

Faculty Recruitment Manual for Promoting Diversity in Universities

Representative institution: Nagoya University

Collaborating institutions: Gifu University, National Women's Education Center

Introduction

For universities to secure excellent human resources, the qualifications of applicants must be fairly evaluated regardless of gender, nationality, or other backgrounds in the recruitment of faculty members. At the same time, for universities to attract and retain talented individuals who will contribute over the long term, universities must have organizational culture and workplace structure that maximize the abilities of the faculty members who are appointed to the position. An organization with a healthy, democratic atmosphere that is inclusive of minorities and respects diversity will not only enable individual researchers to develop their abilities but will also produce a rich soil that nurtures creativity and vitality. This Faculty Recruitment Manual describes precautions to be taken in the selection process of faculty members so that universities can produce outstanding educational and research results through the promotion of diversity. We hope that you will find this manual useful in your efforts to secure talented individuals who are not only highly capable as individuals but who can also contribute to the creation of organizational culture and system to bring out the full potential of their abilities.

1. What the faculty selection committee should prepare

1) Composition of the faculty selection committee

When conducting faculty recruitment with diversity in mind, it is important to have a selection committee that is committed to viewpoints and values that enable it to fairly evaluate the abilities of applicants from diverse backgrounds. To this end, the composition of the selection committee itself must embody diversity. For example, to prevent the composition of the selection committee from being skewed toward one gender, consider having a rule that the minor gender is not less than 1/4 of the committee. If there are not enough minor gender faculty members in a department, a mechanism could be created to have a neutral body involved in promoting diversity within the university and send an observer to the selection committee.

Also, agree on a ground rule in advance that encourages the participation of all committee members so that discussions within the committee will not be dominated by certain members or some members will refrain from speaking due to power relations within the committee.

2) Mandatory "unconscious bias" training

For everyone to become aware of biases and cognitive distortions that they may not be aware of themselves, the "unconscious bias" training video ("Recognizing Unconscious Bias: Promoting Gender Equality at Universities") should be viewed by all committee members at the committee meeting, and time should be set aside for exchanging opinions. At Nagoya University and Gifu

University, attendance at training using this training video is mandatory.

3) Confirmation of the ratio of female faculty members and non-Japanese faculty members in the department

All members of the selection committee are encouraged to grasp not only the ratio of women at each stage of the academic career path (e.g., full professor, associate professor, lecturer, assistant professor) but also the ratio of female applicants and female hires in past open recruitments. It is important to obtain data on the status of diversity in the department in advance of recruitment so that all members of the selection committee can have a common understanding of the current situation based on the data. National universities should compile such data yearly for *the Report on the Follow-up Survey on the Implementation of Gender Equality Promotion at National Universities* (The Japan Association of National Universities). Contact the department in charge of promoting gender equality.

4) Grasp the number and ratio of female researchers and non-Japanese researchers in the field of study

It is advisable to confirm in advance, as much as possible, the number of female researchers and non-Japanese researchers in the field of study to be recruited in Japan and abroad, based on data from academic associations and other sources. In addition, the selection committee should discuss in advance whether the ratio of female researchers and non-Japanese researchers in the department conducting the recruitment is appropriate compared to the above ratio, for the ratio of female researchers and non-Japanese researchers to all applicants, set targets using internal and external figures for the positions to be recruited as a benchmark. For example, suppose you are recruiting for a position of full professor. In that case, the ratio of female researchers and non-Japanese researchers to all applicants must be equal to or higher than the percentage of those in the relevant fields of academic associations. Suppose you are recruiting for the position of assistant professor. In that case, the ratio of female researchers and non-Japanese researchers to all applicants should be higher than the percentage of female and non-Japanese doctoral degree holders in the relevant fields.

5) Demonstrate positive attitudes toward promoting diversity and work-life balance

The application guidelines, clearly state that you are actively promoting diversity and work-life balance and show relevant links. For example, at Nagoya University, "The Graduate School of XXX is actively working to promote gender equality. (For more information on Nagoya University's initiatives, please see the following: <https://www.kyodo-sankaku.provost.nagoya-u.ac.jp/>)" or "We actively recruit women if the level of academic achievement of male and female candidates are about equal."

Good practices on faculty recruitment processes in other countries

Lund University in Sweden (ranked 5th in the world in the Global Gender Gap Report 2022) has an "unconscious bias observer" system. The unconscious bias observers, who have undergone an intensive training course for about two days, attend the faculty selection committee meetings as observers, record the decision-making process, and compile a report. The presence of the observer provides each member of the selection committee with an opportunity to question and reflect on his or her assumptions and

biases. The reports compiled by the observers are shared with all members of the department which conducted the recruitment to eliminate unconscious bias.

In addition to the above example, Western Sydney University in Australia (ranked 43rd in the world in the Global Gender Gap Report 2022) has a rule that faculty selection committees must include at least 40% of either gender. It also requires that staff members from the Office of Equity and Diversity participate in the review process in all cases of appointments for promotion within the university.

North Carolina State University in the United States (ranked 27th in the world in the Global Gender Gap Report 2022), has established on-campus the Office for Institutional Equity and Diversity. It has Equal Opportunity and Equity staff members assigned to each department to monitor all employment processes within the university. It is the duty of any employer that receives more than a certain amount of public funds to establish such an equal opportunity and equity department, and, it is stipulated that in educational institutions, the head of the office must be a vice president level. The office also has dozens of professional staff members with doctoral degrees in human resources and education.

What is more, Seoul National University in South Korea (ranked 99th in the Global Gender Gap Report 2022) has a legal obligation to achieve numerical targets that ensures that faculty members are not biased toward one gender based on a law. At the same time, Seoul National University has formulated an annual plan for recruitment, which includes a target for the number of female faculty members employed by each department.

*According to the World Economic Forum. Japan's ranking is 116th (out of 146 countries) in 2022.

2. Clarification of screening criteria

Before the selection process, it is very important that the criteria for screening applicants be clearly defined and agreed upon by the selection committee. In doing so, please refer to the following:

- a) To ensure that applicants who have undergone life events, such as childbirth, childcare, or nursing care, do not receive unfair evaluation because of such events, this should be clearly stated as a precaution in the screening criteria. It is also important to clearly state in the application guidelines that if applicants have had to interrupt or delay their research activities in the past due to childbirth, childcare, nursing care, illness, or other reasons, they can indicate this in their application documents. This will prevent applicants from being evaluated unfavorably due to such experiences and recognize that universities may be able to employ researchers with diverse life experiences. As a rule, however, you do not ask questions about a candidate's marital status or family structure during the interview process. If a candidate mentions them (e.g., interruption of research activities due to childbirth or childcare), you will respond in good faith.
- b) Even if a candidate is highly rated for his or her achievements, years of experience, and obtaining research funding, he or she may not be considered for the final selection due to the "age structure" or "distribution of fields of study" of the current faculty members. Similarly, all members of the selection committee must be aware that even the best candidate may not be selected as a finalist due to the "diversity" of the current faculty. The selection process should be divided into two stages, first narrowing down the list of candidates who meet the evaluation criteria for recruitment and then considering the "diversity" of the current faculty as well as their "age structure" and "distribution of fields of study" to make a final decision.
- c) Apart from whether the applicant's background embodies diversity, the applicant's experience in teaching students and other groups with diverse attributes, and the applicant's ability, as well

as the willingness to contribute to the promotion of diversity in teaching and research after taking up the position, should also be added to the evaluation criteria. Applicants will be asked to express their opinions on these points during the interview, which will be reflected in the evaluation.

- d) When recruiting for positions of managerial responsibility, such as full professors, be aware that the candidate's awareness of diversity and inclusiveness will greatly influence the development of young faculty members. Confirm the candidate's ideas and opinions regarding these issues during the interview process.

Good practices on the screening process in other countries

It is a practice at universities in Europe and the United States to re-open the call for applications when the shortlist of candidates does not include women. Examples include Lund University and Chalmers University of Technology in Sweden, and North Carolina State University in the United States. Western Sydney University in Australia has set a target of 40% for the percentage of women on the shortlist in the university's gender equity plan.

These universities also include in their evaluation criteria whether candidates have the potential and experience to contribute to ensuring diversity at the university. Furthermore, to increase the transparency of the screening process, a record of the reasons for hiring or rejection is kept for each applicant in case a rejected candidate requests disclosure of information about the hiring.

3. To secure a diverse applicant pool

1) Reduce the burden on applicants

Complicated documents and procedures to be submitted at the time of application may discourage applicants from applying, even if they are highly qualified, depending on their circumstances. Consider the following measures to reduce unnecessary burdens on applicants:

- a) Use an open application format and use online or e-mail to complete the application process.
- b) Separate the application screening into first and second rounds, and require a curriculum vitae, a statement of educational and research achievements, and documents showing the acquisition of research funds as necessary documents for the first round of application screening. In a statement of educational and research achievements, a summary of each achievement will not be requested.
- c) When obtaining degree certificates, qualification certificates, etc., it takes time and effort to verify the identity of a person who uses a common name that differs from his/her family name each time. These certificates will not be requested in the first round of screening.

2) Ensuring a diverse applicant pool

- a) If the number of women and other minority applicants is expected to be small, the selection committee should actively recruit them. It is widely practiced for faculty members to attempt to find outstanding candidates by using their networks of fellow researchers close to them. However, if the current faculty is predominantly male, the number of female researchers and other minority researchers actively participating in their networks may be small, to begin with. On the other hand, female researchers and other minority researchers may be connected through networks of those who have much in common with each other in their backgrounds,

so you should contact such networks and make efforts to encourage diverse candidates to apply.

- b) As for open recruitment, as far as possible, international recruitment should be the principle, and access to overseas researchers' networks should be made to recruit excellent candidates from all over the world. Even in fields where there are few female researchers in Japan, there may be many female researchers who are eligible to apply on a global basis. If your field of study is difficult for women and other minorities to enter in Japan, be aware that many of them are pursuing degrees at universities overseas.

3) Broaden the range of fields of study to be recruited

If you limit the fields of study you are recruiting in too narrowly, the number of target candidates may be too small in the first place, and you may not be able to find the best candidates, even if you want to encourage a diverse range of candidates to apply. This is because researchers who try to strictly meet the requirements of the field of recruitment tend to be reluctant to apply if their research theme or approach deviates even slightly from the narrowly defined field, even if they are excellent. It is important to set the fields of study as broadly as possible to attract as many qualified candidates as possible and to hire innovative faculty who are not confined to the existing classifications of subdivided specialized fields.

Good practices for expanding fields of study for recruitment

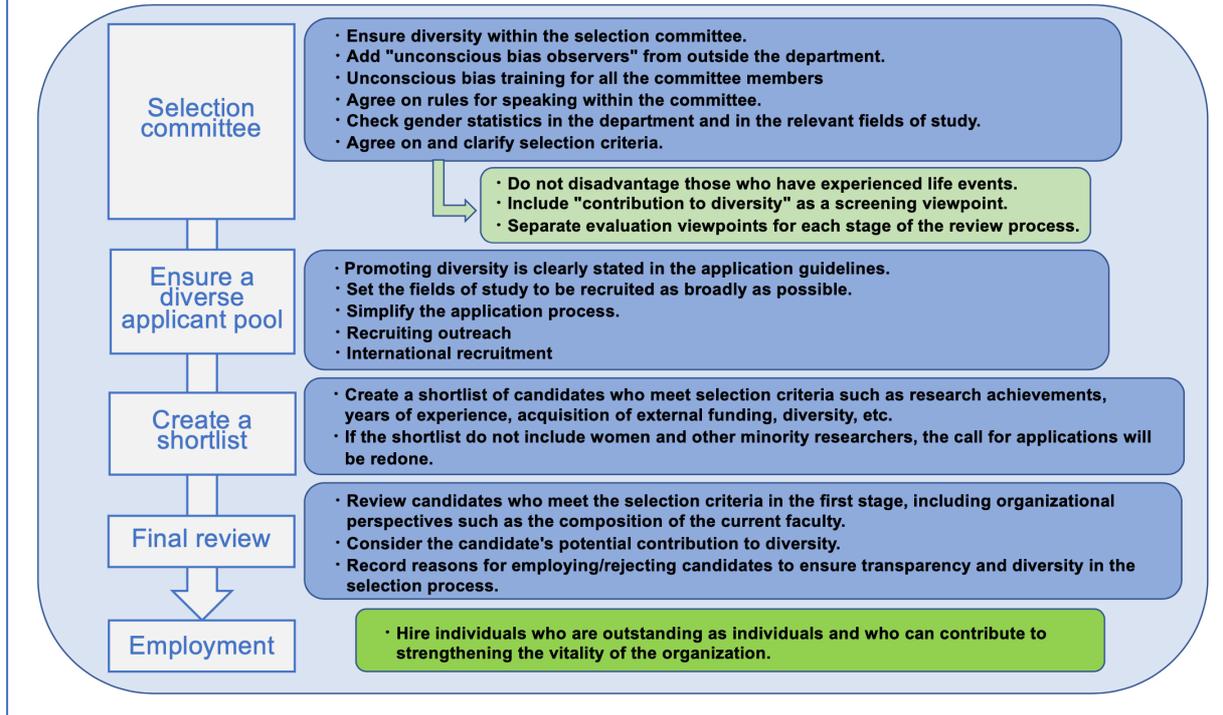
Abigail Stewart and Virginia Valian, the authors of *An Inclusive Academy: Achieving Diversity and Excellence* (MIT Press, 2018) point out that setting up recruitment fields based on specific research topics and methods minimizes the number of applicants and fails to attract applicants from diverse backgrounds. For example, rather than recruiting "researchers who conduct research on stigma and stereotypes in social psychology" in the field of psychology, it is more effective to recruit "researchers who can carry out a promising research program in psychology" to attract the best applicants from diverse backgrounds.

In the case of Nagoya University's open call for science-related fields of study, the university used a category that integrated several traditional fields of study, such as "bioscience," "biomechanics," and "environmental studies," to enable researchers from diverse backgrounds to apply for the positions.

4. Standardize the faculty recruitment process and share it across the campus

As described so far, many things can be done to achieve a diverse and vibrant university. The key to moving forward is to standardize the recruitment process according to the circumstances of each university and department and to share it within the university. We encourage you to use this manual as a reference to create your original faculty recruitment manual.

Examples of Recommended Faculty Recruitment Processes



5. References

The Japan Association of National Universities, "Follow-up Survey Report on the Implementation of Gender Equality Promotion at National Universities"

(<https://www.janu.jp/janu/gender/>)

Stewart, Abigail J., and Virginia Vailan, 2018, *An Inclusive Academy: Achieving Diversity and Excellence*, Cambridge: MIT Press.

World Economic Forum, "Global Gender Gap Report 2022"

(<https://www.weforum.org/reports/global-gender-gap-report-2022/>)