

ask & apply

We start at 13.00



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Winter call 2026: what's new

Ask & Apply webinar, 2 October 2025

Some guidelines

1. First the presentation – then questions and discussion
The presentation takes 10 to 15 minutes and we have a plenty of time for questions and discussion
2. The webinar will be recorded and made available online for two weeks
3. You can write questions during the presentation on Q&A
Start your question with "ARF" (Academy Research Fellows) or "AP" (Academy Projects) depending on the funding opportunity your question concerns

Ask & Apply webinars in 2025

1. Research security

- Tuesday 30 September at 14.00-15.00 - recording available soon

2. Winter call 2026: what's new

- Thursday 2 October at 13.00-14.00

Timeline for the winter call 2026

- Calls have now been published on our website
- Calls (online services) will open on October 15 and close on **November 12, 2025**
- Open for application:
 - Academy Project Funding, Academy Research Fellowships
- **HINT:** You can **submit** your application early and edit/supplement until the deadline
- NB: Academy Programme for Sport Science and Physical Activity (ACTIVE) is open around the same time as winter call 2025, but as a separate call



What's new?

What's new for both Projects and Fellows

- The [research security assessment](#) is a mandatory **appendix**. Use the template provided.
- In the **research plan**, you must describe how in the implementation of your project:
 - **good scientific practice** will be followed
 - **gender equality and nondiscrimination** will be promoted
 - the RCF's guidelines on open access to research results and on the **responsible management of research data** will be followed
- A **report** on a completed or ongoing RCF-funded project must be submitted by the set deadline
- **Commitment from the site of research** must be given within 14 days of the closing date
- Some panel titles, descriptions and keywords have been revised, see [Panel structure for 2026 winter call](#)
- [Policies of scientific councils](#) will be updated 10 October, 2025

What's new for 2026 Academy Research Fellowships (ARF)

- 4-year funding (1 Sep 2026 – 31 Aug 2030), can cover applicant's own salary, salary costs of possible research team and other research costs, **the max number of salary months not restricted**
- Cost estimate must be based on objectives of funding scheme and project, **max. RCF funding granted €700,000**
- Who can apply: applicant's 1st doctoral degree within 2–7 years of the start of the calendar year closest to the application deadline
- Exception in 2026 winter call: applicant's first doctoral degree certificate dated **1 Jan 2019–31 Jan 2024**
- For details, see the ARF [Call Announcement](#)

What's new for 2026 Academy Projects (AP) 1/2

#1 ONGOING FUNDING

- **Funding cannot** be granted if there is **ongoing funding** (= funding period overlaps) i.e. if applicant is *Academy Research Fellow*, PI or co-PI for *Centre of Excellence* or co-PI for *Academy Project*

Exceptions:

- If funding period has been extended until 31.12.2026 **OK**
- If funding period has been extended due to legal family, (non-)military or health reasons beyond 1.1.2027 **OK**

What's new for 2026 Academy Projects (AP) 2/2

#2 SALARY OF PI

- **Salary for PI** needs to be justified and can be applied in a four-year project for **6 months in total** (1,5 months / year), including project management, doctoral thesis supervision and research work
 - In online service: Please only select '**Principal investigator**' category in the 'Salaries' section of the 'Funding for the project' tab

Best practices

- **Read the call text, panel descriptions and scientific council policies carefully**
- **Start early, submit early**
 - Remember: You can submit your application and supplement/update until the deadline
 - Take note of and respect internal university deadlines for budgets, etc.
 - Obtain letters of collaboration in time for the deadline
- Pay attention to your application's topic, key words, abstract and public description

Questions?

- You can **type your questions in the Q&A**
- Contact [our helpdesk](http://www.aka.fi/feedback) (www.aka.fi/feedback)
- Also see our [winter call FAQ](#) and [A–Z index of application guidelines](#)
- [Subscribe to our newsletter](#)

Q&A

Academic age

How does the research council define/assess 'early-career researcher'? Are research fellows generally of a certain age, or can they also be people who have started research work later in life? Are young people given preference?

ARF minimum duration

The duration of the fellowship is 4 years, can an applicant apply only for 2 or 3 years ?

ARF: Research team salaries

Can a postdoctoral fellowship application include funding/salary for two postdocs and one doctoral candidate? One postdoc as the PI (four years of salary) and the second postdoc as the senior researcher with an entry-level postdoc salary (four years of entry-level postdoc salary). Also, a doctoral researcher for four years.

Merits of AP consortium leaders

In a consortium project, do the subprojects PIs also need to be merited PhDs?

Collaboration letters

How many collaboration letters can be included, and how are they expected to be attached in the SARA system?

Mobility

Should projects include mobility? Does it need to be agreed on and should we have an invitation letter ready even if the mobility would be late in the project timetable (years from now)?

How much weight do you place on mobility in applications? Is it possible to demonstrate and build international networks through other means (e.g., short visits, co-authorships) if family reasons don't allow for longer absences? Is it necessary to justify in the application if one doesn't plan to spend months abroad?

Pre-prints in publication list

I would like to ask about pre-prints: Is there a spot for them in the publication list, since they are not yet published peer-reviewed articles, but are usually encouraged in the spirit of open science?

Allocating reviewers for your application

Could you please explain how you choose the reviewers within a panel?

Q&A

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