

Recruitment Procedure

Hybrid Intelligence

1 Introduction

The Hybrid Intelligence Centre is committed to fostering the diversity of researchers in our consortium and in general in computer science. This document describes the procedure we followed for hiring the first cohort, its evaluation, and based on that evaluation and the current state of the world, we define the procedure for the 2nd cohort. The aim when hiring the 2nd cohort is to also focus beyond the diversity aspect of gender on all other aspects of diversity.

2 Diversity Statement

We aim to create hybrid intelligence for everyone. To do this, we need an inclusive and diverse team of researchers. Therefore, everyone is welcome — our researchers are invited to bring their authentic whole selves to work. We like you to be you.

3 Procedure followed for hiring the first cohort

We aligned this procedure with all partner institutes.

1. Please read the guidelines for writing inclusive job advertisements that we have provided for you and follow them to write your job advertisement. In case of doubt, you can discuss your advertisement with either your local Diversity Officer or the HI Diversity Officer. The guidelines follow best practices shared by Diversity Officers of our partner universities and advice to write in an open, non-offensive way to any underrepresented group.
2. Please read the following incentive that we have put in place to increase the chance of reaching gender balance: An **incentive of 20 percent** of the funding for each university will become available when a 50/50 gender balance has been achieved on the first 80 percent of the funding. If not yet achieved, 20 percent of the funding will have to be spent to **correct the gender imbalance**.
3. We have set up a recruitment system at the VU in which all positions can be found and which makes it possible for candidates to indicate for which positions they would like to be considered. The VU recruitment system links the candidates to your local recruitment system. The candidates' documentation will only be visible to the hiring committee of the projects they want to apply for. You will be informed of which projects your candidate also applied to.
4. Please read the guidelines for reading application letters.
Reading these hopefully raises your awareness of the way women and men write about themselves, without attaching a qualification to that.

5. After your normal rounds of interviews, we ask you to create a short list of the best three candidates you would be willing to hire and share that with the Management Team (MT).
6. If the top-ranking candidate is female, you can immediately offer the job to the candidate.
7. If the top-ranking candidate is male, then you will have to wait until a time when the set of job offers is again gender-balanced. If you do not want to wait but want to move on to the next female candidate on the list instead, then you can offer the job immediately.
8. At moments of gender balance, the first committee on the waiting list would get the ok to offer the job to the male candidate that was on the top of their list.

4 Evaluation of the procedure for the first cohort

The above procedure did not unduly delay the hiring process, and in the end, everyone could offer the position to the highest-ranking candidate. For the first cohort, we ended up with 17 male and 12 female researchers. Overall, we have a gender balance of 22 female and 22 male PhDs and PDs across all funded and associated projects.

Advertising vacancies internationally resulted in high ethnographic diversity. Specific activities such as Women in AI meetings at international conferences and our partner institutes, and contributions to activities such as the Digivita summer camps also contributed to this. Currently, we foster 14 nationalities in our team, attracted from universities around the globe.

Still, we can improve as we heard that the phrasing of the introductory text was not ideal for all of our projects. In particular, our phrasing reinforced the gender binary and lacked further nuance in regards to gender diversity. Furthermore, the focus on gender equality distracted from other aspects of diversity, which might have discouraged potential candidates belonging to other underrepresented groups.

Given the strong commitment of all our partners to diversity, we propose to drop the special incentive. Based on the above, we decided to keep the strong points of our procedure and improve on diversity in all dimensions, as reflected in the procedure for hiring the second cohort. In setting up the procedure for hiring the second cohort we sought the advice of Diversity Officers of our partner institutions, members of our consortium or its partner organization, that gave a prior indication of the importance of the topic of diversity. Furthermore, we searched for EU guidelines on diversity, equity and inclusion, and searched for examples of diversity statements and self-identification tools. The guidelines for writing inclusive job advertisements, and for inclusive reading of applications found their way into the guidelines we provided to our consortium in preparation for hiring the second cohort.

5 Procedure for hiring the second cohort

You are suggested to use [the guidelines for writing inclusive job advertisements and reading application letters](#) before your start recruiting. Additional information can be obtained from your local Diversity Officer or the HI Diversity Officer (Catholijn Jonker). Next, we would like to point out that our university probably has a policy in place on “knowledge security”. Such a policy describes what kind of background checks have to be done on applicants before they can be hired to be compliant with instructions from the government. We recommend you ask your HR department about this.

Your vacancy text should explicitly state:

- Note that this job opening is one of several job openings on the [HI page with job openings](#). You can apply to more than just this one. If you do so, please inform the Hybrid Intelligence Centre's [Project Manager](#) via email of the projects you are applying to.
- We aim to create hybrid intelligence for everyone, see also our [Diversity Statement](#). To do this, we need an inclusive and diverse team of researchers. We especially encourage people from underrepresented groups to apply for this job.

To advertise your position please mail the link to the advertisement to the [Project Manager](#); the link will be added to the [HI page with job openings](#) on the HI website. Please check whether your short project description on the website is still accurate.

Once you are receiving application letters, make sure you are aware, by reading [the guidelines](#), of the way (for example) women and men write about themselves, without attaching a qualification to that.

Your invitation for the final rounds of interviews has to contain the following sentences:

We aim to improve the representation of underrepresented groups (w.r.t. the entire consortium) in our research team. If you do not self-identify in your application materials and your membership in such a group may not be apparent, please contact (in confidence) the Hybrid Intelligence Centre's Diversity Officer, Prof. dr. Catholijn Jonker about your application via email. Any information you disclose will be viewed only by the Diversity committee headed by the Diversity Officer. If further disclosure would be to your advantage, this will only be done with your explicit consent.

After your normal rounds of interviews, we ask you to create **a shortlist of (at most) the top three candidates** to share with [Project Manager](#) for evaluation by the Hybrid Intelligence Centre's Diversity Committee. On short notice, you will be informed whether your top three candidates applied for other projects and whether or not you can immediately offer the job to your top candidate. If the top-ranking candidate does not belong to an underrepresented group, then you will have to wait until the representation of underrepresented groups in the set of job offers has improved. Once the diversity in the set of job offers is acceptable, the first hiring committee on the waiting list will get the OK to offer the job to the top-ranked candidate from an (over)represented group. If diversity remains an issue even when the lists of all projects have come in, then the Diversity Committee will inspect the diversity of the second and third-placed candidates on your lists and report to the EB. The EB will decide on the follow-up steps based on the advice of the Diversity Committee, including options like suggesting to offer the position to second or third-placed candidates, or reopening the position.

6 References

- [the guidelines for writing inclusive job advertisements and reading application letters](#)
- [Strategies to encourage Self-identification and self-disclosure](#)
- [EU on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion](#)
- [Getting candidates to Self-identify](#)
- [The best diversity statements](#)

7 Other procedural elements we considered

We have considered asking the consortium to add to every job advertisement:

1. If you do not self-identify in your application materials and your membership in such a group may not be apparent, please contact the Hybrid Intelligence Centre's Diversity Officer, (Catholijn Jonker) about your application via email. Any information you disclose will be viewed only by the Diversity committee consisting of the Diversity Officer and two members. If further disclosure would be to your advantage, this will only be done with your explicit consent. After the hiring procedure is completed, this information will be deleted, only the overall statistics will be retained.
2. If you would like to self-identify as belonging to an underrepresented group, it is enough to indicate one or more of the following: I would like to self-identify as
 - LGBTQIA+
 - Ethnicity
 - Disability
 - First generation student
 - Other: your own specification

This information will only be read by the selection committee of the project you apply to, and the Diversity Committee.

We decided against 1) for the following reasons:

- Some disclosure is necessary anyway to act on it.
- Acting on it does not help to change the mindset of our hiring committees.
- The usual discussion that applicants don't want to be hired because of a label.

We decided against 2) for the following reason: The list is not complete and that might still trigger the feeling that this particular group will not be recognized, nor welcomed.

8 Writing Guidelines for Diversity

Definitions:

Diversity is the range of human differences, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, social class, physical ability or attributes, religious or ethical values system, national origin, and political beliefs.

Inclusion is involvement and empowerment, where the inherent worth and dignity of all people are recognized. An inclusive space promotes and sustains a sense of belonging; it values and practices respect for the talents, beliefs, backgrounds, and ways of living of its members.

We have three recommendations for you to get a more inclusive team: how to write effective and inclusive job ads, how to read incoming applications, and what to think of when selecting candidates.

Writing inclusive Job ads The adagio is Keep it Short and Simple (a variant on the KiSS principle) and don't give offense. Remember when writing that you don't want to discourage people from underrepresented groups such as people with disabilities, LGBTQIA+, unrepresented ethnic groups, and first-generation students. The most specific writing-guidelines we can give to avoid gender targeting: Refrain from bullet lists of requirements and do not use gendered words and phrases like "boastful" and "sympathetic" as these reinforce gender-specific applicants. Why: women may be discouraged if they think they might not meet one of your requirements and by words such as competitive, excellent, ambitious, expert, and leader. Men tend to still apply even if they only meet the requirements they think are important. Remember, you can select excellence yourself, but if you discourage them from applying, you can't select them.

Here are some tools and websites to assist you:

- [Accessible writing](#)

A free tool to check your ads:

- [Gender Decoder](#)
- [EU Guidelines](#)
- [writing cooperative](#)
- **Textio:** is a tool that can detect bias in texts and help you remove that bias. In terms of augmented intelligence nice to see anyway.
- [Avoid bias](#)

When in doubt? Ask! You can ask our Diversity Officer directly, or contact our Project manager.

When reading application letters The whole point of spending time on how you write our advertisements is to improve diversity in our teams. All effort might be wasted if we don't pay the same attention to how we read the application letters we receive. Research shows that letter writers Tend to describe women in more "communal terms," such as "warm" and "nurturing," (gendered phrases) which ended up hurting their chances at being hired, while men applying for the same jobs were more likely to get "agentic terms," such as "ambitious" and "self-confident." The recommendation letters for men are longer and contain more "standout adjectives" than women (again this is about gendered phrases) Women are significantly less likely to receive excellent recommendation letters than their male counterparts at critical junctures in their career. The above aspects tend to raise tiny doubts when comparing male to female candidates and a tiny doubt raiser becomes just one of a slew of ways women are put at a disadvantage.

When selecting candidates There is just a bit of additional information we want you to be aware of. Research shows that readers judge applications from overrepresented groups higher than those from underrepresented groups. Don't think that you are unbiased, try to be aware of the above and act with integrity. More information on how to form inclusive teams can be found here: [Considerations when forming diverse teams](#) Diversity and inclusion: advice and important information