# ask & apply

We start at 13.00

SUOMEN AKATEMIA
FINLANDS AKADEMI
ACADEMY OF FINLAND

# Tips for a good application: The structure of the research plan

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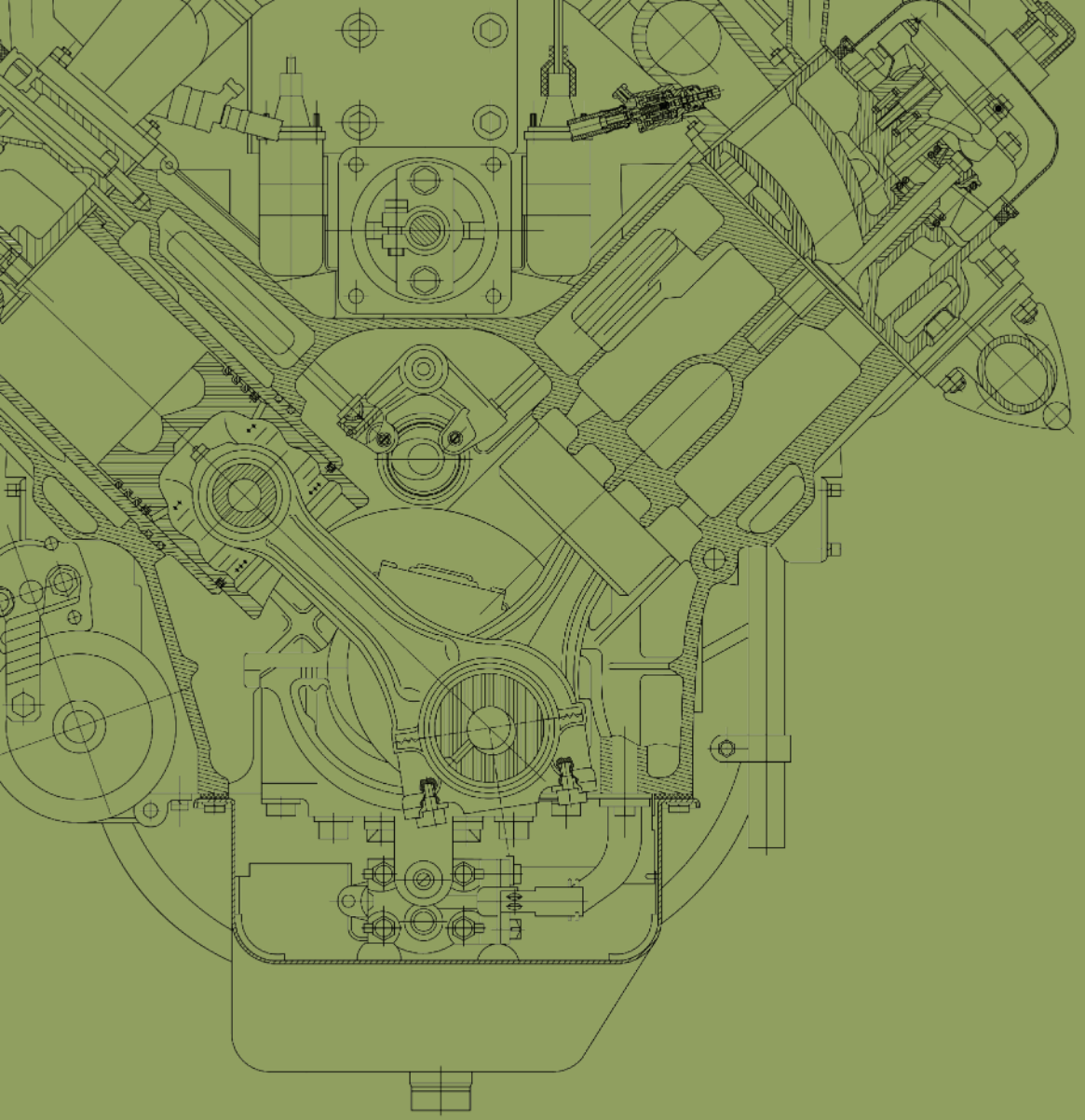

# Poll: Which will you apply?

# Before we start

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 presentation will be recorded and made available online for two weeks – Q&A and discussion will not be recorded

3. You can write questions during the presentation on Q&A

# Ask & Apply webinars

Webinars in June:

1. Information for first-time applicants Tuesday 8 June at 13-14
2. What's new? Friday 11 June at 13-14
3. Research posts and researcher mobility Tuesday 15 June at 13-14

Link to webinars: https://www.aka.fi/askapply

**Webinars in August-September:**

1. **Tips for a good application, the structure of the research plan, Tuesday 24 August at 13-14**
2. How applications are reviewed **Thursday 26 August at 13-14**
3. How funding decisions are made, ask our research councils **Thursday 9 September at 13-14**
4. AMA Ask Me Anything – our science advisers answer your questions **Friday 10 September at 13-14**

# The structure of the research plan

- All aspects are relevant
- ”Aim and objectives” and ”Implementation” most important
- Is in line with the evaluation criteria
- Make it easy for the reviewer:
  - Follow the structure
  - Answer to the evaluation criteria

1. **Aim and objectives**
2. **Implementation**
3. Research team and collaborators
4. Responsible science
5. Societal effects and impact
6. References

# Evaluation criteria

1. scientific quality, innovativeness and novelty value of the research as well as its impact within the scientific community

2. competence of applicant or research team in terms of project implementation

3. feasibility of research plan (incl. research ethics)

4. quality of research environment and collaborative networks

5. researcher mobility and researcher training.

Link to the review forms: https://www.aka.fi/en/research-funding/peer-review-and-funding-decision/guides-for-reviewers/

# Aim and objectives

Scientific quality,
Novelty/ Innovativeness

**1.1 Significance of research project in relation to current knowledge, research-based starting points:**

- Why is this topic relevant/important
- Show that you know the state-of-the-art (international) and are an expert in this field
- Show how your proposal goes beyond the state-of.the.art (panel composition)

**1.2 Research questions and/or hypotheses**

- Articulate the research questions/hypotheses clearly (clear concept; focus)

**1.3 Expected research results and their anticipated scientific impact, potential for scientific breakthroughs and for promoting scientific renewal:**

- Tell the evaluators what is the novelty and added value for science of the project

# Implementation

Feasibility of research plan

| | |
|---|---|
| 2.1 Work plan and schedule: | • Describe how you are going to accomplish the project's objectives<br>• Make a **realistic** schedule for the project implementation |
| 2.2 Research data and material, methods, and research environment: | • Describe the data, methods and research environment in **detail** |
| 2.3 Risk assessment and alternative implementation strategies: | • Show that you are aware of possible risks<br>• Show that you have a plan B |
| *2.4 Added value of consortium (only for consortia)* | • *How do the partners in the consortia complement each other* |

# 3. Research team and collaborators

Competence/ Collaboration/ Researcher mobility

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**3.1 Project personnel and their project-relevant key merits:**

- Show that you are the right person to lead the project
- Describe tasks, roles and key merits of the project PI and the project's researchers

**3.2 Collaborators and their project-relevant key merits:**

- Describe the significance of the collaborators to your project as well as their merits
- Describe how the collaborators will strengthen your project

# Responsible science


| | |
|---|---|
| 4.1 Research ethics: | • Describe ethical governance procedures, informed consent, anonymity of subjects, withdrawal from research, methods and data |
| 4.2 Equality and nondiscrimination: | • Describe how the project will promote equality and nondiscrimination within itself or in society at large |
| 4.3 Open science: | • Include a publication plan that supports open access<br>• Include a brief plan for data management |
| 4.4 Sustainable development objectives: | • Brief description of how the project can advance one or several goals included in the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. |

# Societal effects and impact

Scientific quality, Novelty/ Innovativeness

5.1 Effects and impact beyond academia:

- Describe the impact of the project beyond academia e.g. societal or economic impact
  - Who will benefit from your research outside of Academia? E.g. ecnomically, socially, politically…
  - Check out research council policies (differs across councils and funding instruments)

# References

- List of all of the sources used in the research plan
- The list (**no more than 2 pages**) does not count towards the length of the research plan.
- Please note that the text type, font size and line spacing of the list are the same as elsewhere in the research plan.

# General Tips: Summary

- Follow the template. Fill in ALL sections (headlines)
- Have the evaluation criteria next to you while writing
  - Put yourself in the shoes of the evaluator: Do you find what they are looking for?
  - Ask a third person to evaluate your proposal
- **Online Form:** Make sure it supports the research plan (e.g.collaborators should be the same)
  - **CV/Publications**: Choose wisely what to include
  - **Abstract and Keywords**: Also used to find reviewers
  - **Letter of collaboration**: Do not leave to the last minute
  - **Mobility**: Should support your research plan

  Less is more
- Check the final version of the PDF are pictures readable, colors etc.

# Getting your message across

With so many applications, how do you make yours stand out from the crowd?

- Make it clear and understandable.

3 main points: Scientific excellence, scientific excellence and scientific excellence!

Questions you should answer:

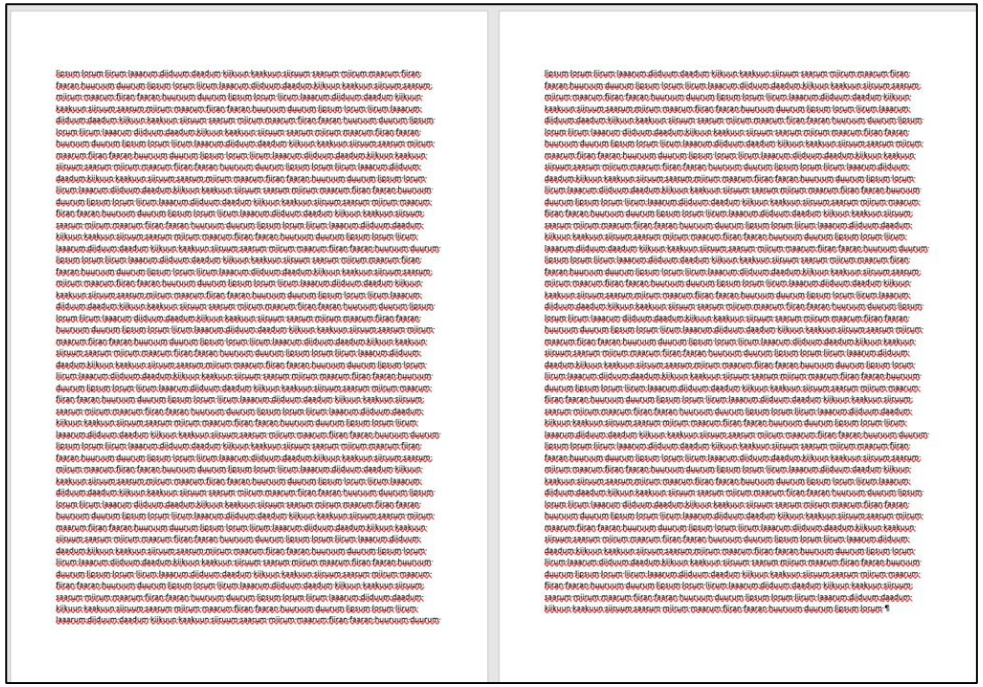
- **Why this project?** What are the results? What are the impacts?
- **Why now**? Why is the project important?
- **Why me?** And why this research team and collaborators?
- How much? Is the project feasible in regards of the funding applied? (check policy lines)

THE ABSTRACT: Think of it as your sales pitch

Source: Professor Tuija Pulkkinen: "How to get your message across to the research council?"

# Readability

- Use subheadings in the template
- Highlight the most important elements so that they are easy to find
- Include graphs, tables, pictures etc., but make sure they are readable and understandable



# Additional links

- Guidelines for research plan templ - Academy of Finland (aka.fi)
- Feedback from last years panels
- Research council policies
- Ethical guidelines
- Equality and nondiscrimination guidelines.
- Open science guidelines.
- Guidelines on the data management plan
- Sustainable development guidelines.
- Agenda 2030
- Research impact - Academy of Finland (aka.fi)A–Z index of application guideline - Academy of Finland (aka.fi)

# Contact us!

- Questions about mobility requirement: **mobility@aka.fi**
- Other questions: get in touch with the call's contact person named in the call text

  OR

- Questions and feedback

# Q&A
# Use following classification:

| Funding instrument | Research council, if needed |
|---|---|
| ARF (Academy Research Fellow) | BHE (Biosciences, Health and Environment) |
| Postdoc (Postdoctoral researcher) | CS (Culture and Society) |
| APr (Academy Project) | NSE (Natural Sciences and Engineering) |
| Mobility | |
| Other | |

An example:
**Postdoc: NSE: What does it mean that RC has reserved six additional posts for certain fields?**

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