



THE HUMAN RESOURCES STRATEGY FOR RESEARCHERS

**INCORPORATING THE EUROPEAN CHARTER FOR RESEARCHERS AND THE CODE OF
CONDUCT FOR THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS**

ACTION PLAN

May 2016

1. Inserm: at the heart of life and health sciences

Founded in 1964, the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm) is a public scientific and technological institute that operates under the joint authority of the French Ministry of Health and French Ministry of Research.

The 318 research units of Inserm are located throughout France. Most of them have been set up in universities, hospitals or other research organisations, which involves a national and regional management.

As the only French public research institute to focus entirely on human health, in 2008 Inserm took on the responsibility for the strategic, scientific and operational coordination of biomedical research. This key role as coordinator comes naturally to Inserm thanks to the scientific quality of its teams and its ability to conduct translational research, from the laboratory to the patient's bed.

In light of this new coordination role the French National Alliance for Life Sciences and Health (Aviesan) and 9 thematic institutes in association with Inserm were created. The roles of the institutes are mainly coordination of strategic analysis, scientific monitoring and operational implementation of life and health science research in France.

At Inserm, there were 12992 researchers in December 2014:

- Inserm civil servants: 17%
- Civil servants from other institutions: 42%
- Inserm fixed-term contracts: 7%
- Other fixed-term contracts: 7%
- PhD students (only a few of them are paid by Inserm) : 27%

The main strategic objectives of the Institute are:

- Promote creativity and excellence
- A commitment to social responsibility and health policy
- Strengthen research and research training in universities
- Focus on translational and clinical research
- Forging strategic partnerships with industry
- Completion of the European Research Area: in the frame FP7 Inserm hosts 59 ERC beneficiaries and 116 Marie Curie Actions ones
- Contribute to the international exposure and the attractivity of the Institute
- Acting through the French alliance for health and life sciences: Aviesan

2. Context: Participating in the HRS4R process

For many years, Inserm set up international researcher centres equipped competitively to attract the very best researchers, PhD graduates and students. Therefore, Inserm signed the "Declaration of Commitment to the Principles of the European Charter of Researchers and Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers" in 2006.

Furthermore, in 2011 the directorate general of Inserm decided to get involved in the second cohort of the European Commission's Institutional HR Strategy Group in order to obtain the logo "HR Excellence in Research".

The same year, the French Government signed a protocol of agreement to define the objectives relative to the career of the fixed-term contract employees.

In 2013, the Institute established a "Charter for the recruitment and monitoring of fixed-term contract employees (CDD) of Inserm" whose principles are very similar to those expressed by the European Commission. It was developed in consultation with trade unions. It sets out a framework and reference principles to involve better and empower managers in managing the careers of their personnel: a systematic support of human resources poles, a clear display of the conditions and criteria of recruitment, a reminder of the principles defining the remuneration policy, a reinforced follow up during the contract ... are all priorities highlighted by this charter.

Recently, Inserm signed the "Charter of deontology for careers in research." This charter is a national variation of the main international instruments in this field: the European Charter for Researchers (2005); the Singapore Statement on Research Integrity (2010); the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity (SFS-ALLEA, 2011).

The texts on the human resources regulations are available on the HR website of Inserm and accessible to all audiences.

In addition, to better support the researchers with fixed-term contract and permanent positions throughout their careers, the national training office evaluates the training needs of both individuals and teams in order to construct a suitable response (group training, individual training...).

Inserm has been involved in the construction of the European Research area for several years now. The Institute is the first European coordinator and the first European partner in collaborative projects in Health as part of the seven framework programme. Inserm is also a leading European research organism to host winners ERC (Panels Life Sciences).

The European position of Inserm will be maintained or even improved during the Horizon 2020 European program.

To do this, Inserm will continue to provide practical information and training to its scientific and administrative staff on the different instruments offered by Horizon 2020.

3. The approach

The first step of Inserm's approach was an assessment of the current rules and practices of the Institute relative to the Charter and Code principles.

- Initially, discussions have been organised with a working group involving French research organisms: CNRS, INRA and Inserm.
- Then, some Headquarters' departments finalized the gap analysis in sub-groups in order to highlight which improvements could be made.

These departments were:

- Human Resource Department
- Partnerships and External Relations Department
- Program Assessment and Follow-up Department
- Scientific Information and Communication Department
- Scientific Integrity Delegation

Staff of the Human Resources involved were those in charge of:

- fixed-term contract follow-up
 - gender balance
 - health and work safety
 - personal regulation
 - researcher follow-up
 - social policy
 - training and continuous development
- Each sub-group organised individual interviews with researchers.
 - Following the gap analysis, the different sub-groups proposed various improvements, which were discussed with the Directorate General.

4. The Action Plan

The actions planned are part of the strategic orientations of Inserm. Several axes were preferred to improve in particular those actions that had been implemented recently:

- **Recruitment of “CDD”**
 - The "Charter for the recruitment and monitoring of fixed-term contract employees (CDD) of Inserm" signed in April 2013, is applied. It involves the implementation of procedures and tools for supporting young researchers. We have just set up the automatic publication of recruitment offers on Euraxess via Inserm exchange platform.
 - National and regional events have been organised to inform and advise postdocs on the career prospects offered to them in the academic and private sectors.

- **Career development and evaluation of researchers**
 - Researchers may be recruited on permanent positions through competitive recruitment. For these researchers, it is necessary to improve the support in their careers.
 - An awareness of the evaluation commission has been established on topics related to mobility issues. Peers consider intersectoral and interdisciplinary mobility as an asset when worn by a scientific goal.

- **Working conditions**
 - Inserm is concerned about the welfare of its staff and the prevention of psychosocial risks.

- **Gender equality**
 - Unfortunately at Inserm, the same glass ceiling that exists in private enterprises can also be observed. Access to positions of leadership is still difficult for women. Indeed, it appears, among others, self-censorship on the part of women applying for promotions and programs of excellence; hence the need for awareness and encouragement.
 - Indicators on gender equality have been established and the Institute focuses on the respect of gender balance in all selection committees.

- A number of measures have been taken, for example, the extension of the eligibility period for maternity or paternity and/or military service leaves for the leadership ATIP-Avenir program or, the encouragement to apply to leadership positions and the establishment of videoconferences for pregnant women.
- **Non-discrimination/disability**
 - Inserm, firmly committed to an attentive disability policy working conditions, wishes to develop the recruitment of disabled researchers, which implies an awareness of all actors involved in the recruitment.
 - The conclusion of a multi-year agreement with the Fund for Integration of Persons with Disabilities in the Public Service will allow the Inserm approach to be strengthened for the integration of disabled people by taking new actions.

Abbreviations used

- CSS : Scientific specialised committees
- HR : Human Resource Department
- DPRE : Partnerships and External Relations Department
- DESP : Program Assessment and Follow-up Department
- DIS : Scientific Integrity Delegation
- DISC : Scientific Information and Communication Department
- IT : thematic institutes

5. Actions to be implemented

Objectives	How?		When?	Who?
1. Recruitment	1.1.	Increase the dissemination of job offers and the transparency of temporary and permanent recruitment at national and international level (systematic publication of offers on different sites: exchange platform of Inserm, Euraxess, embassies, multilingual information on the modalities recruitment, distribution of the list of Inserm laboratories and their managers, etc.).	2016	HR, DISC, DPRE
	1.2	Improve the help given to researchers who are relocating to France from abroad: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Give researchers more help with the administrative procedures that are required due to their relocation (welcome booklet and administrative documents translated in English, helps for getting visa, network of correspondents "mobility", etc.) b. Facilitate access of researchers to housing c. Improve the access of researchers to French training d. Improve the awareness of unit directors to the obligations relative to the researchers' hosting 	2017-2018	HR, DPRE
	1.3.	Set up a working group to determine actions to implement for the future of young researchers at the end of their contracts.	2017	HR, Supervisors, Post-docs

2. Career Development and Research evaluation	2.1.	<p>Inform researchers on the development of their careers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Improve and reorganise the site dedicated to the evaluation of researchers and structures (EVA website) b. Improve and reorganise the site that provides human resources information and tools for career development (HR website) 	2017 2017	HR, DESP, Researchers
	2.2.	<p>Strengthen the follow up process and optimise the evaluation of researchers throughout their careers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a trades and skills observatory in order to determine what the Institute needs to do to improve the guidance given to researchers b. Establish HR interviews at key moments of the researcher's career c. Support researchers at the end of their career (knowledge transfer, mentoring, etc.) d. Decrease the frequency of evaluation and review each case more thoroughly and in line with the assessment of the host lab to help the best the researchers 	In progress 2017 2017 2017	DESP, HR, CSS, IT HR HR DESP, HR, CSS, IT
	2.3.	<p>Value international experience in scientific careers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Provide researchers with the tools needed to develop international research collaborations (information guide, language support, network of correspondents "mobility", etc.) b. Giving a role of "Inserm ambassadors" to Inserm permanent researchers working abroad 	2017-2018	DESP, DPRE, HR, CSS, IT
	2.4.	<p>Broaden the assistance loan for those either relocating within France or those moving to France from abroad.</p>	2017	HR, DPRE
	2.5.	<p>Train and sensitise those concerned with issues of scientific integrity.</p>	2017	DIS, HR

3. Working conditions	3.1.	Implement the National Commission of psychosocial risk prevention in charge of proposing and evaluating prevention policies and training members of the relevant committees to psychosocial risks.	2016	HR
	3.2.	Strengthen action and increase the visibility of the monitoring groups responsible for preventing and managing individual or collective situations of discomfort at work.	2017	HR
4. Gender Equality	4.1.	Educate and inform researchers on gender issues: a. Inform on the inventory b. Inform on national and international actions	2017	HR
	4.2.	Educate and inform researchers on gender research: a. Inform about seminars on gender research b. Inform about calls for monitoring gender studies	2018	HR
	4.3.	Create a portal "Gender equality" at Inserm	2018	HR, DISC
	4.4.	Establish mentoring programs	2019	HR, DESP, Researchers
	4.5.	Train Unit Directors and members of committees to gender issues	2018	HR
	4.6.	Strengthen information on the services offered to reconcile better family and professional life (help with child care in different situations such as conferences, etc.).	2018	HR
5. Non-discrimination Handicap	5.1.	Develop recruitment of disabled researchers conducting awareness and communication actions with different audiences (disabled, doctoral schools, universities, etc.) on the trades of Inserm, as is done for technicians and engineers, and create a pool of scientists candidates	In progress	HR
	5.2.	Open positions for disabled researchers	2017	HR

6. Evaluation	6.1.	Implement a self-assessment every two years	2018	
	6.2.	Implement an external evaluation four years after acknowledgement	2020	