

# SEFS Faculty Search Procedure

The following SEFS procedure draws heavily on the [UW Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches](#) and the [Online Toolkit](#). The faculty search and hiring process is broken down into stages as described in the Table of Contents below and in the timeline on the next page.

We focus specifically on positions that require a faculty vote, including research faculty and permanent lecturers. Temporary lecturers are not included as our bylaws permit these to be appointed by the SEFS Director without a faculty vote. The procedure outlined here is for competitive hires. Modifications to these procedures for non-competitive hires are described in Appendix 1.

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Table 1. Generalized search and hiring timeline for competitive hires within SEFS. Dates assume an Autumn start date. Activities are detailed in subsequent pages.

Activity	Target Date	Deadline
<b>Two Academic Years Before Target Start Date</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Planning and Scouting</u></a>	Before May 20	
<a href="#"><u>Formation of the Search Committee</u></a>	May 20	
<a href="#"><u>Writing the Job Ad</u></a>	June 1	
<b>Vote to Approve Job Ad</b>		Last faculty meeting of Spring quarter
<a href="#"><u>Creation of Assessment Rubric</u></a>	June 1	Presented to faculty at or before the last faculty meeting of quarter
<b>One Academic Year Before Target Start Date</b>		
<a href="#"><u>Distributing the Job Ad</u></a>	Summer and Fall quarters	
<a href="#"><u>Initial Evaluation of Candidates: The First Shortlist</u></a>	December-January	February 1, propose to faculty the first shortlist of candidates for on-line interviews
<a href="#"><u>Preliminary On-line Interviews</u></a>	January-February	
<a href="#"><u>Selection of Candidates for In-Person Interviews</u></a>	February-March	March 15
<a href="#"><u>In-Person Interviews</u></a>	March-April	May 1

<a href="#"><u>Recommendations to the Director</u></a>	May	Faculty vote no later than May 15
<a href="#"><u>Making an Offer</u></a>	May-June	

## Planning and Scouting

Purposeful scouting can lead to the identification of potential candidates. Scouting should be part of the entire hiring process. This scouting process is viewed as an opportunity to build awareness and relationships with candidates from under-represented groups. Faculty should become aware of relevant academic meetings, conferences, and professional outreach opportunities early in the planning and scouting process. Scouting can transition to active networking when the final position announcement has been developed and accepted by SEFS faculty. Reaching out to networks should involve members of the communications team within the Director's Office.

**Who:** Faculty and the Directors Office

**When:** Ongoing - revisiting long term hiring plans each year cognisant of upcoming retirements.

**Activities:**

- Faculty awareness at professional meetings
- Targeted attendance at presentations by advanced graduate students and postdoctoral scientists
- Hosting seminar series on related topics at UW or within the professional conference

See the [Faculty Handbook](#) and the Faculty Hiring [Toolkit](#) for additional resources.

## Formation of the Search Committee

The Director will appoint a search committee. The committee's composition sends a message to potential applicants about the unit's climate. Special considerations should be made for cluster hires--hires of two or more faculty addressing a similar theme.

**Cluster hires provide an opportunity for attracting applicants from historically underrepresented backgrounds - because cluster hiring 'signals' a significant commitment to - and investment in - a specific area of research, teaching, service and/or outreach.** Special considerations for search committees for cluster hires are included below.

**Who:** Director

**When:** Announcement of any self-nominations by the Faculty meeting on or most closely preceding May 12th. The search committee will be finalized by May 20th.

**Activities:**

- The Search Committee should seek to balance racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.
- Search Committee members should include senior and junior SEFS faculty, at least one faculty from outside of SEFS, a graduate student, and a current (or former) member of the diversity, equity, and inclusion committee.
- Search Committee members should not only represent the expertise of the position to be filled, but should represent the faculty as a whole as well.
- Search committees for cluster hires should:
  - Be broad enough in discipline to adequately assess any potential candidate. This may require drawing on expertise from outside of the School. Such expertise could be added to the committee on an ad hoc basis after the committee views the applicant pool. When reaching outside of the School, when at all possible, add committee members who will increase the racial, ethnic, and gender diversity of the committee.
  - Be broad enough to represent the interests of the School as a whole.
  - Have the capacity to interview and assess a large applicant pool. Thus, the Search Committee for a cluster hire will need to be significantly larger than the search committee for a single position. A cluster hire search committee could be as large as 6x the number of open positions.
- The Director will designate a SEFS faculty member as search committee chair.
- Once formed, the search committee will schedule a workshop with the Office of Faculty Advancement specific to running a formal Faculty Job Search.
- The search committee will become familiar with the UW-Interfolio system, and become aware of the laws and practices associated with affirmative action and I-200.
- Establish a timeline for posting the job advertisement, search process, and recruitment, and coordinated updates of the applicant pool to SEFS faculty.
- Establish a confidential approach to provide access to all search materials and applicant information to SEFS faculty.
- Bring recruitment opportunities to the attention of the faculty and establish that all faculty are responsible for the recruitment process.
- Require regular search committee meetings (physical or virtual) and active participation by search committee members at these meetings.
- Be provided detailed fiscal resources available for the search/hiring process.
- Work with the Director to establish communication of the search process in faculty meetings or discussions.

All effort should be given to reaching out to other units within the College of the Environment and elsewhere in the University of Washington for recruitment strategies, faculty members for the search committee, and to advertise opportunities to learn about

and meet potential candidates. Additional resources are available through the Faculty Hiring [Toolkit](#) and are outlined in the [Faculty Best Practices Handbook](#).

## Writing the Job Ad

A job advertisement consists of a position description, desirable qualifications, and application instructions. The search committee will work with the Director's office to provide the necessary language related to the University of Washington resources and the application instructions. Furthermore, all job advertisements should include language that reflects the mission and goals of SEFS, as well as the SEFS position statement on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (<https://sefs.uw.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/22/2019/08/Equity-and-Inclusion-in-the-School-of-Environmental-and-Forest-Sciences.pdf>).

**Who:** Faculty Search Committee and Faculty

**When:** Presented to Faculty at a faculty meeting on or before June 1 so that amendments can be made and voted on by the last faculty meeting of the spring quarter.

**Activities:**

- The position description should reflect the short and long-term hiring needs previously discussed, and accepted by SEFS faculty.
- Position descriptions should include information about SEFS, and a commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion across research, pedagogy, mentorship, and collegial activities.
- Position descriptions should describe the university, and potential related programs or allies across the UW campus pertinent to the specific position.
- Position descriptions should include a list of required minimum qualifications, as well as desired qualifications. Consult the Faculty Best Practices and Hiring Toolkit for specific examples, and check with SEFS HR specialists on language prior to presenting to the Faculty.
- Position descriptions should include clear and concise instructions about all materials to be submitted (CV, research statement, teaching statement, example peer-reviewed papers, letters of reference, etc.).
- Position descriptions should request an explicit statement that describes the applicant's 1) position/viewpoint/perspective on, 2) experiences with, and 3) commitments to diversity, inclusion, and equity.
- Position descriptions should include clear deadlines and timelines for applicant review and notification.

Search committees should work with the Director's office to ensure all language associated with "Equal Opportunity Employment", and SEFS "Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" are accurately included in any job advertisement.

## Distributing the Job Ad

The search committee should distribute the job advertisement widely and with sufficient time so that applicants can review and prepare their application materials.

**Who:** Search Committee

**When:** Summer and Fall quarter of the year before the position would begin.

**Activities:**

- The search committee will select outlets for distributing the job ad that maximize reach to diverse audiences. Outlets include:
  - A list of outlets informed by the SEFS DEI committee (The DEI committee should reach out to the office of the CoE Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. This office has developed a list of recommended advertising outlets to increase the diversity of candidate pools.)
  - The email and professional networks of search committee members
  - Sending the job ad to SEFS personnel so they can forward it through their networks
- Targeted emails to individuals identified via scouting phase
- Circulation at professional societies

## Creation of Assessment Rubric

The search committee is responsible for creating an assessment rubric to be applied equally to every applicant in the search process. The assessment rubric should reflect specific desires and goals of 1) the long term hiring plan within SEFS, and 2) the specific desires written into the position advertisement. All assessment rubrics should be presented to the SEFS faculty, properly discussed and amended as needed prior to reviewing position applicants.

**Who:** The Search Committee - presented to the Faculty

**When:** In parallel with the position description - but finalized prior to the posting of the position (Presented to faculty at or before the last faculty meeting of the spring quarter and voted on at the same faculty meeting)

**Activities:**

- Search committees should establish an appropriate ranking for assessment categories and priorities for the position (inclusive of research, teaching, service, outreach, and commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion). This is a critical component and will take time to be done well. The search committee will need to be thoughtful and careful in crafting the rubric for ranking, requiring work, and potentially challenging current practices.
- The search committee will request a workshop on creating an informed assessment rubric that ‘works against bias’ with the Office of Faculty Advancement.
- All members of the Search Committee will read the [Faculty Best Practices Handbook](#).
- The Search Committee will dedicate time to discussing bias as a group, identify potential sources of bias and work to eliminate them from the assessment rubric.
- Understand and directly address ‘Implicit Bias’, ‘Early Bird Bias’, ‘Moving Target Syndrome’, ‘Known Quantity Bias’
- Upon completion of the rubric design, the search committee will present it to the faculty in a faculty meeting, explicitly describing how the rubric and its use will minimize the influence of bias in the assessment process.

Example rubrics are available within the UW Hiring [Toolkit](#).

## Initial Evaluation of Candidates: The First Shortlist

The goal of this phase of the process is to narrow the initial list of applicants down to a smaller number of candidates who can be interviewed remotely.

**Who:** The Search Committee and Faculty

**When:** Commencing as soon as possible after the deadline or “priority deadline” for applications. By February 1, the search committee will propose to the faculty the first shortlist of candidates for on-line interviews.

**Activities:**

- As soon after the deadline or “priority deadline” as possible, but not before, the search committee will share all applications with the faculty via access to a secure server.
- After sharing the applications with the faculty, the committee will begin to evaluate the applicants using the rubric and dedicated discussions. When incorporating the faculty opinions, the committee must do so through the lens of the rubric.

- The committee will generate a shortlist of at least 8, but no more than 20 candidates for on-line interviews. For cluster hires, this shortlist should have at least 8 candidates per open position.
- By February 1, the search committee will propose to the faculty the first shortlist of candidates for on-line interviews. The search committee will expressly discuss how the selection of the shortlist addresses the School's dedication to diversity, equity, and inclusion and what steps were taken to minimize the influence of bias (particularly implicit bias and known quantity bias in the process). The Director and faculty will evaluate the process to create a shortlist to determine that best practices related to diversity, equity, and inclusion were followed.
- The faculty will be given at least one week to review and discuss and suggest changes to - in a faculty meeting or discussion - the initial shortlist.
- The faculty will vote to approve the proposed or amended shortlist.

## Preliminary Remote Interviews

The purpose of this phase of the process is to narrow the initial shortlist of candidates down to a list of 4-6 candidates who will be brought to campus for interviews.

**Who:** The Search Committee and Faculty

**When:** Commencing as soon as possible after the approval of the initial shortlist by the faculty

**Activities:**

- The Search Committee will conduct all interviews—including interviews with internal candidates—in the same format (e.g., phone or Zoom or Skype or some other on-line platform) and under similar conditions. All interviews will be recorded and shared with the SEFS Faculty and Search Committee.
- The same committee members will be present for all interviews.
- Each candidate will be asked the same set of questions in the same order. These questions will include questions about diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- The Search Committee will ensure that all interview questions comply with federal and state hiring laws and university policies. (These are available on the [EOAA website](#).)
- The Search Committee will not offer “courtesy” interviews to internal or other applicants who do not meet stated criteria.

A guide to “fair” and “unfair” inquiries, sample interview questions that highlight issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and a guide to interviewing candidates with disabilities are available in the UW Hiring [Toolkit](#).

## **Selection of Candidates for In-Person Interviews**

The purpose of this phase of the process is to use the information gathered in the on-line interviews to select a list of 4-6 candidates for in-person interviews.

**Who:** The Search Committee and Faculty

**When:** Commencing as soon as possible after the completion of the last on-line interview

**Activities:**

- As soon as is feasible after the final remote interview, the Search Committee will meet to discuss the candidates and draft a recommended list of finalists for on-campus interviews. To facilitate this discussion, the committee will re-evaluate the candidates using the original rubric. Revisiting the same rubric will help the committee avoid “moving target syndrome.”
- The Search Committee will present their recommended list of finalists to the faculty for discussion at a faculty meeting. The search committee will expressly discuss how the selection of finalists addresses the School’s dedication to diversity and what steps were taken to minimize the influence of bias (particularly implicit bias and known quantity bias in the process).
- The faculty will be given at least one week to review and discuss and suggest changes to - in a faculty meeting or discussion - the list of finalists.
- The faculty will vote to approve the proposed or amended list of finalists.

## **In-Person Interviews**

The in-person interview is a component of the assessment process, but it is also the beginning of the recruitment process, and thus it should involve not only the search committee but also the larger unit, the college or school, and any campus and community allies.

**Who:** The Search Committee and Faculty

**When:** Commencing as soon as possible after the completion of the last on-line interview

**Activities:** In-person interviews typically involve a traditional job talk, research seminar, and/or teaching demonstration; meetings with the chair or director, other department leaders, and graduate students; meals with colleagues; a meeting with the appropriate dean or chancellor; and a tour of the campus. Consider the following elements when planning and conducting in-person interviews:

- Before designing the interview process, ask the candidates whether there are any accommodations we can make to make the interview process more successful for them. It would be ideal to have all interviews be ADA compliant, though our buildings do not currently permit this.
- Providing finalists a detailed itinerary, as far in advance as possible. To ensure equitable treatment, all itineraries should be similar, including those for internal candidates.
- Introducing finalists to relevant faculty, staff, students, and administrators within and outside the unit with whom they might share research, teaching, service, and/or outreach interests. How can you help finalists imagine local professional networks?
- Asking finalists if they would like to visit relevant research centers, facilities, or other campus resources, and/or to meet with a human resources or benefits officer. It is best to create a list of resources finalists can review before they travel to campus. A sample list of campus resources is available in the [UW Hiring Toolkit](#).
- Providing venues for finalists to ask questions they might not feel comfortable asking members of the unit (e.g., about partner hiring, family or medical leave, stopping the tenure clock, disability accommodations, resources for childcare or eldercare, unit or campus climate toward women and minorities). The meeting with a dean can be an opportunity for these kinds of questions if it is clear they can be asked in confidence.
- Maintaining clear and open communication with finalists. It is important to be honest about expectations, as well as about issues of funding, space, or other resources.
- Explaining the unit's and the university's expectations about teaching, research, service, and the promotion and tenure process.
- Introducing finalists to relevant college and campus resources for their success.
- Soliciting feedback from students, staff, and external stakeholders. This information will be gathered by the Search Committee and incorporated into its decision making.

If the list of finalists includes internal candidates, it is important to:

- Host internal finalists first in order to avoid any potential perception that internal finalists have an advantage from having seen firsthand or heard about the other finalists' visits.
- Encourage internal candidates not to attend public events, such as job talks or open meetings, involving the other finalists.
- Ensure that the itineraries for their campus visits are as similar as possible to those of external candidates.

- Be intentional about maintaining fairness, collegiality, and confidentiality.
- Provide a reminder to all faculty on best practices for in-person interview behaviors, interactions, [questions and conventions](#).
- Inform internal candidates about the campus visit process.

## Recommendations to the Director

**Who:** The Search Committee and Faculty

**When:** Commencing as soon as possible after the completion of the last in-person interview

**Activities:**

- As soon as is feasible following the last in-person interview, the Search Committee will meet and discuss the finalists.
- The committee will determine, whether in their opinion each candidate is acceptable or unacceptable.
- The committee will then rank all acceptable candidates.
- The committee will present their recommendations of both acceptability and ranking to the faculty.
- The faculty will discuss the recommendations of the Search Committee.
- The faculty will then vote:
  - on the acceptability of each individual candidate
  - ranking all candidates
- The recommendations of the Search Committee and the votes of the faculty will be presented to the Director.

## Making an Offer

**Who:** The Director and Dean

**When:** Commencing as soon as possible after the vote of the faculty on acceptability and ranking

**Activities:** The Director will take into account the recommendations of the Search Committee and the votes of the faculty in deciding on a top candidate. With the approval of the Dean, the Director will then make an offer to the top candidate. The following should be considered when making an offer:

- To ensure equity, the salary, work expectations, and rank of the proposed position should be based on an evaluation of distributions across faculty in the unit, taking disciplinary differences and experience levels or time in rank into account, regardless of gender, race, and other personal characteristics.

- Notify unsuccessful candidates only after an offer has been accepted, but prior to public announcements of the appointment.
- Although one should not directly ask a final candidate about the need for partner accommodation or visa sponsorship, it is appropriate to ask if there are additional factors that would influence the decision to accept a position at UW.
- If partner accommodation is a concern, the chair or director should consult with the appropriate dean or chancellor about possibilities for employment within the unit, college or school, or university (e.g., tenure-track, lecturer, or other instructional positions on a permanent or temporary basis, or various staff positions). The unit should also introduce the candidate to the Greater Washington State Higher Education Recruitment Consortium (GWS HERC) and its online regional job board. Information about [GWS HERC](#) is available in the [Toolkit](#).
- The college, school, or campus and the university may be able to offer recruitment incentives beyond the unit's standard compensation package. In addition to partner accommodations, such incentives might include relocation funds, reduced teaching expectations, professional development funds, start-up funds, summer salary, and/or research support.
- The Office for Faculty Advancement offers the Provost's Faculty Recruitment Initiative (FRI), which can provide supplemental funds to leverage resources from the unit and dean when hiring faculty who will enhance the unit's diversity profile. Details about the [FRI](#) are available in the UW Hiring [Toolkit](#).

## Appendix 1 - Non-Competitive Hires

Periodically, opportunities arise that do not fall within the usual hiring process of a competitive search. UW's Academic Human Resources office considers search waiver requests in four situations:

- Spousal / domestic partner hires
- Critical hire / "team" hires
- Candidate specifically named in a contract or grant
- Candidate uniquely qualified

Details are at <https://ap.washington.edu/eoaa/search-waiver-request-policy/>. Other situations are also possible, including joint hires where a candidate has gone through a search process in another unit. These opportunities will often be suggested by the SEFS Director or by the College of the Environment.

A unique aspect of these opportunities is that the candidate is being evaluated individually, not directly against other candidates. Criteria to consider when deciding whether to proceed with these opportunities include:

- Academic qualifications
- Fit with faculty hiring priorities (e.g., research areas, teaching needs)
- Role of diversity and other SEFS priorities
- Funding arrangements
- Faculty support - is this opportunity broadly supported by the faculty?

The candidate will submit application materials (CV, research statement, teaching statement, example peer-reviewed papers, letters of reference, etc.) to the SEFS Director. EFAC will function as a first-round review committee and will review the candidate's materials in light of the above criteria. If helpful, EFAC will ask faculty with subject matter expertise to evaluate the novelty and rigor of their research program. EFAC will also invite feedback from SEFS faculty, including statements of support or concern. EFAC will share the results of their deliberations with the SEFS Director.

If it is determined that additional exploration of this opportunity is warranted, the candidate will be invited to an in-person interview following the guidelines in the '[In-Person Interviews](#)' section of this document. An ad-hoc search committee will be formed, consisting of EFAC, a student, a member of the DEI committee, and (if necessary) additional faculty with subject matter expertise. Results of this process will be reported back to the Faculty and the SEFS Director - see the '[Recommendations to the Director](#)' section for details.

## **Appendix 2 - Important Contacts and Links**

### **UW Academic HR:**

<https://ap.washington.edu/about-us/contact/>

### **Handbook of Best Practices for Faculty Searches:**

<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/handbook/scouting/>

### **Online toolkit for Faculty Hiring Best Practices:**

<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/handbook/toolkit/>

### **Mechanics of the search:**

Faculty Search in Interfolio.

<https://ap.washington.edu/ahr/policies/recruitment/posting-jobs/uw-evaluators-guide-to-interfolio-faculty-search/introduction/>

**Setting up a workshop:**

<https://www.washington.edu/diversity/faculty-advancement/faculty-search-committee-workshop/>

**College of the Environment Specific Webpage**

<https://environment.uw.edu/intranet/personnel/academic-human-resources/faculty-recruitment-and-hiring/>