



Regulations for the assigning of research contracts, pursuant to Article 22 of Law No. 240, 30.12.2010 ¹

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Article 1 - Purpose and Scope of Application.

1. These Regulations are issued in accordance with Law No. 168 of 9 May 1989 and current legislative provisions. They comply with the principles set out in the new European Charter for Researchers, as set out in European Council Recommendation C/2023/1640. They also comply with the Code of Ethics and Conduct of the University of Cagliari. These Regulations govern the selection process, legal framework and financial provisions for holders of research contracts

¹ *The University is fully aware of the importance of using appropriate gender language, as explicitly recognized in its own documents (Gender Equality plan, gender budget, positive action plan). With a view to simplification, in this document, all references to offices, professions, titles and functions reported and declined in the inclusive masculine plural are understood to refer also to the corresponding term of the feminine gender*



referred to in Article 22 of Law No. 240 of 30 December 2010. In the following text, such individuals are referred to as 'Contract holders'.

2. The University of Cagliari may enter into fixed-term employment contracts, denominated 'research contracts', for the exclusive purpose of carrying out specific research projects. These contracts may be financed in whole or in part with internal funds, or by third parties (both public and private), on the basis of specific agreements or conventions.

3. These Regulations align with the University of Cagliari's policies to implement the principles of the new European Charter for Researchers, with the aim of achieving recognition in Human Resources Excellence in Research by promoting a competitive and productive research environment.

Art. 2 - Details of research contracts

1. Research contracts last for two years and can be renewed once for a further two years.

2. For national, European or international research projects, research contracts are initially for two years and can be extended by up to one year depending on the specific needs relating to the project's objectives and nature.

3. The total duration of research contracts, even if signed with different institutions, cannot exceed five years. Periods spent on maternity or paternity leave, or on health-related leave in accordance with current regulations, are not taken into account when calculating the total duration.

4. Contracts covered by these Regulations do not entitle the holder to directly access tenured positions, nor can they be counted for the purposes of Article 20 of Legislative Decree No. 75 of 25 May 2017.

Art. 3 – Selection procedure

1. Research contracts shall be awarded following selection procedures that ensure the comparative evaluation of candidates and the public notification of proceedings, as outlined in



the following articles.

2. Research contracts may be awarded as a result of procedures carried out by the University in accordance with these Regulations, or as a result of assessments carried out by ministries, the European Union or other recognised national, foreign or international public or private bodies within the scientific/academic community. These bodies must be involved in competitive funding procedures that comply with the principles of publicity and transparency. Following evaluation of the researcher's profile, the successful candidate will be offered a fixed-term employment contract.

In this case, the contract will be awarded by the Board of Directors, subject to the Academic Senate's approval.

Article 4 - Implementation of the selection procedure

1. Subject to the opinion of the Academic Senate and the financial resources available in the University budget, the Board of Directors shall decide whether or not to assign research contracts.

2. Research contracts can also be assigned with funding from research projects, third-party activities, or other resources under conventions or agreements with external bodies.

3. For the exclusive purpose of carrying out specific research projects, and restricted to teaching staff (Art. 54, lett. c, Statute), the Department Councils shall decide on the assigning of research contracts given the available financial resources, taking into account legal constraints.

4. The decisions referred to in the preceding paragraph must state:

- a) the number of posts under consideration during the procedure;
- b) the research programme to which the contract relates;
- c) the Principal investigator;
- d) the group of academic research fields;



- e) one or more academic research fields that fall within the same group of academic research fields;
 - f) the department and main place of work activity;
 - g) details of the funding sources to which the cost of the contract should be charged;
 - h) The commitment to activities should respect the directions for implementing the research programme for the sole purpose of reporting on research projects.
 - i) The salary parameters specified and based on the required commitment, from among the following:
 - i1) The first parameter, which is equal to the initial salary payable to a tenured track researcher on a fixed-term basis;
 - i2) Second parameter, equal to the initial salary payable to a full-time tenured track researcher, increased by one-third of the salary difference between a full-time and part-time contract;
 - i3) The third parameter is equal to the initial salary payable to a full-time tenured track researcher, increased by two-thirds of the salary difference between a full-time and a part-time researcher.
 - i4) Fourth parameter, equal to the initial salary payable to a full-time tenured track researcher.
 - j) The maximum number of publications, with a value between 2 and 10.
 - k) The foreign language of which candidates are expected to demonstrate knowledge;
 - l) Useful information for applicants to submit their project proposal.
5. The Board of Directors shall authorise the assigning of research contracts after consultation with the Academic Senate.



Art. 5 - Call for Selection

1. In addition to the elements set out in Article 4, the selection notice issued by decree of the Rector must contain the following elements:

- a) the selection procedure;
- b) the requirements for participation;
- c) the evaluation criteria and the corresponding maximum scores;
- d) the maximum number of publications that each candidate may submit for evaluation purposes;
- e) useful information for applicants for the purpose of submitting their application and project proposal;
- f) The deadline for submitting applications to participate in the selection process;
- g) The legal, financial and social security status;
- h) The date, time and manner in which candidates will be called for interview, if applicable.

2. This notice is publicised on the Ministry of University and Research website and the European Union Portal, as well as on the University's website.

3. Deadlines for submitting applications to participate in the selection process run from the day after the notice is published on the University website.

Art. 6 - Candidates eligible for selection

1. Eligible candidates will be Italian or foreign nationals who, by the deadline for submitting applications for admission to the selection, are in possession of a doctoral degree or a degree obtained abroad that has been evaluated as equivalent for the sole purpose of awarding the contract by the Selection Committee, or, for the relevant fields, a specialisation degree in Medicine.

2. Provided that they are enrolled in the third year of a PhD programme or the final year of a medical specialisation programme, and provided that they are expected to obtain their degree within six months of the date of publication of the call for selection on the University's website,



candidates who are compatible with the discipline of the research programme and the relative reporting rules, may also participate in the selections.

3. For degrees obtained abroad, the Selection Committee will evaluate the equivalence of the degree for the purposes of the procedure.

4. The following may not participate in selections:

a) Tenured staff hired on a permanent basis by universities, public research organisations and institutions, whose postgraduate scientific/academic degree has been recognised as equivalent to a research doctorate in accordance with Article 74, paragraph four, of Presidential Decree No. 382 of 11 July 1980;

b) Those who have benefitted from fixed-term researcher contracts under Art. 24 of Law No. 240/2010;

c) Those with a kinship or affinity relationship up to and including the fourth degree with a professor in the department that proposed the assigning of the contract, or with the Rector, Director General or a member of the Board of Directors.

5. The Rector may exclude any person from the selection procedure at any time by reasoned decree and notify them of the decision.

Art. 7 – Selection Committee

1. The Selection or Evaluation Committee is appointed by the Rector after the deadline for submitting applications.

2. To ensure scientific/academic quality and international standing, the committee must consist of three professors and/or researchers who have been positively evaluated by their home university, in accordance with Article 6, Paragraph 7 of Law No. 240/2010.

3. Professors in service at foreign universities or research institutes with proven international recognition, within the group of academic research fields covered by the call, may also be appointed, provided they hold an academic position corresponding to the Italian position of Professor, as defined by the Ministry's equivalence tables.

4. Committee members will be chosen as follows from among those indicated by the relevant



Department Council by special resolution, restricted to faculty members:

- One member chosen from among the principal investigator of the project or a professor belonging to the same group of academic research fields covered by the call.

- Two members chosen by drawing lots. This will be carried out by the Personnel, Organisation, Performance Directorate in a public session on the Microsoft Teams platform. The names will be drawn from two trios constituted as follows:

a) the first trio of professors and/or researchers, from which a male component will be drawn;

(b) the second trio of female professors and/or researchers, from which a female member will be selected.

5. At least one of the Committee members must be a tenured Professor.

6. The following may not be members of the selection committee:

a) individuals who are married to or related by blood or affinity up to and including the fourth degree to any of the following; individuals who are in a civil partnership with someone of the same sex, as regulated by Art. 1 of Law No. 76 of 20 May 2016, or who are in a state of *de facto* cohabitation as regulated by Art. 1, paragraphs 37 et seq. of Law No. 76 of 20 May 2016, with candidates or other members of the Committee;

b) individuals with a conflict of interest or a situation for which there are grounds for abstention under Article 51 of the Code of Criminal Procedure with regard to the candidates or other members of the Committee.

7. In any case, the following may not be members of selection committees:

a) fixed-term professors under Article 1, paragraph 12, of Law 230/2005;

b) professors and researchers who, in the academic year preceding the date of the rector's decree appointing the committee, did not obtain a positive evaluation pursuant to Article 6, paragraph 7, second sentence, of Law No. 240 of 30 December 2010;

c) those who have been convicted, including by a judgment that has not become *res judicata*, of offences under Chapter I of Title II of the Second Volume of the Penal Code.

d) current members of the Board of Directors and Academic Senate of this University.



8. Each member of the committee must verify and declare that they are not in any of the situations of incompatibility provided for in paragraphs 6 and 7 above.

9. A Committee Member who has more than 50% of their scientific/academic output in common with that submitted by candidates in the selection process must be considered incompatible and must renounce the appointment, providing timely notice of their withdrawal to the University.

10. Participation in the work is an *ex officio* obligation for members of the jury, except in cases of *force majeure*.

11. The committee conducts its work collegially and reaches decisions by an absolute majority. It may use computer-based tools to conduct its meetings remotely, including those relating to interviews with candidates, in the manner provided for in the notice.

Article 8 – Procedure for conducting the selections

1. Candidates are evaluated through a comparative process to assess their adherence to the open, transparent and merit-based recruitment standards, and to evaluate the alignment of project proposals with the research programme that is the subject of the contract, as well as the suitability of candidates' scientific/academic and professional backgrounds for the research activity that is the subject of the contract.

2. The interview will be held in open session.

3. Applicants must submit all relevant documentation for evaluation as specified in the public announcement.

4. Candidates will be assessed comparatively on the basis of the following:

a) Quality, originality and innovativeness of the project proposal in relation to the selected research area;

b) Relevance and practical application of previous research activities and work experience (if applicable) in relation to the content of the selected research area;

c) The relevance and practical validity of the attached publications in relation to the thematic area of the selected research project;

d) An interview designed to ascertain the candidate's suitability for carrying out the research



activity covered by the contract and for implementing the submitted project proposal, as well as assessing their knowledge of English and/or other relevant languages.

5. The evaluation of a project proposal and scientific/academic and professional curriculum is carried out on the basis of the following general criteria that are also recognized internationally:

(a) evaluation of the project proposal:

a1) characteristics of the proposal (clarity, completeness);

a2) scientific/academic quality of the proposal

a3) Consistency with the research program;

b) evaluation of the scientific/academic and professional curriculum:

b1) Ph.D., or, for the fields concerned, the medical specialization degree, obtained in Italy or abroad;

b2) documented training or research activities at recognised Italian or foreign Institutions and Research Centres;

b3) implementation of project activity with respect to the group of academic research fields in question;

b4) Participation, with physical or virtual mobility, in national and international research groups;

b5) Ownership of patents with respect to the group of academic research fields in question;

b6) Participation as a speaker in national and international congresses and conferences;

b7) Achievement of national and international awards and prizes for scientific study;

b8) European specialization diploma recognized by international boards, with respect to the specific relevant academic research fields in question.

b9) Assessment of scientific/academic output:

(b9a) consistency with the thematic area of the research project being selected;

(b9b) individual contribution in collaborative team research work;

(b9c) quality of scientific/academic output, assessed within the international research landscape, on the basis of originality, methodological rigour and innovative character;

(b9d) publication of scientific/academic articles in series or journals and by editors of national



or international renown.

Within groups of academic research fields where its use is established internationally, committees may also employ bibliometric indicators when evaluating publications.

c) Assessment at the interview:

c1) expository clarity of the project proposal submitted;

c2) mastery of the topics included in the research project;

c3) ability to link any interdisciplinary aspects of the research project;

c4) knowledge of the foreign language specified in the notice.

6. The numerical weight given to the general criteria will be distributed thus:

- Between 25 and 40 points for the evaluation of the project proposal;
- Between 45 and 60 points for the evaluation of the scientific/academic and professional curriculum;
- Between 10 and 30 points for the interview.

The sum of the individual numerical weights must amount to 100 points in each case.

7. Based on the above general criteria, the Committee will specify and/or detail how they will be used and the maximum weight given to each at their first meeting.

The evaluation criteria defined by the committee will be published on the university's website, and candidates will be notified.

8. Following publication, the Committee will have access to the list of candidates and the documents they submitted for selection.

The Committee will then collectively proceed to assign scores to the candidates based on the predetermined evaluation criteria for the project proposal, scientific/academic and professional curriculum and output. These scores will be transmitted to the person in charge of the procedure. This person will notify candidates of their score before the interview. Candidates will be invited to interview at least five days in advance.

9. After scoring each candidate's interview, the Committee shall formulate a ranking list based on the scores given to all candidates and designate the successful candidate in the selection process.



In the event of a tie, preference will be given to the candidate belonging to the gender that is least represented among the incumbent holders of the contracts indicated in the announcement. If there is still parity, preference will be given to the youngest candidate.

10. Candidates with a total score of 70 points or more will have passed the selection.

11. The Committees may hold their meetings, including those relating to the interview of candidates, on online platforms. In this case, the committee must adopt the necessary instruments and arrangements to ensure transparency, identification and equal treatment of candidates, and guarantee the smooth and proper conduct of the interview, as well as the confidentiality of communications.

Art. 9 - Termination of proceedings

1. The Committee must complete its work within two months of the date on which the appointment decree is published. The Rector may extend the deadline once and by no more than one month, provided that the reasons are proven and indicated by the committee Chairperson.

2. If the documentation is not submitted by the deadline, the Rector shall declare the Committee lapsed and appoint a new one to replace it.

3. The records shall consist of the minutes of each meeting, including the Committee's collegial scores awarded to each candidate, and a final report summarising the proceedings. In the event that a committee member disagrees with the evaluation of the candidates, this disagreement may be expressed in a minority report.

4. If the Rector finds irregularities in the selection process, he shall return the records to the Committee by reasoned order, assigning it a time limit to make any changes.

5. The documents will be approved by Rectoral Decree within fifteen days of being delivered to the relevant office. The approval decree will be published on the university's website. The candidates and the department concerned will be informed of the publication.

6. If the successful candidate declines to accept the contract or resigns within six months of the start of their work activities, the contract may be offered to another candidate, in order of priority as established by the ranking list formulated by the Committee, after consultation with the



department concerned.

7. Within six months of the start of the activities of the research project in question, additional research contracts may be awarded to candidates who have been favourably ranked, provided that the relevant financial coverage is available. The Board of Directors must authorise any changes to the ranking list.

8. The contract must be signed by the interested parties within 15 days of receiving the notice from the relevant competent Offices. The interested party may request a reasoned deferral of up to an additional 30 days, provided it is compatible with the project activity. Failure to sign within the time limit shall be considered a waiver of the right to take up the position and shall result in disqualification from the ranking.

Article 10 - Stipulation of the employment contract and its duration.

1. Prior to signing an individual fixed-term employment contract, the University shall invite the relevant person to submit the documentation required by current regulations.

2. The contract should state:

a) the start and end date of the employment contract;

b) the main place of business;

c) the activities related to the research project indicated in the announcement;

d) the total financial remuneration;

e) how the contract holder is required to deposit the results of their scientific/academic research activity within the department, in the form of an appropriate report, annually and at the end of the contract;

f) the grounds for termination of the contract and the necessary notice periods;

g) the grounds for termination pursuant to Article 2119 of the Civil Code;

h) aspects relating to intellectual property, data processing regulations and related confidentiality obligations;

i) a commitment to comply with the obligations set out in the University's Code of Ethics and



Conduct.

3. The employment contract is signed by the contract holder and the Rector or his/her representative.
4. A doctoral student or resident contract holder may enter into the contract only after they have obtained a PhD or medical specialisation. If the doctoral candidate or resident does not obtain the degree within six months of the publication date, they shall forfeit the right to the research contract award and be excluded from the ranking list.
5. In the event of termination, pay is due up to the last day of actual service.

Art. 11 - Employment Contract

1. The contract holder shall carry out scientific and/or academic research activities exclusively covered by the research contract.
2. Disciplinary matters are governed by Article 7 of Law No. 300 of 1970, as amended, and the Rector is responsible for the procedure and sanctions.
3. In the case of a request for external appointments, the Academic Senate shall make final decisions, after consulting the Department Council and assessing the absence of conflicts of interest and the compatibility of the appointment with research activities.
4. Tenure of contracts does not confer any rights with regard to access to university positions.
5. Contract holders are subject to the health checks required by Legislative Decree 81/2008, which are to be paid for by the university, and to the regulations on health and safety in the workplace.

Art. 12 - Extension of contracts

1. For national, European or international research projects, research contracts may be extended by up to one year to accommodate the specific requirements of the project's objectives and nature.
2. Any extension to a research contract must comply with the maximum total duration constraint of 5 years, as set out in Article 22, paragraph 2, of Law 240 of 2010.
3. The Department Council must request the extension of the contract by resolution, within the



resources available for the research project. This must be justified with reference to the needs of the research project and provide an account of the results of the activity carried out and the qualifications submitted by the contract holder, which must be duly documented.

4. The Department Council's resolution must be forwarded to the Personnel, Organisation, Performance Directorate at least 45 days before the contract expires. It must indicate the duration of the extension and how it will be financed and be accompanied by the appropriate documentation.

5. After consultation with the Academic Senate, the Board of Directors shall authorise the extension by resolution, to be adopted prior to the expiration of the two-year contract.

6. The employment contract extension is signed by the contract holder and the Rector or his/her representative.

Article 13 - Renewal of contracts

1. Research contracts may be renewed once, extending them by a further two years.

2. Any renewal of the research contract must comply with the maximum total duration constraint of 5 years, as set out in Article 22, paragraph 2, of Law 240 of 2010.

3. Due to the level of commitment required, the monetary value of the contract may be increased, if necessary, in accordance with the provisions of Article 4, paragraph 3, letter i). It should be noted that the all-inclusive gross annual salary may under no circumstances exceed the initial salary of the tenured track full-time researcher.

4. The Department Council may request renewal of the contract within the available resources of the research project. This request must be justified with reference to the needs of the research project and provide an account of the results of the activities carried out and the qualifications submitted by the contract holder. These must be duly documented.

5. The Department Council's resolution shall be forwarded to the Personnel, Organisation, Performance Directorate at least 45 days before the contract expires. It must indicate the renewal's duration and financial coverage and be accompanied by the appropriate documentation.



6. After consultation with the Academic Senate, the Board of Directors shall authorise renewal by resolution to be adopted prior to the contract's expiry.

7. The employment contract renewal is signed by the contract holder and the Rector, or his/her delegate.

Art. 14 – Causes of employment termination

1. In addition to forfeiture, the termination of the employment contract is determined by the expiration of the term, termination by either party, or any other cause of termination provided for in current regulations.

2. Either contracting party may terminate the contract before the end of the term if a cause arises that, pursuant to Article 2119 of the Civil Code, does not allow the contract to continue, even temporarily, or if there is an unforeseen impossibility.

3. The contract may be terminated without prior notice if the recruitment procedure is cancelled.

4. Failure to prepare the technical-scientific report or obtain approval from the head of scientific/academic research shall constitute just cause for termination of the contract.

Article 15 - Incompatibility

1. Research contracts are not compatible with:

- any other employment contract, including part-time or fixed-term contracts with public or private entities.
- tenure of research grants at other universities or public research institutions;
- scholarships or research grants awarded by domestic or foreign institutions in any capacity, except those exclusively for the purpose of international research mobility, including doctoral fellowships and remunerations related to medical specialisation contracts.

2. Attendance at undergraduate, master's or PhD courses, or specialisation courses in Italy or abroad is not compatible with the research contract and entails placement on unpaid leave of absence for the employee serving in public administrations.



3. Notwithstanding the above, the holder of the research contract must not engage in any activities that could result in a conflict of interest with the University's activities or prevent the regular conduct of research.

Article 16 – Details of salary, taxation, social security and national insurance policies

1. For the entire duration of their employment, contract holders shall be entitled to an all-inclusive gross annual salary, as stipulated in Article 4, Paragraph 4(i) of these Regulations.

2. This salary is not subject to indexation or revaluation but is subject to current tax and social security regulations.

3. The employment contract established between the University and the Research Contract Holder is governed by the relevant provisions in force, including those relating to tax, welfare, social security and insurance provisions for employment income.

4. The university also provides insurance coverage against occupational accidents and diseases, as well as liability.

Article 17 - Transitional and final rules - Entry into force.

1. Anything not expressly provided for in these Regulations shall be subject to the current provisions of the law, as well as the Statutes and Regulations of the University of Cagliari.

2. These Regulations, adopted pursuant to Law 168/1989, are issued by the Rector's decree and published on the University's website. They shall take effect the day after publication.