



ACADEMY OF FINLAND

ACADEMY PROGRAMME FOR
DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH
DEVELOP2
2023–2026

Programme memorandum



ACADEMY OF FINLAND

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1. BACKGROUND

The Academy of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland have engaged in long-standing cooperation to provide funding for development research. The Ministry has funded development research from the budget available for development cooperation. Until 2014, the Academy of Finland's funding for development research was granted under the Targeted Academy Project scheme, which concerned all Academy research councils. The funding was open for application each year in the September call. However, there was no call in 2015 and 2016. The Academy and the Ministry were keen to make the funding opportunity more thematic, more programmatic and more effective and to further strengthen the dissemination of research knowledge. This is why the Academy of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs decided in 2017 to launch DEVELOP, a co-funded Academy Programme for Development Research. Twelve research projects were selected to the programme, and they ran from 2018 to 2023.

DEVELOP2 is a new Academy Programme for development research, but its main characteristics derive from the first DEVELOP programme.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the DEVELOP2 programme are as follows:

- produce new research-based knowledge on issues of global development, the causes and mechanisms of poverty and inequality in developing countries, and to find ways to remove obstacles to development and to improve conditions for development
- strengthen and renew high-quality phenomenon-driven and problem-based development research in Finland in the long term and promote its application in developing countries
- support cooperation and research on equal terms between universities and research institutes in Finland and developing countries and strengthen the research capacity of universities and research institutes in developing countries
- meet the objectives of Finnish development policy and the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: to end poverty and to reduce inequality in the world
- support broader interaction of research in society: disseminate new research-based knowledge to support informed decision-making and implementation, make research-based knowledge more readily available among stakeholders and the general public, and support improved application of research-based knowledge both in Finland and the other countries involved
- pool scattered research capacity in Finland and promote its international networking
- promote interdisciplinary cooperation in the field of development research
- promote long-term and high-impact Finnish expertise and multi-actor cooperation between research, business and non-governmental organisations in the target countries.



3. THEMES

The Academy Programme for Development Research (DEVELOP2) will provide funding for multidisciplinary, phenomenon-driven and problem-based research that targets global development issues, helps boost economic, social and ecological development in developing countries and makes good use of Finnish knowledge and expertise in the field. Its purpose is to work towards achieving the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals as adopted by UN Member States.

The goals of the 2030 Agenda steer Finland's development policy. The aim is to achieve economically, socially and environmentally sustainable development and to eradicate poverty. The growing role of social and technological innovations and digitalisation will be central to achieving the objectives of Agenda 2030. Innovations and digitalisation can help in creating novel solutions to support positive development. The UN Sustainable Development Goals, climate focus, sustainable green growth, clean energy and the circular economy are central.¹

Supporting research and strengthening research capacities are considered key development targets in many developing countries, but local universities often have limited resources to undertake research. International research cooperation and improved research capacities can help bolster developing countries' competitive position. The Academy Programme for Development Research aims to strengthen the research capacity of developing countries by funding projects that support long-term equal partnerships and research cooperation between researchers and universities in Finland and the target countries. International networking and cooperation are central to the effective dissemination and application of the research results.

The call for applications under the DEVELOP2 programme has three themes:

- **sustainable economy in developing countries (digitalisation, jobs, livelihoods, decent work, international trade)**
- **creating a more efficient society (welfare, health, human rights, high-quality education incl. school meals)**
- **food security, biodiversity, environmental health and sustainable management and use of natural resources.**

Eligible research projects are to address one or more of these research themes. Furthermore, it is required that the projects support the achievement of the Agenda 2030 goals and support the management of changes that will benefit poor people and promote equality primarily in least developed and lower middle-income countries and regions. In their research plans, applicants shall identify which Agenda 2030 goals their project will address and what impact their project will have in the target countries or regions. The applicants must also justify why the selected target country or region and combination of themes is important for Finland, that is, they must explain what broader impact the project will have there.

The DEVELOP2 programme is sensitive to human rights: all research plans are expected to reflect a human-rights-based approach and to incorporate cross-cutting objectives (gender equality, nondiscrimination and climate sustainability).

¹ [Report on Development Policy Extending Across Parliamentary Terms](#). Finnish Government 27 May 2021.



INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION REQUIRED OF PROJECTS

Projects approved for funding are expected to work in cooperation on equal terms with researchers and research institutes based in developing countries. At project level, the inputs of researchers from Finland and the developing country concerned should be as closely equivalent as possible. While the Academy does not grant funding to foreign sites of research, the funded projects may use the funding they receive from the Academy to hire researchers in developing countries for a joint research project, such as in the form of outsourced services.

In the selection of target countries, emphasis will be placed on countries/regions where there is other existing or planned Finnish cooperation on issues relevant to the research theme. This cooperation may consist of activities of the research community, commercial cooperation, cooperation at the level of civil society or development cooperation. Research projects can be carried out in developing countries that, according to the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) definition, are eligible for official development assistance (ODA). The Academy Programme for Development Research encourages cooperation with least developed and lower middle-income countries and regions. Rather than focusing on problems in one country or region, research can also take a broader perspective on development issues.

4. IMPLEMENTATION AND SCHEDULE

The DEVELOP2 programme is intended to provide funding for multidisciplinary research by research teams and consortia. A consortium is a collaboration between research projects and a fixed-term body of subprojects. A consortium has a joint research plan that the subprojects implement together with a view to achieving more extensive added value than through normal cooperation. Each consortium subproject applies for funding to implement the research plan as part of the joint consortium application. ([See guidelines on consortium applications on the Academy's website.](#))

The funding for an individual research project comes to a maximum of 600,000 euros, while the funding for a consortium comes to a maximum of 1,000,000 euros for a period of 40 months.

This call is a single-stage call. See the Academy of Finland's call text for the call schedule and application guidelines. All applications will be checked for completeness after the deadline, and applicants will be contacted if additional information or documents are required.

4.1 REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Research projects must meet certain criteria in order to be eligible for the DEVELOP2 Academy Programme. They shall:

- address one or several themes of the programme
- meet the objectives of the programme as stated in this programme memorandum
- support one or several Agenda 2030 targets
- support the management of changes that benefit equality and the poor



- cooperate on an equal basis with researchers, universities and research institutes in developing countries in project planning and implementation
- engage in mutually beneficial research collaboration
- demonstrate the wider impact of research and cooperation in the partner country
- take into account the human-rights-based approach to development and the cross-cutting objectives of the programme: gender equality, nondiscrimination and climate resilience.

The applications will be reviewed by an international panel. The Academy of Finland will use the following criteria in the scientific review of applications:

- scientific quality, innovativeness, novelty value and impact of the research described in the research plan (incl. phenomenon-driven and problem-based approach)
- project's relevance to the programme and its contribution to meeting the programme's objectives (incl. societal interaction)
- feasibility of research plan (incl. responsible science)
- competence of applicant/research team in terms of project implementation, possible researcher training
- quality of research environment and collaboration networks (incl. researcher mobility).

[Read more about the review of applications on the Academy's website.](#)

After the scientific review, the steering group of the DEVELOP2 Academy Programme will examine the results of the review and prepare a proposal on projects to be funded. The final funding decisions will be made separately by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and the Academy's Subcommittee for Development Research, which consists of representatives from the Academy's Research Councils who serve on the programme's steering group. One key consideration is to create a cluster of projects that is best placed to further the programme's overall objectives. The primary decision criteria are the scientific quality and innovativeness of the research, its societal relevance and impact, and how the project is aligned with the programme.

The funding decisions will be made by August 2023. The funding period starts on 1 September 2022. The project duration is up to 40 months.

4.2 FUNDING

The Academy Programme for Development Research (DEVELOP2) is funded by the Academy of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and coordinated by the Academy. Total programme funding is no more than 6.25 million euros. Decisions on supplementary calls will be made separately.

4.3 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, INTERACTION AND IMPACT

The cornerstones of the DEVELOP2 programme are networking, interaction, communication and the dissemination of research knowledge. During its funding period, the programme will facilitate stakeholder collaboration with key national partners such as the Finnish Society for



Development Research and the Finnish University Partnership for International Development UniPID. It will also provide a platform for discussion with NGOs, policymakers and the general public, and encourage cooperation with development researchers outside the programme. Other Academy of Finland funding activities (e.g. Academy Programmes and Strategic Research Council programmes) will also provide possible opportunities for cooperation and synergy.

DEVELOP2 is an inherently international research programme. Every project is expected to show an international focus and orientation. This will also be highlighted by the programme coordination team throughout the programme.

The programme is designed to support long-term cooperation and to promote equal participation by researchers and research institutes from developing countries in the planning and implementation of research projects. The results should first and foremost meet the information needs of partners in developing countries. To ensure interaction and the effective dissemination of research results and application of knowledge, projects will be asked to attach to their application a separate interaction plan. This plan should describe the aims and means of interaction, the stakeholder groups, implementation and the research team's competence in promoting societal impact. The interaction plan should also include the project's communications plan.

Projects selected for funding will be expected to demonstrate high scientific quality as well as high societal relevance and impact. To achieve impact, it is essential that the research themes grow out of the developing countries' own needs and are possibly prompted by the initiative of the developing country partners themselves. Research plans must clearly describe the project's anticipated societal impact. Where possible, the project's impacts should extend to public administration in the developing country concerned: these ambitions should also be reflected in the project's research plan.

4.4 PROGRAMME COORDINATION

Coordination of the Academy Programme for Development Research rests with the programme steering group and the programme managers and coordinator appointed by the Academy. Their role is to work closely with the research projects to facilitate achievement of the programme's objectives. A further aim of programme coordination is to generate added value that would not be achieved if funding were provided to a number of separate projects each going their own way.

The steering group is composed of members of the Academy's research councils, representatives of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and other possible expert members. The steering group is charged with submitting a proposal on which projects to fund based on the scientific review; submitting proposals on possible additional calls; assuming responsibility for the final programme evaluation; and promoting practical application of the programme's results. The steering group will monitor programme progress, among other things, via interim project reports and by attending programme events. In addition, the programme manager will provide regular updates on progress to the steering group. The steering group will meet 2–3 times a year.

The members of the steering group are: Professor Tarja Väyrynen (Research Council for Culture and Society) as chair, Professor Jarkko Niemi (Research Council for Biosciences, Health and the



Environment) as vice chair, Project Director Kari Herlevi (Strategic Research Council), Professor Mirja Illikainen (Research Council for Natural Sciences and Engineering), Professor Sirkku Juhola (Research Council for Biosciences, Health and the Environment), Deputy Director General Juha Savolainen (Ministry for Foreign Affairs) and Senior Adviser Pekka Seppälä (Ministry for Foreign Affairs).

Practical arrangements for coordination, including the organisation and administration of the call, communications, and organising the final evaluation of the programme, rest with the programme managers together with the coordinator. The role of coordination is to support and promote the development of the participating projects into a cohesive structure through active exchange of information, cooperation and various coordination activities. These activities include seminars, workshops, researcher training, public events and meetings, meetings with policymakers, stakeholders and NGOs, promoting national and international networking, visits to research institutes, participation in national and international events, communications, and the popularisation of science.

Coordination of the projects participating in the programme is expected to contribute to their mutual reinforcement and to help the programme generate new multidisciplinary research knowledge. For this reason, the projects' principal investigators will be required to commit themselves to the programme objectives and to work closely with one another during the programme. The PIs of the projects selected for funding under the programme will be required to

- assume responsibility for and report on the scientific progress of the project and on the use of the funds in accordance with the steering group's instructions
- see to that the whole research team attends all meetings, seminars and workshops organised by the programme coordination, and facilitate cooperation and exchange of information between the teams within the programme
- take part in producing reviews, syntheses and information material around the programme, and actively disseminate information about the programme's progress and results on public and scientific forums.

During the course of the programme, the research projects will participate in events arranged together with end-users of research results and in any other activities designed to disseminate information to stakeholders.

4.5 FINAL EVALUATION

The DEVELOP2 programme will be evaluated on its completion to assess implementation and outcomes. The scope and aims of the evaluation will be defined during the course of the programme, but it may consider such issues as the attainment of the programme's aims; the achievement of the intended broader societal impact in the target country; national and international cooperation; and the exposure and publicity gained by the research undertaken.

All research teams funded under the programme will be required to submit a research report to the Academy of Finland upon project completion. The reports must include information on, for



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example, scientific publications produced and theses and doctoral dissertations completed within the programme. The projects will also be requested to submit a separate report on the societal impact of the project, its impact in partner countries and the presentation of results to a wider audience than the research community. This report is narrative in nature and is mainly needed for the information needs of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

5. HOW TO APPLY

The call for applications to the Academy Programme for Development Research is single-stage. Guidelines for preparing and submitting applications are given in the Academy's call text. For more detailed information on how to apply, go to [How to apply for funding](#) on the Academy's website. **Please note the application schedule. The preliminary deadline for applications is 5 April 2023 at 16.15 Finnish time. The deadline is non-negotiable.**

MORE INFORMATION

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