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Glossary
The CNRS is a public scientific and technological institution. Its mission is to identify, conduct or organize any and all research which presents an interest in the advancement of science, as well as for economic, social and cultural progress, either on its own or with its partners. The CNRS is internationally recognized for the excellence of its scientific work and serves as a role model, both for the world of research and development and for the general public. To fulfil its duties, the CNRS recruits a large number of permanent research scientists each year by means of competitive examinations based on criteria of excellence.

These competitions cover every field of research: human and social sciences, mathematics, physics, chemistry, nuclear and high energy physics, engineering and systems sciences, biology, information science, universe sciences, ecology and environmental science. The available positions are therefore characterized by a wide diversity of scientific themes.

The purpose of this guide is to present the practical terms and conditions of application, the competition process itself and the recruitment procedure for the winners.

To fulfil its duties, the CNRS recruits a large number of permanent research scientists each year by means of competitions based on criteria of excellence.

Antoine Petit, CEO of CNRS
EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW TO APPLY

WHEN RECRUITMENT OPENS

How to be informed?

The competitions for available positions open each year in early December by means of decrees published in the Journal officiel de la République française (JORF). There is a separate decree for each vacancy grade. These opening decrees set out:

• the application procedure and calendar;
• the number of positions to be filled by theme, discipline and group of disciplines.

The CNRS wants to increase the number of women in all scientific professions and encourage women scientists to apply for jobs.

The publication of these decrees in the JORF marks the official launch of the competitions. No information may be communicated until they are published. Each decree that opens a competition is published at least one day before applications open. When opened, the competitions are advertised on the CNRS website along with all the key information, such as the number of positions by scientific theme, the calendar for applications and the provisional dates for the various competitions.

To learn more about the different competitions, please visit the website carrières.cnrs.fr/en.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT COMPETITION

For your profile

The competitions are organized by scientific discipline or by group of disciplines. In some cases, scientific themes are specified. The competitions may be attached to one or more CNRS scientific institutes, depending on the disciplinary or inter-disciplinary nature of each theme.

There is no limit to the number of applications you may submit.

For researcher (CR) recruitment competitions, if you do not hold a doctorate (because you have not yet defended your thesis, you do not have the required qualification but have scientific work experience, etc.) or if you hold a foreign qualification, you may still be eligible for the competition if so approved by the competent evaluation body under the National Committee for Scientific Research, that will rule on the equivalence of your work experience.

Required criteria for application

Unlike most recruitment competitions, there is no criterion of nationality for research scientists. Each year, nearly a third of the successful candidates are foreign nationals representing more than 90 different nationalities.

There is no age criterion for applicants, so long as you have not reach the legal working age limit.

There is no limit on the number of applications you may submit.

STANDARD GRADE RESEARCHER (CR)

1 - Hold one of the following qualifications:
• doctorate,
• State or third cycle doctorate,
• engineering doctorate,
• research diploma in dentistry (DERSD),
• research diploma in human biology (DERBH);

2 - Hold a foreign university qualification deemed to be one of the above qualifications;

3 - Have scientific qualifications and work experience deemed to be equivalent to the above qualifications.

For researcher (CR) recruitment competitions, if you do not hold a doctorate (because you have not yet defended your thesis, you do not have the required qualification but have scientific work experience, etc.) or if you hold a foreign qualification, you may still be eligible for the competition if so approved by the competent evaluation body under the National Committee for Scientific Research, that will rule on the equivalence of your work experience.

SENIOR RESEARCHER GRADE 1 (DR1)

You must meet one of the aforementioned criteria concerning your qualifications and work experience and have at least 12 years’ experience working in research.

Civil service researchers working at a public scientific and technological institution are not eligible to apply.

Further, the CNRS’s Scientific Board may, as an exception, authorize a special dispensation from these criteria for noteworthy contributions to research.

• for candidates applying for senior researcher grade 2 (DR2) competitions who have been working with the status of researcher for less than 3 years;
• for candidates applying for senior researcher grade 1 (DR1) competitions whose current status is that of a civil servant.

SENIOR RESEARCHER GRADE 2 (DR2)

You may be eligible for the competition if you meet either of the following criteria:

• You belong to a research body at a public scientific and technological institution (IPST) with at least 3 years experience in that capacity.
• If you do not belong to a research body but you meet one of the aforementioned criteria in terms of qualifications or work experience and have at least 8 years’ experience working in research after obtaining one of the required qualifications.

IN ADDITION

The number of years of work in research required for eligibility for the researcher (CR) and senior researcher (DR1 and DR2) competitions must have been completed in a research institution or a public or private higher education institution, either in France or abroad. These years refer to paid research work performed under a public or private employment contract or as a civil servant. Only the years of work completed after the date on which the required qualification was obtained are taken into account. The years of research work may be either continuous or with interruptions, at one or several institutions. Years spent working on a thesis are not taken into account.

If you have not spent the required number of years working in research, you may still be eligible for the competition. In this case your application will be reviewed by the relevant section of the National Committee for Scientific Research, which will rule on the equivalence of your scientific work.

If you have a disability or benefit from the French employment obligation, you may also apply under the contractual recruitment procedure held each year by the CNRS.

- DUTIES -

CNRS RESEARCH SCIENTISTS

The research scientists at the CNRS are divided into two occupational categories: researchers and senior researchers, both of which fall within the French civil service category A.

The research scientists employed by the CNRS fulfill a variety of functions. They are often involved in group projects and aim for excellence in every scientific discipline.

In the performance of their duties, research scientists work for the development and transfer of knowledge, and its practical application within companies, in all domains which contribute to the advancement of society.

Their functions include the dissemination of both information and scientific and technical culture.

Within the laboratories, research scientists help in the training of doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows and junior researchers.

The most experienced research scientists may also lead units, supervise teams, run national and international scientific projects, teach and be responsible for technology transfer.

In some instances, their work may also involve managing and administrating research.
Your application

Qualifications
You must indicate the date on which you were awarded your doctorate. If you have not yet received it, you should indicate the date of your viva voce.
If you do not have a copy of your qualification, you must attach either the certification or report from your viva voce or your authorization to defend your thesis, issued by your doctoral school.
If you hold a foreign qualification, you do not need to prove its equivalence: it will be submitted to the relevant section of the National Committee for Scientific Research, that will rule on your eligibility for the competition.

For foreign qualifications, a French translation must be provided by a sworn translator, or a Comparability Statement must be obtained from the ENIC-NARIC: https://www.france-education-international.fr/enic-naric-menu/comment-obtenir-attestation-equivalence: it will be submitted to the relevant section of the National Committee for Scientific Research, that will rule on your eligibility for the competition.

Research project
You will need to provide a clear, structured presentation of your research project and its scientific interest.
You are free to choose the way in which you present your project. There is no limit to the number of pages. Your research proposal should be aimed at one CNRS unit. You are free to choose the way in which you present your project.

Required documents
• A Curriculum-Vitae
• A copy of the qualification required for eligibility
• A report describing the work you have carried out
• A comprehensive list of your publications, as well as your most meaningful publications (you may attach up to three publications)
• A report describing the proposed research programme, citing only laboratories supervised by the CNRS
• The report from your thesis examining board, as well as the thesis itself (optional but recommended)
• Which may be accompanied by a letter of support from the director of the laboratory concerned.

Senior researcher (DR)
Required documents
• A Curriculum-Vitae
• A copy of the qualification required for eligibility
• A summary report of your work
• A comprehensive list of your publications, as well as your most meaningful publications (you may attach up to five publications)
• A report setting out your intended research work
• The main points in your career development should be specified on the "work experience" form

Publications
The number of publications submitted is limited to three per researcher competition and five per senior researcher competition. Due to the software’s limited upload capacity, candidates submitting more than one application, who wish to provide a higher number of publications, may use MEDIHAL for text documents (thesis, publications, etc.) or HAL for audiovisual files (images, videos and sound), specifying the URL on the application form.

Given the various methods available for electronic transmission, the submission of publications by post is not recommended.

If necessary, you may include with your application proof of any publications currently in progress.

Letters of reference
Scientists may submit letters of reference in support of a candidate’s research project proposal. Such references may only be submitted during the application period, at the following address: http://www.cnrs-bellevue.fr/formulaires/scc-recommandation2020-2021.php

Previous work carried out
You will need to provide a short summary of no more than 12 lines describing your previous work, to be included on the application form. In addition, you will need to attach a more comprehensive document to your application setting out in greater detail the work you consider to be the most significant.

Applications must include all the documents common to all the competitions, as well as those specific to each individual competition.
APPLICATION PROCEDURE

The application procedure can be completed online on the CNRS website. It includes three compulsory steps: creating a candidate account, entering personal data and submitting the application.

Application procedure

1. Creating your candidate account
   This enables you to register for one or more competitions.

2. Entering your personal data
   Informational screens will guide you through the process to enter all the information required for your application. Once this information has been entered, a summary of the data will be displayed so you can check for any errors and make any necessary changes.
   You can add to your online application as needed over the course of the application period.
   We recommend that you do not wait until the final days to enter your information and submit the supporting documentation required in order for your application to be examined. You should take special care in the presentation of your past work and your research project.

3. Submitting your application
   Submission is a significant and compulsory formality. You will be required to swear to the accuracy and the completeness of the information provided.
   We would like to remind you that providing forged documents is a criminal offence open to prosecution and/or disciplinary action, as applicable. In any case, you may be struck off the list of selected candidates. Any application that has been completed but not submitted by the closing date will systematically be rejected, regardless of any personal reasons that may be given.

Management and protection of your personal data
You have the right to access, rectify, modify and delete your data. For the recruitment of researchers by competitive examination, the CNRS collects and processes personal data. Information is available on the CNRS Career site:

Eligibility for the competition
The eligibility criteria are set out after the application period closes. The sections act as the evaluation bodies for the equivalence of candidates’ titles, qualifications and scientific work.

The lists of eligible candidates are published, by competition, once the evaluation bodies have met and in the month following the closure of applications. Candidates considered to be ineligible for a competition will be notified individually, by post.

You may withdraw your application following submission, after applications close, by sending a simple written request by email to the "service central des concours".

If for some reason you wish to do so, you may withdraw your application before applications close. After they close, no application may be submitted or modified. Any additional documentation (publications and/or thesis) sent by post, that you have been unable to send electronically, must therefore be sent before applications close.

The application calendar is available online, once the competition opening decrees are published. You must complete your online application between the opening and closing dates. You cannot begin an application before applications open.

The application calendar (opening and closing dates and times) is set by the opening decrees. Applications are normally open to candidates over the course of a month, from early December to the beginning of January of the following year. The opening and closing dates and times may change from year to year.

You have the right to access, rectify, modify and delete your data. You must inform the Central Competitions Department in the event of a change of address, surname or contact details, occurring during the entire duration of the competitions or after the admission results if you are a prizewinner.

Application timeline and formalities
The application calendar (opening and closing dates and times) is set by the opening decrees the competitions, in the Journal officiel de la République française. Applications are normally open to candidates over the course of a month, from early December to the beginning of January of the following year. The opening and closing dates and times may change from year to year.

You can add to your online application as needed over the course of the application period. You can still make any changes you may consider to be useful. Don’t forget to validate again your application.

ADVICE
• Do not wait until the last day to submit your application.
• Make sure your computer terminal is working properly.
• Verify the contents, the accuracy and the completeness of your application.
• Verify the reference number(s) of the competition(s) for which you are applying.

• the email addresses in @yahoo / @hotmail /@outlook systematically reject the addresses in @cnrs.fr without making the distribution in the concerned box. It is therefore strongly recommended not to use this type of address. For @gmail addresses, you must authorize in the box parameters, the reception of @cnrs.fr addresses. Otherwise the risk of non-receipt is the same.

- BEFORE SUBMITTING YOUR APPLICATION -

MAKING CHANGES TO YOUR APPLICATION
If you have submitted your application, but the application period is still open, you can still make any changes you may consider to be useful. Don’t forget to validate again your application.
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE EXAMS

REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS
The examining board reviews the applications for their scientific value. At the end of the review, the board releases a list of candidates who will be interviewed (who are qualified to proceed). After the interviews, the board releases a list of qualifying candidates.

REVIEW OF SENIOR RESEARCHER APPLICATIONS
The examining board reviews the applications for their scientific value. Interviews may also be organized if the section or CID decides to meet with the candidates. At the end of the review, the board releases a list of qualifying candidates.

INTERVIEWS
The majority of interviews will take place in either Paris or Meudon (in the suburbs of Paris). The provisional calendars are posted online when the competitions are opened on the CNRS website. Depending on the health situation, they could take place by videoconference for all candidates.

Interview procedure
The interview procedure is at the discretion of the examining boards and is explained to the candidates in their interview notification (authorized materials, length of the interview, etc.). The interview procedure may differ from one competition to another and may change from one year to the next within the same section, at the boards’ discretion.

The oral exams will be conducted in French. Under certain conditions, they may take place partially in English.

The oral exams are not scored. At the end of the interviews, each board produces a list of eligible candidates by order of merit. The boards have independent authority in drawing up their eligibility lists.

Notifications
Candidates to be interviewed will receive a notification stating the date, time and location of the interview, its length and the procedure. It is paramount that you appear for your interview on time. Notifications are sent out at least 15 days before the beginning of the interviews based on the respective calendars for the different competitions.

Candidates who have not received their notification by the week preceding the beginning of the interviews for the relevant board should contact the Service Central des Concours. In that instance, a copy of the notification(s) will also be sent to the candidates by email on their express request.

The administration is not responsible if a notification is not received or is received late. International candidates must complete the necessary formalities to obtain a visa according to the competition and interview dates. The interview calendar will not be adjusted if a visa is issued late.

Selection
The selection phase consists of a review of the applications submitted by those candidates approved as being eligible to proceed by the eligibility boards. It produces the list of selected candidates based on a study of the eligible candidates’ applications. The dates on which the selection boards meet are given on the CNRS website.

Withdrawal
Candidates called for interview must inform the “Service central des concours” should they wish to withdraw or are unable to attend, by sending an email to: concours@cnrs.fr

- ORAL EXAM ACCOMMODATIONS -
POSSIBILITIES

Oral exam accommodations can be made for people with disabilities, pregnant women and anyone whose state of health justifies it under the conditions set out in the official decree governing each competition. If you have a permanent disability and are officially considered as a disabled worker or benefit from the French employment obligation, you may receive accommodations for your interview.

You must request any such accommodations at the time of application. They will be granted after the provision of supporting documentation demonstrating that you fall into one of the aforementioned categories and a medical certificate specifying the requested accommodations, completed by an approved doctor designated by the administration.

Such accommodations are not granted automatically; they are based on the nature of your disability. They may notably include adjusting the length and division of the oral exams to your physical abilities or the provision of the necessary human and/or technical aids. If your disability evolves between the time when you requested the accommodations and the date of the oral examination, you must provide the additional documentation early enough to allow for their implementation, as appropriate.

In specific cases (disability or pregnancy), interviews may be arranged by video conference. For more information about the criteria for accommodations, please contact the "Service central des concours" at the time of your application.

- RESULTS -
COMMUNICATION OF ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION RESULTS
Eligibility and selection results are published on the CNRS website after the examining boards have met. Candidates who have not been invited for interview, who are considered not to be eligible and who have not been selected will be so notified individually no later than one month after the results have been published.

DISCRETION OF THE EXAMINING BOARDS
The examining boards are free to determine the number of eligible candidates and their order of merit. The boards may rank more than one candidate as tied. They may also choose not to rank any candidates.

The examining boards have no obligation to provide any written explanation concerning their deliberations. There is no legislative or regulatory provision that requires the boards to explain their decisions, including refusing an interview, eligibility or selection. The selection boards may not rank more winners in the primary list than there are positions to be filled. Once all the positions are filled, the selection boards may, at their discretion, choose to establish a supplementary list.

2021 RESEARCHERS COMPETITIONS / CANDIDATE’S GUIDE
FOCUS CRITERIA

The criteria used by the eligibility juries are available online on the National Committee’s website:
https://www.cnrs.fr/comitenational/accueil.html

Criteria used by the eligibility juries:

FOR CR COMPETITIONS

"The admissions jury verifies that the candidates’ academic background and possible professional experience, the quality of the publications mentioned, and the interest of the scientific projects presented correspond to the level expected to enter the CNRS. The quality of publications, the diversity of methodological skills, participation in large-scale research projects or membership in international research networks are among the elements that determine the scientific merit of candidates.

The following points are particularly taken into account:

- The scientific interest of the publications mentioned and the importance of the conclusions presented in the field under consideration; the quality of the media in which the candidates have published (peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, books, etc.); the number of publications in relation to the candidate’s experience;
- The quality and originality of the scientific project. Applicants must demonstrate a mastery of the international state of the art of their theme; be able to formulate an original proposal; demonstrate a mastery of the methodologies necessary to develop the project presented;
- The quality of the candidate’s academic background, particularly with regard to international post-doctoral studies and interventions in seminars, conferences or colloquia.”

FOR THE DR COMPETITIONS

The criteria of the admission jury are as follows:

- Quality, originality and regularity of scientific production
- National and international recognition of research work
- Ability to federate within a laboratory the emergence of a specific theme
- Ability to supervise research and manage collective projects (national and/or international)
- Administration and management of research contracts
- Valuation of research (contracts, patents, licenses)
- Mobility, thematic evolution
- Participation in the dissemination of knowledge.
- Participation in university teaching
- Ability to lead and animate a team or research axis
- Mentoring other researchers
- Management of collective structures
- Involvement in research administration tasks

WINNERS

The President & CEO of the CNRS decides on the assignment of the winners to a research unit either within or affiliated to the CNRS. That assignment may differ from the preferences expressed in the candidate’s application.

Assignment and appointment

Assignment

The winners are notified individually of their proposed assignments within one month of publication of the selection results. The winners then have 15 days in which to respond. The winners will be under the authority of the director of the research unit to which they are assigned.

Appoint

Appointments are announced by the President & CEO of the CNRS, in the same order as the list of selected candidates. For standard and higher grade researchers, the winners are appointed for a probationary period of one year before being confirmed in their posts as civil servants. Beyond that date, any non-appointed winners will automatically lose the benefit of their results.

In addition, any official admitted to an open competition for the grade of Director of Research 2nd class (DR2) and in a position of secondment or mobility after the date of his admission shall, prior to his appointment as DR2, be required to be reinstated.

Remuneration

A normal class researcher’s gross monthly salary (before bonuses) is between €3,290 and €6,450. A senior researcher’s gross monthly salary (before bonuses) is between €3,290 and €6,450.

INDEPENDENCE OF THE ELIGIBILITY AND SELECTION BOARDS

The selection boards are independent of the eligibility boards. For that reason, the ranking of selected candidates may differ from the ranking released by the eligibility boards.

Respective situations of candidates appearing on primary and supplementary lists

The winners appearing on primary lists will all be offered an assignment with a view to their appointment. Candidates appearing on supplementary lists may receive an assignment proposal in the following instances:

• if a candidate on the primary list withdraws
• if a position is still vacant

The President & CEO of the CNRS will decide whether or not to call on any supplementary lists. If the number of names on the list of selected candidates released by the selection board is lower than the total number of vacant positions concerned by the competition, the President & CEO of the CNRS may decide to transfer all or some of any such positions to one or more competitions currently open for a different discipline or group of disciplines.

The career of research scientist

The status of research scientists was recently reviewed in order to improve career prospects (recategorization by index, increased possibilities for promotion, etc.). If you are considered as eligible for a competition, the Human Resources Department will explain the current system to you. Actions are also undertaken to encourage gender equality.
CAREER
A career covers all possibilities for professional development. It includes the possibilities for advancement within a profession, linked to both length of service and professional value, and the possibilities for reaching a higher professional level, by means of either competitive internal processes or promotional procedures. More broadly, the opportunities for mobility within the CNRS or to other research organizations, universities, companies or administrations also form an integral part of the careers of research scientists at the CNRS.

DECREET TO OPEN A COMPETITIVE EXAMINATION
Decrees which open a competition are published in the Journal Officiel de la République Française. They define, by vacancy grade, the date and time when applications close, the job description and the number of positions, the online or postal application procedure, and the terms for requesting any accommodations.

ELIGIBLE
Eligible candidates are those ranked by the eligibility boards.

ELIGIBLE FOR THE COMPETITION
Candidates who are eligible for a competition are considered to meet all the necessary terms and conditions, as required by the competition.

ELIGIBLE TO PROCEED
Candidates who are eligible to proceed are those interviewed by the eligibility boards.

ENIC-NARIC
ENIC-NARIC France is the French information centre for the academic and professional recognition of foreign qualifications. Its actions contribute to encouraging international mobility. It is notably responsible for issuing of comparability statements and certificates of recognition for foreign diplomas and qualifications.

INELIGIBLE FOR THE COMPETITION
Ineligible candidates are those who have not satisfied the eligibility criteria for the competition concerned.

INSTITUTES
The CNRS’s 10 institutes implement the organization’s scientific policy. Each institute leads and coordinates the actions of a coherent ensemble of research activities relating to different disciplines.

LABORATORIES
The laboratories - or units - constitute the scientific foundation of the CNRS. They are spread throughout France and in some 50 other countries.

NATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH (CoNRS)
The National Committee is a collective body comprising the Scientific Board, Institute Scientific Boards, specialized sections in each discipline and five interdisciplinary Commissions. The CoNRS plays a key role in French science. Its members help define the scientific policy of the CNRS, analyse the current situation and outlook, recruit research scientists and promote their careers, and monitor research unit activity.

PROFESSIONS
The civil servants at the National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS), including its national institutes, belong to one of the following professions: senior researchers, researchers, research engineers, project engineers, assistant engineers, research technicians and technical research assistants. Each profession corresponds to a group of civil servants performing similar duties, with identical conditions of remuneration and identical career development. Each research profession comprises several grades. Each grade is divided into levels through which its civil servants can progress, chiefly based on length of service. Each level is associated with a pay level.

SALARY
The remuneration received by civil servants. A salary comprises several different elements. The base salary (or “indexed salary”) is calculated according to a given index corresponding to the employee’s grade and level. It is completed by a housing allowance and potentially by a family supplement and various bonuses and incentives.

SECTIONS AND CIDS
Every field of research is divided into disciplines or groups of disciplines which correspond to the sections of the National Committee for Scientific Research. This breakdown, set by ministerial decree, is updated on a regular basis according to advances in science and the fields of research, with the names and number of the sections being adjusted as appropriate. The scope of each theme is defined by the section’s keywords. In addition to its 41 sections, the CNRS has five interdisciplinary Commissions (CIDs), created to meet the needs of domains covered by several sections or institutes. The section is the structure of reference for research scientists and research units. In addition to their functions as admission boards, they carry out a wide range of other roles (including assessing the scientific activity of the research scientists, making recommendations on career-related requests and analysing the scientific situation and its future outlook). All the criteria used by admission boards are available at the CNRS National Committee website at: http://www.cnrs.fr/comitenational en/uk.html

SELECTED
The selected candidates are those ranked by the selection boards on a primary or a supplementary list.

STATUS
The permanent staff at the CNRS are public civil servants governed by the general civil service, and certain specific regulations (e.g. Decree 83-1260 of 30 December 1983), as amended, relating to the specific status of civil servants at public scientific and technological institution (EPSTs)). These tests regulate the different stages in the careers of the CNRS’s permanent research scientists.

WORKING AGE LIMIT
All civil servants must retire when they reach a certain age. That age limit varies, depending on the person’s date of birth. For example, the working age limit for a civil servant born in 1952 is 65 years and 9 months.
The TORE (The Open Reality Experience).

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