

WISEST Faculty Search Toolkit
Recruitment Plan to Enrich the Applicant Pool with Women and URMs

A. Carry out a systematic search for names of possible applicants.

A systematic search for applicants is particularly important when seeking a diverse applicant pool. The following steps are suggested.

1. Find a ranked list of the departments from which the search will draw highly qualified candidates. Sources for rankings:
 - (a) “Research-Doctorate Programs in the United States. Continuity and Change” This is published by the National Academy of Sciences. An electronic version, including download-able tables may be found at:
<http://gradschool.about.com/gi/dynamic/offsite.htm?site=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nap.edu%2Freadingroom%2Fbooks%2Fresearchdoc%2F>
(This is soon to be replaced with the results of the 2006-2007 NRC ranking exercise.)
 - (b) There is also the potentially useful US News and World Report rankings of graduate programs, which may be found at:
http://www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/grad/rankings/phdsci/phdsciindex_brief.php
2. From the ranked list of departments, choose the institutions to include in your search. Find the list of current faculty in each of these departments by going to the departmental web sites.
 - (a) Identify faculty who are women and URMs. These serve as targets for e-mails/letters or phone calls soliciting their help in identifying women and URM postdocs or finishing Ph.D. students in the targeted search field. Since women faculty are more likely to be acquainted with women postdocs and graduate students in the department, they serve as good sources. Ditto for URM faculty. Both groups are likely to respond positively to solicitations to help identify women and URM candidates. Suggestions for wording e-mails/letters are given in *Writing Successful Recruiting E-mails*.
 - (b) Look in the research group web site of *each faculty member in the targeted search area*. The web sites of these research groups serve as sources for a systematic search for women and URMs: look at alumni, current postdocs, and Ph.D. students close to finishing (often web sites are not very current, graduate students listed may already have completed their degree). Include those found in the list of prospective applicants.
 - (c) If the search field is broad enough to include all the areas within a department, consult the departmental directory of postdocs and graduate students to find women and URMs.
3. At the same time, members of the search committee will develop an international list of research groups from which the search will draw highly qualified candidates. This is an important source because faculty candidates often choose the research area of their postdoctoral training according to their future career plans. Members of the search committee will identify their own colleagues from these groups whom they will contact for leads.

4. Specifically ask research advisor contacts for names of women and URMs who may be possible applicants. Include any of these names in the list of prospective applicants.
5. Consult web sites which post CVs of job applicants in the targeted search field. For example, the CACHE site at U Texas Austin posts not only a list of advertised faculty positions but also CVs of grad students/postdocs who are applying for faculty positions. For Chemical Engineers there is a poster session called “Meet the Faculty Candidates” in the annual national meeting of the AIChE. There may be similar such opportunities for other professional societies. It is usually possible to identify the female names.
6. URMs can be found through web sites posting minority graduate fellowships or awards, particularly those graduate fellowships announced by various URM societies.

Examples of URM societies are:

- HENAAC (Hispanic Engineer National Achievement Awards Corporation)
- SHPE (Society for Hispanic Professional Engineers)

Some foundations list URM fellowship winners:

- Ford Foundation Dissertation Fellowships
<http://www7.nationalacademies.org/FORDfellowships/forddiss.html>
- Packard Foundation Graduate Scholars
<http://ehrweb.aaas.org/packard/site/scholars/list.php?orderby=year>
- AT&T Labs Research Fellowship Program

Some universities post URM scholarship winners: GERS (Graduate Engineering Research Scholars) at UWisconsin, Goizueta Foundation Graduate Fellows at Georgia Tech.

7. At the end of this step you will have a list of names of prospective applicants who are women and URMs and their connection to a Ph.D. or post-doc institution or a faculty advisor. The connection is important because names are sometimes not unique.

B. Discover factual information about the prospective applicants.

Start with the list of names of prospective applicants who are women and URMs. For each one, Google the name (Google Images, if unsure about the gender.) and find out their contact info, publications and presentations. Copy and paste the information (including CV & photo, if found) into a Word document to create a profile of the individual. Remember that only a small amount of the individual’s CV may be revealed by such a search, but this partial profile may be sufficient to ascertain whether the individual may be a viable applicant. When in doubt, do not eliminate prospective applicants too soon.

C. Communicate with the prospective applicants directly and invite them to apply.

1. The key to contact letters is that each is personalized with some particular achievement of the individual which makes her/him a desirable faculty applicant. See *Writing Successful Recruiting E-mails* for tips on how to word the letters. Do not tell the student/postdoc that you are looking for a woman or URM; we are looking for the best scientist within the most diverse pool.

2. Communicate with the research advisor. Ask the advisor to encourage the student/postdoc to send in an application package. This is an opportune time to find out expected date of graduation, student's interest in an academic career, and advisor's impressions.
3. Follow-up e-mails to prospective applicants should retain a positive connection with the individual. For example, send a note after they send in an application, or after reading one of their publications or a press release about their work, or make a note of the title/abstract of a presentation at a conference.
4. If an occasion arises where a meeting in person is possible, take advantage of it. For example, candidates may be presenting at national meetings of professional societies or at key meetings of the search sub-field. Members of the search committee should attend the presentations and make contact with the prospective candidate. Additional possible applicants may be discovered at the meeting and encouraged to apply.

D. Monitor the completion of the application packages of the candidates.

1. If letters of reference are missing, or information is incomplete, contact the individuals so that they may remedy the situation.
2. Maintain communications with the women/URM candidates before and after their applications are received so that they know we are interested in them. Send a follow-up e-mail upon receiving the application package. Ask for additional information if the proposal was vague or incomplete.

E. Take particular care to prepare a friendly, well-managed interview.

1. Brief the applicant about the interview process soon after the invitation; what should they expect and be prepared for. Prior to the visit, send their interview schedule along with a departmental, college, or UIC brochure and City of Chicago promo materials.
2. Pre-arrange restaurant reservations, the hand-offs from one interview appointment to another; be sure IT services are on hand for setting up presentations; actively recruit audiences for each presentation. Do include a representative of WISEST and at least one woman (or URM if candidate is a URM) in the interview schedule. One-on-one interviews with faculty should be in a mode of selling UIC and the department to the candidate. Presentations should be followed by lively and friendly question and answer exchanges. The latter can be ensured by having a prepared audience (that is, one which has at least passing familiarity with the candidate's work). Do hand out (ahead of time) to each participating person one sheet with a thumbnail bio-sketch and an abstract of the talk. The end of the interview should be congenial and upbeat.
3. Send a thank you e-mail immediately following the visit. If possible, give the candidate an idea of the decision timeline (expect to hear in two weeks, one month, whatever).