Academy Research Fellow’s merits and competencies

November 21, 2023
Our program today (13.00-14.30)

1. Science advisers’ presentation on merits and competencies – what and why?

2. Guest speaker presentations: Academy Research Fellows and Scientific Council representative

3. Discussion: Add questions for science advisers or guest speakers in the Q&A – there will be plenty of time and we will respond to your questions after the presentations

The science adviser's presentation will be recorded and made available online for two weeks – guest presentations and discussion will not be recorded (some participant names may appear in the recording)
Ask & Apply webinars in 2023

1. What’s new about the winter call?: Check materials

2. Autumn call becomes winter call – how will the review change?: Check materials

3. Merits and increased competencies of Academy Research Fellows: Today!

4. Academy Programme for Sport Science and Physical Activity: Thursday 23 November at 13-14

5. Ask Me Anything – our science advisers answer your questions: Tuesday 12 December at 13-14
Background

• Aim: Academy Research Fellowship supports early-career researchers on fast career tracks
  • Significant career progress
  • Establishing a position in national and international research community
  • High-quality, high-impact science

• Principles of responsible researcher evaluation

➢ *Describe your own personal path as a researcher*, past and future
  • Importance in the review and decision-making process
Winter call 2024: How to fill in the ‘Merits and increased competencies’ section (link to video)
Feedback from panels of the first call 2022

- It was a bit unclear how a project will help the applicant develop particular skills etc, beyond helping to build a career.
- Applicants need more guidance on how to fill out this section.
- Applicants should describe better their career progress and increased expertise – and make it personal.
- It should be made clear to applicants that this is priority evaluation criteria.
- Applicants should address their career path and plans clearly so they can be evaluated.
- Not all applicants stick to the principles of DORA, with frequenting citing of journals to indicate quality.

How the project will help the applicant develop explicit skills, not only in terms of management, supervision and the like, but also more substantially/scholarly skills - and more quantitative measures.
How applications for Academy Research Fellowships are reviewed

• The applicant should be a promising research talent who is on a rising career trajectory and has potential to advance to more demanding research positions.

• Applicant’s competence is based on qualitative indicators.

• Throughout the review, the applicant’s career stage is taken into account.

• Merits and increased competencies are evaluated in the review form: 1.1 Competence, expected achievements and potential of applicant
Tips for writing your own story: Be concrete and personal

• Be **concrete** and **specific**
  • What research topics/fields have you/will you contribute to?
  • Describe your past turning points and future vision and ambition

• Highlight suitable **examples** from your CV (do not simply summarize and avoid repetition)

• If you have worked in a team, mention **your specific contributions** and the skills that you used or developed
  • For planned future collaboration, what will you learn or develop to support your goals as a researcher?

• Go beyond a list of the numbers of people you have supervised or mentored
  • For example, how did you help them to develop and what did they go on to achieve?

• Focus on explaining **HOW** and not **WHAT**

• Reminder: not give journal rankings, journal impact factors or citation metrics (e.g. h-index) in your application.
## Structure of merits and competences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic profile and merits to date</th>
<th>• What is your research topic, and why have you chosen it? What choices have you made so far in your research career? In which areas in particular have you wanted to develop yourself and improve your skills? What have been the turning points in your research career?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How has your research idea evolved since your doctoral thesis</td>
<td>• What factors or experiences have contributed to the evolution of the idea? What new perspectives or methods have you adopted since your doctoral thesis? What is the relevance and potential impact of the new idea in your research field?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How do you plan to increase your competence as a researcher during the funding period</td>
<td>• How would this funding benefit your research career? What would you do with this funding to further your career? What kinds of skills are you going to develop?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your career plan after the funding period</td>
<td>• How will you make use of your knowledge and know-how as a researcher or expert after the funding period? What are your short- and long-term career goals after the funding period? What is your scientific vision and ambition for the future, and which scientific disciplines will be your focus? How will you implement these?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Merits and competencies in the winter call

• This section now added as a pdf (use the template!)

• Length extended to one page

• Guidance and supporting questions available in the templates

• See Merits and competencies
The template

- Fill in all sections in the template
- Do not delete or change the titles
- 1 page at the end

Grey text instructions:
- Read them
- Delete them in the final version

The aim of the Academy Research Fellowship funding scheme is to enable researchers to increase their competencies, make significant career progress toward the most demanding research position and achieve an established position in the national and international research community. Academy Research Fellowships promote high-quality, high-impact research that stems from the scientific merits of the proposal.

The review of applications for Academy Research Fellowships is focused on the applicant’s ability to have the following objectives:

- The Research Council of Finland’s review criteria are in compliance with the principles of transparency, impartiality and respect for the research evaluation. This means, for example, that you should not give any priority to your own research interests, impact factors or citation metrics if they are below in your application.

Fill in your research and career competencies on our template. The description must not exceed one page. This template contains information about the formatting and page settings. The instructions and structure provided must be followed to ensure the equal treatment of all applicants.

The template is designed as a PDF appendix on the tab “Menti and increased competencies” in the online service.

- Content of description

The “Menti and increased competencies” section is essential to the narrative CV designed to allow the applicants to describe their interests, motivation, achievements and means to progress in their career. The description should focus on the personal research career path with an emphasis on concrete examples as possible.

When writing the description, consider, for example:

- Collaboration, mobility and various forms of networking
- Career development
- Establishing a research team and other academic leadership responsibilities
- Supervision and teaching experience
- External expert positions
- Promotion of science or societal impact

Influences your career path and development as a researcher, mentor or expert.

Also familiarize yourself with section 1.1 “Competence and expertise of applicants” in the review form for Academy Research Fellowship applications.

The mentor and increased competencies document is submitted as an PDF appendix on the “Menti and increased competencies” tab in the online service.

- The description must not exceed one page.
- The text size is at least 12 pt.
- The line spacing is 1.5
- The margins are 2 cm each
- Do not use paragraph indents
- Keep a single-column layout with writing the text
- The maximum page of the PDF appendix is 30 MB.

Write the document in English; the applications are reviewed by international experts.

- Structure

Follow the structure in the description. The questions are designed to support and guide you in writing the description. You can refine them as appropriate.

Please, delete those instructions (grey) before preparing your text.

Applicant’s name: Click on top left to enter text
Application number: Click or drag here to enter text

1. Describe your academic profile and events to date:
   - What is your research topic, and from where do you receive it? What choices have you made so far in your research career? Why do you want to develop yourself and improve your skills? What have been the turning points in your research career?

Please, delete these instructions (grey) before preparing your text.

Write your text here...

2. Describe how your research ideas have evolved since your doctoral thesis:
   - What factors or experiences have contributed to the evolution of the idea? What new perspectives or methods have you adopted since your doctoral thesis? What is the relevance and potential impact of the new ideas in your research field?

Please, delete these instructions (grey) before preparing your text.

Write your text here...

3. Describe how you plan to use your competence and expertise during the funding period:
   - How will this funding benefit your research career? What would you do with this funding to further your career? What kind of skills are you going to develop?

Please, delete these instructions (grey) before preparing your text.

Write your text here...

4. Describe your career path after the funding period:
   - How far are you from completing your doctorate? What do you expect to do after completing your doctorate? What is your future plan? What are your next steps?

Please, delete these instructions (grey) before preparing your text.

Write your text here...
Questions?

• You can **type your questions in the Q&A**

• Contact **our helpdesk** (www.aka.fi/feedback)

• Also **see our FAQ page** (www.aka.fi/winter_call_faq)

• Subscribe to our **newsletter** and **check our new videos** for the winter call
Example: Researcher competence framework

- ResearchComp: The European Competence Framework for Researchers

- Poll for the audience: what competence areas do you have now and hope to have in the future?
Guest speakers

Academy Research Fellow

Maria Heikkilä
University of Helsinki

Academy Research Fellow

Kari Vienola
University of Turku

Professor

Tarja Väyrynen
University of Tampere, Scientific Council for Social Sciences and Humanities
Final thoughts

• Poll for the audience: What stood out or stuck with you from this webinar?