SRC programme call

Supplementary call for SRC programme Keys to Sustainable Growth (2018–2023)

1st call stage: 3 Apr 2018–25 Apr 2018 (closes at 16.15 local Finnish time)
2nd call stage: 19 Jun 2018–29 Aug 2018 (closes at 16.15 local Finnish time)

The Strategic Research Council (SRC) at the Academy of Finland provides funding for strategic research, which refers to long-term, solution-driven research of a high scientific standard carried out to develop policies and functions of society with a view to identifying solutions to major societal problems and challenges. SRC funding is based on open competition and independent peer review.

Applications for SRC funding are submitted using the Academy of Finland's online services. The present call has two stages. The guidelines for both stages are presented in this call text. The first stage is open to all eligible applicants. The second stage is for applicants invited by the SRC to submit a full application.

This call text contains a description of the SRC programme to which the call applies, a rundown of SRC-specific conditions that deviate from the Academy's general guidelines, and guidelines for both the first and second call stage. Appendix 1 lists the Academy's general application guidelines (updated according to the Academy's funding criteria form November 2017) in so far as they apply to this SRC call.

CONTENTS

1. CALL DESCRIPTION

Strategic research refers to long-term, solution-driven research of high scientific standard carried out to develop policies and functions of society with a view to identifying solutions to major societal challenges and problems. This call text contains a description of and guidelines for **a two-stage supplementary call to be opened for the SRC programme Keys to Sustainable Growth** on 3 April 2018.

The programme is part of the Finnish Government's strategic research theme for 2018, **Reform or Wither – Resources and Solutions**, which calls for research into the best ways of supporting change and reform in society and creating favourable conditions for such renewal. The Government has described the theme as follows:

"Quick changes pose major challenges to the resilience of society, organisations and individuals. To make the best use of ongoing transitions, it is necessary to be able to combine the resources of society, organisations and individuals in new ways. This will reinforce the capacity for reform and adaptation to changes. A key question to be addressed in the course of research is to determine how to promote the reform and renewal of society, organisations and individuals by harnessing existing and future resources in new ways. Among the resources to be assessed in the context of this theme are: stable society; efficient institutions; research and knowledge pools; skills, competence and education; natural resources; lifelong learning; and the skills and competence possessed by various communities."

The Strategic Research Council (SRC) has launched two programmes under the theme:

- **Adaptation and Resilience for Sustainable Growth**
- **Keys to Sustainable Growth**.

With these programmes, the SRC has especially funded consortia that address adaptation to global changes in society and the environment (six funded consortia). The programmes also include consortia that explore education and training as a basis for sustainable growth (two funded consortia). The funding is granted in two parts; the first three-year funding period of these consortia started on 1 January 2018. The funding for the second period (three years) is decided separately based on the outcome of an interim evaluation. Learn more about the consortia selected to the two programmes at www.strategicresearch.fi.

This supplementary call aims **to augment the programme contents** of the theme Reform or Wither – Resources and Solutions. The call will seek out research that addresses facilitating sustainable growth by means of economic activity. The goal is to support and enable the renewal of services and products of Finnish organisations and companies in ways that support sustainable development. The consortia to be selected will receive **funding for five (3 + 2) years**.

The idea is to find research consortia that present new combinations of expertise and non-traditional forms of collaboration between disciplines. In particular, the SRC is seeking proposals that include slightly rarer discipline combinations, such as engineering research combined with humanities research, or medical research combined with environmental sciences. Applications should present a concrete objective and a vision in support of sustainable societal growth, a research-based plan to implement them, and an impactful interaction plan.

The supplementary call is designed to create new research-based knowledge and solutions for the development of products and services amid changes that affect consumption and manufacturing systems. The research should address these themes:

- transformation and development of business ecosystems in change
- infrastructure and an innovation system that support and renew economic activity
- institutions and policies that support or regulate economic activities.

The supplementary call will provide funding for research to identify opportunities for sustainable growth, analyse preconditions of and obstacles to renewal, and enable the development of products and services that contribute to sustainable growth. The aim is to find solutions to how commercial bodies and companies will be better able to develop and pool their technologies, institutions, resources and assets in new and sustainable ways. The SRC invites applications from research consortia that address their chosen topic by combining several different dimensions (e.g. ecological, societal, legal, technological and ethical dimensions).

Underlying all research projects must be the objectives of harnessing scientific knowledge in decision-making and achieving sustainable societal growth.

1.1   Programme questions

Applicants must answer the following questions (A–G). The review will focus on the answers to the questions.

Basis of achieving impact:

A. What transformation in society and business creates opportunities for the promotion of Finnish commercial services or industrial manufacturing? Why and how does the utilisation of that transformation offer significant benefits to Finnish society in keeping with the principles of sustainable development? How will the knowledge generated and the solutions created support decision-making?
B. What challenges do companies and commercial bodies face in terms of achieving sustainable growth? How will the proposed measures and solutions affect the development of institutions and regulations that support and control the activities of commercial actors?
C. How does the proposed consortium composition best combine scientific quality, societal impact and know-how to achieve the solutions?

Basis of research choices:

D. What research is needed? How does the consortium justify its methodological decisions?
E. How will the chosen multidisciplinary approach contribute to renewing previous research in both a Finnish and international context?

Basis of interaction choices:

F. With whom, why and how will the consortium engage in the most impactful collaboration to seek out solutions based on scientific knowledge?
G. How will the interaction partners benefit from the collaboration? What innovations or innovation-supporting structures will the consortium's activities advance?

2. STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE TO APPLYING

These application guidelines only apply to the funding instrument for strategic research managed by the Strategic Research Council (SRC) at the Academy of Finland. The strategic research funding differs from the Academy of Finland's other funding opportunities, for example, as follows:

- The funding is granted in programme format.
- Funding is only granted to so-called SRC consortia, which must be formed according to the structure defined by the SRC.
- The funding may be used to cover the consortium PI's salary during the entire funding period.
- The funding is granted under the full cost model and the funding percentage is 100 per cent.
- The appendices to the application must be drafted in line with the guidelines provided in this call text.

The call has two stages (see Figure 1). The call for letters of intent (the first stage) is open to all eligible applicants. The call for full applications (the second stage) is for invited applicants only. The SRC decides which consortia will go through to the second call stage.

The call for letters of intent opens on 3 April 2018 and closes on 25 April 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time.

The call for full applications opens on 19 June 2018 and closes on 29 August 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time.

Applications arriving after the deadline has expired will not be processed. The submission deadline is non-negotiable. The consortium PI is responsible for the application arriving by the set deadline.

Guidelines

For detailed guidelines on how to apply, visit these sections on the Academy's website and in this call text:

1) Call texts
2) How-to guide to the Academy's online services
3) Detailed guidelines on how to draft and submit a letter of intent, on its appendices and on the review > section 4.1 of this call text
4) Detailed guidelines on how to draft and submit a full application, on its appendices and on the review > section 4.2 of this call text.

Also read our step-by-step guide to applying, which is a brief summary of the most important steps you will need to follow to submit your application.

We require that you carefully read the call text and the guidelines mentioned above before submitting the application. If you are applying for funding for an organisation other than a university, a university of applied sciences or a research institute, please get in touch with the contact persons at the Academy in good time.
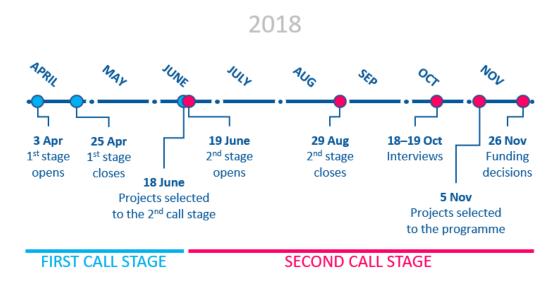
strategicRESEARCH

Figure 1. Schedule of the supplementary call for the SRC programme Keys to Sustainable Growth.

Figure 2. The SRC has launched two programmes under the strategic research theme Reform or Wither – Resources and Solutions: Keys to Sustainable Growth and Adaptation and Resilience for Sustainable Growth. The present call will supplement the programme Keys to Sustainable Growth. The broken lines indicate the second funding period. The funding for the second period is applied for separately and decided based on an interim evaluation (see 3.5).

2.1   Contacts at the Strategic Research Unit

- Science Adviser Joona Lehtomäki, tel. +358 295 335 121
- Science Adviser Milja Saari, tel. +358 295 335 123
- Science Adviser Jyrki Hakapää, tel. +358 295 335 020

Email addresses are in the format firstname.lastname@aka.fi. More information is also available at www.aka.fi/src.

3. HOW TO APPLY FOR SRC FUNDING

The Strategic Research Council's (SRC) funding decisions are made following the Academy of Finland's criteria for funding decisions and the SRC's funding principles. This chapter describes the key application guidelines for SRC funding, but applicants should also, where appropriate, familiarise themselves with the Academy's general application guidelines (see Appendix 1).

3.1 Structure and activity of SRC consortium

The consortia funded by the Strategic Research Council – hereafter SRC consortia – are structurally different from consortia funded by the Academy of Finland, for example, under the Academy Project and Academy Programme funding schemes. In SRC calls, consortia applying for funding must include **at least**

- three subprojects
- two organisations
- three research fields.

'Subproject' refers to the staff working at a certain site of research and contributing to implementing the consortium's research and interaction plan. The principal investigator (PI) of the subproject is responsible for the project's funding at the site of research.

An organisation (e.g. university or research institute) may include several sites of research. For example, a university may have several campuses or other units that apply different coefficients for overheads. 'Site of research' refers to an organisation where researchers and other staff of a subproject are employed.

'Research field' refers to fields that are listed in the Academy of Finland's research field classification. Applicants must select their research fields based on the main categories.

Figure 3 below shows an example of a possible structure for an SRC consortium.

SRC consortia must be based on true collaboration. The research work must not rely too heavily on only one site of research, research team or scientific discipline. This will require sufficient resources for managing and coordinating the consortium operations and for carrying out the consortium's interaction activities. The consortia should work towards a balanced gender composition.

The consortium's research and interaction activities are distributed equally and appropriately between **work packages (WPs)** so that the consortium brings definite added value for the individual work packages. Particular attention must be paid to interlinkages between WPs. In addition, applicants must thoroughly describe the consortium's joint results and expected impact.

The SRC recommends that interaction activities are presented as a separate WP, whose leader is responsible for the consortium's interaction activities. The interaction must be planned so that it covers the entire scope of the consortium's activities. The consortium's management and coordination may also be divided into WPs. There is no limit to the maximum number of WPs, subprojects, sites of research or scientific disciplines.

The WPs may be carried out by people from more than one site of research. Correspondingly, one site of research may participate in several WPs. A subproject is made up of researchers from a single site of research. Subproject PIs may also be WP leaders. Not all subprojects are obliged to lead a WP.
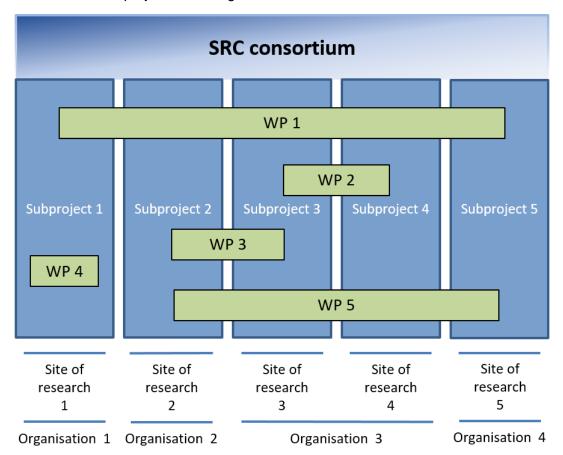

Figure 3. Example of SRC consortium structure.

3.2   Who is eligible to apply?

Principal investigators (PIs) and vice PIs of SRC consortia and WP leaders must have a doctoral degree and qualifications or research experience at the docent level. WP leaders in charge of interaction activities must be qualified in their own field, but they are not required to have a doctoral degree.

Subproject PIs must have a doctoral degree and they must work in the SRC consortium. If the subproject PI does not have an employment relationship with, for example, a university or research institute, they must give an account (in the application) of how their salary will be covered during the funding period.

The SRC's funding for strategic research benefits the scientific community in Finland as well as Finnish society at large. SRC consortia may also include **foreign sites of research**, but their proportions of the total funding must not be significant.

The funding is not granted to support economic activity (i.e. all activity where goods or services are offered on an open market). If the applicant is an organisation other than a

university, a university of applied sciences or a research institute, they must contact the Academy of Finland before applying (see 2.1).

Strategic research funding is not granted to sole-proprietor businesses.

3.3 Restrictions

PIs and vice PIs of SRC consortia cannot be granted funding in other SRC-funded consortia. The exception to this rule are the PIs and vice PIs of SRC consortia that started in 2016 (in SRC programmes "Skilled Employees – Successful Labour Market", "Health, Welfare and Lifestyles" and "Security in a Networked World"), because there is very little funding overlap in the programmes. Subproject PIs or WP leaders cannot have equivalent work assignments in other consortia under the same programme. Directors or team leaders of the Academy of Finland's Centres of Excellence cannot act as PIs or vice PIs for SRC consortia.

The same person may be **a WP leader** in only one application per each SRC programme. Consortium PIs must check the eligibility of each WP leader and that they are participating in only one application. In addition, consortium PIs cannot act as WP leaders in other consortia than their own.

If a person has been entered as a consortium PI or WP leader in more than one application, that person will be removed from all applications before the review starts. In such cases, the applications concerned will proceed to the review without the person's details, CV and list of publications.

SRC funding cannot be applied for by a person who has participated in the planning of the programme to an extent likely to give them a comparative advantage over other applicants.

3.4 Changing consortium compositions between first and second call stage

The composition of a SRC consortium may be supplemented between the first and the second call stage only if the supplementation has been suggested in the first-stage review report.

Consortium PIs, WP leaders and subproject PIs designated in the letter of intent may be changed only for very compelling reasons. Parties to an SRC consortium cannot be removed.

Any changes to consortium compositions made for the reasons mentioned above must be justified in the research and interaction plan of the full application. In addition, in such cases, applicants must contact the science adviser at the Academy of Finland **before they submit their full application**.

3.5 Duration and amount of funding

The funding period of the supplementary call for the SRC programme Keys to Sustainable Growth is **five years**. The research and interaction plan to be included in the application must be drafted to cover the entire five-year period. The funding will be granted in two parts (3 + 2 years).

The first funding decision will cover the period 1 November 2018–31 December 2021. At the end of the first funding period, the consortia will go through an interim evaluation that will determine the funding for the next period from 1 January 2022 to 31 December 2023. The five-year cost estimate of the SRC consortium must be drafted so that **at least two-thirds** of the total funding falls on the first funding period.

The funding budget for the first funding period of the present supplementary call is 14.5 million euros. The SRC will most likely provide funding to 3–5 consortia in total.

3.6 Salary costs

Funding awarded for strategic research can be used to cover the salaries of consortium PIs and possible coordinators for the duration of the funding period. However, the salary funding must not overlap with salary paid from other Academy funding.

Staff to be hired with SRC funding must have an employment relationship with their site of research. With regard to research personnel, the funding is primarily intended for the salaries of **researchers with doctoral degrees**.

3.7 Other eligible costs

The SRC's funding is granted for research and related interaction activities. The funding is not granted to support economic activity.

The application must include **a cost estimate** for the first funding period, showing an estimate of the annual amount of funding needed by the SRC consortium. In the letters of intent submitted in the first call stage, the cost estimate is presented as a total sum. In the second call stage, each subproject will present their own cost estimates, itemised by type of expenditure. The cost estimate must be realistic and justified in the research and interaction plan.

In SRC calls, funding can be applied for to cover the salary and other costs arising from the implementation of the research and interaction plans.

Other eligible costs include the following:

- costs of implementing the interaction plan
- research costs
- travel expenses
- costs of collaboration and mobility in Finland and abroad (of key significance to the goals of the project)
- costs of preparing international projects
- publishing costs (e.g. costs of open-access publishing).
- auditing costs.

When the site of research is a university or a research institute, as a rule, the funding must be applied for VAT included. Consult the financial administration at the site of research for more information. SRC funding can also cover VAT costs, but only on certain conditions; read more on the Academy's website under How to enter value added tax on the application.

The funding cannot be used to pay for acquisition of significant infrastructures.

All acquisitions must be made in accordance with the Finnish Act on Public Contracts. Where necessary, the acquisitions must be put out to tender in compliance with the practices stipulated in the Act.

3.8 Mobility plan

The researcher mobility carried out in SRC-funded projects must support the goals of the programme concerned. It should also support project implementation, reinforce the international networks of the researchers involved, and create new knowledge and know-how. As regards the full applications, applicants must outline the mobility plan both on the application form (in detail) and in the research plan. Mobility plans are not needed in the letters of intent.

3.9 Collaborators

Here, 'collaborators' refers to both Finnish and foreign parties that will contribute to the scientific and societal impact of the SRC consortium with their own funding. As regards full applications, the key collaborators of the project are entered on the application form under *Collaborators*. The collaborators must also sign a free-form l*etter of commitment* to be appended to the application. Collaborators and letters of commitment from collaborators are not needed in letters of intent.

3.10 Applications will be reviewed by panels

The SRC's funding decisions are based on a review of the merits of the research and interaction plan and the applicant. The review puts emphasis on the added value generated by the consortium for the attainment of the objectives set for the programme concerned.

The letters of intent will be peer-reviewed by panels composed of Finnish and foreign experts in science and societal relevance. The panels will consider how well the proposed projects match the programme objectives and assess their societal relevance and impact as well as the quality of the research (see 4.1.3 and 4.2.3).

The SRC will utilise the panel reviews in selecting the consortia proceeding to the second call stage. Successful consortia will be asked to submit full applications.

The full applications will be peer-reviewed by two panels. The societal relevance and impact and scientific quality of the applications will be reviewed separately (see 4.2.3).

A relevance panel composed of Finnish and international experts will review the proposed projects for their societal relevance and impact. It will also consider how well the applications match the programme objectives (see 1.1).

An international scientific panel will review the scientific quality of the proposed research plans and the research choices listed in the programme questions (see 1.1.)

The projects to be funded will be selected by the SRC based the reviews of the relevance panel and the scientific panel.

The SRC reserves the right to invite representatives of SRC consortia to be interviewed. The interview will be held on 18–19 October 2018 (TBC). The interview will focus on how the consortium has addressed the programme description, the

programme questions and priorities, and how the consortium supports the Academy of Finland's science policy objectives, especially in terms of promoting gender equality in research. The interviewees may also be asked to provide additional information to address issues that have emerged during the review process.

As an applicant, you have the right to submit your application in Finnish or Swedish, **but we ask that you to submit it (and the appendices) in English to**

- facilitate international peer review
- ensure an equal preparation of funding decisions
- ensure a smooth processing of applications.

The application and the appendices must be drafted according to the guidelines provided. For justified reasons, we may decide not to review or process an application. The reasons that are considered in these cases are presented on our website under Review criteria.

3.11 How the decisions are made

The consortium application is treated as one single application. When a consortium is granted funding, each subproject of that consortium receives a separate funding decision and the funding is allocated to each subproject's site of research.

Once the SRC has selected the consortia to the programme, it will enter into negotiations with the consortia on their objectives. The final funding decisions are made based on these negotiations. The aim of the negotiations is to reach an agreement on joint objectives for the research and interaction activities and to nail down the funding budget. At the end of the negotiations, the representatives of the consortia undertake to fulfil the agreed objectives by signing a letter of undertaking.

While the consortium project is ongoing, the consortium can apply to change the subprojects' funding plans without having to change the consortium's overall funding.

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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS   2
26 January 2018

4. HOW TO APPLY

4.1 Letter of intent

In the first stage of the SRC programme call, letters of intent can be submitted in the Academy of Finland's online services as of 3 April 2018. The call closes on 25 April 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time. The deadline is non-negotiable.

Draft the application in the Academy's online services.

- Select *Open calls* > **SRC 2018 Keys to Sustainable Growth, supplementary call**.

The consortium PI is responsible for drafting and submitting the letter of intent in the Academy's online services. To minimise the administrative burden on the process, **the letter of intent is drafted as an individual application** – not as a consortium application. Consortium PIs must check the eligibility of each WP leader and that they are participating in only one application. The WP leaders must be listed on the application form.

The consortium PI fills in all required fields of the letter of intent (see 4.1.1).

Consortium PIs must append to the letters of intent a research and interaction plan drawn up according to the guidelines provided as well as the CVs and lists of publications for themselves and the WP leaders (see 4.1.2).

The letters of intent will be reviewed in an expert panel that will assess the match with the programme, the societal impact and the scientific quality. Applicants are advised to carefully read through the review form (see 4.1.3).

According to a preliminary schedule, the projects going through to the second call stage will be selected on 18 June 2018. The names and project titles of successful applicants will be posted on the Academy of Finland's website.

The deadline for full applications (second call stage) is 29 August 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time. The full applications are submitted in the Academy of Finland's online services.

4.1.1   How to submit a letter of intent in the online services

The letters of intent submitted in the first stage of the SRC's call are drafted as individual applications – not as consortium applications. The consortium PI is responsible for drafting and submitting the letter of intent in the Academy's online services. Only the consortium PI's site of research issues a commitment to the application.

All guidelines for the online services are listed on our website under Online services.

The consortium PI drafts the letter of intent.

- Sign-up is required to use the online services.
- After sign-up, select the correct SRC call under *Open calls* and click on *New application*.

- First select the language of the application and then *Individual application*.

Fill in all pages of the application form.

1) Personal data/CV (CV no more than four pages)
2) General description
3) Abstract
4) Work package leaders (enter the WP titles in the description field)
5) Funding
6) Appendices

In the application, give an estimate of the consortium's annual total costs in accordance with the full cost model. The costs to be entered in the online services only concern the first funding period. Do not itemise the costs by type of expenditure; **enter all costs as a total sum under *Other costs***. All other rows of the cost estimate should be left empty.

In this supplementary call for the SRC programme Keys to Sustainable Growth, the five-year cost estimate must be drafted so that at least two-thirds of the total funding falls on the first three-year funding period.

Consortium PIs append only the requested appendices to the application and make sure that they are drafted in line with the guidelines (see 4.1.2).

All obligatory fields must be filled in before the application can be submitted. It is well worth submitting the application in good time **before the deadline expires**, because you can make changes to an application you have submitted while the call is still open. To do this, log in to the online services, open the application, make the necessary changes and save the supplemented application by the set deadline.

If you notice that your application lacks important information **after the deadline has expired**, immediately get in touch with the call's contact person (see 2.1), who may, at their discretion, open the application so that you can add the information. We will take into account the additions insofar as it is possible in view of the review and decision-making process.

4.1.2 Appendices to letter of intent

Append only the requested appendices to the application and make sure to draft them in line with the guidelines provided. Also make sure not to exceed the maximum lengths indicated in the guidelines. Draft the appendices in English and append them to the application **in PDF format** under *Appendices*.

An exception is the consortium PI's CV, which is appended under *Personal data/CV*.

CV and list of publications

We ask that applicants draft their CV in accordance with the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, taking into account the nature of the call, the research career stage and the practices of the scientific discipline concerned. The CV should be a concise presentation of the person's most important scientific merits in terms of the call.

- The maximum length of the consortium PI's CV is four pages. Name the appendix following the format *[surname]_cv*.
- Append a list of the consortium PI's ten most important publications; the list may include links to longer publication lists. Name the appendix following the format *[surname]_pub*.
- Append the CVs for the work package leaders (no more than one page each) and lists of their ten most important publications. Name the appendices following the format *[consortium abbreviation]_WP[no]_[surname]*.

Structure of research and interaction plan

To ensure the uniformity and quality of the review process, applications must be comparable. Applications should therefore be drafted following the guidelines provided.

The research and interaction plan should be **six pages long** (Times New Roman 12 pt or corresponding) including a bibliography. The plan does not need to have a cover page. The plan must be appended to the application in PDF format. Name the appendix following the format *[consortium abbreviation]_research_plan*.

When drafting the research and interaction plan, please take into account that it will be reviewed by both Finnish and foreign experts from various fields and scientific disciplines. The plan must be drafted according to the structure below. Please use the headings provided.

Page structure for the research and interaction plan (6 pages in total)

[pages 1–2]

Project title (ABBREVIATION)

Name and site of research of consortium PI
Name and site of research of vice PI
Names and sites of research of work package leaders
Sites of research that do not have a work package leader
Person in charge of interaction

1. **Central idea of the project and objective for societal impact** (2 pages, programme questions A–C)

Describe the central idea of the research and the purpose of the project by answering questions A–C. The answers should explicitly demonstrate

- the challenge to be solved
- the scientific and societal objectives of the research
- the expected societal impact of the research.

[pages 3–4]

2. **Research implementation** (approx. 2 pages in total, programme questions D–E)

Divide the implementation of the research and interaction into work packages (WPs). We recommend that you devote a separate WP for interaction activities. The leader of that WP will act as the person in charge of the consortium's interaction. The consortium's management and coordination may also be divided into WPs. A WP may

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be implemented by people from several scientific disciplines and sites of research. Describe the WPs so that the descriptions show

- the theoretical background and how the project is positioned in the scientific domain (at least three research fields)
- the implementation and benefits of the multidisciplinary research
- the research methods, design and data
- how the research will be implemented
- the interlinkages (added value of the consortium) and distribution of work between the WPs
- the expected results and impact
- the ethical issues and the promotion of open science.

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3. Interaction (1 page, programme questions F–G)

In the interaction plan, describe the goals, means, stakeholders and implementation of the interaction activities. Make sure that the description of stakeholders is realistic. In addition, describe the consortium's competence as regards the promotion of societal impact.

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4. Scientific accomplishments and competence of the consortium as well as key literature or bibliography (1 page)

On the last page of the research and interaction plan, describe the merits and competence of the consortium PI and the WP leaders. In addition, provide a list of key literature or a bibliography.

4.1.3 How the letters of intent are reviewed

The review of letters of intent will focus on the following aspects:

- compatibility with the programme's supplementary call
- scientific level
- societal relevance and impact.

The letters of intent will be reviewed by a panel composed of Finnish and foreign experts in various scientific disciplines, transdisciplinary approaches and research relevance. The applications must have high societal impact and be of a high scientific standard.

When reviewing the letters of intent, the panel will reflect on the answers to the following questions:

Strategic research programme call: letter of intent review questions
Guiding questions: • Why and how does the proposed research match the programme?   • How significant is the contribution to policy or practice?

- To what extent do the research idea and the applied methodologies aim at scientific excellence?
- How does the research plan support multidisciplinary approach and what added value does the chosen approach bring?
- Is the consortium competent to execute the plan?
- Are the plans for interaction sufficient?

The panel will rate all letters of intent assigned to it and issue a written review report on each application, based on preliminary review statements and the discussions in the panel. The panel will use the review scales for both societal relevance and scientific quality, but it will not give an overall rating to the application. Instead, the panel will divide the letters of intent into three groups (A–C) according to how strongly it recommends that the application be invited to the second stage.

The SRC will decide which consortia are invited to the second call stage based on the panel's written reports and at its own discretion. Successful consortia will be asked to submit full applications.

4.2 Full application

In the second stage of the call, full applications can be drafted and submitted in the Academy of Finland's online services as of 19 June 2018. The call closes on 29 August 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time. The deadline is non-negotiable.

Draft the application in the Academy's online services.

- Select *Open calls* > **Keys to Sustainable Growth, supplementary call**.

Full applications for strategic research funding are drafted **as consortium applications**. The applications and appendices of consortium subprojects will be joined together with the consortium PI's application. **The consortium application can be submitted only after all subprojects have completed their applications (i.e. tagged them as 'complete').** Consortium PIs must follow the completion of the application in the online services to make sure that the consortium's application can be submitted on time.

The application submitted by the consortium PI must include the details, abstract and public description for the PI's own project (see 4.2.1) as well as the whole consortium's joint research and interaction plan and the CVs and lists of publications for the WP leaders (see 4.2.2).

The subproject PIs will complete their own applications, filling in their own subproject's cost estimate and funding plan as well as all other required fields (see 4.2.1).

The applications will be reviewed in two different panels. One panel will focus on scientific quality, the other on societal relevance and impact (see 4.2.3).

The projects to be included in the programme will be selected in autumn 2018. The names and project titles of the funding recipients will be posted on the Academy of Finland's website.

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CALL FOR APPLICATIONS   7
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4.2.1   How to submit a full application in the online services

Full applications for strategic research funding are drafted **as consortium applications.** The consortium PI submits the consortium's joint application, which includes the subproject applications. The consortium PI creates the consortium in the online services, invites the consortium participants and follows the completion of the joint application. The applications and appendices of consortium subprojects will be joined together with the consortium PI's application.

The consortium PI's application includes details and appendices for the PI's own subproject as well as the project's abstract and public description. The consortium PI will enter the project's title, keywords, research fields and collaborators on behalf of the whole consortium. The consortium PI appends to their application the project's joint research and interaction plan, the CVs and lists of publications of WP leaders as well as letters of commitment and all other required appendices.

The subproject PIs will complete their own applications, filling in their own subproject's cost estimate and funding plan as well as all other required fields. NB! Work package leaders are not necessarily subproject PIs. **Costs that involve different work packages and fall upon a single site of research are gathered into one subproject.** The cost estimate must be as realistic as possible. It must follow the cost coefficients (overheads, indirect employee costs, effective working hours) used by the site of research in question. Each site of research of the consortium parties must be asked for their commitment, as is standard Academy practice.

The cost estimate for the first funding period must be drafted so that it covers approximately two-thirds of the total five-year funding.

All guidelines for the online services are listed on our website under Online services.

The joint consortium application is started by the consortium PI. The PI logs in to the Academy's online services, selects the correct SRC call under *Open calls* and clicks on *New application*. First, the PI selects the language of the application and then *Application of consortium PI*. Then the PI enters the name and abbreviation of the consortium.

Under *Collaborators*, the PI describes how key Finnish or foreign collaborators named in the research and interaction plan and working with their own funding will contribute to the project. The collaborators will be asked to submit free-form letters of commitment to be appended to the application.

Under *Consortium parties*, the consortium PI enters the PIs of the consortium subprojects. Please note that the WP leaders do not have to be subproject PIs. The consortium PI can enter the consortium parties in the application only after the parties have signed up in the Academy's online services. When the consortium PI starts writing the name of a subproject PI in the online application, the system will give a list of persons with the same name who have already signed up in the online services. If the name of the subproject PI is not on the list, he or she must first sign up in the online services.

After this, the consortium PI can send the consortium parties a message via the system to indicate that they have been added to the consortium. The email message includes a link with which subproject PIs can log in to the online services to draft their own application and appendices under *My applications > Incomplete*.

Subproject PIs will fill in their own online application forms. Please note that the online services will treat a subproject as a research team. A subproject is made up of researchers from a single site of research, even though they may be assigned to different WPs. A subproject's application form must include information on all researchers working on the subproject's different WPs. On the application form, each subproject PI enters the subproject's research costs and the cost coefficients (overheads, indirect employee costs, effective working hours) and VAT practice of the site of research as well as all other requested details. Research costs are entered only for the first funding period.

Different sites of research within the same organisation may have different coefficients for overheads and indirect employee costs. In such cases, the site of research may choose whether the researchers are placed in the same subproject or in different subprojects, that is, whether the site of research will receive one or two separate funding decisions.

Under *Mobility*, the applicant describes how the subproject's researchers will be mobile in Finland and abroad during the funding period. The mobility must support the project. Learn more about how we support researcher mobility on the Academy's website at [Calculation of support to international researcher mobility](#).

After all obligatory fields have been completed, **the subproject PI tags the application as complete** so that the consortium PI will receive an automatic message indicating that the application is ready.

The consortium application (i.e. the application of the consortium PI and the applications of the consortium subprojects) must be submitted by the set deadline. **The consortium PI can submit the consortium application only after all consortium subprojects (i.e. the subproject PIs) have completed their own applications in the online services (i.e. tagged them as complete).**

The deadline is non-negotiable. All consortium parties can follow the completion of the application in the online services. The PDF version of the application is updated as information is saved in the system. **The PI of the consortium is responsible for the application arriving by the set deadline.**

All obligatory fields must be filled in before the application can be submitted. It is well worth submitting the application **in good time before the deadline expires**, because you can make changes to an application you have submitted while the call is still open. To do this, log in to the online services, open the application, make the necessary changes and save the supplemented application by the set deadline.

4.2.2 Appendices to full application

Append only the requested appendices to the application and make sure to draft them in line with the guidelines provided. Also make sure not to exceed the maximum lengths indicated in the guidelines. Draft the appendices in English and append them to the application in PDF format under *Appendices*. An exception is the consortium PI's and the subproject PIs' CVs, which are appended under *Personal data/CV*.

CV and list of publications

We ask that applicants draft their CV in accordance with the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, taking into account the nature of the call, the

research career stage and the practices of the scientific discipline concerned. The CV should be a concise presentation of the person's most important scientific merits in terms of the call.

Appendices to consortium PI's application

- consortium's joint research and interaction plan (no more than 19 pages), including a two-page *executive summary*; name the appendix following the format *[consortium abbreviation]_research_and_interaction_plan*
- data management plan (approx. 1–3 pages); name the appendix following the format *[consortium abbreviation]_data_management_plan*
- curriculum vitae drafted in line with guidelines by Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (4 pages); name the appendix following the format *[surname]_cv*
- list of the consortium PI's ten most important publications; the list may include links to longer publication lists; name the appendix following the format *[surname]_pub*
- curricula vitae (4 pages) and top-10 lists of publications for work package leaders who are not subproject PIs and for the person on charge of interaction; name the appendices following the format *[surname]_cv and pub*

Appendices to subproject PIs' applications

- curriculum vitae drafted in line with guidelines by Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (4 pages); name the appendix following the format *[surname]_cv*
- list of the ten most important publications; the list may include links to longer publication lists; name the appendix following the format *[surname]_pub*

Case-specific appendices

- letters of commitment from collaborators named in the application
- statement by an ethics committee
- account of state aids received (applies to organisations engaging in economic activity)
- progress report on all Academy-funded research projects by the consortium PI and subproject PIs that have not submitted final reports
- invitation by foreign university or research institute, if part of the work will be conducted abroad in the form of researcher mobility

Structure of research and interaction plan

The joint research and interaction plan of the SRC consortium must be drafted to cover the project's entire funding period. The plan must not exceed **19 pages** (Times New Roman 12 pt or equivalent). The plan does not need a separate cover page.

The research and interaction plan will be reviewed by a relevance panel of Finnish and foreign experts and by a scientific panel of foreign experts. The maximum length of the executive summary of the research and interaction plan is two pages; the summary must follow the structure of the plan. To facilitate the review, the research and interaction plan must follow the following structure and include the following information:

Structure of research and interaction plan for SRC consortium (no more than 19 pages)

i.   **Project title and abbreviation, date of plan**
ii. **Names of PI and vice PI of SRC consortium**
iii. **Work packages, their leaders and the leaders' sites of research**
iv. **Executive summary (no more than 2 pages)**

1. **Central idea of the project and answers to programme questions A–C**

   - how the project addresses the programme's objectives and programme questions A–C
   - what new knowledge will be generated to reach the objectives and how that knowledge will be used
   - added value created by the consortium's multi- and transdisciplinary collaboration; justifications for possible changes to consortium composition
   - aspired societal impact

2. **Scientific objectives and their justifications as well as objectives for interaction (programme questions D–G)**

   - research questions and hypotheses
   - previous research around the topic; how the consortium is positioned in relation to the international scientific field
   - theoretical background
   - methodology behind multidisciplinary collaboration
   - expected scientific results and potential for breakthroughs
   - objectives for consortium's interaction activities
   - publication plan

3. **Research implementation, methods and data, listed by work package**

   - description of work plan (by work package), interlinkages between work packages
   - justifications for chosen multidisciplinary approach
   - presentation of data and methods that enable the study design
   - integration of multidisciplinary methods and results
   - description of ethical issues concerning the research topic, methods and data as well as information on possible research permits and pending permit applications

4. **Implementation of interaction**

   - key actors and knowledge needs with regard to research utilisation
   - means, channels and optimal timing of interaction from the perspective of end-users and beneficiaries at various stages of the project
   - interaction with the media, including social media

5. **Consortium's responsibilities and competence as regards scientific and societal impact**

   - merits and competence of the consortium PI and the WP leaders
   - competence as regards combining multidisciplinary methods and results

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- management, distribution of work and ensuring collaboration between work packages
- justifications for gender imbalance (if necessary), and means to promote gender equality
- critical points for success, alternative implementation strategies

6. International collaboration and researcher mobility

- international connections and cooperation
- plan for possible researcher mobility that will support project implementation

7. Schedule and cost estimate

- schedule for research and interaction activities
- consortium's cost estimate and cost justifications by type of expenditure
- costs arising from interaction activities

8. Bibliography

4.2.3 How the full applications are reviewed

The full applications by consortia invited to the second call stage will be reviewed by two different panels. One panel will assess the applications' match with the programme and their societal relevance and impact, and the other will focus on scientific quality.

The relevance panel composed of Finnish and foreign experts will review the proposed projects for their societal relevance and impact. It will also consider how well the applications match the programme objectives.

The scientific panel, composed of international experts, will review the scientific quality of the research and interaction plans.

Below is a list of the panels' review questions for the second call stage as well as the review scales and scale descriptions.

Review questions: societal impact

1 Project's relevance to the programme
Societal relevance of the project and match with the programme
Guiding questions: How does the project contribute to achieving the objectives of the programme? Are the objectives and/or the implementation of the research societally important?

2 Project's interaction with society
Reaching stakeholders and networks, obtaining support to decision-making
Guiding questions: Is the implementation of research activities and results good and efficient? Are the effects and scope of the intended interaction relevant and realistic from a societal perspective? Are co-creation, co-design or participative methods used well in the different phases of the project?

3 Competence and expertise

Competence and expertise of the consortium, including external collaboration

Guiding questions:
What are the merits and expertise of the consortium (incl. multidisciplinary expertise and external collaboration) in conducting socially relevant research that enables impact on society? Is the management and coordination of the consortium appropriate and high-quality? Does the consortium have appropriate competence to implement the interaction plans?

4 Overall assessment

List of main strengths and weaknesses of the project; additional comments and recommendations

Review questions: scientific quality

1 Research plan

1.1 Scientific quality and the framing of the phenomena

Guiding questions:
How does the project show high scientific quality and potential for innovative outcomes across disciplinary boundaries? How are the problem framing and the choice of disciplinary perspectives and methodologies justified? Is there a unifying principle, frame or concept that provides coherence? Does the proposal indicate synergistic or innovative outcomes from the interaction between disciplines in a solution-oriented way?

1.2 Research Plan

Guiding questions:
Are the objectives sound and well-presented and is the research plan realistic? Have relevant approaches, methods, materials and research partners been identified and appropriately incorporated into the research plan? Do you consider the application multidisciplinary, and are multiple organisations and research fields included in the work packages? Is the management plan appropriate and will it support leadership, coordination, interaction and exchange of information between work packages? Does the research environment support the project, such as with appropriate research and/or technology infrastructures?

1.3 Good Scientific Practices

Guiding questions:
Are there any ethical issues involved and, if so, how are they taken into account? Does the publication plan support open access? Does the data management plan responsibly support the reuse of research data after the project has been completed?

2 Competence of applicants, quality of research collaboration

Guiding questions:
What are the merits and scientific expertise of the consortium in both discipline-based research and multidisciplinary research? Are they appropriate and sufficient for the proposed project? How does the collaboration (incl. international collaboration) contribute to the research activities and knowledge?

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3 Scientific impact
Guiding question: What is the project's level of expected scientific impact? Is there potential for generating impact on multiple disciplines or for advancing further learning and collaboration across disciplinary divides?

4 Overall assessment
List of main strengths and weaknesses of the project; additional comments and recommendations

Scale for rating the relevance of the application

6	extremely significant	research of crucial relevance to users, i.e., such novelty or timeliness and promise that an extremely significant contribution to policy or practice is likely; demonstrates exceptional novelty and innovation to address a solution to an important problem or a critical barrier
5	very significant	research of very high relevance to users, i.e., such novelty or timeliness and promise that a very significant contribution to policy or practice is likely; high potential to address a solution to an important problem or a critical barrier
4	significant	research of high relevance to users, i.e., such novelty or timeliness and promise that a significant contribution to policy or practice is likely
3	moderate	research of relevance to users, i.e. such novelty or timeliness and promise that a moderate contribution to policy or practice is likely
2	limited	research that will add to understanding but that might not be of sufficient relevance or urgency to influence policy or practice
1	poor	research is not considered relevant; proposal is in need of substantial modification or improvement

Scale for rating the scientific quality of the application

6	outstanding	demonstrates exceptional novelty and innovation; has potential to substantially advance science at a global level; includes high-gain projects that can include risks
5	excellent	extremely good in international comparison – no significant elements to be improved
4	very good	in general sound, but contains a few elements that could be improved
3	good	in general sound, but contains important elements that should be improved
2	fair	contains flaws; is in need of substantial modification or improvement
1	poor	contains severe flaws that are intrinsic to the proposed project or the application

APPENDIX 1: APPLICATION PROCESSING AND FUNDING CONDITIONS

1.1 Publicity of research results, research ethics and good scientific practice

All results produced with funding from the Academy of Finland must be made public. The research must be conducted following the principles of good scientific practice. The Academy is committed to following the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity and requires that Academy-funded researchers and sites of research respect the same guidelines. We also recommend that you follow the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity. ALLEA (All European Academies) published the revised edition of the Code of Conduct on its website in spring 2017.

The ethical issues of the research must always be described in the research plan; they are reviewed as part of the scientific review. **The ethical issues and duties** to be considered at the application stage are listed on the Academy's website under Ethical issues and applying for funding.

We require that all Academy-funded research is conducted following the guidelines of the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, including the recommendations on ethical review in human sciences.

We require that Academy-funded projects

- are committed to open access publishing
- make their research data and methods freely available for reuse.

The principles of open science must be pursued with due attention to research ethics and law. Data may for justified reasons come in varying degrees of openness, ranging from fully open to strictly confidential.

The funding application must include a separate data management plan.

Learn more about our open science policy and recommendations on our website under Open science.

1.2 Research funding and equality

In accordance with the Academy of Finland's criteria for funding decisions, Academy-funded research shall contribute to advancing the research careers of women and to promoting gender equality in research.

1.3 Conditions for receiving funding

The Academy of Finland will fund a research project only if the site of research undertakes to provide the researcher with the necessary basic facilities for research.

We allocate the funding to the researcher's host organisation. Staff to be hired with Academy research funding must have an employment relationship with the site of research or the organisation receiving the funding.

Academy funding to organisations outside the central government (e.g. universities) is regarded as a discretionary government transfer. If the site of research is a research organisation, the funding is granted following the Finnish Act on Discretionary

Government Transfers and the general conditions and guidelines for funding by the Academy of Finland. Since the funding is allocated not to individual researchers but to their host organisations, the organisation – not the researcher – is regarded as the recipient of the transfer (as per the Finnish Act on Discretionary Government Transfers), and will accordingly be required to assume all related obligations. The funded projects must also conform to other legislation, such as the Finnish Act on Public Contracts. The organisation receiving the transfer may use the funds only for the research stated in the research plan.

Academy funding is not granted to support economic activity.

For detailed conditions and guidelines (revised annually) on use of funding and reporting, see How to use the funding on our website.

1.4 Sites of research commit to the funding at the application stage

The Academy of Finland will fund a research project only if the application includes a commitment by the site of research. You must agree on this commitment **in advance** with a representative of the site of research. After the call has closed, we will request the commitment by the site of research from the person indicated in the application. Read more on our website under Commitment by site of research.

For example, the site of research undertakes to secure the necessary basic facilities for the project, which are the same as those available to other research staff at the site: office and laboratory premises, equipment (incl. computer equipment), and telecommunications, telephone, mailing, copying and library services.

In calls where full costing is applied, you must – before submitting your application – determine from your own organisation the **calculated coefficients**, and agree on them with the commitment issuer. The coefficients will be valid during the entire funding period. The funding for strategic research comes under the full cost model. The funding percentage is 100 per cent, which means that sites of research need not contribute to the funding with their own percentage.

It is not possible to transfer funding from one funding period to another. The annual instalments of strategic research funding may be changed by up to 15 per cent, according to the Academy's general funding conditions. However, we do not recommend it, because the annual spending of SRC consortia should follow the original plans as closely as possible.

At the application stage, sites of research must check that the site's coefficients, VAT practice and Business Identity Code have been entered correctly. Applicants must indicate in the online application form whether the other costs include VAT.

A prerequisite for Academy funding is that both the applicant and the site of research commit to the guidelines issued by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity on responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland. The site of research undertakes to submit to the Academy's Registrar's Office the final report of any investigations concerning violation of good scientific practice by the PI or a researcher of an Academy-funded project.

If the funding is a discretionary government transfer awarded to organisations outside the central government (e.g. universities), the site of research also undertakes to act as

the recipient of the transfer on behalf of the applicant and will accordingly assume all related obligations.

1.5 How applications are submitted and become pending

The non-negotiable deadline for letters of intent (first call stage) is 25 April 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time. The non-negotiable deadline for full applications (second call stage) is 29 August 2018 at 16.15 local Finnish time.

The PI of the consortium is responsible for the application arriving by the set deadline. To ensure smooth drafting and submission, please submit the application as early as possible.

According to section 17 of the Finnish Administrative Procedure Act and section 8 of the Act on Electronic Services and Communication in the Public Sector, the sender is responsible for the application arriving by the set deadline.

An application becomes pending at the Academy when the online application and the obligatory appendices **have been submitted in the online services**. The system will confirm a successful submission by sending an email to the address provided by the applicant. Nor will the system accept applications that lack obligatory details or appendices.

Append only the requested appendices to the application and make sure not to exceed the maximum lengths indicated in the guidelines.

For guidelines on how to submit an application in the Academy's online services, see our How-to guide. If you run into problems in the online services at the time of submission, please contact us (the contact persons are named in the call text) before the deadline expires, either by phone or via Questions and feedback on our website.

1.6 How to supplement the application

You can make changes (e.g. change appendices) in an application you have submitted to the Academy, but you must make them **before the deadline expires**. To do this, log in to the online services, open the application, make the necessary changes and save the supplemented application by the set deadline.

If you notice that your application lacks important information **after the deadline has expired**, immediately get in touch with the call's contact person, who can open the application so that you can add the missing information. We will take into account the additions insofar as it is possible in view of the review and decision-making process.

Do not submit any new appendices via the so-called additional information feature; such appendices will not be saved as part of the application.

1.7 Publicity of applications

Under the Finnish Act on the Openness of Government Activities, an application and its appendices are public information; research and interaction plans, plans of intent, abstracts and progress reports, however, are not. For example, the CV is a public document and as such must not include any confidential information.

1.8   Guidelines for public project description

The popular description of the project is an important part of the application. The description is a way for the Academy and researchers to disseminate information on Academy-funded research to the research community, stakeholders and the public at large. The description should therefore be as readable as possible, written for a nonscientific audience. It must give the reader a brief summary of the key points of the research. Read more under Public description of project on our website.

If a project is granted funding, we will publish the description of the project on our website. The description is written by the applicant when drafting the application. **We cannot edit project descriptions – it is the applicants themselves who are responsible for the content, clarity and style of the descriptions.** The descriptions will remain accessible on our website for several years.

Finnish- or Swedish-speaking applicants write their descriptions in Finnish or Swedish. All applicants must also write a description in English to facilitate international peer review.

1.9   How the decisions are announced

The dates for Academy funding decisions are posted on our website under Funding decisions. You can also search our decisions for the funded projects, their public descriptions and the call-specific fact sheets.

Applicants will receive an automatic **email message** after the funding decision has been made. After receiving this message, you can log in to **the online services** with your user ID to view the decision. You can also read the conditions for the decision and read the expert reviews on your application, if such reviews have been drafted.

1.10   Applicants and sites of research must confirm receipt of funding

After being granted funding, you must check and accept it in the online services without delay. The system will then send a notification to the commitment issuer at the site of research. That person must also accept the granted funding, and notify whether they wish to receive advance payments based on the funding decision. Advance payments can be made if they are determined to be necessary for the funded project.

The funds can be paid only after both the applicant and the representative of the site of research have accepted them as received. The system will then notify the funding to the finance administration of the site of research, whereupon the funds will be ready to use.

About this document

This call for applications is based on a document that presents the criteria for research funding decisions by the Academy of Finland and that is annually approved by the Academy Board. It is also based on the funding principles decided by the Strategic Research Council (SRC) at the Academy of Finland. This call that will open in April 2018 comes under the decision criteria adopted on 9 November 2017 and the funding principles adopted on 11 December 2017. The documents are available on our website (in Finnish).

Riitta Maijala, Vice President for Research at the Academy of Finland, approved the Finnish-language version of this call text on 26 January 2018.

NB! If any questions arise concerning the accuracy of information presented in the translated version of the call for applications, please refer to the official Finnish version.

How to contact us

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Email	kirjaamo@aka.fi
Website	www.aka.fi/en
More information	Contacts listed in this call for applications (firstname.lastname@aka.fi)
Questions and feedback	Questions and feedback on our website

APPLICATION PROCESSING AND FUNDING CONDITIONS