

EUROPEAN MEDICINES AGENCY

Permanent Call for expression of interest for Contract Agents for temporary assignments (London)

The Agency is responsible for co-ordinating the evaluation and supervision of medicinal products for human and veterinary use in the European Union (see European Parliament and Council Regulation (EC) No 726/2004 of 31 March 2004, Official Journal of the European Union No L 136/1 of 30 April 2004). The Agency was established in January 1995. It has many close contacts with the European Commission, 27 EU Member States, EEA-EFTA countries and many other groups in government and the private sector. The Agency is a stimulating multicultural working environment.

Further information on the Agency and its activities is readily accessible through the Internet; our web address is <http://www.ema.europa.eu>

The European Medicines Agency wishes to set up a roster of candidates interested to work for temporary assignments under the contract agent contract. The job profiles are published in a separate document available on the Agency's website.

GENERAL CONDITIONS

Selected candidates will be included on a reserve list and may be offered a temporary assignment which can range from three months to five years under the contract agent contract in accordance with the Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Communities (*Official Journal of the European Communities No L 56 of 4 March 1968*)¹ and the Agency's general implementing provisions on the procedures governing the engagement and the use of contract staff at the Agency². The most common length of assignment offered at the Agency is one year.

Temporary assignments may include replacement of the Agency temporary agents (for example maternity leave, paternity leave, family leave, parental leave, unpaid leave or long term sickness) or to work on specific short-term projects. A contract agent contract cannot lead to a temporary agent contract without the successful participation in an additional selection procedure. Contract agent contracts are not renewed more than once.

The place of employment shall be Canary Wharf, London.

Candidates must be nationals of a Member State of the European Communities, or of Iceland, Norway or Liechtenstein, on condition that they have full rights as a citizen.

Candidates must have fulfilled any obligations imposed on them by laws concerning military service and meet the character requirements for the duties involved.

For each selection procedure candidates *have to follow the application procedure as instructed below.*

All material to be placed on candidates' files shall be submitted afresh: reference may not be made to earlier applications. No material contained in candidates' files will be returned. All the questions on the form have to be completed in full.

Applications have to be submitted electronically using the form available on the Agency website.

¹ http://ec.europa.eu/civil_service/docs/toc100_en.pdf

² <http://www.ema.europa.eu/pdfs/general/admin/recruit/42125407en.pdf>

Application Procedure

There are five stages in the application procedure:

1. Publication of job profiles
2. Electronic submission of the application
3. Keyword search among candidates
4. Interview and written tests
5. Submission of a full application

Stage 1 Publication of job profiles

The Agency publishes a permanent call for expression of interest for the most commonly needed job profiles to source its staff. In addition to the permanent call the Agency launches from time to time specific calls for expression of interest for contract agents to invite candidates to apply for specific job profiles.

Candidates applying to the permanent call and candidates applying to a specific call must use the same electronic form available on the website and will be entered in the same database.

Each job profile published shall identify the most common keywords that will be used to search the database for applications to each profile.

The notices are published on the Official Journal of the European Communities as well as on the European Personnel Selection Office website the Agency's website, containing the notice of the specific call for expression of interest, and will give the conditions and essential requirements. Notices of a specific call for expression of interest may also be advertised in specialist journals or internet sites, depending on the nature of the positions for which recruitment is planned.

For specific calls for expression of interest the Agency will send an e-mail alert to all candidates registered in the Agency's on-line subscription service available at http://list.ema.europa.eu/mailman/listinfo/ema_recruitment_procedures on day one of the announcement of a new job profile.

In case of specific calls for expression of interest the vacancy notice will remain published for one month before any application forms are considered.

Stage 2 Electronic submission of the application

At the second stage candidates have to submit their application electronically using the application form available in English on the Agency website. Translations of the application form are available for reference purposes in the other official languages. All parts of the form must be completed in full.

Candidates are recommended to provide detailed information on their application form. Any candidate found making false declaration or giving incomplete information about their knowledge or experience on the application form can be immediately disqualified at any later stage of the selection process.

Candidates should assess and check before submitting their application form whether they fulfil all the conditions for admission laid down in the publication notice, particularly in terms of qualifications, relevant professional experience and the duration of professional experience.

The Agency accepts only electronic applications forms submitted via e-mail. This is in order to make processing of applications more efficient, which benefits both the Agency and applicants. Applications have to be submitted to selection_procedures@ema.europa.eu. Applications emailed to any other email address cannot be accepted.

Personnel team from the Agency will send via e-mail an official acknowledgement of receipt with the protocol number the candidate is assigned.

Should a candidate wish to send an up-to-dated application form, this will be possible at any time. Whenever a candidate sends a new application form automatically the old one will be deleted. Candidates can withdraw their application at any time.

Additional practical recommendations with regard of the electronic submission of the application are given at the end of this document.

Stage 3 Keyword search among candidates

The most suitable candidate(s) for the next stage are selected with a Google-style keyword search mechanism among the database of applicants by a representative from the selection board. Additional keywords taken from the published profile from the one published in the call for expression of interest may be added if the resulting subset of candidates is too large.

As the exercise concerns a selection following a call for expression of interest, candidates not invited for interview will not be informed individually.

Application forms which are older than 24 months will be deleted from our records for data protection reasons. If a candidate is not invited for the interview within 24 months he/she may re-apply, however it is necessary to re-submit a full application afresh.

Stage 4 Interview and written tests

A selection board is set up. It consists of members designated by the Executive Director and the Staff Committee. The candidates, selected from among the overall applicants, who are considered by the selection board most matching with the required profile will be invited for interview as and when a need arises. The selection board conducts the interviews. In order to facilitate the selection process the selection board might have one or more telephone conversations with the candidates to clearly understand their background prior to inviting them for interview.

On the same day of the interview candidates will be required to undergo written tests for a total of two/three hours. The tests relate to general aptitude, language abilities necessary for the performance of the duties, knowledge on European integration and the institutions and specific competencies with reference to the profile of the candidates.

A good command of English and a thorough knowledge of another official language of the European Union to the extent necessary for the performance of duties is an essential requirement. Please note that if your mother tongue is English, around half of the interview will be conducted in your second declared language.

The address indicated on the application form will be used as the location for travel for candidates invited to interview.

Any candidates invited for interview will be informed individually about the outcome of the interview.

Stage 5 Submission of a full application (only for candidates invited to interview)

In order for the application to be considered complete candidates **must bring with them on the day of the interview photocopies of all the supporting documents (diplomas, certificates, professional references, letters from official EU bodies recognising non-EU diplomas, etc) needed to prove that they satisfy the conditions for admission.** The documentary evidence of professional experience has to indicate start and end dates for previous positions and the start date and continuity for the current position held. On the day of the interview the candidate will have to sign his/her

application form and by signing the form the candidate certifies on his/her honour that the information provided is complete and accurate.

An application cannot be accepted unless all the documents are complete and the application form has been signed on the day of the interview. Candidates who have not submitted the documents specified by the date of the interview cannot be considered further.

Eligibility

Education, certificates and diplomas

Candidates shall provide photocopies of certificates or diplomas to show that they have completed studies of the level required by the notice of the selection procedure. The first degree/diploma obtained by the candidate giving access to the recruitment category and being relevant to the notice in the selection procedure is counted for admission to the selection procedure.

In the case of specialist or further training required, candidates shall specify whether the course was full-time or part-time, which subjects were covered and the official length of the course.

Only diplomas issued by EU Member State authorities and diplomas recognised as equivalent by the relevant EU Member State bodies are accepted. If the main studies took place outside the European Union, the candidate's qualification has to be recognised by a body delegated officially for the purpose by one of the European Union Member States (such as a national Ministry of Education).

Experience

Professional experience connected with the Agency's areas of activities shall be taken into account and is counted from the time the candidate obtained the certificate or diploma required for admission to the selection procedure.

In case of a doctorate/PhD the actual duration of the studies shall be taken into account as professional experience, subject to an upper limit of three years. In the case of other qualifications the statutory duration of the studies shall be taken into account. Military service and equivalent civilian service shall be regarded as professional experience. Part-time work shall be taken into account in proportion to the stated percentage in relation to full-time work. No period may be counted more than once.

Candidates shall provide supporting documents confirming the *length and nature* of their experience. If, for reasons of confidentiality, a candidate is unable to provide the necessary statement for their current employment, he/she has to provide photocopies of the contract, the letter of recruitment and /or the first pay slip and the candidate must in any event provide a copy of the latest pay slip.

Free-lance or self-employed candidates have to provide either a practicing certificate (or equivalent), or a copy of the entry in the relevant trade register, or any other official document (for example a tax document) showing the length of the relevant professional experience.

Equal opportunities

The Agency applies a policy of equal opportunities and accepts applications without distinction on grounds of sex, race, colour, ethnic or social origin, genetic characteristics, language, religious, political or other convictions or opinions, belonging to a national minority, financial situation, birth, disability, age, sexual orientation, marital status or family situation.

Selection

A selection board is set up. It consists of members designated by the Executive Director and the Staff Committee. The principle of confidentiality is enshrined in Article 6 of Annex III to the Staff Regulations, which states that the proceedings of the selection board must be secret. It works in two ways: first, it imposes obligations to ensure equal treatment for candidates; and second, it seeks to protect the selection board to ensure that its decisions are totally impartial.

The candidates selected among the overall applicants, who are considered by the selection board most matching with the required profile, will be invited for interview as and when a need arises. The selection board conducts the interviews. In order to facilitate the selection process the selection board might have one or more telephone conversations with the candidates to understand their background prior to inviting them for interview.

On the day of the interview candidates will be required to undergo written tests for a total of two/three hours. The tests relate to general aptitude, language abilities necessary for the performance of the duties, knowledge on European integration and the institutions and specific competencies with reference to the profile of the candidates.

The selection board adheres to the conditions of admission laid down in the publication notice when deciding whether or not candidates are to be admitted. Candidates admitted to a previous selection procedure will not automatically be eligible. **Candidates are not allowed to make any contact with the members of the selection board, either directly or indirectly. Any infringement of this rule can lead to disqualification from the selection procedure.**

Should the selection board discover at any stage in the procedure that the candidate does not meet one or more of the general or special conditions for admission to the selection procedure or that the information on the application form does not correspond with the supporting documents, the candidate will not be considered any further.

The selection board decides on those candidates who are admitted to the selection procedure in accordance with the requirements specified in the publication notice. The applications of the candidates admitted to the selection procedure are reviewed and the selection board decides on those candidates who are invited to attend for interview. Following the interviews, which are conducted by the selection board, the selection board decides which candidates will be placed on the reserve list.

Reserve list and Recruitment

Each candidate, invited for interview, will be informed by letter whether or not he/she has been placed on the reserve list. Candidates should note that inclusion on the reserve list does not guarantee appointment. The recruitment procedure is as follows: as and when a need arises, candidates on the reserve list will be considered and the reserve list will be drawn on to fill vacancies. If a letter of intention is issued, the candidate will have to undergo a compulsory medical examination to establish that he/she meets the standard of physical fitness necessary to perform the duties involved and the candidate had to provide original or certified copies of all relevant documents.

It should be noted that the retirement age for staff is:

- either automatically at the age of 65 years;
- or, at the staff member's own request, at the age of 63 years or where the staff member is between 55 and 63 years of age and satisfies, as specified in the Conditions of Employment of Other Servants, the requirements for immediate payment of a pension;

Probation period

Successful candidates who are recruited for a contract of at least one year undergo a probation period of 9 months.

Pay and welfare benefits

The pay of staff members consists of a basic salary and, depending on the personal situation supplemented with various allowances, including family allowances. There is a basic salary scale for each grade, divided into a number of steps. Staff members progress automatically to the next step every two years until they reach the top of the scale for that grade. In addition to their basic salary, staff members may be entitled to various allowances, in particular an expatriation or foreign residence allowance, and family allowances, including household allowance, dependent child allowance, pre-school allowance and an education allowance.

Contract agents are entitled to a medical insurance, which works like a private medical reimbursement scheme, accident insurance and unemployment insurance. Where the contract agent contract is for less than one year, the contract agent has a free choice of the national scheme into which to pay the social contributions. Where the contract agent has a contract of one year or longer the pension contributions are paid into the European Community scheme, and a transfer back into their chosen national social security scheme will apply at the end of their contract.

Under certain circumstances, in particular where staff members are obliged to change their place of residence in order to take up employment, the Agency may also reimburse various expenses incurred on recruitment, notably removal expenses and may provide an installation allowance, depending on the length of the contract.

Annual leave entitlement, in addition to the European Medicines Agency holidays, is 24 days per year and/or 2 days per month worked.

Community Tax

The salaries of staff members are subject to a Community tax deducted at source. They are exempt from national tax on salary and are members of the Community social security and pension schemes.

Remuneration

The remuneration of Contract Agents consists of a basic salary, weighted to compensate the London cost of living, additional allowances and deductions for tax and social security contributions.

Basic Salary: There is a basic salary scale for each grade, divided into a number of steps. Examples of basic monthly salary (figures valid as of 1 January 2010 and do not include any allowances and London weighting):

Function Group IV Grade 13 Step 1: €3,086.25

Function Group III Grade 8 step 1: €2,410.84

Function Group II Grade 4 Step 1: €1,883.05

Weighting Factor: to compensate the London cost of living: The London weighting is currently 120.3 (and 100 being the basis).

Allowances: In addition to their basic salary, Contract Agents may be entitled to various allowances, e.g. an expatriation or foreign residence allowance (depending whether the candidate has left his/her Member State to take up employment with the Agency), and family allowances (depending on personal circumstances): household allowance, dependent child allowance, pre-school allowance, nursery allowance and an education allowance.

Examples of Allowances:

Dependent Child Allowance: € 365.60 per child/month.

Education Allowance: single ceiling €248.06, double ceiling €496.12

Pre-School Allowance: € 89.31

Deductions: Contract Agents pay a Community tax at source and deductions are also made for medical insurance, pensions and unemployment insurance. Salaries are exempt from national tax.

Precise information on individual levels of salaries and allowances can be obtained from the Agency's Personnel department.

Data Protection

The purpose of processing of the data you submit is to manage your application(s) in view of a possible pre-selection and recruitment at the Agency.

The Agency does not make public the names of successful candidates on reserve lists. However, it is possible that, for the purposes of recruitment and related planning purposes, members of the Agency management team may have access to reserve lists and in specific cases, to the application form of a candidate (without supporting documents, which are kept in confidence by the personnel department). Application files are kept for five years from the establishment date of the reserve list after which time they are destroyed.

The personal information requested from candidates will be processed in line with Regulation (EC) N° 45/2001 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 18 December 2000 on the protection of individuals with regard to the processing of personal data by the Community institutions and bodies and on the free movement of such data.

Appeal Procedures

A candidate who feels to have been treated incorrectly may ask to have his/her application reconsidered by sending, within 20 calendar days of the date postmarked on the letter of notification, a request for review, quoting the number of the selection procedure concerned to the Chairman of the Selection Board at the following address: European Medicines Agency, 7 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London E14 4HB, United Kingdom.

The selection board will reconsider the application and notify the candidate of its decision within 45 calendar days of receipt of the letter.

If a candidate considers that he/she has been adversely affected by a particular decision, he/she can lodge a complaint under Article 90(2) of the Staff Regulations of Officials of the European Communities and Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Communities, at the following address:

Executive Director
European Medicines Agency
7 Westferry Circus
Canary Wharf
London E14 4HB

The complaint must be lodged within 3 months. The time limit for initiating this type of procedure (see Staff Regulations as modified by Council Regulation No 723/2004 of 22 March 2004 published in the Official Journal of the European Union L 124 of 27 April 2004 – <http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex>) starts to run from the time the candidate is notified of the act adversely affecting him/her.

If the complaint is rejected the candidate may bring a case under Article 236 of the EC Treaty and Article 91 of the Staff Regulations of officials of the European Communities and Conditions of employment of other servants of the European Communities before:

The European Union Civil Service Tribunal

Postal Address:
L-2925 Luxembourg

Please note that the appointing authority does not have the power to amend the decisions of a selection board. The Court has consistently held that the wide discretion enjoyed by selection boards is not subject to review by the Court unless rules which govern the proceedings of selection boards have been infringed.

It is also possible to complain to the European Ombudsman pursuant to Article 195(1) of the Treaty establishing the European Community and in accordance with the conditions laid down in the Decision of the European Parliament of 9 March 1994 on the Staff Regulations and the general conditions governing the performance of the Ombudsman's duties, published in Official Journal of the European Union L 113 of 4 May 1994.:

European Ombudsman
1 Avenue du Président Robert Schuman – BP 403
F-67001 Strasbourg Cedex

Please note that complaints made to the Ombudsman have no suspensive effect on the period laid down in Articles 90(2) and 91 of the Staff Regulations for lodging, respectively, a complaint or an appeal with the European Union Civil Service Tribunal under Article 236 of the EC Treaty.

Practical recommendations for the electronic submission of the application

To use the application form it will be necessary to use Adobe Acrobat Reader Version 8. Adobe Acrobat Reader is a very common software plug-in available on most computers. Please check that you have version 8 installed on your computer, otherwise we recommend that you download version 8 for free from the following web address as per your computer specifications:
http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2_allversions.html

If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Reader version 8 installed on your computer the application form will not work correctly. Once you have completed the application form click on the "Submit by e-mail" button on the top right of the application form. Your application form is transformed into an xml file and attached to an e-mail. You still need to click on the send button of the e-mail to ensure that your application form is sent correctly to the Agency. You do not need to write any message in the e-mail. In principle you should not send a PDF version via separate email. However if you have only a web-based email service (e.g. hotmail) then save the form on your desktop and attach it to an email and send it to: selection_procedures@ema.europa.eu. You should receive an automated response from the Agency acknowledging receipt of your email.

Before completing the application form it is important to read the full instructions given in this document, in particular taking note of the application deadline. Please note that due to the large numbers of applications we might receive, when reaching the submission deadline, the system may encounter problems processing large amounts of data. Applicants are therefore advised to send in their application form well ahead of the deadline. Please note that you will need a valid e-mail address.

The electronic application form to be used is available in English only. This application form can be completed using any EU official language. Translations of the application form in the other official languages are provided for reference purposes.

In case of difficulties please contact: Mr Tommy Johansson +44 20 75 23 74 21 or Mr Hendrik Feddersen +44 20 75 23 70 07 during normal office hours. DO NOT leave it to the last moment if you have any technical queries!