

Strategic Research Council's proposal on theme and priority for SRC programmes in 2023

13 June 2022

Theme: Just green transition

In this theme, the green transition refers to comprehensive, long-term solutions to ecological sustainability crises. The theme is premised on the societal solutions necessary to break current unsustainable trends and respond to major crises. The transition is not only about the environment and technology, but also about major societal and cultural changes, both locally and globally. The changes will highlight issues relating to the stability and security of society, and the need for foresight will increase. With change also come new opportunities. In Finland, the green transition can contribute to promoting resource and energy security and strengthening societal and economic resilience, the ability to adapt to change. Solutions can also increase inequality and conflicts. How can we identify sustainable pathways of change that reduce inequality and support the participation and inclusion of different societal groups? How do we strengthen the democratic legitimacy of the green transition?

This theme seeks new research-based solutions and perspectives for a just green transition and for strengthening societal resilience. The major crises at hand, such as climate change and biodiversity loss and their linkages to the use of natural resources, with their various interdependencies, require measures that have a significant impact on our entire operating environment, our economic structure and our lifestyles. Research under this theme shall strengthen our capacity to make the long-term decisions required by a just green transition and to anticipate the challenges and opportunities this development will bring about. The research must consider the links between local and national solutions and the global operating environment. The aim is also to open up opportunities for the renewal of the various sectors of society and the economy. The paths that lead us towards a green transition may also lead to and intensify societal disagreement. It is therefore essential to examine resilience and ways of reducing the vulnerabilities of different actors in society.

Through multidisciplinary and interactive research, the theme will build a wide-ranging knowledge base and expertise to support the green transition of the welfare society. The theme will be used to form two separate research programmes with different focuses. The aim is that the programmes will focus on the energy transition and resource issues, their linkages to changes in the global operating environment and the implementation of the societal solutions required by the green transition from the perspective of different actors. Both programmes will place emphasis on resilience and the societal acceptance of the solutions.



Cross-cutting priority: Resilience

The cross-cutting priority of the 2023 strategic research theme is resilience. It refers to an ability to adapt to changes and crises affecting society in a humane and socially, economically, technologically and ecologically sustainable manner. It is essential to reinforce the capacity of individuals, communities, institutions and society to adapt to changes, to recover from adversity and to discover new opportunities – to safeguard the stability and functional capacity of society in changing circumstances. The perspective on resilience may extend from a conceptual examination to concrete analyses as part of the project package. The objective is to include resilience in all stages of the research to be carried out in the 2023 strategic research programmes, from planning to implementation.