



## **Recruiting for impact: OTM-R policy 2025–2030**

### **International and multidisciplinary organisation**

#### **Working towards a sustainable future**

A sustainable world is not a distant dream, but a tangible goal that VITO actively pursues every day. With 1,300 employees representing more than 65 nationalities, VITO, as one of Europe's leading research centres, turns scientific insights into groundbreaking technological innovations, AI solutions and policy advice. We do so with a single objective: to help the world thrive for at least 1,000 more years.

As a science-to-technology partner, we support companies, governments and society in their sustainability transition. With our multidisciplinary approach and unique lab, scale-up, and testing infrastructure, we create practical technological innovations. We accelerate progress towards a regenerative economy that reinforces planetary boundaries (prioritising electrification and circularity), smart climate solutions for resilient and secure ecosystems, and a healthy living environment harmonising humans, industry, agriculture and nature.

#### **Research as a driver of progress**

Research is our core activity. Most VITO employees are researchers working within a dynamic cycle of applied research. Excellence, internationalisation and valorisation are central to this cycle. This research cycle directly shapes our recruitment needs, job profiles and selection criteria. New hires play a strategic role in this context. They act as a lever for future developments. That is why we invest fully in the quality and impact of our talent acquisition process.

#### **Talent as a key to impact**

Each year, we look for new colleagues to fill a wide range of roles: from research profiles to experts in ICT, support and management. Every new employee is seen as a valuable contributor to strengthening our impact and ambitions. That is why we consciously invest in an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment process.

#### **HR Excellence in Research: a quality label that counts**

In 2016, VITO received the European quality label 'HR Excellence in Research'. This confirms that our operations are aligned with the 40 principles of the 'European Charter & Code for Researchers'. In 2022, this quality label was successfully renewed. It reflects our commitment to quality and aligns seamlessly with our values and recruitment policy.

#### **Our recruitment policy**

##### **Open, transparent and inclusive**

At VITO, we apply a clear, inclusive and uniform recruitment process for all our vacancies, from research positions to support and management roles. PhD positions are the exception, following a separate procedure, in close collaboration with universities and in accordance with the doctoral regulations.



To attract the right talent, we publish our vacancies across a wide range of channels (LinkedIn, Euraxess, VDAB, Jobat, Indeed and specialised recruitment and selection partners). This ensures visibility both nationally and internationally.

Applying is quick and straightforward via our digital HR and recruitment platform. Candidates can submit, track and manage their application in just a few clicks. They will automatically receive a confirmation for each application and we aim to provide feedback as soon as possible. For any questions, candidates can always contact HR support or the assigned recruiter.

As we welcome international talent, our vacancies are published in English by default. Only when fluent knowledge of Dutch is required, we publish the vacancy in Dutch only. Each vacancy is clear and informative, offering a concrete description of the role and the desired profile, including the required technical skills, behavioural competencies and personal characteristics. This way, every candidate knows immediately whether the job matches his or her profile.

### **Efficient and people-oriented**

The first interview takes place online via Teams or another digital tool. This way, we avoid unnecessary travel and start the selection process in a cost-effective way. If the interview is positive for both parties, we will schedule a second interview on-site, if feasible. We believe it is important for candidates to experience the working environment and meet future colleagues before starting. Of course, we take the practical feasibility into account when planning the interview on-site, especially for international candidates.

During each phase of the selection process, candidates receive targeted feedback on their CV, the previous interview and completed tests, regardless of whether they proceed to the next stage.

All applicant data is processed in accordance with GDPR legislation. Candidates can update or delete their data at any time.

We aim to offer all candidates a smooth, transparent and respectful experience from the first contact to a potential hire.

## **What matters: talent and motivation**

### **Merit takes centre stage**

At VITO, we look beyond academic knowledge or research experience. What candidates can do, who they are and what drives them truly makes the difference. Merit is therefore a fundamental principle in our selection procedure.

The process starts with an introductory interview focusing on the candidate's technical knowledge and background. If this initial conversation is positive, several online tests follow: a reasoning test and questionnaires related to personality and motivation. For certain roles (such as leadership positions), these tests are replaced by a more extensive assessment conducted by one of our external partners. This is always clearly communicated to the candidate in advance.

This provides us with a broad and nuanced understanding of the candidate's competencies, talents, motivations and personality. Based on this, we can assess whether there is a strong match in terms of both expertise and cultural fit, including the ability to collaborate effectively. The results are then thoroughly discussed during the second interview.



## **Fair and objective**

Every candidate deserves a fair and equal opportunity. That is why everyone involved in the recruitment process, from HR employees to hiring managers and experts, is trained to select candidates in an objective and professional manner.

We have developed our own e-learning module focused on fair, qualitative selection with added value for both the candidate and VITO. Through this training, employees learn how to question experiences and competencies in a structured and unbiased way, ensuring that every candidate is evaluated equally and transparently. Because research shows that we are subconsciously more inclined to assess people who are similar to us more positively, we pay extra attention to diversity and inclusion in the e-learning. We provide concrete tools to help identify and manage unconscious bias throughout the selection process.

In addition, we use an internal recruitment tool that allows us to evaluate candidates both individually and as a team. Thanks to this combined approach, we bring together different perspectives and make decisions based on a complete and balanced picture.

## **Support from day one to long-term growth**

### **VITO Onboarding App**

VITO ensures a warm and well-prepared start for every new employee. As soon as an offer is made, the new employee gains access to a personal profile in the VITO Onboarding App. Through this platform, new employees receive practical and relevant information step by step, even before their first working day, to support their social and functional integration.

### **Feedback as a foundation**

The wellbeing of new employees is a top priority at VITO. Through the Onboarding App, we collect targeted feedback on both the recruitment process and the first 100 days within the organisation. This provides VITO with valuable insights into the initial experiences of new employees and enables us to respond promptly to any needs or concerns.

### **Guidance and development**

Every new employee is assigned a mentor at the start and follows a structured introduction programme that provides support and guidance during the first weeks.

VITO also actively invests in professional growth over the long term. Through a broad and accessible range of Learning & Development initiatives and an annual cycle of Development and Performance Management, employees are encouraged to further develop their talents and to build their careers in a targeted manner.

## **A future-oriented recruitment policy**

VITO believes in the power of people. By continuously investing in an open, transparent and merit-based recruitment policy, we are building a working environment where talent can grow, collaborate and contribute to the solutions of tomorrow. Through this approach, we aim to make a lasting difference for our employees and society.