Novice Educator Support and Training (NEST)

3.4 RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION METHODOLOGY FOR MENTORS AND NOVICE TEACHERS

3. MENTOR RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION – INTERVENTION GROUPS AND CONTROL GROUPS

Due date: 07/2021

Responsible partner: Teach for Romania

Dissemination level: Public

Deliverable description
The current Recruitment and Selection methodology has been built in order to provide a guideline for these processes, with a high degree of customisation for all NEST partners, and also to provide a guideline of building on the NEST Pilot to further projects and initiatives where there could be a bigger flexibility on the variables presented.

Authors
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NEST recruiting methodology

High Cost (HR needed)

Higher Selection Quality

Higher centralisation of the R&S Process
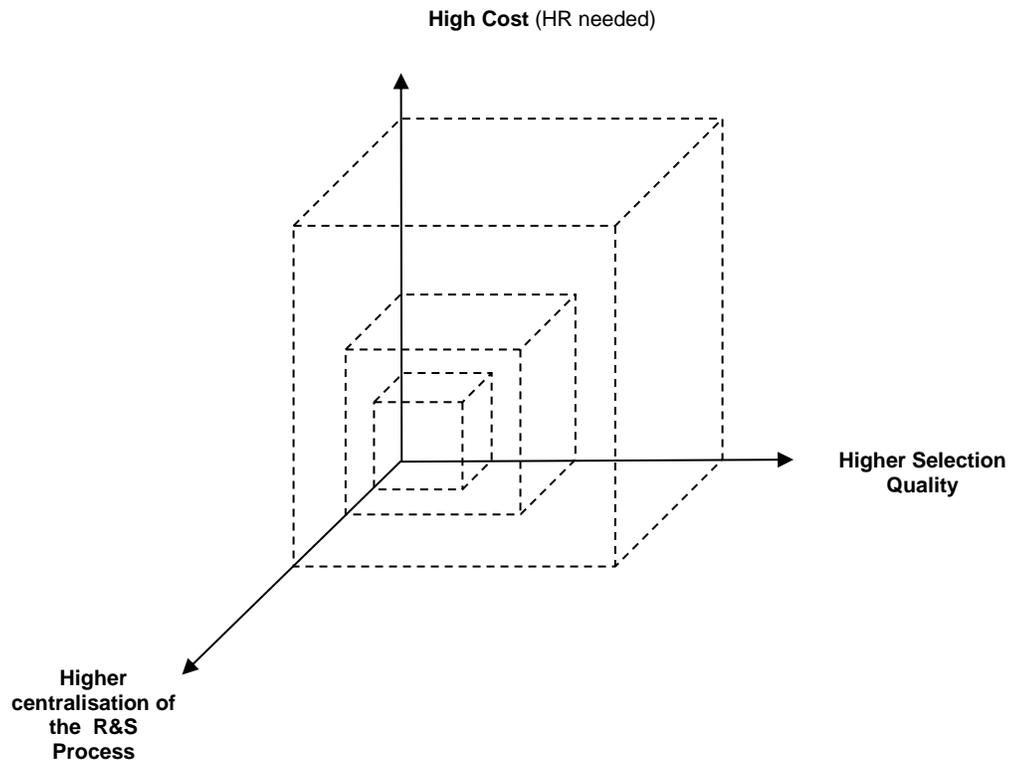
The proposed methodology works with 3 variables that we have found critical in the realities of each of the NEST Partners realities:
- the centralisation of decision-making of hiring;
- the constraints over the costs of the process
- the quality / reliability of the selection process;

The current document proposes three models to be used as guidelines in the creation of the national Recruitment & Selection methodologies, each of them with higher levels of centralisation / costs / reliability.

Further on, each partner will build upon these models, aiming to increase the reliability of the selection process, while staying in the constraints of the project costs and national reality of centralisation of processes in the educational system.

We acknowledge the limits of a theoretical model, where the three variables are proportional, so we encourage NEST partners to build models that are not necessarily following such a direct proportionality.

Briefly, the models are introduced below, while in the next chapters are further explained.

1. The Local Identification Model

- Created for the countries where the educational system is **decentralised** and in which the Teach for X partner would not be able to get involved in the evaluation of candidates.

- The local **institutional partners** (*schools, inspectorates, teachers associations, etc.*) are the ones responsible for bringing the right mentors in the program, so they are empowered with the evaluation and decision-making of possible candidates.

- The local institutional partners will **target and identify** the candidates that are already **demonstrating behaviours** aligned with the European Mentors Profile, inviting these mentors to join the NEST program.

- Thus, the recruitment & selection processes are united under a method of identifying and promoting the opportunity **exclusively** to teachers that are already aligned with the competences we require in the program.

- This is a **highly-decentralised** model, with **very low costs** for the Teach for X side, yet it also brings a **low level of reliability** of the selection process, as the quality of the evaluation process can vary greatly from one institutional partner to another. In order to address it, in the next chapters we are proposing a model of recognisable behaviours aligned with the Mentors Profile, for easier identification of the right candidates.

- Further steps can be done by the Teach for X partner to increase the reliability of the selection process, including, but not limited to, guides or workshops for decision makers or a further selection step, either as a group interview / individual case study / individual interview (*see model 3*).

- *ANNEX 1: The behaviours demonstrated by the right mentor candidates* - a tool for institutional partners to identify the mentors most fit for the NEST program.

2. The Mass-Recruitment & Automated Evaluation Model

- Created for the countries that will work with **high scales**, either **high numerical objectives** in the NEST program, or a situation where there is expected a **high number of candidates** for the program that needs an efficient approach.

- **Semi-centralised**, where the recruitment (*promo of the program*) is done mainly through the institutional partners, but where the Teach for X organisation can also promote the opportunity through its own channels. The candidates interested in the program will submit an online **Application Form**.

- The particularity of the model is an **automated selection process**, based on the European Mentors Profile, which evaluates the answers given by candidates in the Application Forms.

- The **selection reliability is higher** than in the Local Identification Model, but it can vary greatly based on the complexity level decided by each partner. As part of this Methodology we will propose a type of Application Form, yet in the customisation process that each Teach for X organisation will do, the Application Form can be made easier (*higher pass rate in the process, but lower selection model reliability*) or harder (*lower pass rate, but higher chances to have the right candidates - useful for realities where the interest for the program is expected to be very high*). Further steps can be done to increase reliability.

- *ANNEX 2: The NEST mentor Application Form & automated selection tool* - a tool for managing applications to the program, with a highly customisable automated selection process.

3. The Centralised Evaluation & High Reliability Model

- Created as an ideal benchmark, for realities where the cost of resources involved in Recruitment and Selection is not an issue, and where the focus stays on the **highest quality of candidates**.

- The recruitment process can vary, either through centralised mass-promotion or decentralised identification, but the **selection process is highly centralised**, with all candidates passing through similar selection stages delivered by evaluators previously prepared, using aligned selection tools.

- Following the European Mentors Profile, we are proposing as a selection process an **online interview**, with questions measuring all the 11 mindset related and competences related dimensions of the mentor profile.

- As it is a model built around high reliability, it can be further customised to lower its costs (externalising the selection process) or decrease its level of centralisation (a mixture with Model 1).

- **_ANNEX 3: The Interview Guide for NEST mentors_** - a tool to be customised by the partners that have the resources required to deliver individual interviews for all mentor candidates.

1. The Local Identification Model
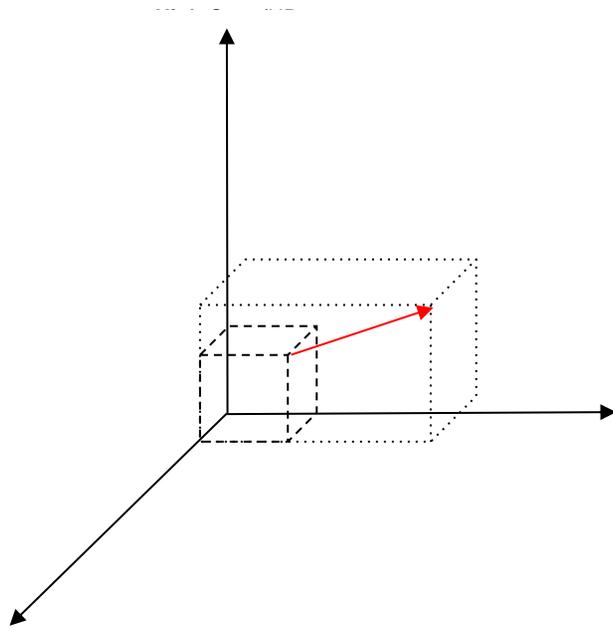
Model features:

- Highly decentralised, autonomy for schools
- Recruitment + Selection = Identification
- Identification done by institutional partners
- Low cost on *Teach for X* side
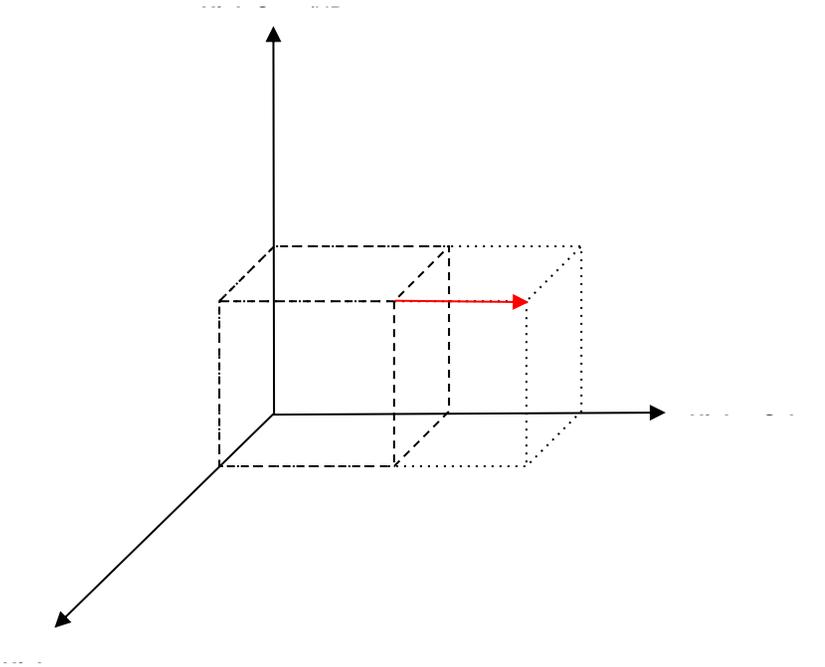- Low reliability of the selection model

Main challenge:

- ***How to increase the selection model reliability, while keeping it decentralised and with costs as low as possible?***

Possible solutions:

- *ANNEX 1: Checklist of behaviours that the right fit mentors have already demonstrated*. The document is to be used by the institutional partners in identifying and presenting the opportunity of becoming a NEST mentor only to the fit candidates.
- Introducing a further selection process, to be delivered by the institutional partners: group interview, case study, individual interview. Yet, this requires higher availability & resources from the institutional side and some training from the Teach side.
- Introducing a further selection process, delivered by the Teach for X side (*group interview, case study, individual interview*) increases both costs & reliability and is further detailed in the 3rd model, The Centralised Evaluation & High Reliability one.

2. The Mass-Recruitment & Automated Evaluation Model

Model features:

- Fit for high objectives and a reality with a high number of candidates for the Mentor roles;

- Recruitment done both centralised (mass promotion) and decentralised (institutional partners)

- No matter the recruitment source, the candidates submit an online Application Form

- The evaluation process is centralised, thus increasing the reliability of the selection model

- The selection is automatised, in order to keep a low cost on the Teach for X side.

Main challenge:

- *How to increase the selection model reliability, while keeping it low-cost / automatised and with the most useful pass rate of candidates?*

Possible solutions:

- *ANNEX 2: Application form and automated selection tool*. The tool is to be used by partners that work with high numerical objectives in NEST and that expect a high number of candidates. It is currently made for a high pass rate of candidates.
- To further increase the selection quality, the Application Form can be made more complex (*multiple aspects of the same competency*) or harder to score (*with less socially desirable answers*) or open questions (*that require manual evaluation*).
- To further increase the selection quality, the Automated Selection Tool that accompanies the Application Form can be customised with multiple ranges (1 to 5 instead of 1 to 3) and a more complex final decision formula or even an not-automated decision making (*yet, that increases the capacity needed from Teach for X side to manage selection*).

3. The Centralised Evaluation & High Reliability Model
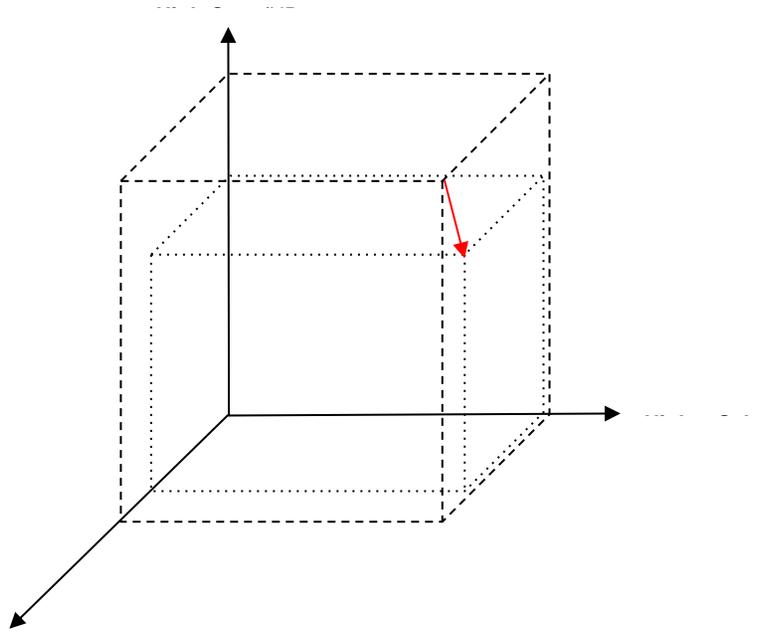
Model features:

- Highest selection quality / reliability model
- High cost on *Teach for X* side, as the selection process is 100% centralised in the organisation
- The model is created mainly as a benchmark for further reference of a starting point in the customisation of a national R&S model, in the realities that will strive for high quality and have the capacity to manage it's evaluation processes, probably most fit for partners with low numerical NEST objectives.

Main challenge:

- *How to keep the selection model reliability as high as possible, while heavily cost cutting?*

Possible solutions:

- *ANNEX 3: Individual Interview Guide*. The document is to be used by Teach for X partners that have the capacity to have a 45'-60' interview that verifies all 11 mindset-related and competencies-related aspects of the Mentor Profile .
- In order to decrease the costs of HR capacity, the selection process can be somehow decentralised (*mixture with the 1st Model*) or externalised to a recruitment agency (lower HR cost from Teach for X side, but possibly higher financial cost).
- Another option to lower the costs of HR capacity needed for the selection process is a mixture with the 2nd Model, including an Application Form to easily screen out unfit candidates and then invite to interviews just the ones with high chance to pass.

ANNEX 1 - Behaviours demonstrated by the right mentor candidates

Checklist to be completed by institutional partners:

- The teacher asks open questions, listens actively and understands and supports beginning teachers using examples from his experience
- The teacher has a constant concern for self-improvement, participates in different conferences/ workshops/ seminars about teaching, education and learning strategies for supporting the professional growth of others and is willing to integrate feedback in order to improve.
- The teacher does not have a superior attitude and shows respect and support for all people, expressing acceptance and openness and believes that all people can reach their potential.
- The mentor is patient and understands that growth is a process, respecting the particularities in the learning process
- The teacher wants to know as much as possible about his colleagues, asking questions, getting to know them personally and professionally, being open to different perspectives
- The teacher doesn't back down from possible conflicts or difficult conversations, approaching it with courage, empathy and transparency
- The mentor doesn't have a fixed mindset and is not attached to his own ideas, being open to integrate new methods.
- The teacher uses evidence-based approaches and actions when stating an argument
- The teacher understands the importance of self-reflection and is using it in their learning process
- The teacher listens to other's perspective without judging
- The teacher uses digital instruments in the learning process.

Competencies from European Mentor Profile	Behavior observed by institutional partners
The mentor is EMPATHIC - The mentor can empathize with the beginning teacher	The teacher asks open questions, listens actively and understands and supports beginning teachers using examples from his experience
The mentor is OPEN FOR PERSONAL & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT - The mentor is authentic in the relationship. He is open to personal and professional development	The teacher has a constant concern for self-improvement, participates in different conferences/ workshops/ seminars about teaching, education and learning strategies for supporting the professional growth of others and is willing to integrate feedback in order to improve.
The mentor is RESPECTFUL - The mentor accepts the beginning teacher as a person unconditionally	The teacher does not have a superior attitude and shows respect and support for all people, expressing acceptance and openness and believes that all people can reach their potential.
The mentor is TRUSTFUL - The mentor has confidence in the process and does not expect immediate results	The mentor is patient and understands that growth is a process, respecting the particularities in the learning process
The mentor is CURIOUS - The mentor is sincerely curious about the mentee	The teacher wants to know as much as possible about his colleagues, asking questions, getting to know them personally and professionally, being open to different perspectives
The mentor is COURAGEOUS - The mentor is courageous and engages in difficult conversations	The teacher doesn't back down from possible conflicts or difficult conversations, approaching it with courage, empathy and transparency

The mentor is open for FREEDOM AND FLEXIBILITY - The mentor is open to discuss different approaches and can adapt its support accordingly	The mentor doesn't have a fixed mindset and is not attached to his own ideas, being open to integrate new methods.
The mentor is EVIDENCE BASED - The mentor collects, presents, and suggests evidence-based approaches and actions in mentoring conversations.	The teacher uses evidence-based approaches and actions when stating an argument
Self-reflection- The mentor understands the importance of the self-reflection process in their role as a mentor	The teacher understands the importance of self-reflection and is using it in their learning process
Active listening - The mentor understands that listening is an important part in the learning process	The teacher listens to other's perspective without judging
Digital literacy digital pedagogy - The mentor is willing to use technology in order to improve the quality of the educational process.	The teacher uses digital instruments in the learning process.

ANNEX 2 - Application Form & automated evaluation Tool

Starting from the European Mentor's profile, which is a competencies based profile, we propose a simplified selection method that can be implemented by every partner.
We propose an **online application form** that can be completed by every candidate that wants to become a mentor in the NEST project.
An online application form provides an objective and transparent approach to the selection process, it can be scalable and it provides an equitable way to evaluate candidates based on a competencies profile.
The online form is structured into four parts (personal information, context, mindset and competences):

- Personal information (eg: contact details) are necessary, but evidently, it will not be assessed.
- In the **context – related dimension of the mentor's profile,** the must have category represents the common criteria that are needed in all partner countries and if a candidate isn't compliant to every statement from the must have category, he/ she will be rejected automatically.
- The second component - **mindset – related dimension of the mentor profile** includes all the elements related to the attitude of the potential mentor. These are the mindsets which are needed to optimally achieve the 6 key pillars described in the mentoring framework. This category is further split into two dimensions – **must have** and **nice to have** criteria.
- The third component is **competence related to the dimension of the mentor profile** (skills, abilities and attitudes).

For each competency category (context, competence, must have, nice to have), we included one question in the application form.

The tool will be translated and customised for each partners' reality, as the must-have and nice-to-have competences or mindset dimensions differ. Further, it will be duplicated for the control group, as the selection process should remain similar with the intervention group.

Selection decision

In order to have an objective selection decision, each applicant will have a final score based on the application form, in this **selection tool**. Each competency has one question. For each application, we will automatically receive a final score and a score for each competency. If the applicant has an answer that scores 1 for any competency that is in the "must have" category, the applicant will be automatically rejected.

If a partner has more applicants than needed, they can select the candidates with the most suitable score.

ANNEX 3 - Interview Guide

Here you can see the **interview guide proposed**, with the evaluation grids.

ANNEX 4 - European Mentors Profile

Annexed to the current document for easy access and reference.

Novice Teachers - Recruitment and selection methodology

Criteria for selecting novice teachers:

	Context – related dimension of the teacher profile
	Key criteria for teachers according to the NEST application
	The novice teacher has maximum of 2 teaching experience
Must have	The novice teacher is an active teacher in a vulnerable school
	The novice is participating on a voluntary basis - an authentic motivation to be part of the project
	The novice teacher has to teach in the same ISCED level as the teachers in the control group
	The novice teacher has to teach in the same ISCED level as the mentors

	Competences related to dimension of the teacher profile		
	Self-leadership	**Self-improvement**	The novice teacher has a constant concern in order to make changes to self-improve (cognitive, social and emotional)
	Resilience	**Mindset**	The novice teacher believes that every child can reach their potential

Nice to have	Building relationships	Receiving feedback	The novice teacher is open to receive feedback in order improve their personal and professional skills
		Empathy	The novice teacher shows compassion when talking about their students/parents/community

The criteria for the participants in the control group and participants in the intervention are the same.

Recruitment and selection steps – novice teacher

1. Identify and attract the right candidates.
2. Online application form with eligibility criterias and nice to have competencies.
3. The most suitable online applications are selected to be participants in the control group and participants in the intervention group.

Basic online application form with:
- *Contact details*
- *Eligibility criterias*
- *Nice to have competencies (one question per competence)*
- *Open question "which is the name of your mentor"*