants that are unable to travel to Brussels for the interview, a video conference interview will be available (using Webex). For this Webex interview, the applicant will need:

- (1) a computer
- (2) a good Internet connection (cable is better than wireless)
- (3) a good (very good) audio system (headphone with good microphone)
- (4) and a webcam
- (5) to join the interview, the candidate will just need to follow the Internet link that will be sent to them by email.
- (6) following then the automatic connection procedure, a dedicated plugin will be automatically installed on your computer to join the meeting
- (7) in case the applicant never used Webex before, we encourage (to be more familiar with webex), to consult in advance the following video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aB8bmZcDMnQ>

Additional Information

- The RSPC encourages both the candidates and the ESR Supervisors to conduct informal and preliminary discussions before the interview, in order to strengthen the formal interview and to keep the strict and tight schedule of the recruitment event.
- For the reimbursement of travelling expenses, the ESR Supervisors will contact the candidates personally and inform them on how to proceed (as each institution has its own specific rules).
- Due to the high number of interviews to be conducted, the RSPC will be very strict in keeping all interviews in the allowed schedule. All applicants are encouraged to keep within the schedule their presentations and to be as concise as possible with their answers.
- To have a better understanding of the overall ATHOR project, the candidates will have access to the detailed description of the project in the form of the two ATHOR proposal documents.
- All candidates will be informed of the results. And the final selection for each ESR will then follow the specific procedure of each member of the ATHOR consortium in order to obtain the work contract.
- For the specific case of ESR11, ESR13 and ESR15, and due to specific national and institutional rules at UMINHO, this event will not produce the selection for each ESR. Instead, the best 2 applicants for each ESR will be selected and invited to apply to a latter local recruitment procedure.
- The interviews for the Project Manager will also be conducted at the Recruitment Event. Four candidates to be interviewed are expected and the selection procedure and members of the interview panel are the same as to the ESR positions.