

Max Planck Institute for Astronomy

Hiring Guidelines 2021

contact: MPIA Gender Equality Officer
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1 Hiring Guidelines 2021

1.1 The Job Adverts should contain:

- which skills and qualifications are required/desired.
- information about working hours i.e. which days and times.
- the salary or remuneration group.
- whether the position is fixed term, tenure-track or permanent.
- the statement: “The Max Planck Society is an equal opportunity employer. Applications from women, persons with disabilities, and minorities are particularly welcome. The MPIA supports its employees in the search for suitable child care. For questions concerning promoting equal opportunity for all employees and prospective employees at MPIA, please contact NAME of the Equal Opportunity Officer (equality@mpia.de) and regarding disabilities guidelines and regulations please contact NAME of the representative for severely disabled persons (SBV) (sbv@mpia.de).”
- Send the job advert to the Equal Opportunity Officers (EOOs) for endorsement before it is made public.

1.2 The search committee

- Ensure that there are equal numbers of women and men on the search committee. If this is not possible, the reasons must be placed on file.
- Provide each member of the committee with the list of skills and qualifications required/desired, which should be used to assess all applicants.
- If there is at least one applicant with explicitly mentioned severe disability, the SBV must be included in the search committee.

1.3 The short list

- When women are under-represented **at the position - i.e career level, being offered**, women with the required qualifications entered into the long list and short list (including the interview stage) must be at least 50% or better in terms of gender balance **regardless of the applicant pool**. Otherwise, only if female applicants are obviously not qualified for the position (based on qualification clearly outlines in the job advert and provided to the selection committee the short list and those interviewed should reflect the original pool of applicants. In this case, the reasons why equality could not be fulfilled should be clearly communicated and justified to the EOs.

- Send the shortlist to the EOs and provide them with access to all application material of all candidates.
- Applicants with explicitly mentioned severe disability must always be invited for the interview, unless the applicant is obviously not qualified for the position based on the conditions written in the job advertisement. The judgment whether or not an applicant is in principle qualified shall be done in close collaboration with the SBV.

1.4 Conducting the interview

- Ensure that at least 40% of women take part in the interview committee. If this is not possible, it should be clearly justified to the EOs.
- Follow the guidelines for interviews, developed by our staff (see Section 2).
- Send the name(s) of the top candidate(s) to the Equal Opportunity Officers before an offer is made.**
- The decision about the rejection or acceptance of a disabled candidate must be made in close collaboration with the SBV.

1.5 When you negotiate the job offer, mention:

- Child care options
- Dual career services
- Flexible working hours/work from home in case of caring responsibilities

2 Guidelines for Interviews

1. Do the interview with at least one other person. Have an equal number of women and men in the interview committee (The EO can not be counted towards this balance), but at least a 40% of members of the underrepresented genders is required. If this is still not possible for specific reasons, these should be justified to the EOs.
2. The EOs must be invited to all interviews.
3. Before starting the interview, ensure both sides can understand each other clearly. In case of an online interview, make sure you ask for a telephone number where the candidate is reachable in case the internet connection is bad or breaks down.
4. Allow to the EO to introduce them self and their role in the interview.
5. Briefly introduce all of you, including who you are (e.g. a group leader and a senior postdoc from the same group). The EOs should have the opportunity to introduce themselves and explain briefly their role at MPIA.

6. Describe the structure of the interview, e.g., first some questions from your side, then the candidate will have the opportunity to ask questions, then come back to some more questions (possibly more directly related to the position offered), and end by explaining the next steps.
7. The previous points probably already eased the candidate, but if not enough, you could consider starting with 'fact/confirming' questions, e.g., from the CV if they indeed did their masters at place X with person Y on topic Z.
8. A candidate with proven severe disability must not be asked for the type of his/her disability, but can and should be asked if there is a conflict with any of the tasks of the offered position. For this purpose, it can be helpful to discuss a few use cases.
9. Try to get a clear picture of the candidate's past performance, preferably in a chronological order, following the CV. Concerning conducted research projects, make sure to find out what the candidate contributed her/himself to get a clear picture of the true skills (e.g. candidate did run a code, but actually never touched it).
10. Find out why the candidate is interested in the position. Make sure that the candidate explains what she/he thinks the job is about.
11. This is perhaps a good moment to put in some less expected questions, e.g., an idea for what a student could do within the project or what kind of extension (in data /model/etc.) would make the project stronger, etc.
12. Then probably ask the question how the candidate sees her/himself fitting in the project, group and institute, e.g., what kind of interaction/communication does the candidate bring and expect, what other own projects does the candidate want to do, does she/he perhaps already have an idea for after this project?
13. Try to figure out how the candidate would fit in the institute - equality ideas. How would they contribute to a good work environment at MPIA? Were they involved in activities related to ethics, sustainability, equal opportunities?
14. Now it should be turn for the candidate to ask questions and of you to tell more about the project, group and institute, including logistics (computer, travel, publication), collaborations within and outside Heidelberg, regular group and department-wide meetings, open-door policy, equality and disability related questions, etc.
15. End with explaining clearly the next steps of the procedure and if possible an estimate of the timeline when you know more. State that you would appreciate if the candidate would mention any potential offers or even acceptance of other positions from her/his side.