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**Title**

Selecting early-career researchers: the influence of discourses of internationalisation and excellence on formal and applied selection criteria in academia / Channah Herschberg ; Yvonne Benschop ; Marieke van den Brink

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**Abstract**

This article examines how macro-discourses of internationalisation and excellence shape formal and applied selection criteria for early-career researcher positions at the meso-organisational and micro-individual levels, demonstrating how tensions between the various levels produce inequalities in staff evaluation. In this way, this article contributes to the literature on academic staff evaluation by showing that Selection Committee members do not operate in a vacuum, and that their actions are inextricably linked to the meso- and macro-context. This study draws on qualitative multi-level data that comprise institutional-level policies, recruitment and staff protocols, job postings and individual-level interviews and focus groups with Selection Committee members. Findings show that a majority of Selection Committee members consent to university policies and macro-discourses when evaluating early-career researchers, but a smaller group questions and resists these criteria. Furthermore, the analysis revealed four inequalities that emerge in the application of criteria and

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reflect on disciplinary differences between the Natural and Social Sciences. The article concludes that with only a few Committee members to critically question and resist formal selection criteria, they limit the pool of acceptable candidates to those who fit the narrow definition of the internationally mobile and excellent early-career researcher, which may exclude talented scholars. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Herschberg, Channah, E-Mail: [c.herschberg@fm.ru.nl](mailto:c.herschberg@fm.ru.nl)