

Research Council for Biosciences and Environment

## **Academy Projects (October 2010 call)**

### **Funding to 33 projects**

At its meeting on 9 June 2011, the Academy of Finland's Research Council for Biosciences and Environment decided to fund 33 applications for Academy Project funding. The Research Council could fund 18 per cent of the reviewed applications. This was reached by lowering the Academy's funding contribution by 5–10 per cent for the applications where the Academy's funding contribution exceeded EUR 600,000. The funding contribution varied between EUR 250,000 and 930,000; the average funding was EUR 590,000. The Academy's funding contribution of the total costs is 64–80 per cent. The Research Council placed five applicants on a reserve list. If an applicant who has been granted funding decides not to accept it, the funding can be granted to an applicant on the reserve list (in the order of preference on the list), taking into account the Research Council's budget.

The Research Council has decided not to review (and, consequently, not to fund) six Academy Project applications. Five of these applications were rejected on the grounds that the applicants already had ongoing funding in form of general research grants. The Research Council considered that there was no particular reason to fund another project through the same funding instrument. One applicant worked in a Centre of Excellence that is in its first three-year term. Academy Project funding is not granted to such researchers.

### **Decision notification by email**

All applicants will receive an automatic email notification of the decision. After receiving the notification, applicants can log in to the Academy's online services and read the decision on their application. Applicants can also read the panel review on their application.

Before the funds can be paid, the principal investigator and the site of research must confirm that they will accept the funding. The confirmation is done in the Academy's online services within six weeks from the decision date. By confirming that they will receive the funding, the principal investigator and the site of research accept the whole funding decision and commit themselves to complying with the conditions set by the Academy for the use of funds.

### **Decisions based on international peer review**

The applications for Academy Project funding are reviewed at the Academy by using international peer review. The reviewers read the applications via the



Academy's online services, draft preliminary reviews of the applications and convene at the Academy to draw up panel review reports based on the preliminary reviews and the discussion at the panel meeting. A panel drafts one panel review for each application.

The applications for Academy Project funding were reviewed by eight panels with a total of 71 members. Apart from these applications, the panels also reviewed the applications for research posts as Postdoctoral Researchers and Academy Research Fellows as well as the applications for development research submitted to the Research Council for Biosciences and Environment. Where necessary, the panels consulted external experts for support reviews.

The Research Council for Biosciences and Environment decided on the composition of the panels at its meeting on 22 March 2011. The Research Council processed the applications for Academy Project funding in two drafting groups and in the executive group. Research Council members who applied for Academy Project funding were disqualified to process all applications submitted to this call. There were also individual cases when a member was disqualified, and this was taken into account in the processing of the applications and in decision-making.

The Academy's decisions on research funding are based on the highest possible scientific quality. In the international panel review, 16 applications received the highest grade 6 and 42 applications the second highest grade 5. The Research Council decided to fund the applications that received the highest grade (with one exception) and 40 per cent of the applications that received the second highest grade. In addition, the Research Council decided to fund one application that received the grade 4. This decision was based on research-policy grounds.

Apart from scientific quality, the Research Council also paid attention to the Academy's research-policy objectives, such as advancing women's research careers and supporting research that serves Strategic Centres for Science, Technology and Innovation. Only 25 per cent of the applications for Academy Project funding were submitted by women; however, women accounted for 30 per cent of those who were granted funding. Nine applications had a recommendation letter from a Strategic Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation and five of these applicants received a higher grade than 4. The Research Council decided to grant funding to the consortium "Novel selective carbohydrate oxidizing enzymes for targeted polymer and fiber modification", where Professor Maija Tenkanen, FiDiPro Professor Emma Master and Research Professor Kristiina Kruus work at different sites and are involved in the Forest Cluster Strategic Centre for Science, Technology and Innovation.



The funding decisions are available on the Academy's website at [www.aka.fi/eng](http://www.aka.fi/eng) > For researchers > Funding decisions (via search function: Funding source: Research Council for Biosciences and Environment; Call: 2010 Academy Projects). More information is available from Science Advisers Jaana Lehtimäki, tel. +358 9 7748 8373, and Kyösti Lempa, tel. +358 9 7748 8248.