

Academy of Finland's Commitment to Sustainable Development

Description of the Commitment

The Academy of Finland is a key provider of funding for scientific research in Finland and an active player in national and international science and innovation policy. The Academy takes the principles of sustainable development and responsibility into account and promotes their implementation in its research funding.

Research data is essential for promoting sustainable development and safeguarding the wellbeing of future generations and nature. The objectives of the Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development cover a broad range of areas in life and society. The Academy provides extensive funding for research in all fields of science, and can through its actions also broadly promote implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The aim of the Academy's commitment is to increase and deepen the awareness of researchers, the Academy and its stakeholders with respect to the principles of sustainable development and to emphasise the importance of these principles in research and research funding in a cross-cutting manner. The objective of the commitment is also to more systematically examine the perspectives of sustainable development and responsibility, integrating monitoring with the annual cycle of Academy operations.

Through its advocacy communications, the Academy wants to highlight the significance of research as a promoter and enhancer of sustainable development. At the same time, the Academy strengthens its community image as a responsible promoter of the principles of sustainable development.

Background

The Academy of Finland is a key funder of scientific research in Finland and an active player in national and international science and innovation policy. The Academy takes the principles of sustainable development and responsibility into account and promotes their implementation in its research funding. Through its peer-reviewed competitive research funding and scientific policy activities, the Academy improves the quality and impact of research and strongly supports scientific innovation. The Academy serves as an expert in Finnish and international scientific policy issues, and collects and analyses data on science and scientific activities.

The Academy drafted its first Society's Commitment for research funding in 2015. At that time, the commitment focused on selecting the themes of Academy programmes. Later, in 2018, the Academy expanded the commitment to include all funding activities. The objectives of the Academy's 2018 commitment remain valid, and the measures listed in the commitment are still topical. In the commitment for 2022, the themes of sustainable development and responsibility as well as their implementation will be discussed in greater detail and more systematically than before. An essential part of the commitment is that the Academy requires taking the principles of sustainable development into account in the projects it funds. In addition, the Academy examines measures that promote the sustainable development of research funding activities and the Academy's Administration Office as a whole.

The Academy requires that the researchers and research projects it funds comply with the principles of responsible science, which include research ethics, equality and nondiscrimination, open science and the Sustainable Development Goals. The aim is thereby to strengthen the quality and impact of research. The Academy will continue to support the operating conditions for responsible science.

As part of its work in responsible science, the Academy requires that the research projects it funds describe how the project can promote one or more of Finland's eight sustainable development objectives: equal prospects for wellbeing; a participatory society for citizens; sustainable work; sustainable local communities; a carbon-neutral society; an economy that is resource-wise; lifestyles that respect the carrying capacity of nature; and decision-making that respects nature.

Objectives

The aim of the Academy of Finland's Commitment to Sustainable Development is to increase the awareness of researchers, the Academy and its stakeholders with respect to the principles of sustainable development and to emphasise the importance of these principles in research and research funding. The commitment also endeavours to more systematically examine the perspectives of sustainable development and responsibility, integrating the monitoring of implementation into the annual cycle of Academy operations.

The aim of the commitment is also to use advocacy communications to highlight the importance of research in promoting sustainable development and to strengthen the Academy's image as a responsible promoter of sustainability.



As the Academy provides funding to all fields of science, the commitment to research funding is broadly targeted at the eight objectives in the Society's Commitment to Sustainable Development of Finland.

Measures

1. Research funding

The Academy of Finland provides responsible funding for high-quality, high-impact and innovative research. In the projects it funds, the Academy requires that the Sustainable Development Goals be taken into account as part of responsible science. Researchers include the SDGs as part of their research plan. The Academy intends to more systematically monitor or measure the setting or implementation of the SDGs in the projects it funds. The measures of this commitment include:

- The Academy takes the Sustainable Development Goals into account at all stages of its research funding process and in development of the new electronic research funding system.
- The Academy aims to integrate monitoring implementation of the sustainable development goals into the research reports of the research projects it funds.
- The Academy assesses and monitors what can be learned from other Nordic funding organisations and how they develop the monitoring and measurement of the sustainable development of research funding.
- The Academy develops data collection and monitoring through trials. The Academy will determine what kind of information could be collected on funded research projects and what indicators could be used in systematically monitoring the implementation of sustainable development and responsibility.

2. Advocacy communications

The Academy communicates more systematically on the significance of sustainable development and its implementation in Academy operations. This can involve, for example, compiling data collected from research funding applications and research reports. The Academy's annual report also regularly reports on taking sustainable development and responsibility into account in its operations. In addition, the Academy's image as a responsible actor and pioneer in taking the Sustainable Development Goals into account will be enhanced.



ACADEMY OF FINLAND

Schedule

The duration of the measures to be taken is 3.5 years, from 2 June 2022 to 31 December 2025.

What's new in this commitment

- A more systematic review of the Sustainable Development Goals
- Integrating advocacy communications into research funding activities
- Developing indicators for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals.