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## INSTRUCTIONS FOR EVALUATING plans of intent – Academy Professors September Call 2019

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### 1 Academy Professor funding instrument

The aim of a research post as Academy Professor is to facilitate full-time scientific research for internationally leading-edge researchers. Academy Professors are expected to greatly contribute to the progress of research and develop a creative research environment. Their duties include (without separate compensation) supervision of thesis and dissertation writers and teaching associated with the research, covering 5% of annual working hours.

The applicant is a researcher. Posts as Academy Professor are intended for leading-edge researchers for fixed-term, full-time research and related tasks. Academy Professors pursue their research plans, supervise their team and provide guidance to junior researchers.

The Academy Professor's term is five years. Successful applicants can – having received the decision on their salary funding – submit a separate application for a grant for research costs to the relevant research council. This grant can cover research costs, salary costs of a research team, national and international collaboration, and mobility.

The Academy Professor funding call follows a two-stage review process that takes about 15 months in total. Selection is based on thorough international peer review of the plans of intent and thereafter of the full applications. On the basis of your review, a subcommittee appointed by the Board of the Academy of Finland selects the Academy Professor candidates for the second stage. More information on the Academy Professors is available at <http://www.aka.fi/en/about-us/scientists-behind-the-research/academy-professors/>.



## 2 Evaluation and rating

### 2.1 Reviewing the plan of intent

WRITTEN REVIEWS: Evaluative comments are particularly valuable to the decision-making body. After the funding decisions have been made, the applicants can access the final review on their own application. The review provides also the applicant with important feedback. Reviewers should therefore:

- write evaluative rather than descriptive comments
- write comments for each item and sub-item
- write coherent comments.

NUMERICAL EVALUATION: Only the final rating is given numerically. There should be consistency between the numerical rating and the written comments. Please rate the plan of intent using the scale below:

- 6 = outstanding: demonstrates exceptional novelty and innovation; potential to substantially advance science at global level; high-gain project that can include risks
- 5 = excellent: extremely good in international comparison – no significant elements to be improved
- 4 = very good: generally sound plan, but contains a few elements that could be improved
- 3 = good: generally sound plan, but contains important elements that should be improved
- 2 = fair: contains flaws; in need of substantial modification or improvement
- 1 = poor: contains severe flaws that are intrinsic to the proposed project or the application

### 2.2 Items of review

There are four main items in the review of the plan of intent: (1) Research Project, (2) Principal Investigator, (3) Overall Assessment and (4) Final Rating.

#### 1. *Research Project*

Assess the scientific quality, ground-breaking nature, ambition and scientific impact of the research project. Assess also feasibility and implementation (incl. ethical aspects) of the plan.

#### 2. *Principal Investigator*

Assess the scientific productivity, originality and researcher education displayed by the PI, especially during the last 5–10 years. Assess the PI's status and recognition within the international scientific community.

*The Academy of Finland has signed DORA - San Francisco Declaration on Research Assessment, and is committed to promote its recommendations such as not to use journal-based metrics, such as Journal Impact Factors, as a surrogate measure of the quality of individual research articles, to assess an individual scientist's contributions. <https://sfdora.org/read/>*



### *3. and 4. Overall assessment and Final rating*

Please give an overall assessment and a final rating for the plan of intent including the strengths and weaknesses as well as any additional comments. You are also welcome to comment on the effects and impact beyond academia. However, impact beyond academia should not affect the scientific review/rating of the application. Instead, it will be considered as an additional factor when making the funding decisions.

## 3 Confidentiality and ethics

In Finland, according to the Act on the Openness of Government Activities (621/1999), research plans, abstracts, progress reports and reviews are confidential documents. Application documents should therefore be handled and stored with due care and confidentiality.

The Academy of Finland is committed to following the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity for responsible conduct of research. The guidelines also apply to the process of reviewing funding applications, research programmes and scientific disciplines. All reviews must be handled confidentially, competently and impartially, based on the criteria set for the review process. Care must be taken to ensure that the review is conducted in accordance with general stipulations about conflict of interest. It is required to give prior notice to ensure no conflicts of interest exist if a reviewer has economic or other affiliations or significantly different schools of thought in relation to the applicant under review.

As a reviewer, you are not allowed to disclose any information concerning application documents or evaluations to outsiders, nor are you allowed to use this confidential information to your own benefit or anyone else's benefit or disadvantage. You may not reveal to outsiders that you are assessing the research plan of a particular researcher. If you are contacted by anyone, including the applicant, who has questions about the application or reviews, please advise them to contact the Academy of Finland.

Reviewers are guilty of research misconduct if they misappropriate research ideas from applications. The quality of the review is not a research-ethical issue unless the review has been conducted carelessly, which may give an appearance of a review that deliberately either underrates or overrates the applicants under review.

Disclosing the contents of research plans to third parties or contacting applicants personally without explicit agreement to do so are also regarded as instances of inappropriate behavior on the part of reviewers.

Once the review has been completed, you are required to destroy all application documents and any copies made of them, or return them to the Academy. Confidentiality must also be maintained after the review process has been completed.



Review reports are confidential documents, but applicants will have access to the final review on their own application after the funding decisions have been made.

After the funding decisions have been made, the Academy of Finland will publish a list of names, current positions and institutions of all individual reviewers and panel members used in the call. In addition, the applicants will see the names of all panel members in the panel review report. If requested, the names of reviewers giving the draft reviews will also be disclosed (Finnish Act on the Openness of Government Activities).

## 4 Conflicts of interest

As a reviewer you are required to declare any personal interests according to the following criteria. You must disqualify yourself if you can in any way benefit from the approval or rejection of the application. You must also disqualify yourself in the following circumstances:

- You have collaboration with the applicant (e.g. you have co-authored and published an article or manuscript with the applicant in the past three years; you have been involved in the preparation of the application; or you are involved in the publication or application of the results).
- You have been a superior, subordinate or instructor of the applicant in the past three years.
- You are currently applying for the same post as the applicant.
- You are currently applying for funding from the Academy from the same funding instrument.
- The applicant is a close person to you. A close person is:
  - a) your spouse (also *de facto*), child, grandchild, sibling, parent, grandparent or a person otherwise close to you (e.g. fiancé/e or a close friend), as well as their spouses (also *de facto*)
  - b) a sibling of your parent or his/her spouse (also *de facto*), a child of your sibling, or your previous spouse (also *de facto*)
  - c) a child, grandchild, sibling, parent or grandparent of your spouse as well as their spouses (also *de facto*), or a child of a sibling of your spouse
  - d) or a half-relative comparable to the above-mentioned persons.

You are also disqualified if your impartiality may be endangered in any other way, or if you feel that you have a conflict of interest and are therefore disqualified to review the application.

If you identify any conflicts of interest, please notify the Academy as soon as possible.



## 5 Declaration for the reviewer to accept

Please acknowledge that by accepting the task of a reviewer you guarantee not to disclose the information you receive as reviewer and not to use it for anybody's benefit or disadvantage as stipulated in section 3 above (Confidentiality and Ethics). Further, you affirm that you will immediately notify the Academy if you have a conflict of interest in one or more applications.

You hereby give permission for the Academy of Finland to publish your details (first name, surname, organisation) on the Academy's website after the funding decision has been made.



## 6 The Academy's online services – a short guide

Supported web browsers: Internet Explorer (IE) 7 and 8; Mozilla Firefox (FF) 3.0 and later; Mac Safari 4 and later.

### 1. Finding your review requests and applications

- Go to the Review requests tab on the welcome screen (Desktop menu). You will find both your open (not submitted) and submitted reviews under the Reviews menu, on respective tabs.
- To read all applications, click on Download ZIP file of panel applications. The application PDF files are saved in one compressed ZIP file.
- To read general documents for the panel members, click the link of the document on the file list.

### 2. Writing and editing the review

- Click on Edit on your list of reviews to open the form with which you enter the review.
- Click on the application number/research topic link if you want to open the application to read, print or save it (can be saved as a PDF file). There is also a link on the form to the guidelines on how to evaluate applications. Click the Save button every now and then because connection will be closed automatically after 30 minutes of inactivity. After saving, you can safely Log out to enter the review later.

### 3. Submitting the review

- Click on the Submit button on the review.
- After submitting, you cannot edit the review unless requesting it from the Academy's science adviser.

### Updating your personal information (voluntary)

You can update your contact information, email address, password etc. at any time on the Basic data tab under the My account menu. The Academy of Finland warmly welcomes your updates to your information on the Expertise tab and uploading of your CV file on the CV tab. The information helps us find the best application reviewers also for future calls.

Link to the complete online services guide:

[http://www.aka.fi/globalassets/awanhat/documents/ohjeet/verkkoasiointi\\_tmk\\_ohje\\_en.pdf](http://www.aka.fi/globalassets/awanhat/documents/ohjeet/verkkoasiointi_tmk_ohje_en.pdf)