**NatSci Faculty and Academic Staff Search Procedures Checklist**

The college has a structured process to request approval for **faculty and academic** **positions, including postdocs,** and to guide the units and search committees through the institutional and college approval steps.

**\*\*** *Student and graduate student, temporary and on-call employees are exempt from this process*

\*\* *Postdoc positions: complete* ***step 1b*** *for approval and posting. Postdoc supervisors (and committee members, if any) conduct the review of applicants after completing any MSU-required training and following institutional guidelines for merit-based hiring*

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| **Title** | **Individual** |
| Unit Administrator | Chair or director for department/program searches |
| Unit HR Coordinator | Support staff handling hiring in department/program |
| NatSci HR Administrator | Shari Townsley (townsley@msu.edu) |
| NatSci HR Director | Teresa Vicary (vicaryte@msu.edu) |

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| **Position type** | **Hiring Guide** |
| Tenure system faculty | Gemma Reguera, ([reguera@msu.edu](mailto:reguera@msu.edu)) |
| Fixed term faculty, instructors, academic specialists | Cori Fata-Hartley ([fatahart@msu.edu](mailto:fatahart@msu.edu)) |
| Postdoc/research associates | None needed |

| Steps | Action |
| --- | --- |
| 1  1a  1b  1c  1d | **Approval of position and posting**  **Preliminary approval by the college**   * Unit administrator confirms that the Dean will support the position before initiating the formal request. * The unit administrator identifies committee chair and submits the **NEW!** [NatSci Faculty and Academic Staff Position Approval Form](https://natsci.msu.edu/_assets/files/faculty-staff/2-FAS%20Position%20Preliminary%20Approval%20Request%20Form-08202025.docx) to the NatSci HR Director for review and preliminary approval of the posting by the hiring guide and the dean.   \*\**Unit must list search committee members at this stage* (variety of perspectives and expertise). *May include support staff and community members as consultants, if needed.*  *\*\*For academic pool posting information please contact* [*SolutionsCenter@hr.msu.edu*](mailto:SolutionsCenter@hr.msu.edu)   * The unit administrator receives the fully executed form and enters posting request in EBS.   **EBS request and approval flow**   * The unit HR Coordinator enters request in EBS.   **\*\****For postdoc positions enter account number and business justification (e.g., hiring personnel for funded grant or to grow research program with start-up funds).*   * The request will follow the university approval process gone into effect on **July 1, 2025**: College (Dean/designee)> Provost (FASA/hiring committee)>MSU HR (approval to post) * Unit HR Coordinator receives notification of denial or approval of posting. If approved, they can proceed with next steps.   **Approved positions**  If the position is approved, the unit administrator:   * Delivers the charge (position requirements, job expectations, etc.) * Assigns roles (committee chair, advocate, or member)   **Notification to hiring guide**  The committee chair notifies hiring guide that the position has been approved for posting on [*date*] and schedules training. |
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| 2  2a  2b | **Search Committee Training**  *University Training*:  Search committee members are required to take the online [Academic Search Committee Education](https://fasaffairs.msu.edu/resources/trainings/search-committee-training) training. Re-certification must occur biennially.  *NatSci Training:*  The search committee chair submits the committee roster to the hiring guide and requests an orientation session about the NatSci search and approval process. |
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| 3 | **Document Sharing and Communication with Hiring Guide**  The hiring guide creates a Teams channel for document sharing/review/approvals and text communications**\*\*** with the search committee.  **\*\****Tag hiring guide in all Teams text communications for expedient response.* |
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| 4  4a  4b  4c | **Approval to Review Applications**  The review of applicants cannot start without approval by the hiring guide.  The search committee evaluates the efficiency of the recruitment strategy based on the number and quality (qualifications, alignment with job responsibilities) of the applications.  ***\*\*****Screening should be based on triage criteria and breadth of talent pool compared to the overall population of candidates with the appropriate expertise.*  The committee advocate submits to the hiring guide an initial assessment of the quantity and quality of the applicant pool.  The hiring guide must approve the start of the review of applicants by the committee.  \*\**If the pool is unsatisfactory, the hiring guide may recommend extending the application period or enacting strategies to increase the applicant pool.* |
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| 5  5a  5b | **Review of Applicants**  The goal is to ensure that the review is ***unbiased*** and based on ***pre-established criteria/rubrics.***  The search committee reviews applicants using the evaluation criteria and process approved by the hiring guide to determine which candidates will advance in the search.  The committee advocate monitors the search process to ensure that candidates are evaluated objectively using pre-established criteria.  **\*\****The advocate should contact the hiring guide if concerns arise.* |
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| 6  6a  6b  6c | **Approval of Final Interview List**  The hiring guide and MSU’s Office of Inclusive Excellence and Impact (IEI) must approve the final interview list ***before contacting candidates***.  **Hiring guide appoval**  The committee advocate sends to the hiring guide:   * the interview list (3 max. for campus interviews and alternates), * a summary of the review process, and * an assessment of the merit of finalists in reference to the initial pool.   **College signature**  The search committee chair and the unit HR coordinator send the proposed interview list and alternates to the hiring guide for review and approval using the [Academic Final Interview List Approval Form](https://hr.msu.edu/ua/hiring/documents/Academic_Interview_List_Approval_Form.pdf).   * The hiring guide signs the form and sends it to the NatSci HR coordinator to request Dean’s approval. * The unit HR coordinator uploads the form to PageUp, changes the **application status** to “interview list sent to compliance panel,” and changes the job status to “compliance review.”1   **IEI approval**  IEI reviews the quality of the search process prior to approving the final interview list.   * Candidates may not be contacted about interviews until IEI approves the interview list in the Applicant Tracking System/PageUp. * If corrections are needed, the unit HR coordinator completes the “Amendments” section of the Academic Final Interview List Approval Form and repeats the approval steps above. This request must be approved by IEI before these additional candidates are invited to interview. |
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| 7 | **Final Interviews**  Once IEI approval is received (through PageUp), the committee chair invites candidates for a **final interview**.   * The final interview may be either on-campus or virtual, as long as the same modality is used for all final interview candidates. * Campus interviews are limited to 3 finalists. * The committee chair sends **interview format/questions to the hiring guide for approval**, if this step was not completed earlier. * The search committee interviews and evaluates candidates using the approved criteria, questions, and process.   **\*\****All assessments of applicants must be documented for each stage of screening and such documents retained by the unit for 3 or more years.* |
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| 8 | **Final Recommendations**  The search committee makes **hiring recommendations** to the unit administrator (chair/director). The unit administrator then makes hiring recommendations to the dean. |
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| 9 | **Offer Letters**   * Tenure System hires: Unit sends completed [Required Components of Offer Letters Form](https://natsci.msu.edu/sites/_natsci/assets/File/Faculty%20%26%20Staff/Required%20Components%20of%20NatSci%20Offer%20Letters.docx) to the dean for review. Hiring with tenure requires enhanced review (\*\*). * Fixed-Term Faculty and Specialist hires: The unit sends the offer letter to the candidate. |
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| 10  10a  10b  10c | **Final Steps**  Once the offer is accepted:  The unit HR coordinator completes the “Recommend Applicant for Hire” procedure in PageUp ([Applicant Tracking System’s Training Staffing Coordinator Guide](https://www.hr.msu.edu/ua/pageuphelp/documents/staffing-coordinator-guide-fas.pdf)).  The search committee chair sends the [Search Committee Report](https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/affirmative-action/sample_report.html)that accompanies the appointment form in EBS to the hiring guide. The template can be customized as needed.  The unit administrator informs the search committee and hiring guide of the final hiring outcome. |

**Hiring with Tenure, with Continuing Status, or in Ranked Fixed-Term Positions**

\*\**With Tenure*

Hiring recommendations which involve the award of tenure must be reviewed successively by 1) the NatSci RPT committee and the dean (see [Hiring with Tenure tipsheet](https://natsci.msu.edu/_assets/files/faculty-staff/Hiring%20with%20Tenure%20tipsheet.pdf)), 2) the provost, and 3) the president, who makes the final recommendation to 4) the Board of Trustees (BOT) for action. Therefore, unit administrators send to [NatSci/RPT@msu.edu](mailto:NatSci/RPT@msu.edu) a dossier that includes:

* an **independent review by the unit administrator** (RPT style),
* a minimum of 4 **external letters of reference** following the same [principles and procedures](https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/external_ref-letters.html) used for internal faculty applicants, and
* other documents required for the college and provost’s review (see [Hiring with Tenure tipsheet](https://natsci.msu.edu/_assets/files/faculty-staff/Hiring%20with%20Tenure%20tipsheet.pdf)).

*With* *Continuing Status*

It is possible to count previous service within or outside of the University toward the Academic Specialist Appointment System probationary periods. The major criteria for awarding credit for previous service are the level of performance and similarity of duties in the previous and new positions. Requests for recognition of prior employment service as applicable to Academic Specialist Appointment System service requires a written recommendation by the unit administrator, written concurrence of the dean/separately reporting director, and the written approval of the provost.

*Ranked Fixed-term*

Similar to Tenure System positions, it is possible to hire a fixed-term faculty member at the level of associate or full professor. The process is aligned with the typical promotion processes. Therefore, the dossier must include:

* an **independent review by the unit administrator** and
* a minimum of 4 **letters of reference,** with at least two being from outside MSU, and following the same [principles and procedures](https://hr.msu.edu/policies-procedures/faculty-academic-staff/faculty-handbook/external_ref-letters.html) used for internal, fixed-term faculty applicants.