2025

# Career
# Development Guide for
# International Researchers

**University** | of Strasbourg

# Career Development Guide for International Researchers

# Contents

# Editorial

# Career Development Guide 📖

**Supporting researchers throughout their journey—including their career development—is a core priority. The EURAXESS network is fully committed to this goal, providing tailored support to international doctoral candidates and researchers throughout their mobility and beyond.**

EURAXESS France is dedicated to ensuring that researchers are well-informed, guided throughout their career pathways and empowered to broaden their professional horizons—whether in academia or other sectors.

This career guide offers concrete, practical and adaptable tools to help you better understand yourself, explore your career opportunities, showcase your skills and succeed in your job applications in France, Europe and worldwide.

Inside, you will find resources to help structure your career thinking, insights into key skills and practical tips to navigate an ever-changing job market.

This guide embodies the core mission of EURAXESS: supporting research talents in building a professional future that matches their ambitions.

**Carle Bonafous-Murat,
President of Euraxess France**

## The Human Resources Excellence in Reseach Award

The core texts of the European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers from 2005, updated via the new Charter in 2023, encourage institutions to develop particular career development strategies for researchers at all stages of their career, irrespective of their contractual status.

The European Commission has developed a framework known as the Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R) to help institutions define and implement these initiatives. The Human Resources Excellence in Research Award, given by the European Commission to research institutions who take real steps to improve hiring processes and working conditions of their researchers, is particularly valuable when applying for Horizon Europe projects.

## Euraxess

Euraxess is a European network operating in over 40 countries and globally via nine EURAXESS Worldwide contact points. To find out more, visit:

→ euraxess.ec.europa.eu/worldwide

France's institutes of higher education and research centres form part of an active nationwide network coordinated by France Universités. Each centre is tasked with facilitating preparations for international researchers and supporting their integration on arrival. The role of the centres is gradually evolving towards more all-embracing assistance that incorporates career development, professional integration and mobility.

# Introduction

Are you an international researcher or PhD student? Are you currently working in France or have relocated here? And are you wondering about what your next step will be? This guide is designed to help you explore your career plans in France and across Europe.

A PhD opens the door to a wide range of career opportunities, not just in academia, but also in the non-academic and entrepreneurial sectors.

**Key figures—One year after obtaining their doctorate in 2020:**
→ 6 out of 10 non-French PhD graduates stay in France to work.
→ 45% of posts held by international PhD graduates are in the private sector, and 47% in academia.
*Source : MESR-SIES, IPDoc 2021 Survey*

This guide is the result of a joint undertaking among a number of higher education institutions, research bodies and stakeholders committed to supporting international researchers and PhD holders[1]. It aims to offer guidance, resources and practical advice to give you a better understanding of your goals, identify your skills and explore the career opportunities open to you.

**Important:** If the end of your employment contract is drawing near and you are keen to stay in France, you will be required either to renew your residence permit or change your permit status. Make sure you plan ahead and reach out to your local EURAXESS centre as soon as you can! Applications must be submitted two to four months before your residence permit expires!

[1] The institutions and stakeholders involved in this initiative are as follows: La Rochelle Université, Université Polytechnique Hauts-de-France, Rennes Center for International Mobility, the University of Strasbourg and France Universités.
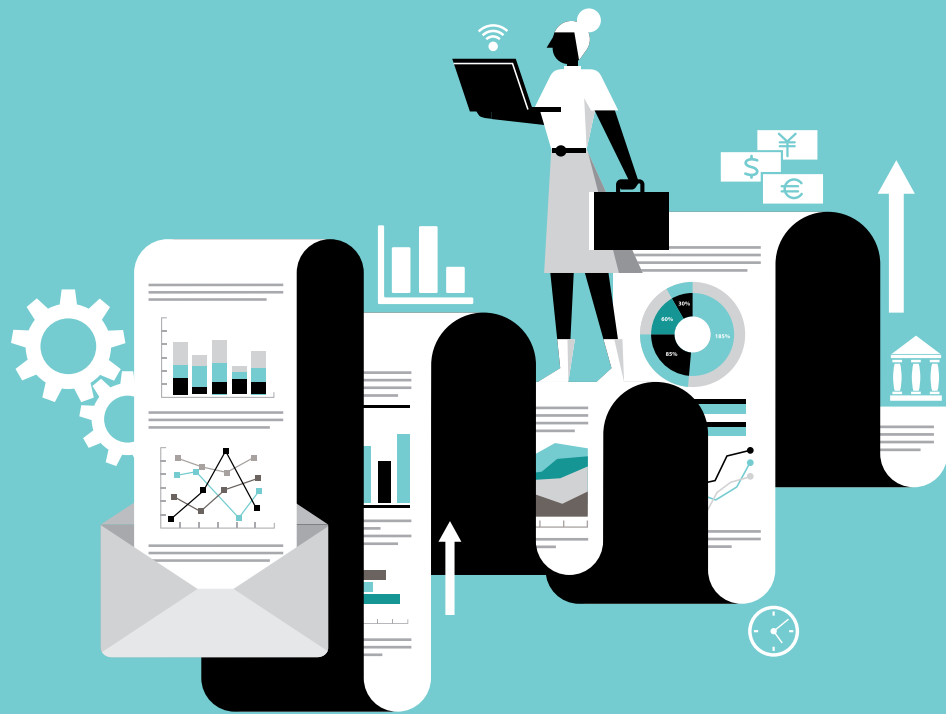
# Better self-knowledge leads to better choices

## self-assessment using the VIPS model

Self-assessment is a crucial step when it comes to exploring your future career. Analysing your **values (V)**, **interests (I)**, **personality (P)** and **skills (S)** means you will be better equipped to make informed choices, target the posts you apply for more strategically and know yourself better so you can choose a career path that suits you best.

# 1/ Values

## Definition

Values represent what you are looking for in a work environment to feel motivated and fulfilled. As well as reflecting what is important to you, they influence your decision-making, priorities and long-term satisfaction at work. Identifying your values early on in your career is a powerful tool for choosing a post that matches your priorities and pinpointing work settings where you will feel comfortable.

**Below are some examples of values and sources of meaning in a professional setting:**

→ **Stability**: secure job conditions, a regular income and a structured framework;

→ **Life balance**: a healthy balance between your personal life and professional life;

→ **Independence**: the freedom to manage your work responsibilities, assignments and projects;

→ **Recognition**: being rewarded for your work with increased responsibilities and professional standing;

→ **Creativity**: variety in your tasks with the opportunity to innovate;

→ **Altruism**: roles that contribute positively to the well-being of others.

Important: **this list is not exhaustive**. If you would like to find out more, take a look at this article:
https://www.thebalancemoney.com/what-are-career-values-with-examples-2059752

### Tip

To identify your values, take a moment to think about the key experiences you have had so far in your career. Pick one or two of these moments and ask yourself the following questions:

– **What did I like (or not like) about this scenario and why?**
– **What motivated me or, on the contrary, held me back?**
– **What does this say about what is important to me in my work?**

Based on your answers, pinpoint three to five values that will act as your compass at every stage of your journey to help you choose an environment, sector or role that suits you.

# 2/ Interests

## Definition

Your interests are the activities that instinctively draw you to your work: the fields you like to explore, the tasks you enjoy and feel at ease with, and the roles and functions that motivate you on a day-to-day basis. This idea can refer to a number of different dimensions:

→ **An area of knowledge that you love investigating**, such as life sciences, data sciences, ecology or literature;

→ **A particular type of activity that you like**: knowledge transfer, project design and management, experimentation, and so forth;

→ **The skills you are seeking to develop**, such as teaching, facilitation, communication and team management;

→ **The setting you would like to work in**: working as part of a team, in an international environment, with organisational freedom, autonomy, a structured framework, remote work, etc.;

→ **The goals you set for yourself**: social utility, career progression, autonomy, etc.

## How can you evaluate your interests?

John Holland, an American psychologist (1919–2008), developed a theoretical model known as RIASEC[2], based on the idea that there are six key psychological types that you can match with the career paths that reflect your goals.

| Type | What this means for you |
|------|-------------------------|
| Realistic (R) | Handling tools, practical, concrete outcomes |
| Investigative (I) | Analysis, research, problem solving |
| Artistic (A) | Creative, innovative, autonomous |
| Social (S) | Helping, supporting, transmitting, cooperating |
| Enterprising (E) | Deciding, leading, project management |
| Conventional (C) | Organising, structuring, rigorous |

### Important ♻ ♻ ♻

This model is not strictly predictive. Nevertheless, you can use it as a starting point to gain better insight into what really motivates you. It will also help you connect your interests to professional environments where you can thrive.

[2] Holland, J. L. (1997). *Making vocational choices: A theory of vocational personalities and work environments* (3rd ed.). Psychological Assessment Resources.

# 3/ Personality

## Definition

Personality refers to an individual's specific traits, behaviours, preferences and ways of interacting with people. It invariably has an impact on a person's relationship to work on at least two levels:

→ The choice of career, which varies depending on an individual's level of interest in a particular sector, the type of work environment and the role;

→ An individual's ability to adapt successfully to a given professional role based on their personal psychological resources.

## How can you assess your personality in a professional context?

The Big Five Model[3] or OCEAN can serve as a useful framework for self-reflection. This method, which is used widely in psychology, describes the differences in personality traits across individuals based on five distinct factors.

| Personality trait | What it measures | What this may mean for you |
|---|---|---|
| Openness (O) | Curiosity, a taste for new ideas, creativity | A taste for learning and trying out new things, the ability to adapt |
| Conscientiousness (C) | Organisation, rigour, attention to detail | Likes planning, meeting deadlines, working with discipline and precision |
| Extraversion (E) | Dynamism, oriented towards others, communicative | Enjoys interacting with partners, leadership skills, oral fluency |
| Agreeableness (A) | Cooperativeness, interpersonal skills, altruism | Taste for teamwork, collaboration, listens to others |
| Neuroticism (tendency to feel negative emotions) (N) | Emotional management, sensitivity, self-confidence | Ability to work in emergencies, manage complex situations |

**Tip**
Rank each of the five traits of the Big Five model from **strongest (1)** to **weakest (5)** so you can identify the environments and roles where you would feel most comfortable.

[3] McCrae RR, John OP. (1992). An introduction to the five-factor model and its applications. J Pers.

# 4/ Skills

## Definition

Your skills are the blend of knowledge, expertise and interpersonal skills that you draw upon in a given professional situation. In English, "**skill**" and "**competency**" have distinct meanings.

→ The term "**skill**" denotes a technical or personal ability acquired through your studies or experiences, including those gained outside a professional setting (such as speaking a foreign language or facilitating a group);

→ "**Competency**" always refers to a professional framework: it is a combination of knowledge, expertise and behaviours harnessed to achieve a specific goal.

## Diversity of skills

Throughout your career, you develop different types of skills:

→ **Technical skills** (hard skills): specific to a given disciplinary field (modelling, statistical analysis, microscopy, software development, etc.);

→ **Cross-disciplinary skills** (soft skills): useful in all work contexts and sectors (the ability to work in a team, verbal communication, the ability to solve problems, manage a project, fluency in several languages, etc.).

> Be careful **not to confuse these with transferable skills**, i.e. skills that can be applied to different types of jobs but within the same sector or the same company.

## How should you prioritise your professional skills?

Not all the skills you have acquired are applicable to every professional setting. Therefore, it is a good idea to map out your own skills to help you make choices that are in keeping with your aspirations, strengths and objectives. You can rank them in four categories based on the Knowdell method[4]:

→ **Motivated skills**: skills that you are good at and that you enjoy leveraging and showcasing as part of your career objectives;

→ **Potential development skills**: skills that you like to leverage but that you need to strengthen and which should be your training priorities;

→ **Burnout skills**: skills that you are good at but that do not give you any satisfaction, and which you should try to avoid in a professional context;

→ **Not important skills**: skills that you have but that are not useful to you in your current professional role.

[4] Knowdell, R. L. (1996). Building a Career Development Program: Nine Steps for Effective Implementation. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black.

> Important, **keep these in mind**: they may prove useful for your future career development!
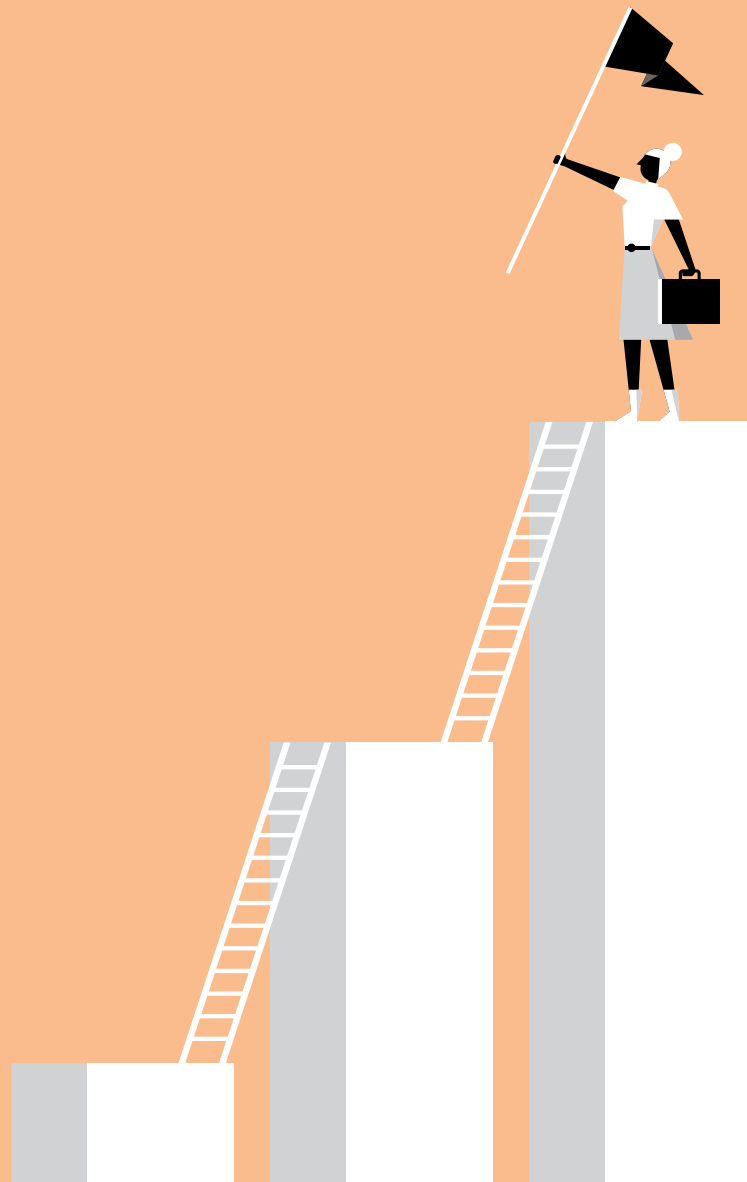
# Skills development

All the skills you develop—**academic, cross-disciplinary or linguistic**—are essential to your professional growth. This section will help you identify, develop and showcase your skills throughout your career by providing practical resources and actionable strategies.

# 1/ Academic skills

**Academic skills refer to skills acquired in laboratories, universities or research institutions through teaching, research, innovation and supervision.**

**Examples of academic skills:**

→ **Research project design**: the ability to identify a problem, write up a project, look for funding and organise a schedule;

→ **Data collection and analysis**: the ability to collect and process qualitative and/or quantitative data;

→ **Scientific writing**: the ability to write articles, chapters, reports, posters and popular science documents;

→ **Information monitoring and management**: the ability to research, filter, summarise and update scientific knowledge;

→ **Teaching**: the ability to develop educational content, lead courses, manage and supervise students and carry out assessments;

→ **Scientific communication**: the ability to create content and present research orally to diverse audiences.

**Tip**
Remember to link each of your skills to a concrete achievement in your career!
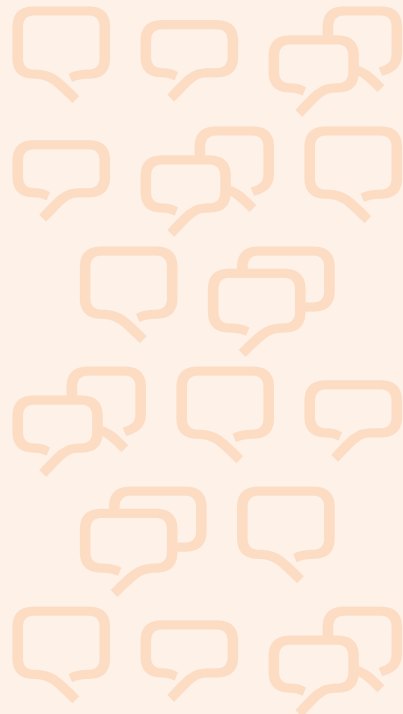
# 2/ Cross-disciplinary skills

**Cross-disciplinary skills are skills that are common to many professions or sectors, meaning they can be leveraged in a variety of work situations. You develop numerous transversal skills during your doctorate or research activities— sometimes without even knowing it!**

**Examples of key cross-disciplinary skills developed during your doctorate:**

→ **Project management**: planning and executing a research project over several years, coordinating the key stages, managing unexpected events;

→ **Teamwork**: working closely with undergraduates, PhD students, engineers, laboratory technicians and researchers, sometimes in international, intercultural and multidisciplinary settings;

→ **Adaptability**: knowing how to deal with the unexpected and adapt your methods, integrating a new country or institution.

→ **Autonomy and proactivity**: identifying what needs to be treated as a priority and seeking training when required;

→ **Written and oral communication**: presenting your work, teaching students and rendering your research outcomes widely accessible;

→ **Creativity and innovation**: suggesting new approaches and experimenting with them;

→ **Analytical and critical thinking**: the ability to process, organise and interpret complex data, and evaluate the validity of a hypothesis or result;

→ **Leadership**: coordinating a team, facilitating a work meeting or workshop;

→ **Solving complex problems**: identifying a problem, exploring different solutions, testing and improving.

**Please note** 🗹 🗐 🗏
Do not forget about your transferable skills: they are highly sought after in the non-academic world (companies, government, international organisations, etc.).

# 3/ Identifying and developing your skills

**Academic and cross-disciplinary skills are not developed solely within the context of research. Any type of experience— volunteer, professional or personal—can help build these skills.**

**To expand your skill set**, reach out to your HR manager, your doctoral school, research unit or EURAXESS centre to learn more about the training programmes or schemes on offer. You can also use the **MyDocPro** platform, which is designed to help PhD students and researchers identify and showcase their skills.

**To find out more, visit:**
www.mydocpro.org/en

### The European Competence Framework for Researchers— ResearchComp

ResearchComp is a digital tool developed by the European Commission to help identify the cross-disciplinary skills researchers are expected to possess and to assess their level of proficiency. It lists 38 key skills grouped into seven areas (cognitive abilities, doing research, managing research, managing research tools, making an impact, working with others and self-management) that you can use as a benchmark.

**To find out more, see:**
https://research-and-innovation.
ec.europa.eu/jobs-research/
researchcomp-european-competence-
framework-researchers_en

# 4/ Linguistic and intercultural skills

**Proficiency in the host country's language is a key driver of social integration, expanded career opportunities and a successful professional transition.**

**To find out more, see:**
https://www.euraxess.fr/france/
information-assistance/french-culture

## How can you improve or learn French?

There are several solutions for learning and improving your French. Check with your institutions and EURAXESS centres to find out more about the services offered. Here are some tips:

→ Join **French as a foreign language (FLE) courses**;

→ Take part in conversation **workshops, language tandems** or **language cafes**;

→ Use **free online resources**;

→ **Read** the French press;

→ **Listen to** French radio and podcasts;

→ **Watch** French films and TV series;

→ **Start practising spoken French as soon as you can**.

**Important:** Working in a multicultural setting can lead to misunderstandings. It is important to seek clarification when needed, as cultural codes may vary. In France, for example, a formal distance is valued more highly than in some other cultures. The perception of hierarchy varies greatly from sector to sector and depending on the size of an organisation. Nevertheless, it is deeply rooted in French culture (as reflected in the use of the formal "vous", respect for authority, etc.).
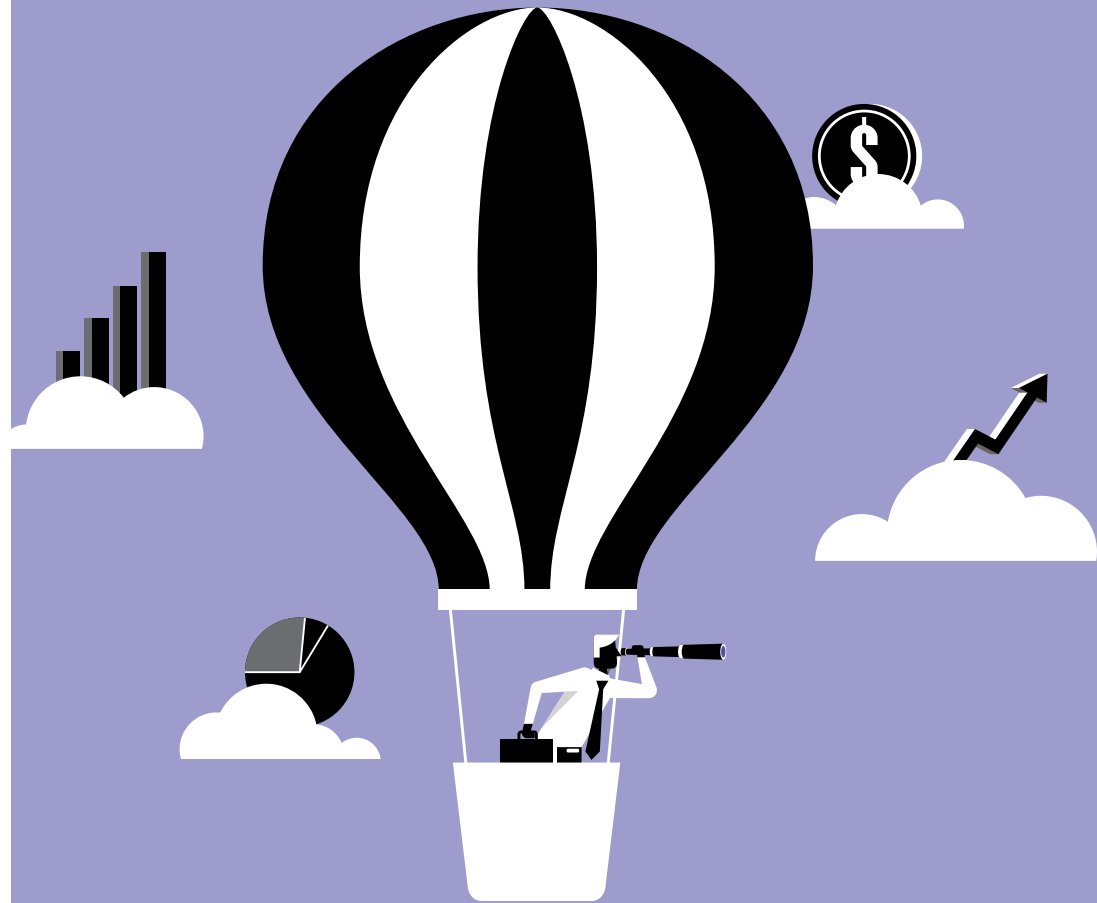
# Exploring career opportunities

After taking the time to think about your values, interests, personality traits and skills, you can begin to explore your career opportunities and build a career path that aligns with your **aspirations**, **preferences** and **strengths**.

# 1/ Different career options

## ↘ ↘ ↘ Working in higher education and public research sector

**France's public higher education and research sector mostly employs permanent staff, recruited through competitive examinations and appointed to permanent positions. Contractual staff may also be recruited for one-off or specific needs for a fixed period.**

## Teacher-researchers

Teacher-researchers are grouped into the following categories:

→ **Lecturers (MCF)**: entry-level academic position after earning a doctorate.

→ **University professors (PR)**: senior rank that can be attained after several years in the MCF faculty and after obtaining the authorisation to supervise research (HDR).

> **Please note** 🗒 🗒 🗒
> Applications are submitted during annual recruitment campaigns on the **Galaxie portal**:
> www.galaxie.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/ensup/candidats.html
> For more details on how to apply for teacher-researcher positions, please refer to **Section 4** of this guide.

## Researchers

Researchers in French national research bodies (ONR), such as CNRS, Inserm, INRAE, INRIA, CNES, CEA and so forth, are divided between:

→ **Research fellows**: first level of permanent position following a doctorate.

→ **Directors of research**: experienced researcher, team or project coordinator.

> **Please note** 🗒 🗒 🗒
> Researchers are recruited via competitive examinations based either on their qualifications and academic work or on external examinations published on the institutions' websites. In addition, research bodies and institutions may publish openings for contractual researchers depending on need (excluding postdoctoral contracts).

## Postdoctoral researchers

Postdoctoral researchers are hired as part of a research project on fixed-term contracts after successfully defending their thesis. Contracts may be funded either publicly or by the private sector.

These researchers are hired for a fixed term on research contracts specific to the research unit or awarded on a personal basis via a research funding body.

## Temporary teaching and research assistants (ATER)

ATER are hired by the state on full-time or part-time fixed-term contracts (CDD), often while working on a thesis or postdoctoral research. They carry out teaching duties and may supervise students.

> **Please note** 🗒 🗒 🗒
> Applications are submitted through the **ALTAÏR platform**, which is accessible via the **GALAXIE portal**. However, you should also remember to look at the openings posted on the institutions' websites.

> **Please note** 🗒 🗒 🗒
> Created by the French Research Programming Law, the Junior Professorship (CPJ) establishes a new recruitment pathway leading to a tenured position within the corps of university professors and equivalent roles, or research directors. Recruitment is based on a research and teaching project proposed by a candidate holding a doctoral degree or an equivalent qualification.
> Learn more: https://www.galaxie.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/ensup/cand_CPJ.htm

## Research engineers

Higher education institutions and research bodies recruit researchers to carry out research-support functions. Research engineers are recruited either through competitive examinations or on contracts.

> **Please note** 🗒 🗒 🗒
> Certain types of research projects hire young researchers as project managers on contractual coordination positions (management, writing, organisation) to support the project leader.

## ↘ ↘ ↘ Working in the private sector

**The private sector offers numerous opportunities for researchers, especially in applied research, innovation and technological development both at the experimental level as well as in research-support roles.**

Companies hire PhD holders and postdoctoral researchers for their cross-disciplinary skills, including: integrative thinking, ability to manage complex problems, formulate and analyse hypotheses, solve challenges, and work independently.

> **Tip** 💡
> Practise talking in terms of concrete outcomes: what you have produced, what it was used for, and what impact it had.
> For further details on applications in the non-academic sector, refer to **Section 4** of this guide.

## ⬐⬐⬐ Working in the public sector outside academia

The public sector offers a wide range of opportunities for researchers and PhD holders, particularly in:
→ **Ministries and national agencies.**
→ **Higher education and research institutions (ESR).**
→ **Local authorities: regions, departments, municipalities and metropolitan areas.**

These bodies hire early-career researchers to produce analyses, manage projects or support government policy in various fields.

### Useful info ⬎♀ ⬎♀ ♀

International organisations and agencies (UNESCO, UN, WHO, NATO, OECD, the European Union, etc.) may also recruit candidates with PhDs. The application procedures may vary with specific entrance exams (e.g. CV in Europass format for the European Union).
**Refer directly to the official websites of the global organisations you are interested in for more information and to access any available openings.**

## ⬐⬐ Entrepreneurship

In France, there are numerous programmes that support researchers and PhD students who are keen to pursue entrepreneurial initiatives:

→ **University Innovation Cluster** (Pôles Universitaires d'Innovation) in certain universities are tasked with boosting knowledge transfer, supporting technology transfer and encouraging deep-tech start-ups spun out of public laboratories.

→ **PEPITE France** is a nationwide network that offers guidance to students and young graduates (including early-career researchers) about business creation via training programmes and personalised support.

**Visit:** www.pepite-france.fr/en/

→ **SATT (Technology Transfer Acceleration Companies)** provides guidance to researchers regarding technology transfer, promoting research outcomes and creating start-ups based on laboratory work.

**Visit:** www.satt.fr/en/

### Tip
Reach out to your institution's innovation hub or technology transfer office.

# 2/ Resources and guidance for your job search

## ⬐⬐⬐ Soutien à la recherche d'emploi et accompagnement

A number of organisations and schemes exist to help PhD holders integrate the workplace and develop their careers. Here are some key resources:

**A fee may be charged for using these resources.** Contact your EURAXESS centre for more information if necessary.

### Association Bernard Gregory (ABG)

The ABG helps doctoral students and PhD holders explore their career goals by disseminating job offers, providing a CV database accessible to recruiters, and offering personalised career advice and resources following their doctorate.

**Visit:** www.abg.asso.fr/en/

### Adoc Talent Management

Recruitment agency that specialises in training and supporting doctoral graduates. Active in several countries, ATM lists job offers available to PhD holders in France, Canada and the Benelux countries (Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands).

**Visit:** www.adoc-tm.com/en

### Science Me Up

Scientific recruitment agency specialising in executive-level, doctoral and R&D engineering profiles and management positions.

**Visit:** www.sciencemeup.com/en/

## Association Pour l'Emploi des Cadres (APEC)

APEC provides free guidance to young graduates and professionals (holding a Master's degree or higher) to help them build and develop their career trajectories. You can access thousands of targeted job offers for professionals that are accessible to PhDs holders looking for employment outside academia, tailor-made workshops and advice as well as individual guidance.

**Visit:** apec.fr

## PhDOOC

PhDOOC is a non-profit association that runs a doctorate and career development MOOC—a free, collaborative online course delivered in French and English. It is designed to help doctoral students and PhD holders think about their professional futures, identify their skills and discover a wide range of opportunities.

**Visit:** phdooc.com/en

### Please note

You should also consider inquiring with your **EURAXESS** service centre and/or affiliated organisations that may have career services offering support to international researchers in advancing their careers!

## ↘ ↘ ↘ Useful platforms for your job search

Important, **this selection is not exhaustive**. Feel free to explore the recruitment pages of the institutions, companies or organisations that interest you.

## Portals for academic positions and public research jobs

**Galaxie portal:** nationwide platform for teaching and research posts (ATER, MCF, PU, CPJ)

**Visit:** galaxie.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr

**Euraxess jobs:** portal listing thousands of job opportunities and scholarships for researchers across Europe and beyond

**Visit:** euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs

**Academic Positions:** platform dedicated to international academic careers

**Visit:** academicpositions.com

**University Positions:** European portal specialising in academic posts

**Visit:** universitypositions.eu

**Find A Postdoc:** postdoc openings, primarily in Europe and the United Kingdom

**Visit:** findapostdoc.com

## Other useful platforms

**Choisir le service public:** website for examinations and job offers in the three branches of French public service[5]

**Visit:** choisirleservicepublic.gouv.fr

**Emploi Territorial :** recruitment in local authorities (town halls, departments, regions, etc.)

**Visit:** emploi-territorial.fr

Important, remember to check that your browser provides automatic translation since **these are French websites**.

**Science Careers :** job platform for scientific professionals with openings in the academic sector and beyond (industry, NGOs and international organisations)

**Visit:** jobs.sciencecareers.org

**EuroJobsites:** website specialising in scientific careers, European affairs and international relations

**Visit:** eurojobsites.com

### Please note

Applications to certain organisations, particularly international bodies, are frequently submitted through dedicated portals. Visit the careers page of the organisations you are interested in for further details.

[5] *State public service (FPE), Hospital public service (FPH) and Territorial public service (FPT)*

# 3/ Funding and mobility programmes

**As an international researcher in France, you are eligible for a number of funding and mobility schemes throughout the duration of your research contract (PhD students and postdoctoral researchers).**

## How can you fund your research?

Public and private institutions and organisations offer funding contracts for young researchers (PhD students and postdoctoral researchers) for contractual research and research engineer positions. These positions are often funded by:

→ **National agencies and research bodies**: the French Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR), the Agence de la Transition Ecologique (ADEME), Inserm, CNRS, etc.

→ **Foundations or specialised institutes**: Institut Curie, Institut Pasteur, etc.

→ **European projects**: the Horizon Europe programme including the European Research Council (ERC), Marie Skłodowska-Curie, Interreg.

→ **Private enterprise**: companies (pharmaceuticals, biotechnologies, etc.) via partnerships or CIFRE agreements.

PhD students and postdoctoral researchers may also be funded by individual grants.
Examples:
→ **Government and embassy scholarships;**
→ **Foundation grants (L'Oréal Foundation, Fondation de France, etc.);**
→ **France Excellence Eiffel scholarships.**

## How can you finance your mobility?

Most institutions have an international relations department responsible for supporting researchers and disseminating information about mobility support schemes.

You may be eligible for mobility funding via:

→ **European and international programmes**: Erasmus+, Young Researchers Grant (Utrecht Network), MAUI (USA), AEN (Australia), REARI-RJ (Brazil), etc.;

→ **Cooperation agreements** between institutions to go on an internship or research trip, particularly in the context of European networks;

→ **Scholarship programmes**: Campus France lists scholarship programmes for incoming or outgoing mobility.

### Where should you look?

**Funding or scholarship openings are published on:**

– The websites of research centres and laboratories.
– The institutional websites of universities or research bodies.
– Euraxess Jobs :
euraxess.ec.europa.eu/jobs/search
– Campus Bourses :
campusbourses.campusfrance.org
– Fund it ! (SHS) : fundit.fr/en

### Tip
Reach out to your institution's **international relations** department to find out about existing agreements and the international networks that your home organisation belongs to.

# 4/ The importance of professional networks

## Why are they so important?

Networking is an essential skill in today's work environment. It opens the door to numerous opportunities by helping you diversify your contacts, broaden your horizons and share your goals in a collaborative, rewarding environment. Developing your professional network means you will be able to:

→ **Access opportunities**:  many offers (jobs, internships, funding, collaborations) are circulated via word of mouth. Your network will help you obtain information more easily and may even lead to direct recommendations.

→ **Boost your visibility**: by sharing your work, ideas or experience in a professional network, you increase your chances of being recognised, sought after and sometimes even identified as an expert in your field.

→ **Gain insight into professional environments**: discussing with other researchers or professionals will help you understand your environment and learn the codes and expectations of different sectors.

→ **Access support**: networks are also a first-rate resource for support, exchanges, feedback and sometimes even advice from other researchers or professionals.



### Elevator Pitch
The "elevator pitch" technique is a concise way (roughly 30 seconds) to introduce yourself, get your message across and establish a connection. You can also adjust this technique when reaching out to people in writing (e.g. LinkedIn notes, emails, etc.).

### Tip
To gain recognition in your area of expertise, accept invitations to review articles for specialist journals.

**Important :** It is highly recommended to join the Alumni networks of your institutions, which are strong professional social networks that help foster professional support and cooperation among students and graduates.

# Here are four ways to expand your network:

**1**

At work events: talk to people during free time, ask questions and **suggest keeping in touch with the people you meet**;

**2**

By using social media: use the "Add a note" feature when **connecting with someone** on LinkedIn or elsewhere and personalise your invitations;

**3**

By joining mentoring, training or professional development programmes, **you will be able to interact with experienced professionals** and establish connections;

**4**

By joining research associations and/or alumni networks: **you will be able to share experiences**, stay informed and expand your circle.

# Here are five tips to help you prepare a good elevator pitch:

**1**

**Be concise** and go straight to the point: you only have a few seconds;

**2**

**Tailor your pitch** to the person you're talking to—your strategy will vary depending on who they are;
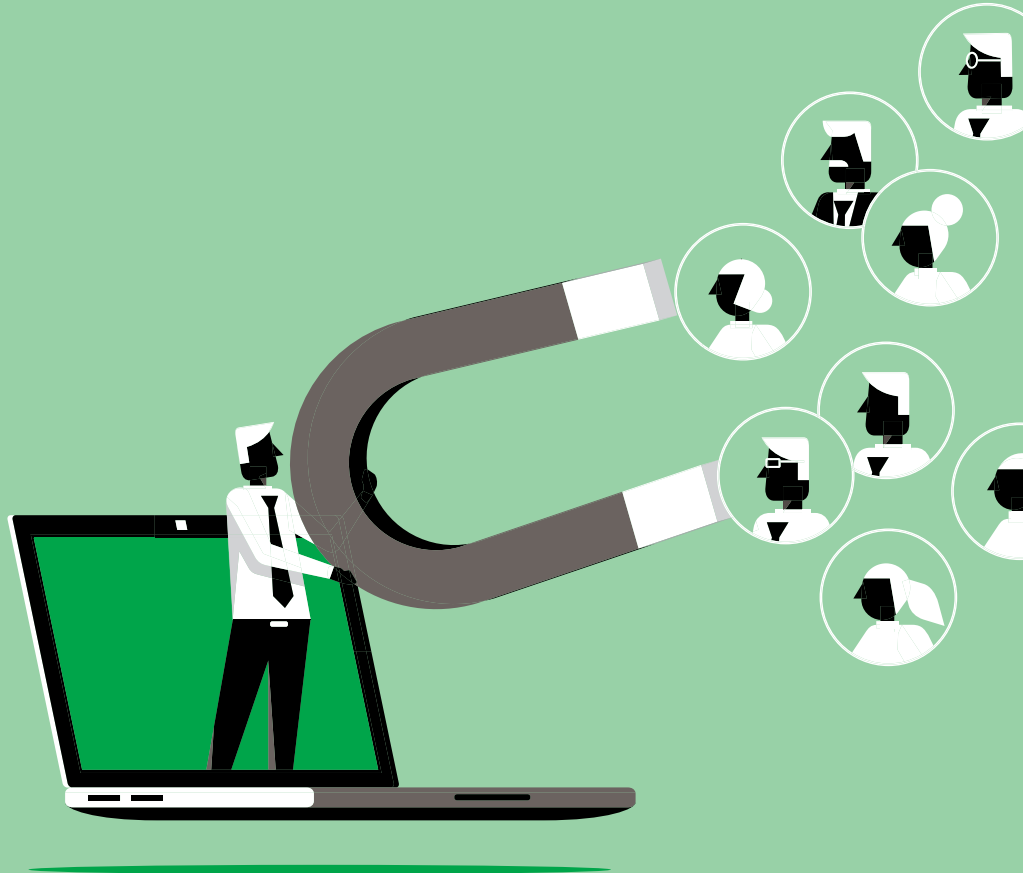
**3**

Work on it: **practice by yourself** or with family and friends!

**4**

State your request clearly: **show your interlocutor** what you are looking for or expecting from the conversation;

**5**

**Follow up**: remind them of the context by email or on LinkedIn, thank them and restart the conversation.

# Academic and non-academic applications

Tailoring your application to the position you are applying for is essential for maximising your chances of success. This section will help you understand the specific requirements of the different sectors so you can optimise your strategy.
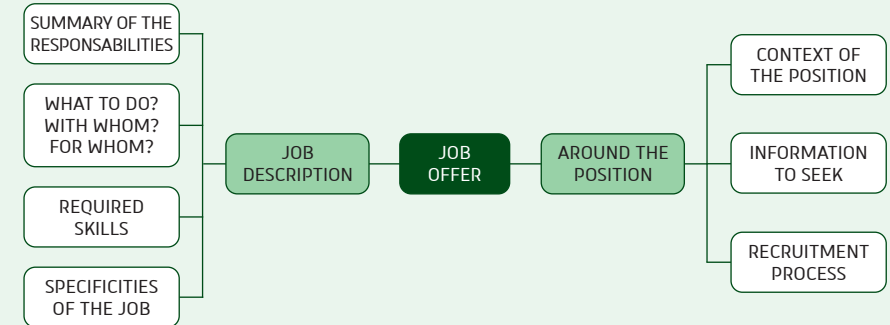
# 1/ Analysing a job offer

## Why analyse a job offer?

Analysing a job offer is a crucial step before submitting any application, whether it is academic or non-academic. This step allows you to:

→ Check whether the position matches your values, interests, personality and skills (see the VIPS model in Section 1).

→ Understand what the recruiter is looking for.

→ Fine-tune your CV, cover letter and interview technique to meet the recruiter's criteria.

# How do you analyse a job offer?

The diagram below shows the key information you need to identify in a job offer, grouped into two main categories:

SUMMARY OF THE RESPONSABILITIES
WHAT TO DO? WITH WHOM? FOR WHOM?
REQUIRED SKILLS
SPECIFICITIES OF THE JOB
→ JOB DESCRIPTION → JOB OFFER → AROUND THE POSITION →
CONTEXT OF THE POSITION
INFORMATION TO SEEK
RECRUITMENT PROCESS

**How do you use this diagram?**
You can annotate each job offer with these headings before applying. This will help you create a targeted, focused application.

## Job description

This section is typically the most detailed part of the job advertisement. It provides the following information:

→ A summary of the responsibilities: tasks and activities, expected outcomes, the type of work (working alone or in a team), etc.

→ The professional skills required: technical, linguistic or cross-disciplinary.

→ Specific details: particular constraints (mobility, hours, type of contract, status, etc.).

> **Please note**
> You do not need to "check all the boxes". There are not many applicants who meet every criterion outlined in a job description. Instead, highlight your ability to learn and your motivation for the position you are applying for.

## Around the position

This information helps you understand:

→ The context of the post: details about the recruiting organisation, its size, the projects in progress, the nature of the opening (new role, replacement, specific financing), the organisation's values, etc.

→ The recruitment process: the application deadline, the different stages and the required documents.

> **Please note**
> This information is not necessarily explicit; nevertheless, it is important. Feel free to seek out additional information: on LinkedIn, on the organisation's website or by contacting the recruiter directly! A well-informed candidate shows the recruiter that they are genuinely motivated about the job and that they can envision themselves in a new environment.

# 2/ Academic job applications

## ↘↘↘ Working as a teacher-researcher

**To apply for a teacher-researcher post, you first need to obtain the formal qualification from the Conseil National des Universités (CNU) in the discipline(s) of your choice.**

## The formal qualification

**To apply for your qualification, you must complete two steps:**
→ 1. Sign up on the ODYSSÉE platform, usually between October and December.
→ 2. Submit the application file between December and January.
Important: these are **two distinct steps**. The official dates are advertised on Galaxie, Odyssée and the CNU website.

☑ ☑ ☑ **Contents of the application file:**

| Doctorate awarded by a French institution | Equivalent foreign degree |
|---|---|
| 1 – Proof of **doctorate** | 1 – Proof of **equivalent degree** |
| 2 – Copy of the **thesis defence report** | 2 – Copy of the **thesis defence report** (or equivalent) |
| 3 – **Detailed CV** (teaching, research, administration and other joint responsibilities) | 3 – **Detailed CV** (teaching, research, administration and other joint responsibilities) |
| 4 – A maximum of three copies of **scientific works, publications and articles** | 4 – A maximum of three copies of **scientific works, publications and articles** |
| **Attention:** → All documents written in a foreign language must be translated into French. The candidate must provide a **sworn statement** certifying the accuracy of the French translation. → **If required**, your work must be accompanied by a summary in French. | |

**Important**
You **must** also attach additional documents. Consult the page of your CNU section for its specific requirements, recommendations and possible templates.

**To find out more, visit:**
https://conseil-national-des-universites.fr/cnu/

**Make sure you pay close attention** to the documents requested and the translation. The French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Space will assess the admissibility of your application based on its **administrative compliance**.

**A closer look at the job criteria**
Your application must be organised as an **activity report**. It must include your academic record, a list of your publications, your research activities (research work, article publications, calls for projects, funding secured, etc.), teaching experience (number of hours, levels, methods, etc.) and your administrative or collective responsibilities (representation, organisation of events, etc.).

## Recruitment after obtaining the qualification

After obtaining the formal qualification, you can apply for job openings **regardless of the specific section**.

☑ ☑ ☑ List of **obligatory documents** for your application:

| MCF application: qualification with a French degree | MCF application: qualification with a foreign degree |
|---|---|
| 1 – One ID document with photograph | 1 – One ID document with photograph |
| 2 – Proof of **doctorate** | 2 – Proof of an **equivalent degree** |
| 3 – Copy of the **thesis defence report** | 3 – Copy of the **thesis defence report** (or equivalent) |
| 4 – An analytical overview of the work aligned with the profile of the targeted position | 4 – An analytical overview of the work aligned with the profile of the targeted position |
| 5 – Copies of each of the works cited in the analytical overview that the candidate intends to present at interview NB: **no more than six documents** | 5 – Copies of each of the works cited in the analytical overview that the candidate intends to present at interview NB: **no more than six documents** |
| A French translation may be provided for the analytical overview, and any work written in a foreign language may be accompanied by a summary in French. | |

Once your documents have been verified by the institute, your application will be examined by a Selection Committee (COS), which may invite you to attend an interview.

**Useful info — Qualification waiver: special cases**
You do not need to apply for the formal qualification if you meet any of the following conditions:
→ **You are a teacher-researcher in a higher education institution abroad (including if you are of French nationality);**
→ **Your current position is equivalent to that of a lecturer or university professor.**
If this is the case, you must declare it when applying on the ODYSSEE platform by selecting the recruitment type: "foreign recruitment".
*Reference: Articles 22 and 43 of Decree No. 84-431 of June 6, 1984.*

# ↘↘↘ Working as a research engineer

**Research engineers are recruited either through external and internal examinations (or by eligibility lists or secondment for civil employees) or as contract workers.**

**Recruitment is organised by job type divided into eight branches of professional activity (known as BAPs):**

→ **BAP A**: Life, earth and environmental sciences.

→ **BAP B**: Chemical and materials sciences.

→ **BAP C**: Engineering sciences and scientific instrumentation.

→ **BAP D**: Human and social sciences.

→ **BAP E**: Computer science, statistics and scientific computing.

→ **BAP F**: Culture, communication, production and dissemination of knowledge.

→ **BAP G**: Property management, logistics, food services and risk management.

→ **BAP J**: Management and governance.

Candidates for recruitment examinations in these category A posts will find comprehensive information about submitting applications and the list of available openings on:

enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/fr/recrutements/itrf/categorie-A

Contract-based candidates are recruited directly by higher education institutions or research bodies for temporary or project-based positions (fixed-term contracts and sometimes permanent contracts).

> Important. **Applications for research engineering posts, although formally part of the academic public sector, are more similar to non-academic applications**: they place higher value on technical skills, concrete achievements and operational results. To optimise your application, read the following section on applying for jobs outside the academic sector.

# ↘↘↘ Working as a researcher in a national research organisation (ONR)

**ONRs offer positions either as research fellows and research directors attached to the civil service or fixed-term and/or permanent positions.**

Each organisation has its own recruitment campaign schedule and its own procedures. Make sure you visit the different ONR websites for information.

> **Tip**
> Some organisations, such as CNRS, INSERM and INRAE, provide "application guides" updated on an annual basis and available on their websites. You will find all the advice and explanations you need for preparing your application!
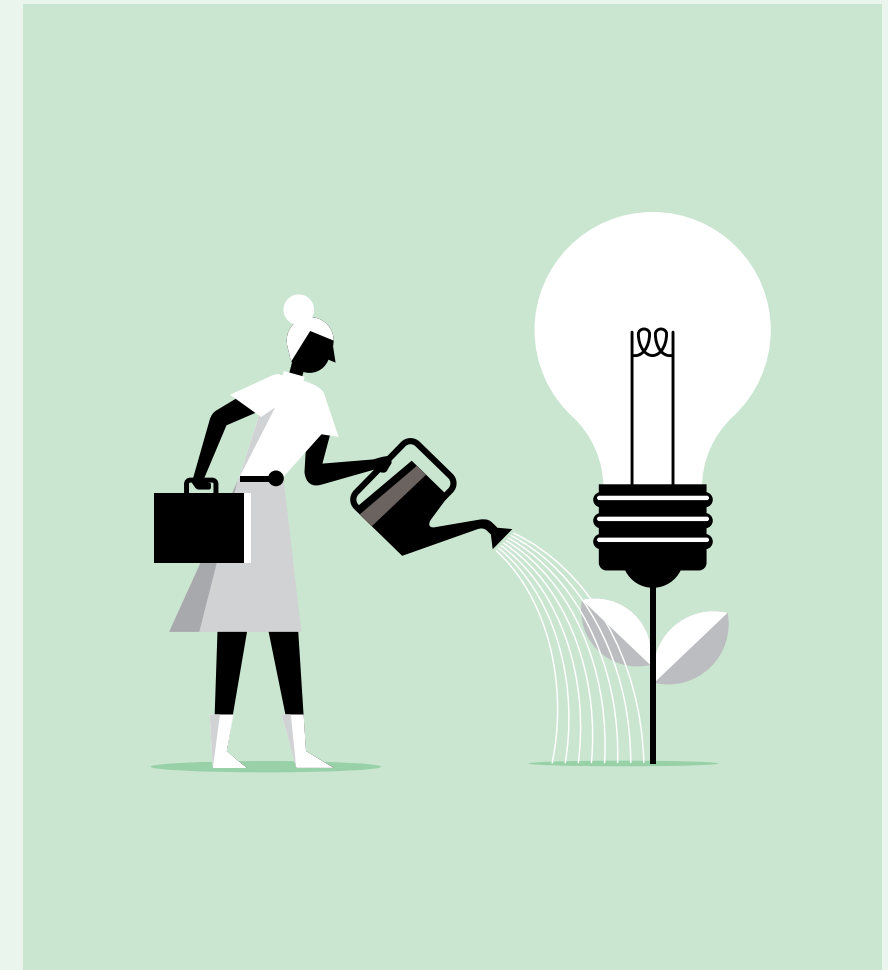
# 3/ Non-academic job applications

**Tailoring your application to the non-academic sector is crucial. The goal is to translate your scientific expertise into concrete added value for a company. Here are some key steps to help you prepare your non-academic application:**

## Step 1 — Adapting your CV

To apply for openings in the non-academic sector (excluding teaching and research), **you must adapt your CV**. While an academic CV is more like a record of your career intended for scientific peers, the non-academic CV is a tool for personal branding designed to win over a non-specialist recruiter in a matter of seconds!

|  | Academic CV | Non-academic CV |
|---|---|---|
| **Length** | Variable | Two pages maximum |
| **Objective** | To show the quality of your scientific career path | To demonstrate the added value and concrete outcomes of your research |
| **General structure** | Chronological, very detailed | Concise, targeted and organised from most recent to oldest |
| **Skills** | Typically implicit through the detail of your academic experience | Prominent section at the head of the CV to attract the attention of recruiters |
| **Thesis and publications** | Comprehensive list of everything you have published (articles, chapters, books, etc.) | Include the title of your thesis and only list your relevant publications without detailed summaries |
| **Experience** | List all your academic experience (teaching, research, mentoring, etc.) | Highlight experiences that are relevant to the post you are applying for using impactful action verbs (designed, developed, analysed, etc.) to describe your responsibilities that align with the needs of the industry |
| **Training** | Include detailed information about all your studies | List your degrees and the key skills they helped you acquire. Do not forget to mention any additional training courses (project management, entrepreneurship, etc.) |

**Example**

Your research involves studying the properties of X-based nanomaterials for photovoltaic energy applications. In a non-academic CV, you would highlight the fact that you have worked on the development of nanomaterial X that boosted performance by Y% while simultaneously cutting production costs by Z%.

## Step 2 — Transpose your skills

*"A PhD graduate trained in scientific research is a professional equipped with all the skills and human qualities needed to meet business expectations".*
*source : www.mydocpro.org*

Project management, scientific communication (outreach), critical thinking and adaptability are all strengths possessed by researchers. However, you must use language that can be easily understood by corporate recruiters.

**Tip**
To help you transfer your technical and cross-disciplinary skills, use the tools provided in the "Identifying and defining your skills" section [in **Section 2** of this guide].

Here is a model you can use to translate your academic skills into industry-relevant skills:

|  | Academic wording | Non-academic wording |
|---|---|---|
| **Technical skills** | Expertise in transmission electron microscopy (TEM) and X-ray diffraction (XRD) for the structural study of new materials | Expertise in materials R&D and quality control: advanced use of characterisation techniques (TEM, XRD) to validate product properties, troubleshoot failures and accelerate innovation |
| **Cross-disciplinary skills** | Independent management of a three-year doctoral research project, including design, implementation and analysis | Proactivity and independent project management: strong ability to take initiative, and define and supervise projects from A to Z while adhering to tight deadlines and precise objectives without the need for constant oversight |

# Step 3 — Understanding the requirements of the private sector

You must read job offers carefully so you can understand the recruiter's requirements in order to:

→ **Identify the key skills** (technical and cross-disciplinary).

→ **Pinpoint clues** about the corporate culture (the tone and keywords to reuse).

→ **Tailor your application** to meet expectations.

---

### Useful info

Some job descriptions implicitly reflect the company culture. Adjust the tone of your cover letter accordingly! If the company uses language that is heavily innovation-oriented, underline your creativity and ability to think "outside the box". On the other hand, if rigour is paramount, it is important to highlight your methodological approach and attention to detail.

---

# Step 4 — Prepare speculative job applications

A speculative application is a proactive strategy whereby you reach out to a company that does not necessarily have a current opening that matches your profile, but that you have deliberately chosen to target.

For this approach to be effective, detailed research is required:

→ **Target companies** that align with your interests and skill set.

→ **Highlight** your added value to the company.

→ **Demonstrate how your profile meets a need** not yet formally identified.

---

### Tip

Ask yourself how the specific skills that you have developed through your academic research could make a concrete contribution to the challenges the company is facing or their projects, and why you think your profile could fit into their long-term vision.

---

# Step 5 — Cover letter

As is the case with academic job applications, your cover letter must expose how your skill set aligns with the targeted position and demonstrate your motivation to join the company. Ask yourself these two key questions:

→ *"Why me?"* (to talk about your skills and added value): this is the crux of your letter. Select two or three of the advert's key requirements, then illustrate how your skills (including soft skills) meet these criteria by means of practical examples (often drawn from your research).

---

### Important

Make sure you translate your research skills into industrial skills!

---

→ *"Why you?"* (to demonstrate your motivation): explain why this company in particular appeals to you, and show that you have undertaken additional research on the company's products, values and latest news.

# Step 6 — Preparing for the job interview

If you are selected for an interview, five key steps are essential to help you prepare effectively:

→ **Research the company** and its sector: prior to the interview, it is important to do your research on the business, its products, its competitors and the latest industry trends.

→ **Prepare suitable examples** for each of the required skills, and make sure you have a clear idea of a scenario you can illustrate.

---

### Tip

Use the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, Result) method to show recruiters that you have the required skills.

---

→ **Rehearse** with close friends, colleagues or family.

→ **Anticipate typical interview questions** such as: "Why are you leaving the world of academia?"; "What do you know about our company?"; and "Where do you see yourself in five years?".

→ **Ask your own questions at the end of the interview:** show your interest by asking about the position, the team and the corporate culture.

**Annexes**

# Sample outlines of an application file for a teacher-researcher position

## Example 1
→ Personal information
→ Academic background
→ Professional experience
→ Teaching activities and departmental integration plan
→ Research activities and laboratory integration project
→ Collective and administrative responsibilities
→ Additional information

## Example 3
→ CV
   ◆ Personal information
   ◆ Research
   ◆ Teaching and research-based training
   ◆ Administrative and collective responsibilities
   ◆ References
→ Research activity report
→ Research project
→ Report on teaching and research-based training
→ Teaching plan
→ Bibliographic references

## Example 2
→ Personal information
→ Summary of research interests
→ Training
→ Professional activities
→ Research activities
→ Administrative and collective responsibilities
→ Technical skills

## Example 4
→ Introduction
→ Short-form CV
→ List of academic output classified by type (see the CNRS classifications) and organised chronologically and numbered with links (plus a symbol—e.g. an asterisk—to denote those which will be submitted to the selection panel if called for interview)
→ University education
→ Previous research
→ Scientific life / collective involvement
→ Teaching experience
→ Suitability for the job

Read a lecturer's advice about their recruitment process:
https://academia.hypotheses.org/34911
Find expert advice from a university professor on preparing for the interview with the COS selection committee:
https://www.campusmatin.com/metiers-carrieres/concours-recrutement/pratiques/5-conseils-pour-reussir-le-jury-de-recrutement-d-enseignant-chercheur.html

# Example of a non-academic CV

## SURNAME FIRST NAME
TITLE OF THE JOB OFFER

✉ email
📞 phone number
🌐 links (LinkedIn, website …)
📍 postal address

### ABOUT ME
Write a short paragraph (4-5 lines) to present your experience and skills in line with the post your are interested in.

### EDUCATION

**TITLE OF THE DIPLOMA**
Place
Dates

**TITLE OF THE DIPLOMA**
Place
Dates

**TITLE OF THE DIPLOMA**
Place
Dates

### WORK EXPERIENCE

**ROLE**
organisation, City | Dates
Short list of your tasks (relevant for the job offer you are applying for)

**ROLE**
organisation, City | Dates
Short list of your tasks (relevant for the job offer you are applying for)

**ROLE**
organisation, City | Dates
Short list of your tasks (relevant for the job offer you are applying for)

### SKILLS

**TECHNICAL SKILLS**
List here your technical skills in line with the job you are applying for without giving too many details (software, programming languages, design of communication tool, project management …)

**CROSS-DISCIPLINARY SKILLS**
list here your cross-disciplinary skills in line with the job you are applying for (adaptability, teamwork, rigour, leadership …)

**LANGUAGES**
List here the languages youspeak and your level (if you have taken language tests, please specify your results)

### HOBBIES
List here some of your hobbies that can showcase to recruiters your qualities and skills, and allow them to better know you outside the world of work

# Salary scales

## Private sector

The APEC provides a number of useful tools and resources, including a pay simulation calculator. To access these services, you must create an account.
https://www.apec.fr/tous-nos-outils.html

## Public sector

If you are a tenured public employee, you are paid an index-linked salary (also known as a base salary) calculated according to a weighted pay index. Your index depends on your grade and your level within that grade. Bonuses may be added to this base remuneration.

For reference, you can find the pay scales in the "Remuneration" section on:
https://www.emploi-collectivites.fr

You can also consult this publication issued by the French Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Space:
https://publication.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/eesr/FR/T512/les_salaires_des_personnels_des_epscp_et_des_epst/

If you are a contractual public employee, your salary is based on specific criteria (the nature of the role, the qualifications required, and the skills and experience of the contract employee). The remuneration of a contract worker is not necessarily identical to the salary scales of civil servants, and salary progression may vary.

# Useful contacts

**The centres below provide recognised career guidance and support. Reach out to your institution to find out which centre is your designated point of contact.**

**Association Bernard Gregory**
239, rue Saint-Martin,
75003 Paris
Contact : abg@abg.asso.fr
https://www.abg.asso.fr/en/

**Institut Pasteur**
25-28 rue du Dr Roux
75015 Paris
https://www.pasteur.fr/en

**Centre de services Euraxess - Université de Strasbourg**
11 Presqu'île Malraux
67100 Strasbourg
Contact : euraxess@unistra.fr
https://international-welcome.unistra.fr/

**Centre de Mobilité Internationale de Rennes**
1 place Paul Ricoeur
35000 Rennes
Contact : cmi-euraxess@univ-rennes.fr
https://cmi.univ-rennes.fr/en

**Centre de Mobilité Internationale de Brest**
225 Cours Aimé Césaire
29200 Brest
https://www.cmibrest.fr/

Find your nearest **EURAXESS centre** for tailored assistance
List of EURAXESS France centres:
https://www.euraxess.fr/france/france-network

# Interviews and testimonies from international researchers

**Explore interviews and personal stories from researchers highlighting a range of jobs and career paths:**

**Euraxess Smart Talks** is a podcast series for international researchers about careers in research, innovation and entrepreneurship.
https://phdcareerstories.com/
https://www.abg.asso.fr/en/vue/career-paths-and-professions

**Apple Podcast**
https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/euraxess-smart-talks/id1789332012

**Spotify**
https://open.spotify.com/show/0FsFvR8A2y8zf4h0cv35zJ

**Deezer**
https://www.deezer.com/fr/show/3831137

**Youtube**
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL2ZiZAXfOF8BSxU4VbNNlmJmWadvwk3MS

**France Alumni** is a platform developed by Campus France at the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Development to help international students and researchers stay connected and leverage their stay in France in a professional context.
https://www.francealumni.fr/en/

# Credits

**Université** de Strasbourg

La Rochelle Université

CENTRE DE MOBILITÉ INTERNATIONALE DE RENNES

Université Polytechnique HAUTS-DE-FRANCE

euraxess RESEARCHERS IN MOTION FRANCE

France Universités

hr HR EXCELLENCE IN RESEARCH