

## **Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD)**

Publication of a vacancy for the function of

Principal Adviser - Head of the Task Force on Startups and Scaleups (Grade AD 14)

(Article 29(2) of the Staff Regulations)

COM/2025/10472

### **We are**

The Directorate-General for Research and Innovation (DG RTD) defines and implements European Research and Innovation (R&I) policy with a view to reinforcing the science and technology base, spurring innovation and turning societal challenges into innovation opportunities that will help deliver on the European Commission priorities.

DG RTD drives the priorities of Commissioner Zaharieva on Open Science, Open Innovation and Open to the World. It monitors and contributes to the realisation of the European Research Area and funds excellent Research and Innovation through Framework Programmes. In addition, the DG contributes to the European Semester by analysing national R&I policies, by assessing their strengths and weaknesses, and by formulating country specific recommendations where necessary.

The mission letter to the Commissioner-designate for startups, research, and innovation states that the Commissioner should develop an EU Startup and Scaleup Strategy which will aim to improve framework conditions for startups and scaleups in order to increase competitiveness and to close the innovation gap, which has been identified as the first pillar of the Competitiveness Compass. The Strategy should consist of a broad set of policy, financial and regulatory measures addressing problems that affect the framework conditions of startups and scaleups. Measures foreseen could include actions to be taken either at EU or national level, or both. Simplification should be a cross-cutting theme across the Strategy.

In this context, a dedicated Task Force (TF) on “Startups and Scaleups” of around 4 people was recently created within DG RTD. In addition, a larger number of identified staff from other RTD units and other DGs, with predefined time dedicated to the Taskforce and sufficient empowerment to act on behalf of their DG, will contribute to the work of the Task Force. For their Task Force related work, all members of the Task Force would report directly to the Head of the Taskforce.

### **We propose**

An attractive position of Head of Task Force with a strong policy, analytical and negotiation dimension. The Task Force reports directly to the Director-General of DG RTD and supports DG RTD with the following roles:

- coordinating the preparation (including the consultation process), implementation and monitoring of the Strategy;
- being consulted on and provide ex officio advice on all initiatives with a direct impact on startups and scaleups, including on the next Multiannual Financial Framework;
- contributing to the SME and competitiveness check foreseen in the mission letters of Commissioners from the perspective of startups and scaleups;
- overseeing core EU programmes and initiatives for startups, such as the European Startup Nations Alliance (ESNA);
- leading on the preparation of briefings with a predominant focus on startups and scaleups;

- representing the Commission in contacts with the startup and scaleup community, with the Member States and the European institutions.

The successful candidate would set up and implement the mandate of the Task Force, as described above and would contribute to managing the Task Force, its staff and financial resources, as applicable, as well as ensure contacts with relevant actors within and outside the Commission.

### **We look for (selection criteria)**

Candidates should have:

#### **Personal qualities**

- Excellent communication skills, be able to communicate effectively at all levels with stakeholders and to represent the Directorate-General at high level, inside and outside the Commission,
- Ability to collaborate with other DGs and stakeholders outside the Commission,
- Excellent capacity to plan and prioritise.

#### **Specialist skills and experience**

- Capacity to promote investment in research at EU, national and regional level, and to strengthen the links with other policies. Experience in domains relevant to the sphere of action of the Directorate-General would constitute an advantage,
- Proven experience in policy development and coordination, e.g. experience with preparing horizontal, cross-cutting policy strategies, legislative proposals and/or interinstitutional negotiations, and/or in setting up and running complex projects,
- Solid knowledge of Commission decision procedures and working methods.

#### **Advisory skills**

- Ability to quickly understand, analyse and present complex policy issues, orally and in writing,
- Excellent negotiation skills,
- Capacity to coordinate the work of teams in a complex multi-disciplinary and multicultural environment, as well as experience in sound financial management,
- Capacity to prioritise tasks and to ensure their execution effectively,
- Experience in leading teams, setting objectives and targets, will be considered as an asset.

### **Candidates must (eligibility requirements)**

Candidates will only be considered for the selection phase on the basis of the following formal requirements to be fulfilled **by the deadline for applications**:

- **Nationality**: candidates must be a citizen of one of the Member States of the European Union.
- **University degree or diploma**: candidates must have:
  - either a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies attested by a diploma when the normal period of university education is 4 years or more;
  - or a level of education which corresponds to completed university studies attested by a diploma and appropriate professional experience of at least 1 year when the normal period of university education is at least 3 years (this one year's professional experience cannot be included in the postgraduate professional experience required below).

- Only diplomas that have been awarded in EU Member States or that are the subject of equivalence certificates issued by the authorities of one of these Member States may be taken into consideration.
- Professional experience: candidates must have at least 15 years postgraduate professional experience <sup>1</sup> at a level to which the qualifications referred to above give admission.
- Advisory experience: at least 5 years of the post-graduate professional experience must have been gained in a high-level advisory function <sup>2</sup>.
- Languages: candidates must have a thorough knowledge of one of the official languages of the European Union<sup>3</sup> and a satisfactory knowledge of another of these official languages. Selection panels will verify during the interview(s) whether candidates comply with the requirement of a satisfactory knowledge of another official EU language. This may include (part of) the interview being conducted in this other language.
- Age limit: candidates must not have reached regular retirement age, which for officials of the European Union is defined as being the end of the month in which the person reaches the age of 66 years (see Article 52 lit (a) of the Staff Regulations <sup>4</sup>).

## **Selection and appointment**

The selection and appointment will be conducted according to the European Commission's selection and recruitment procedures (see: Document on Senior Officials Policy <sup>5</sup>).

As part of this selection procedure, the European Commission sets up a pre-selection panel. This panel analyses all applications, proceeds with a first eligibility verification and identifies candidates having the best profile in view of the selection criteria mentioned above, and who may be invited for an interview with the pre-selection panel. Candidates may be requested to provide documents supporting the information provided in their application at any moment of the procedure. Failure to provide those documents within the deadline set in the request may lead to the exclusion from the selection.

Following these interviews, the pre-selection panel draws up its conclusions and proposes a list of candidates for further interviews with the European Commission's Consultative Committee on Appointments (CCA). The CCA, taking into consideration the conclusions of the pre-selection panel, will decide on the candidates to be invited for an interview.

Candidates who are called for an interview with the CCA participate in a full-day management assessment centre run by external recruitment consultants. Taking account of the results of the

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<sup>1</sup> Professional experience is only taken into consideration if it represents an actual work relationship defined as real, genuine work, on a paid basis and as employee (any type of contract) or provider of a service. Professional activities pursued part-time shall be calculated pro rata, on the basis of the certified percentage of full-time hours worked. Maternity leave / parental leave / leave for adoption is taken into consideration if it is in the framework of a work contract. PhDs are assimilated to professional experience, even when unpaid, but for a duration of three years maximum, provided that the PhD has been successfully completed. A given period may be counted only once.

<sup>2</sup> In their curriculum vitae, candidates should clearly indicate for all years during which advisory experience has been acquired: (1) title and role of positions held; (2) the exact subject area as well as at which level in the organisation the position was based (numbers of hierarchical layers above and below); (3) the reporting lines for each position held.

<sup>3</sup> <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:01958R0001-20130701&qid=1408533709461&from=ENhttps://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01958R0001-20130701>

<sup>4</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX%3A01962R0031-20140701>

<sup>5</sup> [https://commission.europa.eu/publications/documents-senior-management-selection-procedures\\_en](https://commission.europa.eu/publications/documents-senior-management-selection-procedures_en) (only exists in English)

interview and the report of the assessment centre, the CCA establishes a shortlist of candidates it considers suitable for the function.

Candidates on the CCA shortlist will be interviewed by the relevant Member(s) of the Commission.

Following these interviews, the European Commission takes the appointment decision.

The selected candidate must have fulfilled any obligations imposed by law concerning military service, produce appropriate character references as to their suitability for the performance of their duties and be physically fit to perform their duties.

The selected candidate should hold, or be in the position to obtain, a valid security clearance certificate from his/her national security authority. A personal security clearance is an administrative decision following completion of a security screening conducted by the individual's competent national security authority in accordance with applicable national security laws and regulations, and certifying that an individual may be allowed to access classified information up to a specified level. (Note that the necessary procedure for obtaining a security clearance can be initiated on request of the employer only, and not by the individual candidate).

Until the personal security clearance has been granted by the Member State concerned and the clearance procedure completed with the legally required briefing from the European Commission's Security Directorate, the candidate will not be able to access EU Classified Information (EUCI) at the level of CONFIDENTIEL UE/EU CONFIDENTIAL or above, nor attend any meetings at which such EUCI is discussed.

### **Equal opportunities**

In accordance with Article 1d of the Staff Regulations, the European Commission pursues a strategic objective of achieving gender equality at all management levels and applies an equal opportunities policy encouraging applications that could contribute towards more diversity, gender equality and overall geographical balance.

### **Conditions of employment**

The salaries and conditions of employment are laid down in the Staff Regulations.

The selected candidate will be recruited as an official at grade AD14. They will be classified depending on the length of their previous professional experience in step 1 or step 2 within that grade.

The selected candidate should note the requirement under the Staff Regulations for all new staff to complete successfully a nine-month probationary period.

The place of employment is Brussels.

### **Independence and declaration of interests**

Candidates will be required to make a declaration of commitment to act independently in the public interest and to declare any interests which might be considered prejudicial to their independence.

## Important information for candidates

Candidates are reminded that the work of the selection panels is confidential. It is forbidden for candidates to make direct or indirect contact with their individual members or for anybody to do so on their behalf. Any query has to be addressed to the secretariat of the respective panel.

## Protection of personal data

The Commission will ensure that candidates' personal data are processed as required by Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>6</sup>. This applies in particular to the confidentiality and security of such data.

## Application procedure

Before submitting your application, you should carefully check whether you meet all eligibility requirements ('Candidates must'), particularly concerning the types of diploma, high-level professional experience as well as linguistic capacity required. Failure to meet any of the eligibility requirements means an automatic exclusion from the selection procedure.

If you want to apply, you must register via the Internet on the following website and follow the instructions concerning the various stages of the procedure:

<https://ec.europa.eu/dgs/human-resources/seniormanagementvacancies/>

You must have a valid e-mail address. This will be used to confirm your registration as well as to remain in contact with you during the different stages of the procedure. Therefore, please keep the European Commission informed about any change in your e-mail address.

To complete your application, you need to upload a CV in PDF format, preferably using the Europass CV format<sup>7</sup>, and to fill out, online, a letter of motivation (maximum 8 000 characters). Your CV and your letter of motivation may be submitted in any of the official languages of the European Union.

It is in your interest to ensure that your application is accurate, thorough and truthful.

Once you have finished your online registration, you will receive an electronic mail confirming that your application has been registered. **If you do not receive a confirmation mail, your application has not been registered!**

Please note that it is not possible to monitor the progress of your application on-line. You will be contacted directly by the European Commission regarding the status of your application.

**Applications sent by e-mail will not be accepted.** If you require more information and/or encounter technical problems, please send an e-mail to: [HR-MANAGEMENT-ONLINE@ec.europa.eu](mailto:HR-MANAGEMENT-ONLINE@ec.europa.eu)

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<sup>6</sup> Regulation (EU) 2018/1725 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 October 2018 on the protection of natural persons with regard to the processing of personal data by the Union institutions, bodies, offices and agencies and on the free movement of such data, and repealing Regulation (EC) No 45/2001 and Decision No 1247/2002/EC (OJ L 295, 21.11.2018, p. 39).

<sup>7</sup> You can find information on how to create your Europass CV online at: <https://europa.eu/europass/en/create-europass-cv>

It is your responsibility to complete your online registration in time. We strongly advise you not to wait until the last few days before applying, since heavy internet traffic or a fault with your internet connection could lead to the online registration being terminated before you complete it, thereby obliging you to repeat the whole process. Once the deadline for the submission of registrations has passed, you will no longer be able to introduce any data. Late registrations will not be accepted.

### **Closing date**

The closing date for registration is **31/07/2025, 12.00 noon Brussels time**, following which registration is no longer possible.