

Common Policy for Human Resource Management

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1. INTRODUCTION

CEITEC (Central European Institute of Technology) is focused on the establishment of a European centre of excellence in the area of life sciences, advanced materials and technologies. Scientific research is the core of our activities, as is the pursuit of knowledge through the activities of education, training, experimental design and publication. These tasks can only be performed at their optimal level in an environment where a commonality is understood and scientific norms are upheld. Within this document, The CEITEC Common Policy for Human Research Management, outlines institutional policies to shape a supportive and responsible research environment.

1.1. Purpose

In 2011, the CEITEC Common Rules for Human Resources Management was established. The present Common Policy for Human Resource Management will serve as a replacement of the original 2011 document. This CEITEC Common Policy shall be a reference for the partners within the CEITEC consortium, with respect to all employees of CEITEC where matters of Human Resources (HR). The purpose of this document is to set internal guidelines and state the principles to ensure a productive research environment inside CEITEC.

The CEITEC Common Rules for Human Resources Management fully recognize the European Charter for Researchers¹ and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers², released by the European Commission in 2005, and serve as the foundation for these Common Rules for HR.

¹ The European Charter for Researchers is a set of general principles and requirements which specifies the roles, responsibilities and entitlements of researchers as well as of employers and/or funders of researchers. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/pdf/am509774CEE_EN_E4.pdf>.

² The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers consists of a set of general principles and requirements that should be followed by employers and/or funders when appointing or recruiting researchers. Available at: <http://ec.europa.eu/eracareers/pdf/am509774CEE_EN_E4.pdf>.

2. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

CEITEC operates with the belief that its personnel are its most valuable asset. All researchers engaged in a research career and non-researchers should be recognised as professionals and be treated accordingly. This should commence at the beginning of their careers, namely at postgraduate level, and should include all levels, regardless of their classification at national level (e.g. employee, postgraduate student, doctoral candidate, postdoctoral fellow, civil servants). Employers and/or funders of researchers will not discriminate against researchers in any way on the basis of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion, social or economic condition. Employers and/or funders should aim for a representative gender balance at all levels of staff, including at supervisory and managerial level. This should be achieved on the basis of an equal opportunity policy at recruitment and at the subsequent career stages without, however, taking precedence over quality and competence criteria. To ensure equal treatment, selection and evaluation committees should have an adequate gender balance.

In the general principles governing human resources, are outlined 1) recruitment, 2) career development, 3) termination of labour agreement, and 4) alumni development.

All labour agreement are subject to the HR and employment rules of the individual CEITEC organisational units, and this document serves as a guidance framework for CEITEC.

2.1. Recruitment

2.1.1. Scientific Staff (including academic staff)

The recruitment policy is aligned with the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers. Summarized as follows:

The code of conduct for the recruitment of researchers consists of a set of general principles and requirements that should be followed by employers and/or funders when appointing or recruiting researchers. These principles and requirements should ensure observance of values such as transparency of the recruitment process and equal treatment of all applicants, in particular with regard to the development of an attractive, open and sustainable European labour market for researchers, and are complementary to those outlined in the European Charter for Researchers. Institutions and employers adhering to the Code of Conduct will openly demonstrate their commitment to act in a responsible and respectable way and to provide fair framework conditions to researchers, with a clear intention to contribute to the advancement of the European Research Area.

General Principles and Requirements:

- Recruitment. Employers and/or funders should establish recruitment procedures which are open, efficient, transparent, supportive and internationally comparable, as well as tailored to the

type of positions advertised. Advertisements should give a broad description of knowledge and competencies required, and should not be so specialised as to discourage suitable applicants. Employers should include a description of the working conditions and entitlements, including career development prospects. Moreover, the time allowed between the advertisement of the vacancy or the call for applications and the deadline for reply should be realistic.

- Selection committees should bring together diverse expertise and competences and should have an adequate gender balance and, where appropriate and feasible, include members from different sectors (public and private) and disciplines, including from other countries and with relevant experience to assess the candidate. Whenever possible, a wide range of selection practices should be used, such as external expert assessment and face-to-face interviews. Members of selection panels should be adequately trained.
- Transparency. Candidates should be informed, prior to the selection, about the recruitment process and the selection criteria, the number of available positions and the career development prospects. They should also be informed after the selection process about the strengths and weaknesses of their applications.
- Judging merit. The selection process should take into consideration the whole range of experience of the candidates. While focusing on their overall potential as researchers, their creativity and level of independence should also be considered. This means that merit should be judged qualitatively as well as quantitatively, focusing on outstanding results within a diversified career path and not only on the number of publications. Consequently, the importance of bibliometric indices should be properly balanced within a wider range of evaluation criteria, such as teaching, supervision, teamwork, knowledge transfer, management of research and innovation and public awareness activities. For candidates from an industrial background, particular attention should be paid to any contributions to patents, development or inventions.
- Variations in the chronological order of CVs. Career breaks or variations in the chronological order of CVs should not be penalised, but regarded as an evolution of a career, and consequently, as a potentially valuable contribution to the professional development of researchers towards a multidimensional career track. Candidates should therefore be allowed to submit evidence-based CVs, reflecting a representative array of achievements and qualifications appropriate to the post for which application is being made.
- Recognition of mobility experience. Any mobility experience, e.g. a stay in another country/region or in another research setting (public or private) or a change from one discipline or sector to another, whether as part of the initial research training or at a later stage of the research career, or virtual mobility experience, should be considered as a valuable contribution to the professional development of a researcher.
- Recognition of qualifications. Employers and/or funders should provide for appropriate assessment and evaluation of the academic and professional qualifications, including non-formal qualifications, of all researchers, in particular within the context of international and professional mobility. They should inform themselves and gain a full understanding of rules, procedures and standards governing the recognition of such qualifications and, consequently,

explore existing national law, conventions and specific rules on the recognition of these qualifications through all available channels.

- Seniority. The levels of qualifications required should be in line with the needs of the position and not be set as a barrier to entry. Recognition and evaluation of qualifications should focus on judging the achievements of the person rather than his/her circumstances or the reputation of the institution where the qualifications were gained. As professional qualifications may be gained at an early stage of a long career, the pattern of lifelong professional development should also be recognised.
- Postdoctoral appointments. Clear rules and explicit guidelines for the recruitment and appointment of postdoctoral researchers, including the maximum duration and the objectives of such appointments, should be established by the institutions appointing postdoctoral researchers. Such guidelines should take into account time spent in prior postdoctoral appointments at other institutions and take into consideration that the postdoctoral status should be transitional, with the primary purpose of providing additional professional development opportunities for a research career in the context of long-term career prospects.

2.1.2. Non-scientific Staff

An open, transparent, and merit-based recruitment process should be followed with non-scientific staff as with the scientific staff.

The recruitment of director-level positions should follow the guidelines of Code and Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers, and ensure appropriate levels of educational (eg. PhD or equivalent doctorate in natural or physical science) and international experience to warrant a merit-based appointment.

2.2. Career Development

2.2.1. Scientific Staff (including academic staff)

Researchers at all career stages should seek to continually improve themselves by regularly updating and expanding their skills and competencies. This may be achieved by a variety of means including, but not restricted to, formal training, workshops, conferences and e-learning.

- Employers and/or funders of researchers should draw up, preferably within the framework of their human resources management, a specific career development strategy for researchers at all stages of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, including for researchers on fixed-term contracts. It should include the availability of mentors involved in providing support and guidance for the personal and professional development of researchers, thus motivating them and contributing to reducing any insecurity in their professional future. All researchers should be made familiar with such provisions and arrangements.
- Employers and/or funders must recognise the value of geographical, intersectoral, inter- and trans-disciplinary and virtual mobility as well as mobility between the public and private sector

as an important means of enhancing scientific knowledge and professional development at any stage of a researcher's career. Consequently, they should build such options into the specific career development strategy and fully value and acknowledge any mobility experience within their career progression/appraisal system. This also requires that the necessary administrative instruments be put in place to allow the portability of both grants and social security provisions, in accordance with national legislation.

- Employers and/or funders should ensure that all researchers at any stage of their career, regardless of their contractual situation, are given the opportunity for professional development and for improving their employability through access to measures for the continuing development of skills and competencies. Such measures should be regularly assessed for their accessibility, take-up and effectiveness in improving competencies, skills and employability.
- Employers and/or funders should ensure that career advice and job placement assistance, either in the institutions concerned, or through collaboration with other structures, is offered to researchers at all stages of their careers, regardless of their contractual situation.
- Employers and/or funders should ensure that researchers at all career stages reap the benefits of the exploitation (if any) of their R&D results through legal protection and, in particular, through appropriate protection of Intellectual Property Rights, including copyrights. Policies and practices should specify what rights belong to researchers and/or, where applicable, to their employers or other parties, including external commercial or industrial organisations, as possibly provided for under specific collaboration agreements or other types of agreement.
- Employers and/or funders should introduce for all researchers, including senior researchers, evaluation/appraisal systems for assessing their professional performance on a regular basis and in a transparent manner by an independent (and, in the case of senior researchers, preferably international) committee. Such evaluation and appraisal procedures should take due account of their overall research creativity and research results, e.g. publications, patents, management of research, teaching/lecturing, supervision, mentoring, national or international collaboration, administrative duties, public awareness activities and mobility, and should be taken into consideration in the context of career progression.
- Employers and/or funders of researchers should establish, in compliance with national rules and regulations, appropriate procedures, possibly in the form of an impartial (ombudsman-type) person to deal with complaints/ appeals of researchers, including those concerning conflicts between supervisor(s) and early-stage researchers. Such procedures should provide all research staff with confidential and informal assistance in resolving work-related conflicts, disputes and grievances, with the aim of promoting fair and equitable treatment within the institution and improving the overall quality of the working environment.
- Employers and/or funders of researchers should recognise it as wholly legitimate, and indeed desirable, that researchers be represented in the relevant information, consultation and decision-making bodies of the institutions for which they work, so as to protect and promote their individual and collective interests as professionals and to actively contribute to the workings of the institution.

2.2.2. Non-scientific Staff

Career development plans should also be discussed and implemented with non-scientific staff, to further their career progression.

2.3. Termination of Labour Agreement

The termination of a labour agreement are governed by the individual organisational units within CEITEC. All organisation units should strive to end an employment relationship on terms that are understood and acceptable for both parties. The ending of an employment relationship should strive to preserve a constructive future relationship between the organisation and the former employee. Ad hoc policies or unclear variations of policies for termination, can lead to disagreement and may result in unnecessary legal action.

1) Voluntary termination constitutes when an employee decides to end their labour agreement with CEITEC, and must follow in accordance with the CEITEC organisation unit's guidelines and Czech law. Additionally, the nature ending of a time-limited labour agreement constitutes voluntary termination.

2) Firing of an employee constitutes an involuntary termination, which could be due to violations of conduct as specified in their labour agreement or CEITEC policies, or a documented under performance. Clear reasons for involuntary termination of an employee should be stated and understood with advanced notice, preferably during the period of orientation at the time of hiring.

Additional considerations at the time of termination are

- Severance pay is discretionary based on the situation.
- The separation date is the last day an employee will work for CEITEC.
- Employees will receive an exit interview from HR. During this interview employees will receive information about their remaining benefits.
- Termination of employees must comply with Czech law.

The organisational units of CEITEC are encourage to formulate Termination Policies to address the needs of their organisations and employees.

2.4. Alumni Development

CEITEC Alumni are defined as all people who studied or worked within CEITEC. The purpose of an alumni development policy is to provide a clear framework for connecting CEITEC alumni back to CEITEC with the objective of supporting the best interests of CEITEC and its alumni.

CEITEC recognizes and values the importance of maintaining positive ties with its graduates and former employees, and of involving them in the activities and development of CEITEC. Many benefits can be had from active relations between CEITEC and it alumni, and alumni can serve in several capacities:

- Role models, mentors and inspirational speakers for the current CEITEC students and employees;
- An important link between CEITEC and the public, private and non-profit sectors;
- Mentors and guides for new CEITEC graduates entering the job-market;
- Ambassadors to the outside to market CEITEC;
- Sources of funding for CEITEC's development initiatives;
- Collaborators for research and business endeavors.

A database should be developed and maintained to log and stay in-touch with the CEITEC alumni. This database must comply with to current GDPR requirements in order to protect personal information.