

EPFL policy for equal opportunities in faculty recruitment procedures

Faculty recruitment procedures play a key role in shaping the future of EPFL and for the advancement of women. Colleagues who are serving on search committees thus provide a crucial contribution to EPFL's strategic vision, our students and research community, by investing their time and expertise to identify the best possible candidates.

Diversity and excellence are fully compatible goals and should be pursued simultaneously. To support these efforts, EPFL has established a policy for equal opportunities in faculty recruitment procedures. The policy is based on the following elements of a successful faculty search process:

- Active solicitation of an excellent and diverse pool of candidates
- Awareness of unconscious assumptions and their influence on evaluation of candidates
- Standards to ensure fair and thorough review of candidates
- Accountability and monitoring of results

Equality standards in recruitment procedures

Announcement

- Announcement uses gender neutral language and indicates that EPFL is an equal opportunity employer and a family friendly university.
- Requirements should focus on core elements and refrain from adding additional requirements or 'nice to haves' that can hinder excellent candidates from applying (e.g., narrow examples of specialisation, the ability to speak and write in French).

Responsibility: Dean and Faculty Affairs, approval by Direction

Composition and information of search committees

- At least two members of the search committee should be women.
- The Chair has the responsibility to inform search committee members about the EPFL policy for equal opportunities in faculty recruitment.

*Responsibility: Dean and Faculty Affairs, approval by Direction (composition),
Chair of search committee (information on policy)*

Active Search

- As soon as the announcement is published, the Chair requires committee members to actively spot and contact both male and female outstanding potential candidates.
- Schools and institutes put into place a strategy for the active search for potential female candidates. This can include a searchable database or the delegation of faculty members with the mission to support the search of female candidates.

Responsibility: Chair of search committee, Dean

Assessment criteria

- The recruitment tool used at EPFL shall provide the possibility to integrate items for the evaluation of candidates¹. Search committees might want to determine their relative weight prior to the review of candidates.

Responsibility: Chair of search committee

¹ A new recruitment tool is currently being developed.

Review of candidates

- When selecting candidates for interviews, committee members apply the evaluation criteria consistently to all candidates.
- There should be at least two women on the short list of candidates to be interviewed. Additionally, the proportion of women candidates to be interviewed should be comparable or higher than that of female PhD students in the relevant field at EPFL.

Responsibility: Chair of search committee

Interviews

- It is recommended to define a set of core questions before the interviews to be used with every candidate. Questions and comments not linked to professional items are avoided during the interview and during the following discussions.
- Ahead of the interview, candidates are informed when and where they can find information on services for families, the negotiation process and the start-up package. They are informed that EPFL is responsive to the needs of dual career couples.

Responsibility: Chair of search committee

Proposal to Direction

- If two candidates appear as equivalent, the female candidate should be prioritized.
- The diversity of candidates along the process must be critically assessed and accounted for in the record of the search process². This record is provided to the Direction together with the dossier of the selected candidate.
- The Direction shall refuse considering the proposal if the effort to obtain female candidates is considered insufficient or if in its view recruitment procedure violated principles and practices enunciated here.

Responsibility: Dean, Chair of search committee, Direction

Monitoring

- To assess the impact of its policy, EPFL monitors its recruitment procedures and the evolution of the proportion of women professors.

Responsibility: Faculty Affairs and Equal Opportunities Office

Announcements destined to recruit female professors

- Exceptionally, announcements may be published explicitly targeting female candidates, in order to promote women's leadership in a given field. Male candidates would not be excluded from applying.

Responsibility: Dean and Direction

Implicit bias awareness training

- EPFL regularly organises seminars destined to members and chairs of search committees, to enhance awareness of implicit bias and prevent its impact on hiring procedures. Participation is a prerequisite for committee chairs.

Responsibility: Equal Opportunities Office, in cooperation with Faculty Affairs and HR

² Template available to committee chairs on the Faculty Affairs (APR) webpage.