

## The European Charter for Researchers and The Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers



In March 2005, the European Commission adopted the *Recommendation on the European Charter for Researchers and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*.

The Charter & Code spell out the roles, responsibilities and rights of researchers as well as of their employers and funders. The aim is to promote **attractive research careers** and improve **employment and working conditions** for researchers throughout Europe. The implementation of the Charter & Code is a major component of the European Union's strategy to stimulate employment and economic growth, by creating a competitive, transparent and open labour market for researchers.

The *European Charter for Researchers* covers amongst others:

- Recognition of the profession
- Career development
- Value of mobility

The *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* addresses amongst others:

- Recruitment principles
- Selection criteria
- Postdoctoral appointments

Today (end of May 2012) more than **450 organisations** from **35 countries** in Europe and beyond have explicitly endorsed the principles underlying the Charter & Code, many of them membership or umbrella organisations. Together they represent **more than 1200** universities, research institutes and funding agencies. Various **researcher associations** have also endorsed the Charter & Code in writing, representing **thousands of individual researchers**.

The list of organisations that have endorsed the Charter & Code is available on the EURAXESS Rights website at <http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/rights>. The same link can be used to access the full text of the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* which is available in almost all official languages of the European Union.

### Who can endorse the Charter and Code? How does it work?

Any organisation **employing or funding researchers** (e.g. universities, private companies, or research centres) can sign up. Other organisations that represent researchers or their employers or funders (researcher associations or rectors' conferences) are also invited to express their support by endorsing the Charter & Code. Furthermore, they are encouraged to **act as multipliers in the promotion** of the principles of the Charter & Code. Organisations can be located anywhere in the world and do not have to be based in the European Union. The endorsement letter should be signed by the organisation's highest authority.

By endorsing the Charter & Code, an organisation voluntarily commits itself to **implementing the common objectives** outlined in both documents.

The endorsement process is simple. If your organisation agrees with the principles of the Charter & Code and wants to give an endorsement to them, a signed declaration (preferably in English and suitable for publication) can be sent to [rtd-charter@ec.europa.eu](mailto:rtd-charter@ec.europa.eu). The EURAXESS Rights team can help at any stage of the process. Endorsement letters are normally published on the EURAXESS Rights website as soon as the scanned document has been received.

## The Human Resources Strategy for Researchers

The *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers incorporating Charter & Code* was launched in 2008 at the Rennes French Presidency Conference on Young Researchers. The HR Strategy for Researchers provides support to employers and funders of researchers in the **practical implementation** of the Charter & Code principles. This step by step process enables organisations to truly integrate the principles in their own Human Resources policy, thereby promoting the organisation as a **stimulating and favourable work place**, or as a funder that promotes the provision of such a favourable environment through their funding rules.

The *Human Resources Strategy* is easy to apply and flexible in its validation:

- It is implemented by individual institutions on a **voluntary basis**
- It is based on an institution's internal analysis of Charter & Code principles vis-à-vis its **rules and practices** on HR management
- It is simple and light, **non-bureaucratic and flexible**, recognizing the variety of situations across institutions
- It is a **sign of transparency** and provides easy, publicly accessible information on the actions by institutions to implement the Charter & Code principles

Concretely, the *Human Resources Strategy* consists of the following five steps:

1. an **internal analysis** in order to assess in how far the organisation already operates in alignment with the Charter & Code;
2. the publication of an institutional **HR Strategy and Action Plan** addressing the most important gaps identified, through concrete actions;
3. the award of the "**HR Excellence in Research**" logo by the European Commission, provided that certain requirements are fulfilled;
4. a **self-assessment** of the implementation of the Action Plan after two years;
5. an **external evaluation** after four years which could lead either



HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH

So far (end of May 2012) **93 organisations** have received the "HR Excellence in Research" logo. The full list can be found on the EURAXESS Rights website.

## Useful links

EURAXESS – **Researchers in Motion**, with its four axes *Services, Jobs, Rights and Links*.

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess>

EURAXESS **Rights** is hosting the *Charter & Code* and the *Human Resources Strategy for Researchers* alongside other key initiatives facilitating the careers and lives of researchers:

<http://ec.europa.eu/euraxess/rights>