

# Applicant Relationship Management

## *A 21st Century Paradigm to Transform Talent Acquisition in Support of Sustainable Corporate Governance*

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### **Abstract**

**Frame of the research:** *This study contributes to the intersection of talent acquisition, corporate governance, and sustainability scholarship. It extends Customer Relationship Management (CRM) theory into Human Resource Management, positioning recruitment as a governance function with direct implications for ESG performance and stakeholder stewardship.*

**Purpose of the paper:** *This paper introduces Applicant Relationship Management (ARM) as a comprehensive, relationship-centric paradigm for talent acquisition. ARM is contrasted with traditional Applicant Tracking Systems (ATS) and Candidate Relationship Management (Candidate CRM) platforms, proposing a fundamental shift from transactional elimination to relational cultivation of applicants as stakeholders.*

**Methodology:** *The study adopts a conceptual approach, synthesising CRM theory, recruitment scholarship, and corporate governance literature to develop the ARM framework. Preliminary practitioner evidence from a pilot platform provides illustrative validation of the framework's practical applicability.*

**Results:** *ARM is presented as a comprehensive lifecycle model that embeds transparency, accountability, and ethical stewardship throughout talent engagement. The framework repositions applicants as active stakeholders in reciprocal value creation, introduces co-creative assessment, and specifically addresses the systematic re-engagement of "Silver Medallists", past applicants who demonstrated potential but were not selected, as a distinctive value proposition absent from existing systems.*

**Research limitations:** *This paper presents ARM as a conceptual framework; systematic empirical validation across diverse organisational contexts remains a critical next step. The preliminary practitioner evidence derives from a limited sample during an early validation phase.*

**Managerial implications:** *HR leaders should reconceptualise recruitment as relationship stewardship rather than process execution. Technology vendors must develop platforms supporting co-creative assessment and Silver Medallist re-engagement. Organisational leadership should recognise talent acquisition as a governance responsibility with brand, ESG, and regulatory implications.*

**Originality of the paper:** *This is the first study to formally propose Applicant Relationship Management as a governance-integrated paradigm, extending CRM principles to applicant stewardship. ARM's unique contributions include co-creative assessment, formalised Silver Medallist re-engagement, and*

*alignment with UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 8 and SDG 10).*

**Keywords:** *Applicant Relationship Management, Talent Acquisition, Recruitment, ESG, Silver Medallists, Applicant Re-engagement, Sustainable Development Goals*

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