

## Guidelines for Evaluating Research Professor Applicants

### I Legal Background

According to Article 8 of the Organisation of Research and Development Act ([ORDA](#)) the positions of the research staff of research and development institutions include those of the early-stage researcher, senior research fellow and research professor. According to subsections 4 of section 8:

- (4) A research professor is a researcher internationally recognised in their field who directs research in the corresponding field in a research and development institution and supervises Doctoral candidates. A person who has been awarded a doctorate in Estonia or who has foreign qualifications equal thereto, who has worked as a senior lecturer, senior research fellow or university professor for a total of at least ten years and under whose supervision at least one Doctoral thesis has been defended or under whose supervision research has resulted in products or processes protected by patents may apply for the position of research professor.

Further, pursuant to Article 9 of the ORDA, research staff shall be elected by the research council or by the corresponding body of a legal person in public law or a legal person in private law by way of public competition. A person authorised by the research and development institution shall enter into an employment contract for an unspecified term (entry into force January 1, 2015) with the research employee who wins the competition.

In a research and development institution which operates as a legal person in public law (such as NICPB), the conditions and procedure of such competition will be established by the corresponding body of the legal person. In NICPB the conditions and procedures (hereinafter Procedures) have been adopted by decision No 8 of June 13, 2014 of the Science Council.

Also, according to Article 5 of the Procedure the election of the Academy Research Professor by the Academy of Sciences is equalled with public competition

The candidates will be assessed by an expert committee consisting of at least 3 members, with at least half members being from abroad. The qualifications of the committee members should at least equal to the job requirements set forth by the Science Council. The current job requirements have been approved by decision No 1 of January 17, 2012.

The job requirements of a candidate to the post of Research Professor are as follows. The candidate should:

- 1) have a doctorate degree in Estonia or foreign qualifications equal thereto;
- 2) have worked as a senior lecturer, senior research fellow or university professor for a total of at least ten years;

- 3) have supervised at least one successfully defended Doctoral thesis or has supervised research that has resulted in products or processes protected by patents;
- 4) have at least 10 papers in peer-reviewed journals according to Thomson Reuters Web of Science;
- 5) have experience in international R&D activities;
- 6) have experience in leading peer-reviewed R&D projects;
- 7) have experience in organisation of research and/or as administrative experience;
- 8) have been successful in obtaining of peer-reviewed grants.

Candidates to the position of Research Professor shall also present a vision statement for the next 5 years.

## **II Assessment of the Candidates**

The assessment is conducted on the basis of documents presented by the applicant. The conformity of the applicants documents to formal criteria (scientific degree, tenure as senior research fellow, supervision of thesis work, number of scientific publications) will be evaluated by a special control committee set up by the Science Council and is not subject of this assessment. However, the current evaluation shall include assessment of:

### ***1. Scientific excellence***

Assessment of scientific excellence includes accounting for number of publications in peer-reviewed journals; number of the said publications in last 5 years, bibliometric data such as h-index, both cumulative and last 5 years, number of citations, publications in high-impact journals, etc.

### ***2. Experience in international and organisational activities***

Participation in international research projects and/or programmes as Principal Investigator or national co-ordinator shall be assessed. Success in application for domestic and/or international peer-reviewed funding shall also be rated.

### ***3. Vision statement***

The applicant is expected to present the general motivation for future research, explain its role and importance in science, present its general theoretical background and main objectives. Also, the applicant is expected to outline the expected results and possible future developments of the proposed research, explain their importance for science, society and culture.

Conformity of the vision with national ([Estonian RD&I Strategy 2014-2020](#); Estonian Research Infrastructures [Roadmap](#), Smart Specialisation) and international (Horizon 2020) programmes and documents shall be assessed as well.

## **General guidelines**

In evaluating the applicants, please be guided by the following guidelines. A 5-step rating scale should be used in evaluating subsections 1-3 of an applicant (outstanding, very good, good, satisfactory or unsatisfactory). The maximum score an applicant can get is therefore 15 points (subsections 1 to 3).

**The values for criteria are as follows:**

**Outstanding** (5), i.e. top international researcher or researcher of exceptional national quality with excellent track record in international scientific co-operation and in organisational activities. The expected impact of the proposed research on the specific research field, on society and culture is high. The expected results and possible future developments of the proposed research program are clearly outlined. The expected results shall definitely increase the knowledge base in the specific research field, and if appropriate, shall be of high relevance for the societal problems and culture. The application is very well connected to national strategic plans, the Estonian research infrastructure roadmap, or national research programmes.

**Very good** (4), i.e. internationally competitive researcher or leading edge nationally. The proposed research topic is scientifically well motivated, its theoretical background and main objectives are clearly outlined. The proposed activities are well justified, this is original and innovative research at international level, includes novel methodology and design. The expected impact of the proposed research on the specific research field, on society and culture is high. The application is connected to national strategic plans, the Estonian research infrastructure roadmap, or national research programmes.

**Good** (3), i.e. partially internationally competitive researcher or of national strategic importance. The proposed research is scientifically motivated; its theoretical background and main objectives are outlined. The proposed activities are well justified, this is original and innovative research at national level, a methodologically sound study. The expected impact of the proposed research on the specific research field, on society and culture are not very clearly outlined. The application is not connected to national strategic plans, the Estonian research infrastructure roadmap, or national research programmes.

**Satisfactory** (2), i.e. mediocre scientific merits, average experience on international level. The expected results and possible future developments of the proposed research programme are also vaguely outlined. The expected results shall somewhat ensure national and international acceptability, competitiveness and high quality of the research topic. The application is not connected to national strategic plans, the Estonian research infrastructure roadmap, or national research programmes.

**Unsatisfactory** (1), i.e. poor scientific merits, poor international experience. The proposed research programme is weak and the expected impact of the proposed research on the specific research field, the institute and society are vaguely outlined. The application is not connected to national strategic plans, the Estonian research infrastructure roadmap, or national research programmes.

**Finally, in case there are more applicants than the number of open positions, the assessor should rank the applicants according to the results of the assessment and provide a brief reasoning.**