

# Best Practices for Conducting Faculty Searches, Harvard University, 2018

## 1. Starting a Productive Search

- Write **broad and welcoming** job ads. Avoid too-specific ads. Signal support of **work-life balance**.
- Create a **Search Plan** that develops a realistic **timeline** and list of **outreach activities**.
- Form a diverse search committee and choose **decision-making method**. Maintain **confidentiality**. Deliberate in person and keep records. During meetings, **stay off devices and hear all views**.
- **Address imbalances of power**: draw quieter colleagues into the discussion; check privately with untenured members who may be intimidated to voice alternate views to tenured members.
- **For chairs**: conduct productive meetings that follow agendas and occur long before application deadlines. Give members to-do lists, express your appreciation, and be available to help.

## 2. Recruiting a Broad & Deep Group of Candidates

- **Delegate the responsibility** for developing a broad candidate pool to **all** committee members.
- **Analyze** national pool data. **Find diverse peer faculty rosters** to aspire to and to scout from.
- **Review oversights from past searches** in order to avoid repeating them.
- **Proactively**, personally contact potential candidates and **invite them** to apply. Identify potential talent from personal networks, journals, conferences, directories, associations, and so on.
- Integrate resources for people with disabilities. Work with veterans organizations. Follow Title IX protocols if informed of possible sexual or gender-based harassment.

## 3. Evaluating Candidates Fairly

- Take Harvard's [Implicit Association Test](#) to strengthen self-awareness.
- **Agree on clear, explicit evaluation criteria**. Evaluation criteria and standards should be able to be provided to other faculty, the Dean's, and the Provost's offices as clear, persuasive evidence that the review was fair and thoughtful (a version of the *New York Times* rule).
- **Avoid** evaluating applicants on "**cultural fit**." Women and underrepresented minorities are **stereotyped and more harshly judged**. Choice of strong applicants should **go beyond personal preferences**. Any use of internet information should be judicious and job-related.
- **Monitor** the composition of long and short lists. During the long list stage, **invite** desired candidates who have not yet applied to apply. **Meet with the Dean's office** to review the lists. Ensure dossiers continue to be evaluated thoroughly and completely. Beware of tokenism.

## 4. Implementing Informative Campus Visits

- Design interview **protocols**. Ask the **same questions in the same order**. Keep interview discussions **professional**, not social. Describe **mentorship** structure and available **resources**.
- **Plan visits carefully**: provide common information. Standardize schedules. Accommodate candidates' needs. Candidates should meet diverse faculty and wider campus members.
- **Candidates are evaluating you and your department as much as you are evaluating them**.
- Have a productive discussion to select a preferred candidate and an alternate. Develop an **initial mentoring plan** for the new faculty member. Finally, **discuss** how the search went and discuss reasons behind declined offers.