

# Framing Note "Blockbuster Program"

## Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on Society (TIRIS)

The Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on Society (TIRIS) is a 10-year strategic program by the University of Toulouse, aiming to become a world-class, high-intensity research university (ARWU top-100). It seeks to strengthen and expand the site's disciplinary excellence through a proactive strategy supporting interdisciplinary and inter-science initiatives, with the goal of shaping, supporting, and promoting a clear academic identity for the University of Toulouse.

TIRIS focuses on three main pillars corresponding to key societal challenges where the academic community already demonstrates strong and recognized expertise, and which align with local public and private sector priorities:

1. Understanding and promoting health and well-being
2. Understanding global change and its impact on societies
3. Accelerating sustainable transitions: mobility, energy, resources, and industrial transformations

## *Objectives and Ambition of the Program*

The Blockbuster Program aims to attract researchers or faculty members of exceptionally high academic excellence to the Toulouse site. Their research and/or teaching program should demonstrate the alignment with one of the three TIRIS pillars. The project's integration within an interscience strategy is an added value.

Selected candidates are expected to secure long-term positions within one of the member institutions or National Research Organizations (NROs) partnered with the University of Toulouse. The program includes 6 recruitment opportunities over the 10-year span and is intended to help institutions and NROs strengthen their research and teaching capacities at the highest level.

The ambition is to provide already renowned academic communities with the opportunity to further enhance their expertise and consolidate their position among the world's best in their fields. The program supports the University of Toulouse's joint excellence strategy, enhancing its international visibility and attractiveness.

Recruited individuals will actively contribute to the site's transformation dynamics, sharing their experience and vision of high-level international academic strategies.

## *Application Preparation*

Each recruited person may benefit from a package of up to €730,000. Eligible expenses include funding for juniors (Master, PhD, postdoc), equipment and/or operational costs, all of which must be committed by December 31, 2032. Exceptionally, a portion of the budget can be allocated to salary for the recruited individual.

Priority will be given to candidates already significantly involved in a recruitment process with one of the TIRIS partner institutions, assuming equal application quality.

Each proposed recruitment must be supported by at least one TIRIS partner institution or NRO. The candidate application and associated budget must be developed in coordination with the sponsoring partner(s), involving the appropriate levels for both research and, where relevant, teaching.

Application documents (in English) must include at least:

The pre-file for the first phase consists of the following documents:

1. A short CV
2. A motivation letter signed by the candidate
3. A cover letter from the head of the host research unit, explaining the added value of the recruitment for the Toulouse academic community
4. A letter of support from the relevant research authority of the sponsoring institution(s) or NRO(s)

The file for the second phase consists of the pre-file and the following documents:

5. A detailed CV including positions held, awards and honors, full list of scientific publications, and research contracts obtained or under review, 10 major productions and the criteria that led to choosing these works, 5 key highlights of the candidate's career (in research, training, innovation or civil society partnerships)
6. A detailed work plan outlining collaborations with University of Toulouse research teams, alignment with TIRIS pillars, expected medium- and long-term outcomes in research (and teaching, if applicable), the start date, and project milestones over five years
7. A financial schedule for TIRIS fund usage
8. A statement on steps taken by the sponsoring institution(s) or NRO(s) toward securing the long-term recruitment of the candidate

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis. Ongoing application updates may be shared at TIRIS Executive Committee meetings.

## *Eligibility*

- Open to high-level international candidates with at least 10 years of experience
- Candidate's research must fall within at least one of the TIRIS pillars
- The host research unit (and teaching department if relevant) must be affiliated with a TIRIS partner institution or NRO

## *Selection Criteria*

- Scientific excellence and international impact of the candidate's work
- Integration into the Toulouse site and expected added value of the academic project for the local community
- Demonstrated commitment to integration into the University of Toulouse and progress toward a permanent position. Advancement toward securing a long-term role is a key selection factor
- Quality of the candidate's host unit

## *Evaluation Procedure*

Evaluation will occur in two stages:

1. Phase 1 evaluation by a local committee
2. Phase 2 evaluation by an external committee appointed by the TIRIS Executive Committee

Final decision by the Executive committee of the TIRIS project

For additional information, contact the Scientific Coordinator of TIRIS ([bertrand.jouve@univ-toulouse.fr](mailto:bertrand.jouve@univ-toulouse.fr)) with a copy to the TIRIS Program Manager ([aurelie.crette@univ-toulouse.fr](mailto:aurelie.crette@univ-toulouse.fr)).