



NAT  
F / \

National Academy of  
Theatre and Film Arts  
Kr. Sarafov

SINCE 1942 / SOFIA, BULGARIA

# REGULATION

## for the Implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the Recruitment of Researchers

### OTM-R Policy of NATFA

Approved by the Academic Council

Protocol No. 210

27 January 2026

Sofia, Bulgaria

This Regulation constitutes the institutional policy of the Krastyo Sarafov National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA) for the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers and the principles of Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R). It complements the applicable national legislation and the internal regulations of the Academy governing the recruitment, career development and working conditions of researchers.

## **PREAMBLE**

The Krastyo Sarafov National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA) is committed to fostering an open, inclusive and internationally competitive research environment founded on academic freedom, research integrity and excellence in both scientific and artistic research. Through this Regulation, the Academy implements the principles of the European Charter for Researchers and establishes its institutional framework for Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment (OTM-R), ethical conduct, professional development and responsible research assessment. The Regulation complements the applicable national legislation and the Academy's internal regulations and forms an integral part of NATFA's Human Resources Strategy for Researchers (HRS4R).

## **CHAPTER I**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### ***Article 1***

This Regulation establishes the institutional principles governing the implementation of the European Charter for Researchers, the conduct of researchers and artists within the academic community, and the procedures for the recruitment of researchers and artists at the Krastyo Sarafov National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA), hereinafter referred to as "the Academy."

#### **Scope**

#### ***Article 2***

1. This Regulation applies to all researchers and artists who are members of the Academy's academic community.
2. It shall be applied in conjunction with the Academy's other regulations, rules and internal acts and is not intended to replace or supersede them.

#### **Research Ethics and Integrity**

#### ***Article 3***

1. Researchers and artists shall observe the highest standards of ethical conduct and perform their professional activities with honesty, integrity, reliability, objectivity, impartiality, independence, openness, due care, fairness and responsibility towards future generations of researchers and artists.
2. Researchers and artists shall comply with recognised ethical practices and the fundamental ethical principles applicable to their discipline(s), as well as with the ethical standards established in relevant national, sectoral and institutional codes of ethics.
3. Researchers and artists shall be responsible for safeguarding the integrity of their research and artistic activities.

4. Researchers and artists shall avoid all forms of plagiarism. In cases where research or artistic work is carried out in collaboration with a supervisor, co-supervisors or other researchers and artists, they shall respect the rules governing intellectual property rights and joint ownership. These principles shall apply throughout all stages of the research and artistic process, including project design, preparation of funding applications, implementation, development and dissemination of results. The verification and reproduction of previously published findings shall not be regarded as plagiarism, provided that the original source of the data is properly acknowledged.
5. Researchers and artists shall pursue continuous professional development throughout their careers by regularly updating and expanding their knowledge, skills and competences.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **GENERAL PRINCIPLES AND REQUIREMENTS APPLICABLE TO RESEARCHERS**

#### **Academic Freedom and Research Independence**

##### ***Article 4***

1. Researchers shall pursue their research and artistic research activities for the benefit of society and the advancement of knowledge. They shall enjoy freedom of thought, academic freedom and freedom of expression, including the freedom to formulate research questions, determine appropriate methodologies, choose and develop theories, challenge established views, present new ideas, and participate in professional and representative academic bodies.
2. Researchers shall have the right to disseminate and publish the results of their research and artistic research, including through teaching and learning activities.
3. Researchers shall recognise that the exercise of academic freedom may be subject to limitations arising from the specific circumstances of research and artistic research activities, including supervision, institutional management, legal obligations, intellectual property rights, budgetary constraints or the availability of research infrastructure.

#### **Open Science and Citizen Science**

##### ***Article 5***

1. Researchers shall strive to engage in all aspects of Open Science and to disseminate the results of their research and artistic research openly, including through open data, data that are Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable (FAIR), open-access publications, open-source software, models and algorithms.
2. Researchers shall take appropriate measures to ensure the reproducibility of research results and shall endeavour to apply Open Science methodologies and participate in open peer review whenever appropriate.

## ***Article 6***

Researchers shall promote Citizen Science, where appropriate, by involving citizens in the conception, design and implementation of research and artistic research projects to the greatest extent possible.

## **Professional Responsibility**

### ***Article 7***

1. Researchers shall be familiar with the strategic objectives of their research environment and with the available funding mechanisms. They shall obtain all necessary approvals before commencing research or artistic research activities or accessing the resources made available to them.
2. Researchers shall make every reasonable effort to ensure that their research and artistic research are relevant to society and do not unnecessarily duplicate work previously carried out elsewhere.
3. Where a research or artistic research project is delayed, substantially revised or completed, clear communication shall be maintained between the researchers, supervisors and the Academy. Where such a project must be terminated or temporarily suspended, the relevant parties shall be informed without undue delay.
4. Researchers shall be personally accountable to the Academy, funding organisations and other relevant public or private bodies and, from an ethical perspective, to society as a whole.
5. Researchers whose work is supported through public funding shall ensure the responsible, transparent and efficient use of public resources and shall comply with the principles of sound financial management.
6. Researchers engaged in research or artistic research projects shall comply with the internal regulations, policies and decisions of the organisational units of the Academy responsible for the implementation of those activities.
7. Researchers shall perform their professional duties impartially and shall not be influenced by personal preferences, interests, bias or prejudice in the conduct of their research and artistic research.
8. When publishing research and artistic research results, including conclusions and recommendations, researchers shall clearly distinguish between evidence-based scientific assessment and their personal opinions or interests.
9. When participating in partnerships with third parties, researchers shall act solely on the basis of scientific and academic considerations while ensuring the security and appropriate protection of research data.

## **Mobility and the Free Movement of Researchers**

### ***Article 8***

The Academy shall encourage the mobility and free movement of researchers, including geographical, virtual, intersectoral, interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary mobility, as an important means of enhancing knowledge, fostering collaboration and supporting professional development at every stage of a researcher's career.

## **Sustainability of Research and Artistic Research**

### ***Article 9***

1. Researchers shall be encouraged to conduct research and artistic research in a sustainable manner, consistent with the objectives of the European Green Deal, the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
2. Researchers shall take the initiative to reduce the environmental impact of their activities, including their carbon footprint, thereby setting a positive example for the wider research and artistic research community.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RULES ON THE RECRUITMENT OF RESEARCHERS**

### ***Article 10***

Recruitment and selection procedures for academic and research staff shall be open, transparent and merit-based. They shall neither penalise career interruptions nor intersectoral mobility and shall promote excellence, gender equality and diversity, while taking into account the specific requirements of the advertised position.

### ***Article 11***

1. The Academy shall publish vacancy announcements in Bulgarian in the State Gazette; in Bulgarian and English on the Academy's official website; and in English on the EURAXESS Jobs Portal, the European research careers platform.
2. Vacancy announcements shall include a comprehensive description of the required knowledge, competences and qualifications, together with information on the working conditions, employment rights, career development opportunities and the relevant application deadlines.
3. The period between the publication of the vacancy announcement (or the call for applications) and the application deadline shall be realistic and sufficient to enable potential candidates to prepare and submit their applications.
4. Selection Committees shall include experts with complementary expertise and competences and shall be constituted in accordance with the principle of gender balance.

5. Vacancy announcements published through the EURAXESS Jobs Portal shall include information on the recruitment procedure, the selection criteria and the career development opportunities associated with the advertised position.

#### ***Article 12***

1. The qualification requirements established for each position shall correspond to the actual needs of the position and shall not create unnecessary barriers to access.
2. The assessment of qualifications shall focus on the candidate's achievements, rather than on their personal circumstances or the reputation of the institution where the qualifications were obtained.
3. Since professional qualifications may have been acquired at an early stage of a long academic career, lifelong professional development shall also be recognised and valued.

#### ***Article 13***

1. Prior to the commencement of the selection procedure, candidates shall be informed of the recruitment process; the selection criteria; the number of available positions; and the career development opportunities associated with the position.
2. During the selection process, the entire range of candidates' experience shall be taken into consideration. While emphasis shall be placed on their overall potential as researchers, due consideration shall also be given to their creativity, independence and capacity for future development.

#### ***Article 14***

1. Selection Committees shall bring together the range of expertise, competences and experience necessary to evaluate candidates appropriately. They shall maintain an appropriate gender balance and, wherever feasible and appropriate, include representatives from different sectors (public and private), different disciplines and different countries.
2. Wherever possible, Selection Committees shall apply a variety of assessment methods, including external expert evaluation and both in-person and online interviews.
3. Members of Selection Committees shall receive appropriate training, particularly with regard to minimising gender-related and other forms of unconscious bias.
4. Members of Selection Committees shall not discriminate against candidates on the grounds of gender, age, ethnic, national or social origin, religion or belief, sexual orientation, language, disability, political opinion or social or economic circumstances.
5. Upon completion of the selection process, all candidates shall be informed of the strengths and weaknesses of their applications.

#### ***Article 15***

The requirements established for applicants shall correspond to the needs of the advertised position. The assessment of qualifications shall focus on candidates' achievements while taking into account the overall pattern of lifelong professional development.

#### ***Article 16***

1. The assessment carried out by the Selection Committee shall be based on both qualitative and quantitative criteria, with particular emphasis on the significance and impact of the candidate's professional achievements.
2. The evaluation shall be balanced across a broad range of assessment criteria, including, where relevant:
  - research metrics and academic achievements;
  - artistic research outputs;
  - innovative products and inventions;
  - teaching experience;
  - supervision and mentoring;
  - research capability;
  - experience in research management;
  - project leadership;
  - innovation activities;
  - dissemination and communication of research and artistic research results to society.
3. Academic and professional qualifications shall be assessed on their merits, taking into account international experience and professional mobility.
4. Experience gained through employment or research in another country, including experience acquired in other sectors (such as industry), shall be recognised as an important contribution to the researcher's professional development.

#### ***Article 17***

The Academy shall encourage and support researchers in resuming and further developing their research and artistic research careers following career interruptions.

#### ***Article 18***

Upon successful completion of the recruitment procedure, researchers shall be appointed under an employment contract with the Academy.

Researchers may also be employed under fixed-term contracts within research or artistic research projects with clearly defined objectives, tasks and duration.

#### ***Article 19***

Any matters not regulated in this Chapter shall be governed by the Academy's internal regulations and the provisions of the Bulgarian Labour Code.

## CHAPTER IV

### RULES GOVERNING THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH AND ARTISTIC RESEARCH

#### Working Conditions and Research Environment

##### *Article 20*

1. Researchers shall benefit from fair and equitable funding conditions in accordance with the applicable national legislation, the Academy's internal regulations, including the Collective Labour Agreement, and the available institutional resources.
2. The funding and remuneration of researchers shall reflect their professional development, legal status, achievements, qualifications and responsibilities.
3. Within the limits of the available resources, the Academy shall strive to provide a stimulating environment for research, artistic research and research training by ensuring appropriate infrastructure, facilities, equipment and opportunities for knowledge exchange and collaboration with other researchers.
4. In accordance with the applicable national legislation and the Academy's internal regulations, the Academy shall endeavour to provide working conditions that take account of researchers' individual needs, including flexible working arrangements, part-time employment and creative leave where appropriate.
5. The Academy shall seek to maintain an appropriate balance between teaching, research and artistic research activities, ensuring that teaching responsibilities do not hinder the research development of academic staff, particularly those at the early stages of their careers.

#### Professional Development, Supervision and Mentoring

##### *Article 21*

1. The Academy shall create conditions that support the continuous professional development of researchers.
2. The Academy shall provide opportunities for the continuous development of researchers' knowledge, skills and competences through specialised training and lifelong learning activities.
3. Researchers at the early stages of their careers shall be provided with supervisors and/or mentors who support their personal, academic and professional development.
4. Supervisors and mentors shall possess the qualifications, experience, specialised knowledge and commitment necessary to guide research and artistic research activities effectively. They shall devote adequate time to supervision, monitor progress, provide constructive feedback and conduct the necessary evaluation procedures.

5. The Academy shall endeavour to provide appropriate professional development opportunities for staff engaged in teaching, supervision and researcher training as part of their own career development.

## **Research Assessment and Career Development**

### ***Article 22***

1. The Academy shall establish transparent and periodic procedures for the assessment of researchers and their professional performance.
2. Assessment procedures shall take into account the overall contribution of researchers, including, where appropriate:
  - research publications;
  - artistic research outputs;
  - participation in and leadership of research and artistic research projects;
  - teaching activities;
  - supervision and mentoring;
  - national and international collaboration;
  - administrative responsibilities;
  - mobility;
  - activities related to the dissemination and societal impact of research and artistic research results.

## **Intellectual Property**

### ***Article 23***

1. The Academy shall establish conditions that ensure the protection of intellectual property rights, including copyright, arising from research and artistic research activities.
2. The Academy's internal regulations shall clearly define the rights of researchers regarding the results of their research, artistic research and teaching activities.

## **Complaints and Appeals**

### ***Article 24***

In accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Bulgaria, the Academy's internal regulations and the Academy's Code of Ethics, appropriate procedures shall be established for the examination of complaints submitted by researchers.

## **Mobility**

### ***Article 25***

Members of the academic staff, researchers, doctoral candidates and students shall have the right to participate in mobility programmes administered by the Academy.

#### ***Article 26***

Mobility activities under the various programmes shall be organised in accordance with the eligibility requirements of the respective programme.

#### ***Article 27***

The Academy's administration shall regularly inform the academic community about current mobility and research funding opportunities and shall provide administrative support for the preparation and implementation of research projects and mobility activities within its field of competence.

#### ***Article 28***

Mobility activities, including the corresponding selection procedures, shall be organised in accordance with the eligibility criteria of the respective funding programme and the Regulation on International and Project Activities of the Krastyo Sarafov National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA).

## **CHAPTER V**

### **ETHICAL PRINCIPLES GOVERNING RESEARCH AND ARTISTIC RESEARCH**

#### ***Article 29***

Researchers shall treat their colleagues, including competitors, with respect and a spirit of cooperation. They shall acknowledge and value the contributions of previous researchers working in the same field of research or artistic research.

#### ***Article 30***

1. Every member of the Academy shall refrain from discrimination, harassment, offensive behaviour or any other conduct that undermines equal opportunities. All members of the academic community shall be treated equally, regardless of race, nationality, gender identity, religion or belief, health status, age, political opinion or any other protected characteristic.
2. Researchers shall not allow personal, nationalist, racist or political considerations to influence their research or artistic research activities.

#### ***Article 31***

1. In collaborative research and artistic research, researchers shall accurately acknowledge the contribution of each participant in accordance with their actual involvement.
2. Authorship shall be attributed only to individuals who have made a genuine intellectual or creative contribution to the conception, conduct or interpretation of the research or artistic research, or to the preparation of the resulting publication or artistic research output.

### ***Article 32***

Researchers shall interact with one another, with colleagues and with all members of the Academy in a manner that respects the dignity, reputation, rights and privacy of others and preserves the integrity of the academic community.

### ***Article 33***

Researchers shall comply with the applicable legislation, the Academy's internal regulations and all contractual obligations entered into by the Academy with third parties.

### ***Article 34***

When selecting research topics, researchers shall take into account the Academy's strategic research priorities and ensure that their work demonstrates high scientific, applied or artistic research value.

### ***Article 35***

Researchers shall strive to achieve reliable and trustworthy research results by using appropriate methodologies, sound evidence and well-founded scientific reasoning.

### ***Article 36***

When conducting empirical research, researchers shall respect the dignity, honour, privacy and well-being of all participants and shall avoid any action that may jeopardise their physical or psychological integrity.

### ***Article 37***

Researchers shall act honestly, responsibly and professionally in fulfilling contractual and legal obligations towards organisations or individuals commissioning research or artistic research activities.

### ***Article 38***

1. Researchers shall cooperate fully in audits, evaluations, inspections and reporting processes by providing all necessary information, documentation and reports relating to research and artistic research activities.
2. Researchers shall retain and archive all documentation relating to research projects, artistic research projects and externally funded activities in accordance with the Academy's internal regulations, records management procedures and the requirements of funding organisations.

### ***Article 39***

1. Researchers acting as reviewers or experts shall prepare reviews and expert opinions independently, impartially and conscientiously after thoroughly examining the relevant scientific or artistic research outputs and objectively identifying their strengths and weaknesses.
2. The evaluation of research publications, scholarly works and artistic research outputs shall be impartial, completed within a reasonable period and free from unjustified delays.

3. Researchers shall accept review assignments only within their area of professional competence and shall not misrepresent their research, artistic research or expert qualifications.
4. Peer review shall remain confidential. Researchers shall avoid any conflict of interest or circumstances that may compromise the impartiality of the review process.
5. Researchers acting as supervisors shall fulfil their responsibilities with integrity, avoiding any form of manipulation or authoritarian behaviour and promoting collegiality, mutual respect and academic freedom.

#### ***Article 40***

Differences of opinion between researchers shall be discussed exclusively on the basis of scientific and academic arguments.

#### ***Article 41***

Researchers shall demonstrate loyalty to the Krastyo Sarafov National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA) and shall conduct themselves in a manner that upholds and promotes the Academy's reputation.

## **CHAPTER VI IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES**

#### ***Article 42***

The principles and standards of conduct established by this Regulation shall form an integral part of the daily professional activities of researchers at the Academy.

#### ***Article 43***

Compliance with the ethical principles set out in this Regulation constitutes a fundamental guarantee of the legality, integrity and professionalism of researchers' conduct.

#### ***Article 44***

This Regulation shall be binding upon all researchers within the Academy's academic community. Failure to comply with its provisions shall constitute a breach of labour discipline in accordance with the Bulgarian Labour Code and may give rise to the legal consequences provided therein.

#### ***Article 45***

This Regulation shall be brought to the attention of all researchers and their supervisors for information and implementation. Familiarity with its contents shall be acknowledged by personal signature or by another documented procedure established by the Academy.

Comment: I slightly broadened this provision by adding "or by another documented procedure established by the Academy." This preserves the intent while allowing for electronic acknowledgement in the future, should NATFA introduce a digital HR system.

## **Article 46**

This Regulation is a living document and may be amended or supplemented whenever objective circumstances require its revision in order to ensure continued compliance with national legislation, the European Charter for Researchers and the strategic objectives of the Academy.

## **TRANSITIONAL AND FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **§ 1**

Vacancy announcements referred to in Article 11 may also be published in languages other than those specified in this Regulation, where this is appropriate for the advertised position.

### **§ 2**

The Academy adopts the following Research Career Framework, in accordance with the European Framework for Research Careers:

- First Stage Researcher (R1): Researchers up to the award of a doctoral degree (PhD).
- Recognised Researcher (R2): Postdoctoral researchers or researchers who are not yet fully independent in conducting their research.
- Established Researcher (R3): Researchers who have demonstrated the capacity to conduct research independently.
- Leading Researcher (R4): Researchers recognised as leaders in their respective fields of research.

### **§ 3**

Amendments and supplements to this Regulation shall be adopted in accordance with the procedure applicable to its adoption.

### **§ 4**

This Regulation was adopted by the Academic Council of the „Krastyo Sarafov“ National Academy for Theatre and Film Arts (NATFA) at its meeting held on 27 January 2026, Minutes No. 210.