Establishing Search Committees to Attract Diverse Talent

Content

1. Introduction

UCD's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion is reflected in the University's Strategy under Core Objective Four: "attract, retain and develop an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff". Search Committees can enhance the quality, quantity and diversity of candidates that apply for positions. Hiring managers and Heads of Schools/Units can expect to attract a wider pool of talent by incorporating this guidance.

Search committees are just one element of a School/Units recruitment drive. This guidance should be used in tandem with the suggestions outlined in UCD's Inclusive Recruitment Practices Guide for Hiring Managers. This guide and further resources can be found on UCD's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion website: Link UCD's Recruitment Policy can be found on the UCD Resourcing webpage: click here.

Consider and discuss how your School/Unit currently reflects diversity and what 'diversity' means for your School/Unit. This will vary depending on the School/Unit you belong to. UCD's diversity and inclusion strategy refers to ten grounds: age, civil status, disability, family status, gender, marital status, race, religion, sexual orientation and socio-economic status.

People's diverse traits and identities intersect and overlap with other types of diversity e.g. diversity of thought, discipline, outlook. It is important to be cognisant and inclusive of the diversity within groups such as 'women' or 'underrepresented groups'. For example, women encompass different ethnicities, disabilities and sexual orientations. As some of our diverse traits may not be visible, it is important that School/Units affirm diversity and inclusion openly. In Schools/Units where there are more females, this guidance can be adapted to increase more male candidates in the talent pool.

2. UCD's Commitment

The University has also demonstrated its commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) through its UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy and Gender Equality Action Plan.

- UCD Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy: click here.
- UCD Code of Practice for the Employment of People with Disabilities: click here
- UCD's Gender Equality Action Plan: click here.

UCD has a bronze Athena SWAN accreditation for gender inclusion and is implementing its Gender Equality Action Plan 2020- 2024.

Action 5.1.1-5/1/7 in UCD's Gender Equality Action Plan commits UCD to

- Require use of Search Champions to leverage diverse networks for faculty posts.
- Guidelines on "Inclusive Recruitment Practices" to be followed by Resourcing and Hiring Managers
- Assess marketing materials and increase use of job platforms to promote roles
- Appoint a dedicated resource to source diverse talent.
- Set targets at shortlisting stage for each School. This will be implemented on a comply or explain basis.
- Review the selection process to ensure it reflects "best practice" and is considered fair and transparent by all. This includes:

    (a) Provide more guidance and training on the use of the EDI Criteria in Job Descriptions including sample questions for different criteria. Incorporate into interview skills training

    (b) Require all members of assessment panels to undertake the recruitment section in the new EDI awareness online commencing on a phased basis

- Introduce face-to-face mandatory unconscious bias awareness raising for assessment panel members
- Apply for funding for posts under the Senior Academic Leadership Initiative over the next two years and achieve funding for a minimum of one post each year in addition to the current two posts obtained.

UCD is required to address gender inequality and achieve and maintain an Athena SWAN accreditation to be eligible for HEA research funding.

3. Legislation

It is important that the Search Committee is aware of the relevant equality and data protection legislation.

Employment Equality Acts 1998–2015 outlaw discrimination in a wide range of employment and employment-related areas. These include recruitment and promotion; equal pay; working conditions; training or experience; dismissal and harassment including sexual harassment. The legislation defines discrimination as treating one person in a less favourable way than another person based on any of the following 9 grounds gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller community.

Equal Status Act 2000-2015 The Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 ('the Acts') prohibit discrimination in the provision of goods and services, accommodation and education. They cover the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation, race, religion, and membership of the Traveller.

Disability Act 2005 – Public Services Provides places a statutory obligation on public service providers to support access to services and facilities for people with disabilities. UCD has an obligation under this act to recruit a minimum of 3% of people who have a disability.

For more information go to the **Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission:** website.

General Data Protection Regulation 2016/79 (GDPR)

GDPR applies to the processing of personal data in the context of the activities of an organisation, as data controller or data processor, that is based in the EU, regardless of whether the processing of personal data takes place in the Union or not. The protection of natural persons in relation to the processing of personal data is also enshrined in other binding documents and is a fundamental right. Article 8(1) of the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (the 'Charter') and Article 16(1) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) provide that everyone has the right to the protection of personal data concerning them. Link to GDPR ; and the Irish Data Protection Act 2018.

e-Privacy

From 25 May 2018, processing of personal data in the context of certain electronic communications (including, amongst other things, unsolicited electronic communications made by phone, e-mail, and SMS) is subject to both the general laws set out in the GDPR and the specific laws set out in Ireland in the "ePrivacy Regulations" (S.I. No. 336 of 2011, under which the ePrivacy Directive 2002/58/EC (as amended by Directive 2006/24/EC and 2009/136/EC). E-Privacy law, even so all based on an EU Directive, has slight variations in each EU country. Link to Irish e-Privacy Regulations.

4. Search Committee Composition

In some competitions hiring managers may seek to establish a search committee with a dedicated diversity focus. The hiring manager and any individual who will sit on the Board of Assessors should not sit on the Search Committee.

The committee is led by the Chair and consists of representatives from the School/Unit and elsewhere who can play a proactive role increasing the diversity of candidates as required. Representatives should be diverse. The search committee should be gender balanced in line with **University Guidelines**. In addition, consideration should be given into how to ensure the search committee has diverse representation.

The committee could also include representatives external to your School/Unit in similar or related disciplines/functions for example. Be mindful not to overburden an underrepresented gender or group in your School/Unit as search committee members or ambassadors. It is incumbent on the whole School/Unit to be responsible for creating a diverse and inclusive talent pipeline. Search committees are an exercise for members to consider their networks and how they can attract diverse talent to the organisation. If some perspectives are missing from the committee, members can seek colleagues' perspectives.

Ensure post-doctoral researchers are included on the committee. Consider establishing a graduate student advisory or having graduate representation on the committee. Graduates can share ideas on emerging areas of research. This is a valuable career development experience for post-doctoral researchers and graduates and an insight into recruitment in higher education and research institutions.

This guide was developed to give Schools an overview of structuring a Search Committee. The Chair of the committee should have knowledge of the discipline but does not need to be the employee closest to the discipline.

5. Structuring the Search Committee

The Chair of the Search Committee and the hiring manager should not be the same person. The Search Committee members including the Chair should always be different to the Board of Assessors.

The Chair may opt to delegate the following roles to committee members.

- **Pool Development**: keeping track of the actions and efforts use to broaden pool of talent.
- **Outreach Activities:** keeping track of the members' outreach activities (e.g. the mode and volume of contact initiated, social media and promotional campaigns and seeking to work with members to develop/enhance the School/Unit's programme internally and externally.
- **Communications:** liaising with the communications manager to develop a suite of communications tools, templates to promote the School/Unit.

6. Data Protection Responsibilities

Search Committees should be compliant with data protection legislation. The Search Committee should ensure that their School/Unit/College' privacy statement has been updated to include the activities of the Search Committee with regard to processing and retention of a potential candidate's personal data.

- All records should be destroyed by the closing date of each competition.
- Any information pertaining to potential candidates should be encrypted and stored securely by the Chair.
- Search Committees should ensure that potential candidate's personal data is not shared without their knowledge.
- Search Committees can make an initial contact with a prospective candidate through their email address if the prospective candidate has it shared on a public website and it seems they are very relevant to the role.
- Search Committees should use the approved email template in the appendix of this document.

- A Search Committee member can email a prospective candidate to share a job opportunity. Once the prospective candidate has responded to the email, the Search Committee member must ask for consent from the prospective candidate to process their information and direct the prospective candidate to the relevant [School/College/Unit's] privacy statement.
- If a prospective candidate responds with interest to a job advertisement shared by a Search Committee member and sends back a Curriculum Vitae (unsolicited), an email directing the prospective candidate to the UCD HR privacy statement should be included in the response i.e. how long UCD is going to hold onto the document, how and where the information will be securely stored in line with GDPR.
- All prospective candidates are directed to apply for the role through the UCD online application platform.
- If a candidate was approached and does not signal interest, e.g. by submitting a CV or requesting further information, the Search Committee should not continue to pursue this candidate and cannot imply this candidate's permission and agreement to the process of his/her personal data.
- UCD's overarching privacy notices are available here. For further advice on privacy statements, please visit the link to guidance on the UCD GDPR website.

7. Responsibilities

a) Chair of the Search Committee

The Chair will:

- Ensure the work of Search Committee is carefully documented. Documentation should be encrypted and stored securely;
- Set the context and give an overview of the diversity of the School/Unit;
- Highlight gaps in the pipeline where the search committee needs to focus their efforts on attracting more diverse candidates;
- Coordinate networking activity and ensure the search committee is connected with the strategic priorities of the School and Institution;
- Ensure the committee is aligned to UCD's Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy, Strategy, Gender Equality Action Plan and the School/Unit's gender equality action plan if in place;
- Ensure committee members are aware of the relevant legislation outlined on page 3;
- Highlight data protection responsibilities of Search Committee members on page 4-5 with regard to GDPR, and e-Privacy requirements and remind members of their obligations when promoting job advertisements on public communications channels.
- Ensure that members keep discussions in meetings of the search committee strictly confidential;
- Schools should connect with the EDI College VP/EDI School Representatives and School Athena SWAN or EDI Committee to support search activity;

- Through the committee, provide search committee members and employees in the School/Unit with resources to support promotion of posts to diverse candidates as appropriate; and
- Review success at the end of each search and consider the oversights and learnings
- Share good practice across the School/Unit and for future competitions.

In addition, the Chair will support all staff to:
- Support all colleagues to:
  - ✓ Become ambassadors for the School/Unit and develop or expand academic networks
  - ✓ Establish links with other institutions and industries to market and promote the University
  - ✓ Feed any potential diverse candidates into the Search Committee

b) Search Committee Members

Members of the search committee will only play a role in the initial search activity. They will have no role in the selection process.

Search Committee members will be requested to:
- Identify potential diverse candidates in relevant disciplines, interdisciplinary fields and industry;
- Build knowledge of diverse emerging high calibre academics and professionals;
- Identify and test alternative channels to connect with diverse communities of people; and
- Become ambassadors for the School/Unit and continue to develop networks of candidates that could support the strategy of the School/Unit and University.

Search Committee members may be tasked with promoting vacancies to potential diverse candidates in the following ways:

- Emailing their networks to promote job advertisements. If public communication channels are being used, consider the e-Privacy Directive 2009/136.ec, General Data Protection Regulation 2016/79; and the Irish e-Privacy Regulations

- Promoting advertisement across social media and online forums. If public communication channels are being used, consider the e-Privacy Directive 2009/136.ec; and the Irish e-Privacy Regulations
- When emailing job ads to more individuals in your network at the same time via a single email, use the bcc field for your recipients' email addresses, so that you don't share everyone's email with everyone else without their permission;
- Include opt-in for career information on any School promotional material and an option on the School website to opt-in to updates on recruitment competitions;
- Conferences – (have a slide that all staff can use to promote UCD to diverse candidates);
- Seminars, networking events, and forums in the relevant discipline/professional area;
- Making direct personal contact with individuals (either face-to-face, by phone or email as appropriate). If public communication channels are being used, consider the e-Privacy Directive 2009/136.ec; and the Irish e-Privacy Regulations
- Promoting the role to potential candidates from abroad;
- Promoting the role to emerging leaders and early career academics;
Promoting the role to second authors and those working in interdisciplinary research;
- Connecting with UCD's diversity groups and networks for underrepresented employees;
- Leverage networks such as professional bodies, diversity networks outside the University;
- Depending on the discipline, consider developing areas of research; and
- Contact institutions that have a strong track record of attracting diverse talent.

8. **Guidance for Chairs**

- The Chair should establish the committee and schedule first meeting well in advance of the application deadline. This will support the development of the committee, getting buy-in from members and a recruitment strategy that addresses gaps in the pipeline
- Agree a term of reference which ensures rotation of members
- Communicate the Search Committee's data protection responsibilities
- At the beginning of the meeting highlight the value of early career employees' networks as well as more established employees' networks equally.

- Challenge assumptions and biases from members. Encourage members to have an open-mind and to consider their network including those that may be available/unavailable or may not have 100% of the necessary attributes in their view.
- Do some team building and brainstorming exercises that allows all members to participate in the discussion.
- Handle objections: See University's strategy and commitments on page 2 and the business case for diversity in UCD's Inclusive Recruitment Practices Guide for Hiring Managers.
- Before leaving a topic ask if anyone has any other comments
- Facilitate members to think of creative ways to develop a recruitment campaign
- Assign specific tasks to members, remind members of tasks before meeting and hold members accountable
- After the competition, review and examine process and the diversity of applicants. Have other candidates gone on to great success, been overlooked? Did the search committee encounter barriers and how can they avoid pitfalls?

9. Guidance for Committee Members

- Be aware of the Search Committee's data protection responsibilities.
- Be mindful of how you deem a potential candidate to be a 'good fit' or a candidate that has 'potential' for the role.
  These are subjective views. Challenge your assumptions. The current make-up of the School/Unit will most likely reflect gaps in talent and diversity. Committee members role is to address these gaps and enhance the School/Unit's talent to add value.
- Give suggestions of people that are 'not quite ready' or do not meet 100% of the job criteria. Often career experience and achievements of women and underrepresented groups are held to a higher-standard than their peers or may be dismissed or overlooked unconsciously.
- If consulting others for suggestions, understand their reasons for suggesting particular candidates. Ask them to also give 'not quite ready' candidates.
- Review the follow Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Supports:
  https://www.ucd.ie/equality/support/learningsupports/

10. Supports

If you are considering establishing a search committee with a diversity focus in your School/Unit please contact your Resourcing Consultant: Link

Further supports:

UCD Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Unit: Link
UCD Data Protection Office: Link

11. Recommended Reading and Resources

Searching for Excellence and Diversity: A Guide for Search Committees, University of Wisconsin-Madison https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf

Best Practices for Conducting Faculty Searches, Harvard University: http://faculty.harvard.edu/files/fdd/files/best_practices_for_conducting_faculty_searches_v1.2.pdf

Learning Supports: https://www.ucd.ie/equality/support/learningsupports/

Sources
This document draws on the following guides:

- Recruitment Policy, Bristol University, https://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/hr/documents/resourcing/Academic%20Recruitment%20Policy.pdf

- Searching for Excellence and Diversity: A Guide for Search Committees, University of Wisconsin-Madison https://wiseli.wisc.edu/wpcontent/uploads/sites/662/2018/11/SearchBook_Wisc.pdf

- Best Practices for Conducting Faculty Searches, Harvard University: http://faculty.harvard.edu/files/fdd/files/best_practices_for_conducting_faculty_searches_v1.2.pdf

12. Appendix –Email Template

"Dear ………

We hope you do not mind us contacting you and if you would prefer not to do so on another occasion then please let us know.

We noted your profile on [indicate public website where the search committee found their details] and wanted to reach out to you regarding a unique and exciting opportunity at UCD. The UCD [insert School/College/Unit] currently has a job opening for a [insert title].

We note from your profile your experience in [field/skill] and your research activity in the area of [research topic/area] and thought this position might be of interest to you.

If you would like to learn more about the role, please contact [Name/Title] at [Email/Telephone No.]. Alternatively, you can find further

information on the UCD job vacancies website: https://www.ucd.ie/workatucd/jobs/.
(Job ref no. ……….).