BCBL OTM-R Policy

Introduction

The Basque Center on Cognition, Brain and Language is a world-class interdisciplinary research center for the study of cognition, brain and language jointly founded by Innobasque, Ikerbasque, UPV-EHU and the Government of Gipuzkoa.

The center is situated in Donostia-San Sebastián in the Basque Country (Spain). It was set up in December 2008, when the operations team started creating the necessary research environment—including administrative and technical support—and recruiting personnel, with a view to beginning on-site research in September 2009.

The specific aim of our research activity is to unravel the neurocognitive mechanisms involved in the acquisition, comprehension and production of language, with special emphasis on bilingualism and multilingualism.

Some of the areas we study include the processes involved in normal child language acquisition and second language learning in adults, as well as learning disorders, language disorders, language-related effects of aging and neurodegeneration, and language use in different social contexts.

The **BCBL**'s Board of Trustees endorsed the "European Charter & Code for Researchers" in May 2016. All along 2016, the **BCBL** underwent the Internal Analysis process of the "HR Strategy for Researchers" (HRS4R), and designed an Action Plan. As a result, in January 2017, the **BCBL** received "HR Excellence in Research" award.

At the **BCBL** all daily processes are addressed through a system, where a general map calls for the needed specific procedure. These internal processes are classified as:

- **Strategic processes (SP):** General and strategic processes supervising all the activity of the center.
- **Key processes (KP):** What we are supposed to do in the BCBL according to the Strategic processes governance.
- **Management processes (MP):** How we do each thing.

This is the process map of the **BCBL**. For each process, there is a description, a chart outlining the workflow to develop the task and the continuous improvement indicators based on the PDCA (Plan Do Check Act) methodology, along with the standardized forms wherever needed.

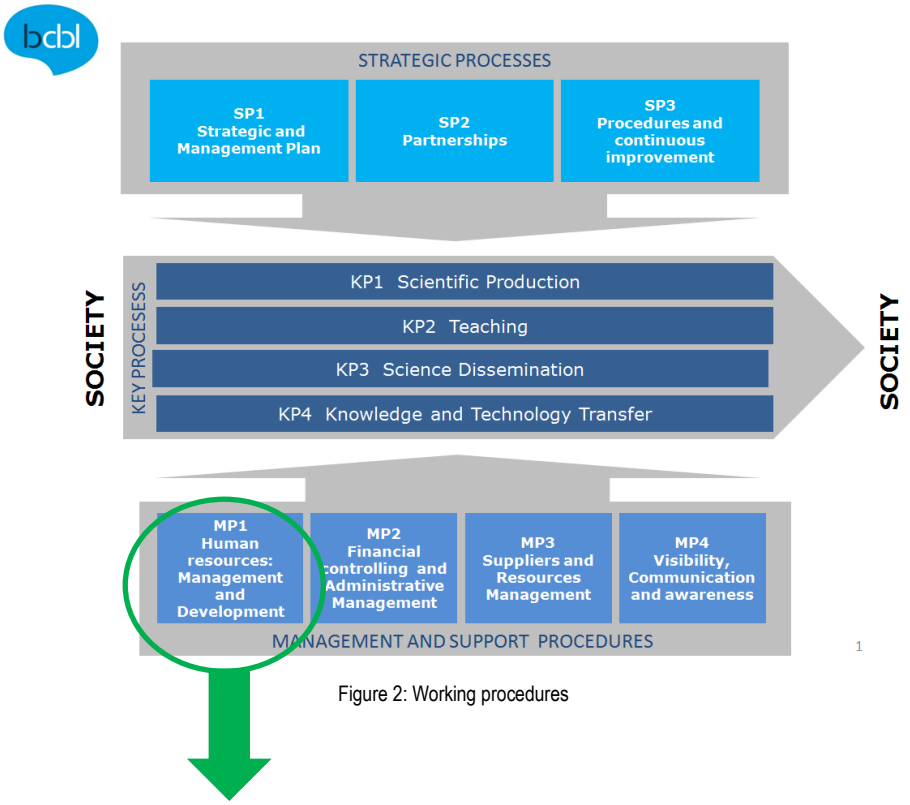

Figure 2: Working procedures

The **BCBL** has recently defined its OTM -R policy, as an improvement of our recruitment procedures designed and developed within our management model (MP1).

Objectives

The aim of this document is to explain the **BCBL**'s policy and methodology for the attraction, retention and motivation of talented researchers.

We are convinced that ensuring that the best applicant gets recruited, **Open, Transparent and Merit-based Recruitment** of researchers—and in general for all our staff—improves the effectiveness of our organisation and thus, our regional and national research systems. As a result, we believe implementing this methodology promotes optimal circulation of scientific knowledge.

Open Recruitment guarantees the equal opportunities principle. Our recruitment processes respect diversity, promoting non-discrimination due to reasons of race, colour, age, sex, marital status, ideology, political opinions, nationality, religion, sexual orientation, or any other personal, physical or social conditions among its professionals. Therefore job calls are widely published, both nationally and internationally.

Transparent Recruitment at the **BCBL** is guaranteed by the establishment of monitoring indicators and the quality control check performed at the **BCBL** every time a job call ends.

Merit-based Recruitment guarantees that applicants to any **BCBL** offer compete effectively for a job, based merely on their academic background, technical and professional skills, motivation, abilities and knowledge.

Context

The **BCBL** is a Centre of Excellence of the Basque Government (BERC Programme). This programme establishes that BERC centers must be able to attract excellent scientists and develop competitive research projects.

Our Strategic Plan 2018-2021 determines that research personnel that joins the center must be funded by public and private competitive calls, as a way to ensure that the best profiles assessed by external and totally independent panels—have evaluate them transparently.

The research personnel at the **BCBL** is divided into Research Groups. Each group is headed by one Group Leader/Principal Investigator. Groups are composed by Experienced Researchers (Staff Scientists, Postdoctoral researchers) and Early Stage Researchers (PhD students).

The scope of the OTM-R policy at the **BCBL** covers the recruitment procedures to incorporate the following profiles:

Early Stage Researchers (R1)

- Professional category: PhD students.
- Work term: 36-48 months.
- Requirements: excellent marks in undergraduate studies and Masters' degree; eligible for PhD fellowships; motivation for a **BCBL** research field; support or recommendation letters from previous academic authorities.
- Internal evaluation panel: Scientific Director, Group Leaders of the group/areas involved.

Experienced Researchers (R2)

- Professional category: Postdoctoral Researchers.
- Work term: 24-48 months.
- Requirements: PhD degree—from a known academic institution—in an area related to the research programme of the center; research interest aligned with the strategic objectives of the center; excellent metrics, support or recommendation letters from previous employers or colleagues.
- Internal evaluation panel: Scientific Director, Group Leaders of the group/areas involved.

Group Leaders (R3-R4)

- Professional category: Staff scientists/Senior Researchers.
- Work term: Tenure-track.
- Requirements: proven research experience in an area related to the research programme of the center; research interest aligned with the strategic objectives of the center; excellent metrics, support or recommendation letters from previous employers or colleagues.
- Internal evaluation panel: International Advisory Board, Scientific Director, Group Leaders of the group/areas involved.

BCBL Selection process

Highlights

- In 2024 BCBL launched the **BCBL** calls web-based tool. The OTM-R checklist and the OTM-R policy were accordingly updated.
- As a result, today our web-based tool guarantees that all OTM-R principles are fulfilled during every recruitment process at the **BCBL**.
- All the members of the **BCBL** involved in our internal recruitment processes have experience in the evaluation and assessment of applications, both internal and external (for instance, evaluating for funding agencies). All of them have received specific training on HRS4R and OTM-R principles.

Steps of the selection process (Web-based tool)

1. **Profile definition and Evaluation Committee appointment:**
   - Identification of the professional profile (requirements, expectations). Call fiches are generated.
   - Decision on job offer (general conditions, work terms).
   - Appointment of the Evaluation Committee (gender balanced, minimum 3 members)

2. **Publication:**
   - All positions are published on: **BCBL** website, social networks, Euraxess, ScienceCareers.eu portal, **BCBL** distribution lists, specialized media.

3. **First Evaluation (candidates' short list):**
   - Evaluation of candidates' eligibility and suitability.
   - Short list of selected candidates.

4. **Short List evaluation:**
   - Evaluation of short-listed candidates.
   - Job talks (presentation of their previous work and research plans)/Interviews
   - Decision on selected candidates.
   - Personalised feedback (report for candidate) on the process to all participants.

5. **Negotiation:**
   - Start of the hiring process.
   - "Being a researcher at the BCBL" document and "Employee Handbook" are sent to final candidates prior to negotiation and contract signature.
   - Preparation of the draft work contract.
   - Signing of work contract.

6. **Finalization of the Recruitment Process:**
   - All records are kept at the web based tool.
   - A quality check is performed right after the job position is completed.

RECRUITMENT PROCESS FROM A POTENTIAL CANDIDATE'S PERSPECTIVE

Applicants register on the platform

The candidate will receive an email with their personal password to access the platform. On the platform, the candidate will be able to edit and view their profile, apply to different calls, track the status of their applications, and access evaluation feedback.

Applicants fill out their data (Personal details, CV and motivation letter/research interests)

Applicants apply to a call (will have to add at least two referees contacts + Masters degree and Undergraduate degrees transcript of records*)

* only to apply for a R1 position

The candidate will receive a confirmation email. Regarding reference letters, referees will receive an email with instructions to upload their letters. The candidate will be able to see whether the letters have been uploaded.

FIRST EVALUATION

The evaluators will review all applications and select the candidates who will proceed to the next phase of the selection process.

FIRST EVALUATION REJECTED

If the candidate is not selected, they will receive an email with this information and will be able to view the feedback on the platform.

SHORTLIST EVALUATION

The evaluators will review all applications and select the candidates who will proceed to the next phase of the selection process.

SHORTLIST EVALUATION REJECTED

If the candidate is not selected, they will receive an email with this information and will be able to view the feedback on the platform.

INTERVIEW / JOB TALK

The shortlisted candidates will be invited for an interview (R1) or a job talk (a presentation of their previous work followed by an interview for R2, R3, and R4).

APPLICANT REJECTED AFTER INTERVIEW

If the candidate is not selected, they will receive an email with this information and will be able to view the feedback on the platform.

APPLICANT ACCEPTED AFTER INTERVIEW

The selected candidate will be informed that they have been selected.

Human Resources initiates the hiring process.

Human Resources will contact the selected candidate for hiring.

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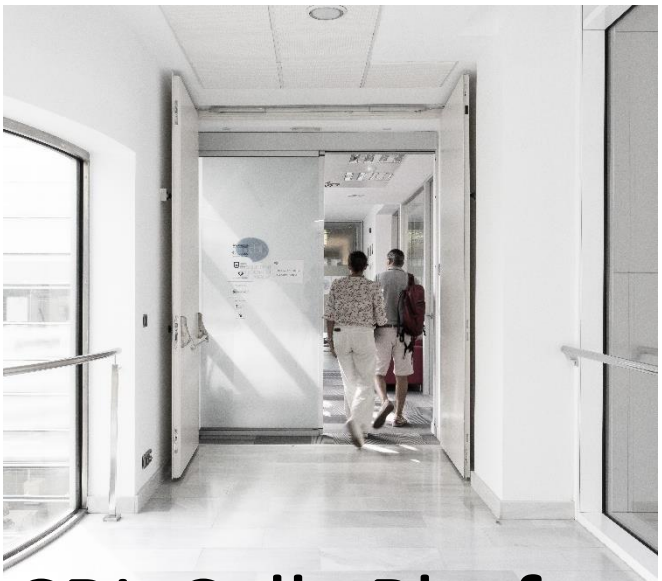

BCBL Calls Platform

User Guide

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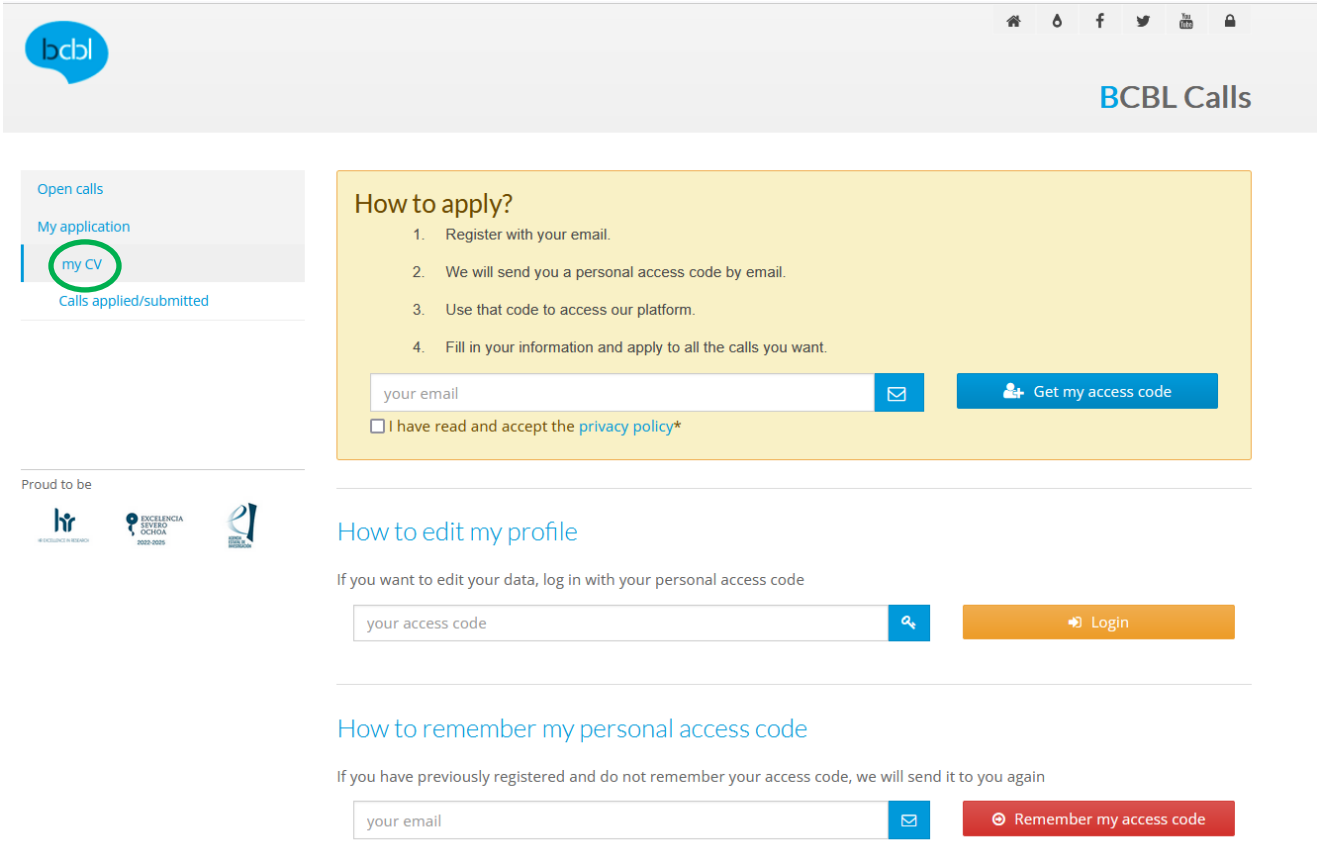
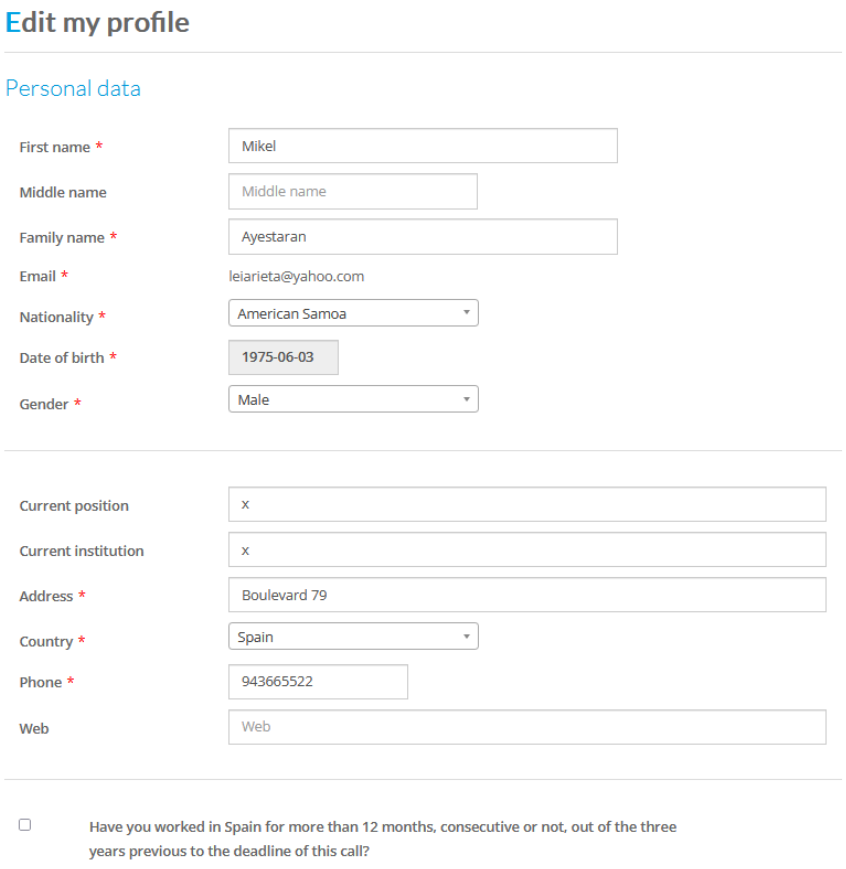
GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR APPLICANTS

How to apply

Register on the platform



Select and edit my profile



Undergraduate degree

Undergraduate degree *	dfad
University *	dfadf
Country *	Algeria
Year *	2000
Exceptions	

If you would apply to R1, these two fields are mandatory

Masters degree transcript of records	MASTER TEST
Upload masters degree transcript of records *	Browse... No file selected.
Undergraduate degree transcript of records	CV TEST
Upload undergraduate degree transcript of records *	Browse... No file selected.

Doctorate

Mandatory to fill out this section if you wish to apply for R2 (Recognised Researcher), R3 (Established Researcher) or R4 (Leading Researcher)

Doctorate	adad
University	adf
Country	Afghanistan
Year	2000
Exceptions	

Other degress

Other degress	

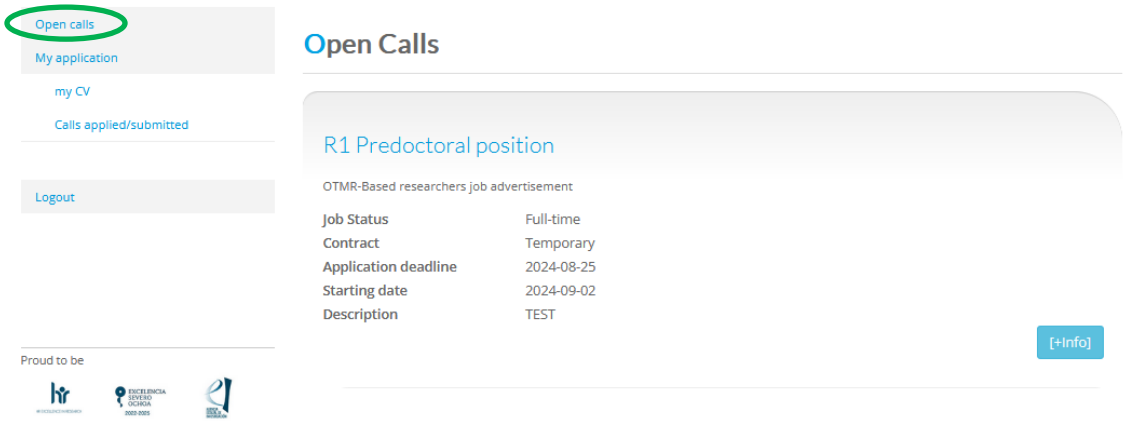
Research

Research Field *	fasdf
Research Area *	afadf
Your two most important research lines *	adfadf

Files

Current CV	CV TEST
Current motivation letter	MOTIVATION LETTER
Upload CV *	Browse... No file selected.
Research interest / motivation letter *	Browse... No file selected.

Apply to the selected call



Submit my application for this call

If you apply to R1, these two fields are mandatory

Upload masters degree transcript of records * Browse... No file selected.

Upload undergraduate degree transcript of records * Browse... No file selected.

To apply for this call, please provide at least two references.

We will request them via email to upload their letters.

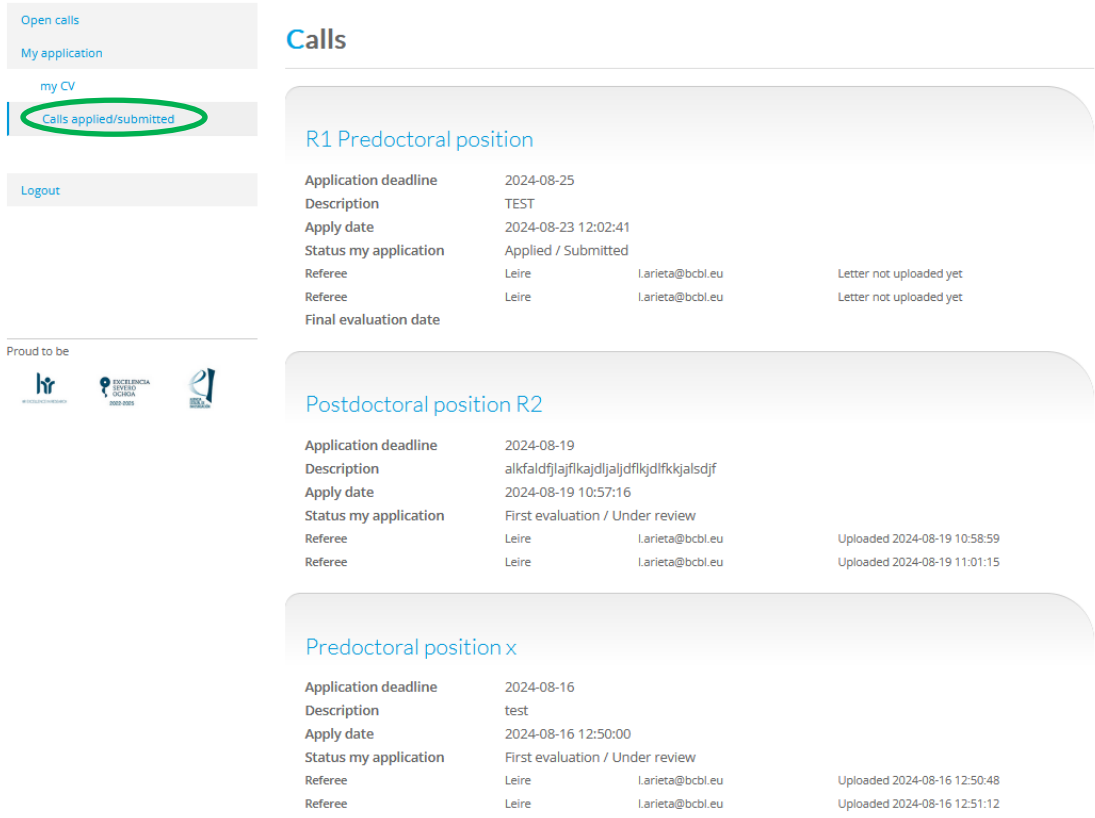
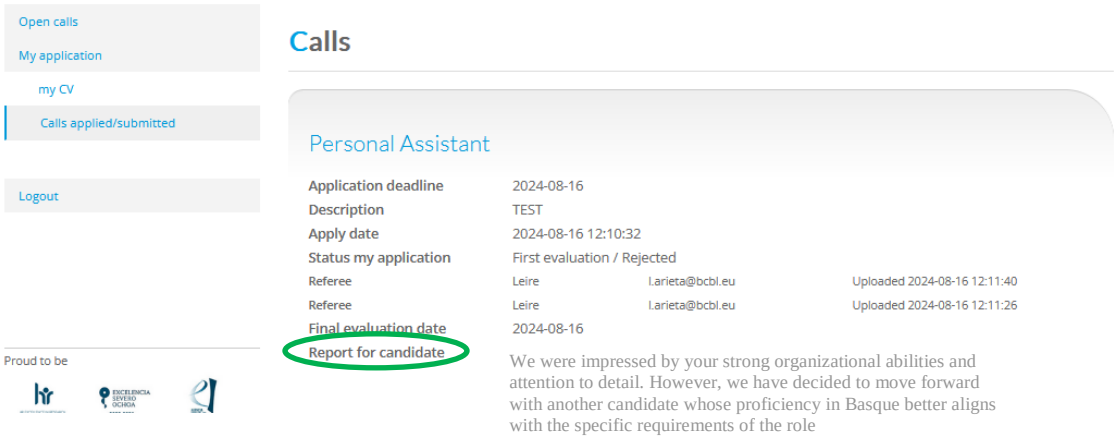
Referee 1 name *	Leire
Referee 1 email *	l.arieta@bcbl.eu
Referee 2 name *	Leire
Referee 2 email *	l.arieta@bcbl.eu

Optional

Referee 3 name	Referee 3 name
Referee 3 email	Referee 3 email
Referee 4 name	Referee 4 name
Referee 4 email	Referee 4 email

Apply Close

How to view the status of my applications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