

FLAGSHIP PROGRAMME

NOVEMBER 2017 CALL TEXT

Applications for the Academy of Finland's flagship funding can be submitted in the Academy's online services as of 19 October 2017. The call closes on 9 November 2017 at 16.15 local Finnish time. The deadline is non-negotiable.

The funding to be distributed through this call depends on the Finnish Parliament's decision to allocate the necessary funds to the Academy of Finland in its budget for 2018.

Aim

The aim of the Academy of Finland's flagship programme is to pool together expertise from different fields in Finland to form high-level research and impact clusters that will further contribute to increasing the quality and impact of Finnish research. A flagship is an effective mix of cutting-edge research, impact in support of economic growth and/or society, close connections to the business sector and society at large, adaptability, and a strong commitment from host organisations to meeting the set targets.

Flagships are high-quality, high-impact competence clusters that work in flexible ways, simultaneously running several research projects and other activities. During the flagship term, the clusters will make ongoing progress and systematically improve and expand their activities.

Who is eligible to apply?

Only universities, government research institutes or consortia composed of universities and government research institutes are eligible to apply for flagship funding. If you are applying as a consortium, [see detailed guidelines on our website](#).

Applicant organisations must be prepared to make a significant, steadily increasing investment in establishing and supporting the flagships. Allocating funding not to individual research teams but to organisations that have a strong commitment to the flagship programme is a way to support the long-term development of competence clusters and their high-quality research and broad impact.

Funding

The funding earmarked for the flagship programme comes to 25 million euros in 2018 and 25 million euros in 2019. The first flagship call is open in October–November 2017; the second call will open in 2018. The funding is granted for a fixed term.

The flagship funding is granted following the full cost model. The Academy's funding contribution comes to 100 per cent, which means that the funding also covers overheads. The host organisations need not contribute to the funding with their own percentage.

The resources planned for the flagship and their development during the flagship term are described in a separate table to be appended to the application. The funding is granted in two separate four-year funding decisions. The flagship will undergo an evaluation in its third year of operation. Based on this interim evaluation, the funding for the second four-year term may increase, decrease, remain at the same level or cease entirely.

The funding is granted to be used for the actions described in the research and impact plans. The Academy will not make advance payments on the funding.

Please see [General conditions and guidelines for funding](#) on our website for all up-to-date conditions and guidelines regarding use of funding.

Funding period

The funding period will start on 1 May 2018 at the earliest. The funding is granted for four years.

How applications are reviewed

The funding applications will be reviewed paying close attention to the flagship programme's objectives concerning internationally top-level research, economic and/or societal impact, and the role and participation of collaborators.

The initial review of applications will be carried out by individual reviewers. After this initial stage, the applications will be reviewed by panels of experts. Based on the individual reviewer's reports, the panels will interview the best applicants. The panel reviews will be held in February–March 2018.

A scientific panel of international experts will review the scientific quality of the applications.

An impact panel of international and possibly Finnish experts will review the impact potential of the applications in terms of supporting economic growth and/or other societal impacts.

The funding decisions will be made by the Academy's General Subcommittee based on the reviews of both the individual reviewers and the scientific and impact panels. The General Subcommittee also reserves the possibility to call the flagship candidate representatives for an interview in April 2018.

The review forms to be used by the reviewers are available on our website at [Guides for reviewers](#). Applicants would do well to familiarise themselves with the review questions.

Follow-up and reporting

The Academy of Finland's general conditions and guidelines for funding oblige the host organisations to report on the use of funds and on the progress of the flagships.

How to apply

Competent representatives of the applicant universities and government research institutes will submit the funding applications using [the Academy of Finland's online services](#). In the online services, the representatives will also issue a commitment on behalf of the sites of research. Applications can be submitted as of 19 October 2017. The call closes on 9 November 2017 at 16.15 local Finnish time.

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ABOUT THE APPLICATION

The application consists of an application and required appendices that are filled in and submitted in the Academy's online services following the guidelines provided.

Appendix 1: Research and impact plan

The research and impact plan **must not exceed 30 pages** (Times New Roman 12 pt or equivalent) and it must be written in English. The plan should describe the research and impact of the candidate flagship from 2014–2017 and outline the research and impact activities for 2018–2025. Draft the plan following the structure below to facilitate the international peer review process. The scientific review will focus on items 1–5 and 7, the impact review on items 1–4 and 6–7.

1. Basic details

Name and abbreviation of flagship candidate

Head and deputy head of flagship candidate

Host organisations of candidate flagship

2. Executive summary (no more than two pages)

3. Central idea (no more than one page)

- anticipated future prospects or factors on which the central idea is based
- 3–5 key objectives for the eight-year flagship term
- brief description of the central idea from the perspectives of research and impact
- added value generated

4. Starting level of research and impact (no more than seven pages)

- previous research on the topic and results in an international comparison as well as demonstrated impact of these results in support of economic growth and/or other societal impacts
- brief description of the competence and merits of key researchers and impact experts from the perspectives of research and impact
- brief description of connections to innovation networks and ecosystems as well as to other actors important for research utilisation

5. Plan for promoting the scientific quality of research

- scientific objectives of the research, justifications and follow-up
- expected scientific results, new initiatives, breakthrough potential and scientific impact
- implementation of research, research methods and data, schedule and risk management

6. Plan for promoting economic and/or other societal impacts of research

- impact objectives, justifications and follow-up
- expected impact in its various forms and possible new initiatives

- planned approaches, methods, materials and schedule for impact promotion
- impact may be viewed from the following perspectives (cf. *State of Scientific Research in Finland 2016*)
 - science as a source of wealth and prosperity
 - science as a developer of practices
 - science as a basis for decision-making
 - science as a developer of human understanding and world views

7. Ecosystem and organisation of candidate flagship

- links to host organisations' strategic priorities
- resource plan for the flagship term, monitoring of resource development
- description of host organisations' roles, flagship management and administrative structures
- key collaborators and their roles
- actions to increase the appeal of the competence cluster/research environment

Appendix 2: Resources

Describe the resources of the flagship candidate for the years 2014–2026; include a resource table and a free-form description. Host organisations should also describe their previous investments in the topic of the proposed flagship and present their plans for the intended flagship term. The plan must describe the allocation of resources and the expected growth in resources during the flagship term. It should also include a risk assessment from the perspective of resource development.

Appendix 3: Other appendices to the application

- data management plan
- statement by an ethics committee (if necessary)