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## *HR strategy for researchers and action plan for implementation of the Charter and Code*

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In December 2015 Nofima signed the *European Charter for Researchers* and the *European Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers*. In signing these documents, Nofima is affirming its support for the European initiatives to promote researcher mobility in Europe, make research an attractive career and improve the quality of research and innovation.

Our work on the Charter and Code also serves to ensure the quality of and increase awareness about our internal guidelines on recruitment, professional development, career advancement and research ethics.

The action plan has been developed by the HR department, with support from Quality, HSE and the three research divisions. Below we will describe Nofima's guidelines with regard to the following four areas: *researchers' ethical and professional responsibilities, recruitment, working conditions and career advancement*. Finally, we will present an action plan with concrete improvement measures and deadlines for implementation.

### Nofima's HR strategy in brief

Nofima delivers research-based knowledge that improves the competitive strength of food-producing industries. Through coordination of existing complementary projects in selected areas, we will improve our standing as an internationally recognized research institute with a focus on the implementation of knowledge. In order to fulfil our mission, we must:

-  Have the necessary expertise in leadership and management as well as the relevant fields and employ the right working and learning methods
-  Be willing and able to act quickly in order to make the necessary adjustments and changes to meet current and future needs, based on trends in society, research and customer contact
-  Have a good working environment, which is constantly developed through individual adaptations and offers possibilities for development and meaningful work, and which is maintained through trust, co-determination and good teamwork

As a modern, business-oriented community of experts, we are dependent on recruiting, developing and retaining people with the necessary skills and expertise. This is achieved through a constant focus and expenditure of resources on professional development of current employees, replacement of experienced researchers and recruitment of new researchers in the coming years.

We have selected management, organization and continuous improvement as the three main areas we will work on.

## The four principles

### Researchers' ethical and professional responsibilities

Our research ethical guidelines describe research ethics as a vision of good knowledge, in the same way that ethics can be regarded as a vision of the good life. Research ethics comprises a diverse set of values, norms and institutional regulations that help constitute and regulate scientific activity so that it is credible and sustainable.

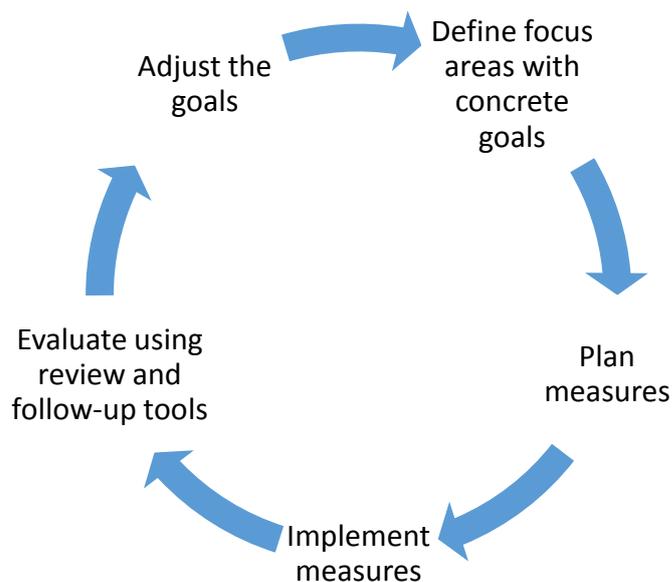
Nofima shall perform all its professional activities in accordance with relevant guidelines from national and international advisory bodies, conventions and agreements. Each employee has an individual duty to comply with the research ethical requirements. This applies to the individual's own work and in their relationship with the employer and society at large. All researchers, managers and others who are involved in scientific work shall be ensured necessary knowledge of the research ethical guidelines.

Falsification, fabrication and plagiarism are incompatible with the researcher's obligation to the truth and are not tolerated at Nofima.

Nofima's researchers participate in research projects involving one or more external clients and both private and public sources of funding. The goals, research questions, budget and transparency need to be clarified before start-up of the project. Public information about the scope of the project, the publishing of data and the ownership of the results shall be in accordance with the current guidelines and whatever has been agreed between the parties.

Our communication shall be marked by accessibility, transparency, openness and honesty. Nofima's research shall be communicated actively and in a targeted manner, with the goal of reaching as many as possible of the people and organizations who will benefit from and are interested in our findings.

Nofima maintains a constant focus on occupational health and safety, the working environment and quality assurance. Continuous improvement is a focus area for the entire organization, with a view to increasing the employees' awareness of safe working practices, quality enhancement, confidentiality, etc.



Nofima strives for a diverse and inclusive work culture marked by equality and tolerance. All people are of equal value at Nofima. No discrimination of any kind will be accepted, be it on the grounds of culture, ethnicity, gender, religion, sexual orientation, age or any other factor. Our researcher evaluation system will help ensure the individual employee's career path.

## Recruitment

Nofima wants to recruit outstanding scholars to research projects, educational positions and scientific positions. Our core values are to be responsible, committed, innovative and inclusive.

Our internal guidelines for recruitment and employment are intended to ensure correct advertisement of different types of positions, equal treatment of applicants, transparency in the recruitment process, selection according to predefined criteria, and a correct appointment process. The general rule is that all positions are advertised through our recruitment tool and in the same channels.

The recruitment process consists of two rounds of interviews, a background check and, as applicable, personality tests. The manager responsible for the position is in charge of the process, with assistance from HR. The selection committees in employment cases consist of people with different expertise and qualifications. All our managers receive proper training in recruitment and selection. The candidates' potential shall be assessed on the basis of a wide range of criteria, both when evaluating applications and in the face-to-face interviews.

All applicants are provided with information about the recruitment process and are briefed about the outcome on completion of the process.

We value diversity and are an inclusive organization. Foreign researchers face a number of challenges, both practical and social. Nofima has special training and introduction routines for foreign language employees. We require that all employees have a good command of Norwegian and offer language training to all employees who need it.

## Attractive working conditions

Nofima complies with the Norwegian Working Environment Act, and all our employees' employment contracts, salaries and social rights are in accordance with this Act. We strive to have good benefit schemes for all our employees. Nofima is an inclusive workplace (under Norway's inclusive workplace (IA) scheme) and strives to adapt the work to meet the individual employee's needs. We also have a dedicated seniors policy.

The main purpose of the remuneration policy is to contribute to the long-term motivation and development of Nofima's employees. The remuneration policy should also promote increased long-term achievement of goals on the individual, group and organizational levels, as well as attract highly qualified employees in all disciplines. Competitive terms and conditions are set on employment and are developed in accordance with assessments of the individual employee's performance and results. This is done in line with the researchers' own evaluation system.

Nofima has a good gender balance in the company, including in the management. We encourage women to take leadership roles and provide all employees with the same career opportunities.

Nofima provides a good working environment with a number of laboratories and up-to-date research infrastructure. We have long-term investment plans in order to ensure we remain a forward-looking,

modern research group. Occupational health and safety are a permanent priority, and we work systematically to optimize the employees' physical and psychosocial working environment.

Nofima wants to foster organizational citizenship and a sense of community. We strive to ensure a good physical and psychosocial working environment, both as an end in itself and as a means to facilitate achievement of our goals. A prerequisite is that managers, employees, employee representatives and safety delegates take responsibility and work together to come up with solutions and create a good working fellowship. The starting point is the employer's managerial prerogative, combined with the employer's duty of care and the employees' duty to cooperate.

All employees have regular appraisal interviews with their supervisor, with a clear focus on career advancement.

### Education and career advancement

Through continuous learning and professional development, Nofima ensures that our employees have the necessary knowledge to create good solutions for our clients.

Nofima has established a dedicated learning arena to facilitate the necessary development of competencies in line with Nofima's needs and the individual's career path. The objective is to encourage collaboration, knowledge sharing and building of expertise. Priority areas include general development of leadership skills, project management, networking, marketing and professional inspiration.

As part of the learning arena, we have also created an internship scheme to increase researcher mobility, exchange of experience and networking. Internships may be with current or potential business partners or research partners in Norway or further afield. All our researchers can apply for an internship. Nofima's management team assesses applications and authorizes internships on an annual basis.

We are also working on strengthening our EU work. An internal EU group has been established to support and assist researchers wishing to participate in EU-funded research projects. Competence building, strengthening support functions and support for network building are central.

Our student supervisors must have experience, the required competencies, time and dedication in order to be able to give trainee researchers support, ensure the necessary progress and give them feedback on their work. All employees in educational positions at Nofima have the same rights and employee benefits as permanent employees.

In order to build and transfer expertise, our senior researchers act as mentors to younger researchers at the beginning of their career.

## Action plan

### Researchers' ethical and professional responsibilities

Nofima's research ethical guidelines and researcher evaluation system serve to ensure full compliance with the European Charter for Researchers' principles regarding researchers' ethical and professional responsibilities. We want to continue working on following up and raising awareness of the research ethical guidelines. Improvement measures:

- ✚ Introduction of research ethics as a separate subject area in the introduction programme for new employees
  - Deadline: 4th quarter 2016 – Responsibility: HR
- ✚ Inclusion of research ethics in our internal project manager training programme
  - Deadline: 4th quarter 2016 – Responsibility: HR
- ✚ Nofima's research ethical guidelines shall comply with the research ethical principles issued by the Norwegian National Research Ethics Committee
  - Deadline: Annual – Responsibility: Quality / Communications

### Recruitment

In order to achieve our goal of being one of the world's leading industry-oriented research institutes, we need to recruit, retain and develop the best researchers in our fields. To this end, we must further professionalize our recruitment and appointment process. Improvement measures include:

- ✚ Switching to a new recruitment tool to make the appointment process more efficient and structured for managers responsible for recruitment
  - Deadline: October 2016 – Responsibility: HR
- ✚ Inclusion of recruitment and appointments as part of our management training programme
  - Deadline: Ongoing – Responsibility: HR
- ✚ Development of new information pages about careers and recruitment on our website
  - Deadline: 1st quarter 2017 – Responsibility: Communications / HR

### Attractive working conditions

The Norwegian Working Environment Act defines the employees' rights and obligations, and as an Inclusive Workplace, Nofima attaches importance to facilitating any adaptations that the employees might need. We conduct regular employee surveys and use the feedback in our efforts to continuously improve our working terms and conditions. Improvement measures:

- ✚ Implementation of new procedures for appraisal interviews, management training
  - Deadline: 3rd quarter 2016 – Responsibility: HR / Managers
- ✚ Further development of the internship scheme and motivate researchers to take the opportunity to spend time at other educational institutions or businesses, in Norway and overseas
  - Deadline: Ongoing – Responsibility: Managers / HR
- ✚ Documentation of the introduction programme and in-house training in the personnel system, and provision of language training for foreign researchers at the start of their employment
  - Deadline: October 2016 – Responsibility: HR / HSE

## Education and career advancement

Competence building is a priority at Nofima, and we invest considerable resources in developing our employees. We want to pave the way for more and better transfer of experience, increase knowledge sharing within the organization and improve talent utilization. Improvement measures:

- ✚ Establishment of a mentoring scheme to build and retain competencies using our own experienced researchers and managers
  - Deadline: 1st quarter 2017 – Responsibility: HR / Managers
- ✚ Identification and development of employees' talents. It shall be possible for managers and employees to change responsibilities and tasks
  - Deadline: Ongoing – Responsibility: Managers with personnel responsibilities
- ✚ Continuation of the EU group that is going to work on assisting and training schemes for researchers who wish to work in EU-funded projects. Measures and training needs shall be tailored in collaboration with managers and researchers
  - Deadline: Ongoing – Responsibility: the EU group

## Follow-up

The action plan was adopted by the management team in August 2016. All departments and research divisions are represented in the management team. The HR department is responsible for revising and following up implementation of the action plan.

The first revision of the plan will take place in the first quarter of 2017. Thereafter, the measures and guidelines will be revised annually in accordance with the Charter and Code.