Changes in the hiring of postdocs.

Academic Hiring policies are no longer waived for Research Associates. This means that the PI cannot hire a postdoc without following a specific protocol created to ensure that the search is conducted in a manner that guarantees diversity.

Below is what the Office for Inclusion and Intercultural Initiatives (OIII) says about the recruitment plan:

To address this, OIII now reviews that a postdoc search fulfills the following requirements:

- The job posting has been approved by HR and goes live on their job portal.
- MSU advertises the job posting in Pure Michigan Job Portal, Inside Higher Ed, and HERC (Higher Education Recruitment Consortium). This satisfies OIII’s requirement to outsource in outlets that can reach a diverse pool of candidates.


**Unit-Level Hiring Pattern**

The office looks for evidence of creative recruitment strategies that will attract a diverse applicant pool. Advertising a position only in traditional publications frequently results in creating only a traditional applicant pool. A position should be publicized in a manner that will bring it to the attention of women and minorities, and the search committee should actively seek to identify qualified applicants from these groups.

**Applicant Pools**

The office looks for evidence of a diverse pool of qualified applicants.

*The PI can (and is encouraged to) advertise informally in any other outlets. These efforts must be described in detail in a search report, which the PI prepares and submits for review to the Affirmative Action Advocate prior to evaluation by the FAC.*

- Applications must be submitted to the online MSU portal for consideration. *Applicants that submit the application package directly to the PI cannot be considered unless they have also submitted the application through the MSU portal.*

- The applications are reviewed by a search committee. In MMG, the members of the search committee are:
  - Chair: PI posting the job.
  - Affirmative Action Advocate: selected from the FAC (currently Gemma Reguera).
  - All other members of the FAC. *The applicants are reviewed by the PI first, then the Affirmative Action Advocate, and lastly, by the FAC.*

**How are the Search committee and Affirmative Action Advocate selected at MMG?**

- The department’s Chairperson has tasked the FAC to be the standing Search Committee for Research Associates at MMG.
- The Chairperson designates what FAC member is to serve as the Affirmative Action Advocate.

Note what the OIII states about who can serve effectively as Affirmative Action Advocate:
The search committee must designate one member to be the “Affirmative Action Advocate.” This person need not be a woman or minority; experience has shown that the role of affirmative action advocate can be fulfilled effectively by a Caucasian man. The advocate should evaluate all steps of the search process in terms of the goals and principles of affirmative action, and bring deficiencies to the attention of the search committee (or as necessary to the attention of the unit administrator) for corrective action. The position should be widely advertised and the search committee should not unconsciously engage in discriminatory practices. In most academic disciplines, the greatest challenge for the search committee will be to actively seek women and minority applicants (see “Advertising and Enlarging the Pool of Applicants”). If necessary, a subcommittee formed from the search committee can address this task. Ideally, each member of a search committee will become an advocate for affirmative action.

How should the Search committee and Affirmative Action Advocate evaluate that the search was conducted appropriately?

1. Log in to the MSU EBS webpage and click on the Applicant Tracking System:

2. Go to “Search Committee Review”
3. This will take you to a page with the job listings in our unit:

![Image of job listings table]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job number</th>
<th>Date added</th>
<th>Status</th>
<th>Classification title</th>
<th>User</th>
<th>Year role</th>
<th>Major Administrative Unit / College</th>
<th>View job</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>492541</td>
<td>21 Feb 2018</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Research Associate-Flex JF</td>
<td>JF</td>
<td>View committee n College Of Natural Science</td>
<td>View job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>493976</td>
<td>2 Mar 2018</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Research Associate-Flex SK</td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>Search committee n College Of Osteopathic Medicine</td>
<td>View Applicants</td>
<td>View job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>498082</td>
<td>2 Apr 2018</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Research Associate-Flex MG</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Search committee n College Of Natural Science</td>
<td>View Applicants</td>
<td>View job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>498472</td>
<td>4 Apr 2018</td>
<td>Compliance Rt Research Associate-Flex SK</td>
<td>SK</td>
<td>Search committee n College Of Natural Science</td>
<td>View Applicants</td>
<td>View job</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>498463</td>
<td>4 Apr 2018</td>
<td>Approved</td>
<td>Research Associate-Flex MG</td>
<td>MG</td>
<td>Search committee n College Of Natural Science</td>
<td>View Applicants</td>
<td>View job</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. “View job” gives access to the job position description. Note the example below:

![Image of position description]

**Position Description**

Position Snapshot:

The Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics seeks a Research Associate to work in the Dr. Andrew Olive laboratory engaging in cutting-edge research to understand the host response to chronic bacterial infections including Mycobacterium tuberculosis.

Posting Text:

**Position Summary**

The Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics is seeking a Research Associate (Post-Doc) to work in the laboratory of Dr. Andrew Olive. The project is to work on cutting-edge research to understand the host response to chronic bacterial infections including *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. The project will use genetic approaches to dissect how distinct immune pathways control bacterial replication and/or inflammation.

This position will begin September 1, 2018, and is initially for one year, renewed annually for up to two years with a possibility of an extension based on performance and the availability of funding.

This page also lists the members of the search committee:

- Recruiting PI is the chair of the search.
- It also lists the name of the Affirmative Action Advocate and the remaining members of the FAC.’s AAA is named and FAC members are listed as search committee.
5. “View applicants” gives access to the applications for each position. You can use the icons by each applicant to view or download the application materials.

**Steps in the Review of Applicants by the Affirmative Action Advocate and the FAC:**

This protocol was designed to minimize interference with the hiring process by the PI while providing oversight to ensure compliance.

1. The recruiting PI writes the **job description** and works with Christine vanDeuren to get HR approval and post the job.
   a. HR determines when the review of applicants can start (usually 2-3 weeks). This is to ensure that the job has been advertised for sufficient time to recruit a diverse pool of applicants.
   b. We advise the PI to be very specific about the job requirements, as this helps later on to justify the exclusion of applicant that did not meet these requirements.

2. The PI **reviews the applications** and **drafts the search report**.
   a. Use template with instructions to guide the writing of the search report (Christine has a copy)
   b. It is important to detail the criteria used to select and/or exclude applicants.
   c. The PI can request letters of reference and/or interview candidates (phone, Skype), as needed.
   d. **Onsite interviews require approval from Chair, Dean and OII** (recruiting PI needs to contact Christine to request approval before inviting the candidates).
3. The PI sends the draft of the search report to the Affirmative Action Advocate:
   a. The Advocate reviews the report and works with the PI to ensure that is a detailed reflection of the search.
   b. The Advocate checks the applicant pool for this search and ensures that the report includes accurate information.
   c. This is the step where it is important to have a detailed summary of the job requirements and how they were use to evaluate the suitability of the applicants for the position.

4. The Affirmative Action Advocate sends the approved search report to the remaining members of the FAC for review.
   a. The FAC members vote by e-mail whether they approve or disapprove of the search.
   b. If they disapprove they have to indicate why. They can also offer suggestions for revisions to the search report.
   c. A majority vote is needed to approve the search report.
      i. The PI and Affirmative Action Advocate count one vote each.
      ii. Two approving FAC members are then needed to reach the majority vote.
   d. Once the Advocate gets the majority vote, he/she notifies the PI and Christine that the search report has been approved.
   e. If the Advocate does not hear from FAC members in 24 h, he/she has the authority to make the final decision and authorize the search report on behalf of the FAC.

5. The Affirmative Action Advocate notifies the PI and Christine that the search report has been approved and sends them the final, approved version of the report.

6. Christine then guides the PI on how to proceed with making an offer.
THIS IS THE e-MAIL that GEMMA PREPARED FOR THE FAC TO EXPLAIN THEIR ROLE IN THE SEARCH. IT CAN BE USED AS A TEMPLATE TO INFORM NEW MEMBERS OF THE FAC OF HOW THE PROCESS WORKS:

At our last faculty meeting we discussed the new university policy and the plan we are implementing at MMG to ensure that postdoctoral searches are compliant while minimizing interference with the ability of the PI to recruit a suitable candidate in a timely manner. A few points to remember:

1. MSU HR reviews, authorizes and outsources the job posting to ensure that it reaches a diverse community.

2. The PI can advertise the position in other outlets. He/she can also interview candidates. All these steps in evaluation must be described in the search report.
   - The PI reviews the applications and selects candidates for interview, if needed.
   - Skype/Zoom interviews can proceed without authorization.
   - Onsite interviews require Chair and Dean approval and are handled by Christine.

3. I serve as Affirmative Action Advocate to ensure that the search was conducted without bias and in a manner that promoted inclusion. I work with the PI to review and revise the search report so by the time I send it to you it is already approved by me and the PI.

4. The FAC is the standing search committee for fixed-term research associates and, as such, we are tasked to review the report and decide whether to authorize, revise or deny a request to hire a postdoc.

5. To speed up the hiring process, I ask each of you to reply to my e-mail as soon as possible.
   - Between the PI and me, we already have two votes approving the search report
   - I need the approval of at least 2 FAC members to get a majority vote. At this point, I notify Christine and the PI so they can place an offer without delay.
   - If I don't hear from all of you within 24 h, I will proceed to approve in order to prevent unnecessary delays in the hiring process.