

Program Framework Note “Blockbuster Program”

Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on Society

Context

The Toulouse Initiative for Research's Impact on Society (TIRIS) is a ten-year strategic program of the University of Toulouse aiming to become a world-class Research-Intensive University (RIU, ARWU Top-100). It seeks to strengthen and expand the disciplinary excellence of the Toulouse academic site through a proactive strategy supporting interdisciplinary and cross-science initiatives, with the objective of shaping, supporting, and promoting a clear academic identity for the University of Toulouse.

The TIRIS initiative is structured around three pillars corresponding to key societal challenges for which our community has recognized strength and credibility, and which align with the priorities of local public and private sectors:

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

Objectives and Ambition of the Program

The **Blockbuster Program** aims to attract to the Toulouse site outstanding researchers or teacher-researchers demonstrating an exceptionally high level of academic excellence, with a research and/or training program showing a significant interdisciplinary dimension and fitting within one of the three pillars mentioned above.

The recruited individuals are expected to achieve long-term integration within one of the member institutions or National Research Organizations (ONR) partnering with the University of Toulouse.

The program provides **six recruitment opportunities** over the ten years of the TIRIS project. It is designed to support institutions and ONRs of the Toulouse site in strengthening their top-level research and teaching capacities.

The ambition is to enable already well-recognized academic communities to further enhance their expertise and secure their position among the world's best in their respective fields. The program contributes to developing the University of Toulouse's shared strategy around its academic strengths, enhancing its **international visibility and attractiveness**.

The recruited individual will actively participate in the ongoing transformation of the Toulouse academic site, contributing their experience and vision of high-level international academic dynamics.

Application Preparation

The program provides a **funding package of up to €500,000 per recruited person**.

Eligible expenses include funding for junior researchers (Master's, PhD, postdoc), equipment, operational costs, or teaching hours, all to be committed before the end of the program (no later than December 31, 2032). Exceptionally, part of the budget may be used to cover salary months or salary complements for the recruited person. However, **priority will be given to applications already significantly advanced in a recruitment process by one of the TIRIS partner institutions**.

Each proposed recruitment must be **supported by at least one TIRIS partner** (institution or ONR). The application and budget allocation must therefore be jointly developed with the supporting partners, both at the research and, when relevant, teaching levels.

Required Documents

Applications must be written in **French or English** and must include at least:

- A **presentation letter** of the project from the head of the host research structure, demonstrating the added value of the recruitment for the concerned Toulouse academic community.
- A **detailed work program** describing planned collaborations with research teams from the University of Toulouse, integration within TIRIS pillars, expected short- and long-term research (and, where relevant, training) outcomes, the expected project start date, and key milestones over five years.
- A **financial timeline** detailing the use of TIRIS funds.
- A **motivation letter** signed by the candidate.
- A **document summarizing key elements of the candidate's CV**:
 - Ten major academic outputs and the criteria guiding their selection;
 - Five key achievements in the candidate's career (in research, training, innovation, or science & society).
- A **detailed CV** including at least:
 - Positions held throughout the career,
 - List of awards and distinctions,
 - Complete list of scientific outputs,
 - List of research grants obtained or under review.
- A **reasoned opinion** from the relevant research body (of the supporting institution(s) or ONR).
- A **statement of progress** regarding the host institution's or ONR's work to ensure the candidate's long-term integration.

There is **no fixed call schedule** — applications are reviewed **on a rolling basis**. Progress updates on ongoing applications within institutions or ONRs may be discussed during TIRIS Executive Committee meetings.

Eligibility

- The program targets **international candidates** with a **minimum of 10 years of post-PhD experience**.
- The candidate's research topics must fit within **at least one of the TIRIS pillars**.
- The host research unit and, where relevant, teaching department must belong to **at least one of the TIRIS partner institutions or ONRs**.

Selection Criteria

- **Scientific excellence** of the candidate and **international impact** of their research.
- **Integration potential** within the Toulouse site and **expected added value** of the academic project for the local community.
- Evidence of the **candidate's willingness to integrate** within the University of Toulouse and progress made toward **long-term recruitment**; the advancement of discussions regarding the candidate's tenure or long-term position will be a **key factor** in the jury's decision.
- **Quality of the host research unit**.

Evaluation Procedure


Evaluation of each application will occur in **two stages**:

1. **First evaluation** by an **ad hoc Committee** composed of external experts appointed by the TIRIS Executive Committee.

2. **Second evaluation** within the supporting institution(s) or ONR, following their own procedures. This may occur either through a standard recruitment procedure or through a **specific process established for such positions.**

Further Information

For any additional information, please contact:

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