

ask & apply

We start at 12.00



Suomen Akatemia
Finlands Akademi
Research Council of Finland

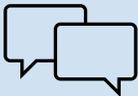
Welcome to the webinar!



The webinar will not be recorded but the presentation is available after the webinar, Ask & Apply-webpage



Participants microphones and cameras are turned off



The event will be held in English



Questions can be typed during and/or after the presentation in either language in the Q&A. **Mark clearly which call your question is about, shared-use RI or thematic RI!**



After the event, please use [our helpdesk \(www.aka.fi/feedback\)](http://www.aka.fi/feedback)

Programme

Time	Section
12:00 – 12:15	Common topics for both calls, Marjut Kaukolehto
12:15 – 12:35	Shared-use Research Infrastructures: Call specific information, Marjut Kaukolehto
12:35 – 12:55	Thematic Research Infrastructures: Call specific information, Ulrika Jakobsson
12:55 – 13:10	How to prepare the application, Ulrika Jakobsson
13:10 – 13:30	Q & A
13:30	End of the event

Timeline for the Research Infrastructure calls in 2026

- The calls have now been published on our website
 - You can find all the material you need from our call texts and pages they link to
- Calls (online services) will open on March 25, 2026 and close on **April 29, 2026 at 16.15 Finnish time**
 - HINT:** You can submit your application early and edit/supplement until the deadline
- Funding decisions for both calls to be made at the end of 2026 and beginning of 2027 by the Scientific Council for Research Infrastructures.
 - Funding period in both calls starts on 1.1.2027.

Applicant

- The applicant is an individual research organisation or a consortium of research organisations.
- **Research organisation:** A university of applied sciences, university, government research institute, or other similar organization where conducting high-quality research (incl. applied research) is one of the main operational goals.
- Research infrastructure is hosted by one or several organisations.
- Each research organisation selects the person who will be responsible for the development project for that organisation. In the consortium, the responsible person of the leading organisation submits the application.
- We recommend that the **research infrastructure's director/ coordinator is the person responsible for the application.**

Funding

- In these calls, the RCF will only fund research infrastructures that are **primarily intended for R&D** use or whose primary purpose is R&D.
- The **funding applied for must be used for R&D activities that are in the public domain.**
 - RCF funding cannot be used for economic activity.
- All acquisitions must be incorporated into an existing or upcoming research infrastructure that is open to use by the users in the RDI system.
 - The calls are not about a research project. Applicant organisations must commit to maintaining the research infrastructure after the investment.
- Funding granted by the RCF is co-funding. The RCF's contribution to the **funding is up to 70% of the total costs**, and the site of research (host organisation) will cover at least 30% of the total costs.
- [Research Council of Finland's funding terms and conditions](#) apply.
- The funding of the research infrastructure cannot rely too heavily on competitive funding granted by the Research Council of Finland. This is evaluated in the long-term financial plans.
- **The funding is not intended for operating costs or permanent operating expenses of the research infrastructure.**

General objectives of both calls

- The Parliament decided in [its supplementary budget for 2025](#) to allocate additional funds for research infrastructures for years 2025-2028. Objectives and use of funding must be in accordance with main policies of [Multiannual plan for the use of government research and development funding](#).
- [The long-term plan for research infrastructures 2030](#) outlines in general the objectives of infrastructure activities.
- Research infrastructure ≠ (research) project
- **The funding applied for must be used for R&D activities that are in the public domain.** Research and development (R&D) generally refers to systematic activities to increase knowledge and use it in new application areas. The aim is to create something fundamentally new. R&D activities include basic research, applied research and development. Research and development expenditure (R&D expenditure) includes R&D-related salary costs, purchased services, other operating expenditure and investment and acquisition costs.

Evaluation and decision process



Applications are evaluated in two phases. First, at least two experts provide an **individual review** for each application. Applications with a score of 5 or 6 proceed to the panel review.



The panel discusses applications that reached the panel review phase in a remote meeting. The panel decides **ratings** for each application. Applications with an overall rating of 5 or 6 are placed in ranked groups.



The panel's **summary assessment** is written for each application during the meeting based on the discussions and the individual reviews.



Scientific Council for Research Infrastructures decides on the funding based on the **review reports** and the **ranking** of the panel, and takes into consideration all applications to be decided on in relation to the **objectives of the call**.



Applications of equal merit, priority shall be given to the application that the Scientific Council considers best advances the dismantling of gender stereotypes, promotes diversity in research and the scientific community as well as supports sustainable development.

**2026 Shared-use Research
Infrastructures:
Call specific information**

Shared-use Research Infrastructures

- Call for *national* roadmap and non-roadmap research infrastructures
 - internationally high-quality research infrastructures and their test beds used by various user groups of the research, development and innovation (RDI) system
- Funding: 70 million euros
 - minimum RCF's contribution to an individual application 200,000 €
 - minimum 600,000 € for the consortium; consortium subproject 100,000 €
- Funding period
 - roadmap infrastructures **five years** (1 Jan 2027–31 Dec 2031)
 - non-roadmap infrastructures **three years** (1 Jan 2027–31 Dec 2029)

Shared-use Research Infrastructures: Call objectives

In general

- to maintain the level of internationally high-quality and shared-use research and technology infrastructures in areas of strength
- to enlarge and diversify the user base of research infrastructures
- to **ensure that the funded research infrastructures operate as part of national and international competence clusters or RDI ecosystems**
- to strengthen the **attraction and retention** power of research infrastructures

Particularly

- The aim of the funded projects is to **improve access to research infrastructures and cooperation between RDI actors**, promote open and shared use, and to create conditions for innovations and the societal utilisation of R&D.
- The objective is that, **at the end of the development project, the research infrastructure will offer at least one new service for a user group of RDI actors beyond academia. The service shall also have a maintenance plan in place.**
- In addition, the project can also develop services for the research community, as long as the service package supports the role of the infrastructure as part of national and international RDI ecosystems and strengthens its attractiveness.

Eligible costs for a new or existing research infrastructure

Only costs that pass through the books of the site of the research must be included in the total costs.

- construction or substantial upgrading, for example, the purchase of equipment and systems
- development of data management
- development of new technologies and services, for example for pre-commercial testing and demonstration prior to deployment
- the formation of services for the needs of new user groups, such as companies, and the development of the necessary skills
- the improvement of accessibility and support for open access with increasing usage, an expanding user base and delivering high-quality R&D activities

In addition, funding may be applied for:

- in a limited and justified manner, salary costs when the job description of the employee is related to the activities of research infrastructure development in the development project. **For the costs to be eligible, the employee's tasks must be clearly specified on the budget tab and motivated in the action plan.**
- the salary costs of the responsible person (in the case of the consortium, responsible persons) for a maximum of 1.5 months/year
- Note: If the construction or significant upgrading of the research infrastructure and the formation of services are focused on the processing of large amounts of data, the project may apply for funding for salary costs related to the data processing.

Additionally, only lighthouses can apply

- the hiring of an expert in innovation and stakeholder cooperation, such as the input of **industry liaison officer (ILO) or knowledge broker** max 12 months
 - the goal-oriented development of the competence of **staff scientists or data scientists** who maintain the operation of the research infrastructure
 - for the duration of the development project
 - permanent employee of the research infrastructure
 - goal-oriented competence development in the development project
- costs to be eligible, the employee's tasks must be clearly specified on the budget tab and motivated in the action plan.

Shared-use Research Infrastructures

- RIs of *national level*
- “Is this a national research infrastructure?”
- Special terms and restrictions given in the call text
 - Research infrastructure, or its part, cannot be national and local at the same time in this call
 - Roadmap RIs: Funding cannot be applied to other organisations than those listed as hosts in the roadmap.

Appendices

- Action plan max 20 pages (template under A-Z) (**mandatory**)
- Long-term financial plan for the entire research infrastructure (template for budget table under A-Z for infras) (**mandatory**)
- Research security assessment (template under A-Z) (**mandatory**)
- Data management policy (**mandatory**) using our instructions under A-Z for infras or the template provided by DMPTuuli
- Letter(s) of collaboration from RDI ecosystem partners that are important for the research infrastructure (instructions under A-Z) (**mandatory**)
- The progress report **in case** the RI has on-going funding from the RCF (instructions under A-Z for infras)

Make sure you have all the requested appendices when submitting your application! The submission will not be successful if a mandatory appendix is missing.

Do not mix the appendices between the two calls, make sure you have the right template!

Action plan sections compared to reviewers form

Action plan

Review form

1 Background and significance

1 Wide and versatile impact and project's relevance to call

2 Impact

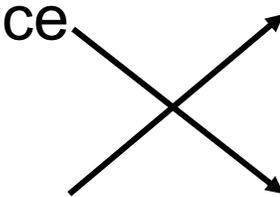
2 Quality of R&D activities

3 Implementation

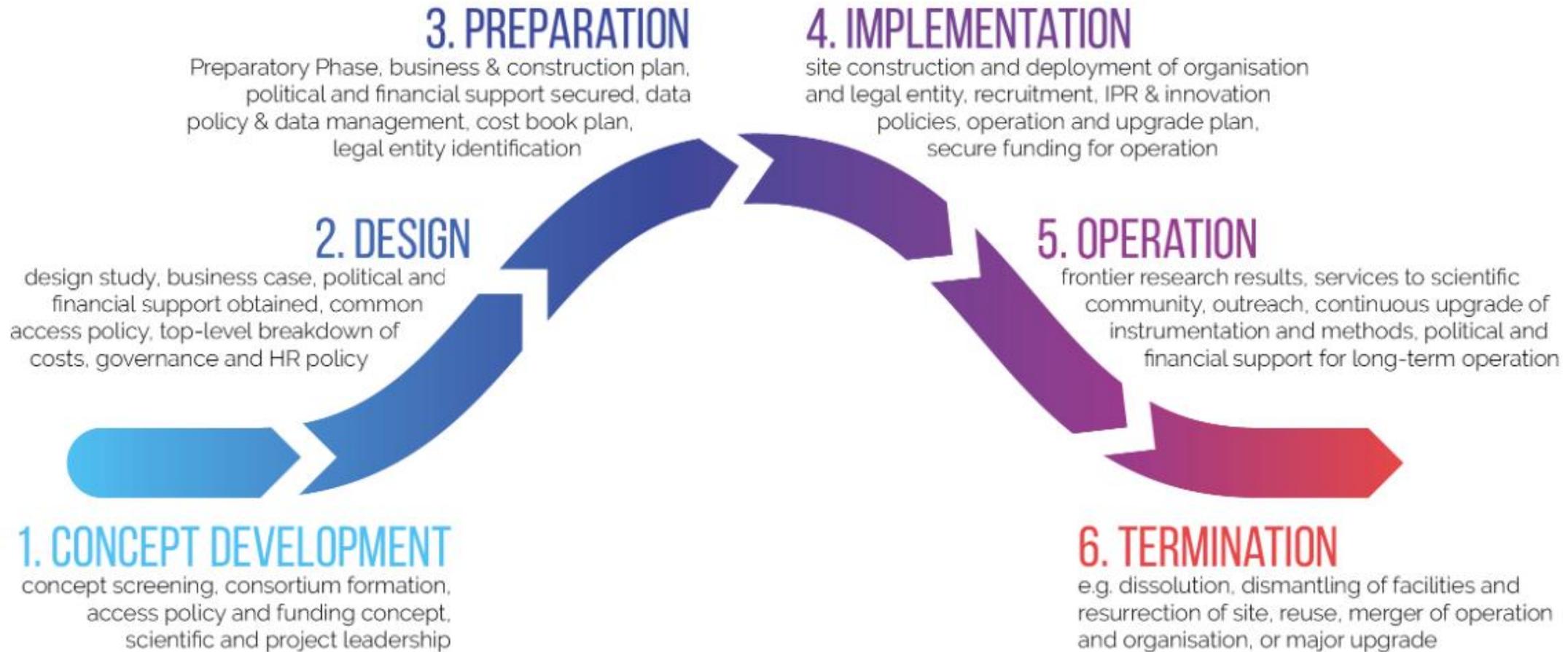
3 Implementation of development project

4 Operational activities

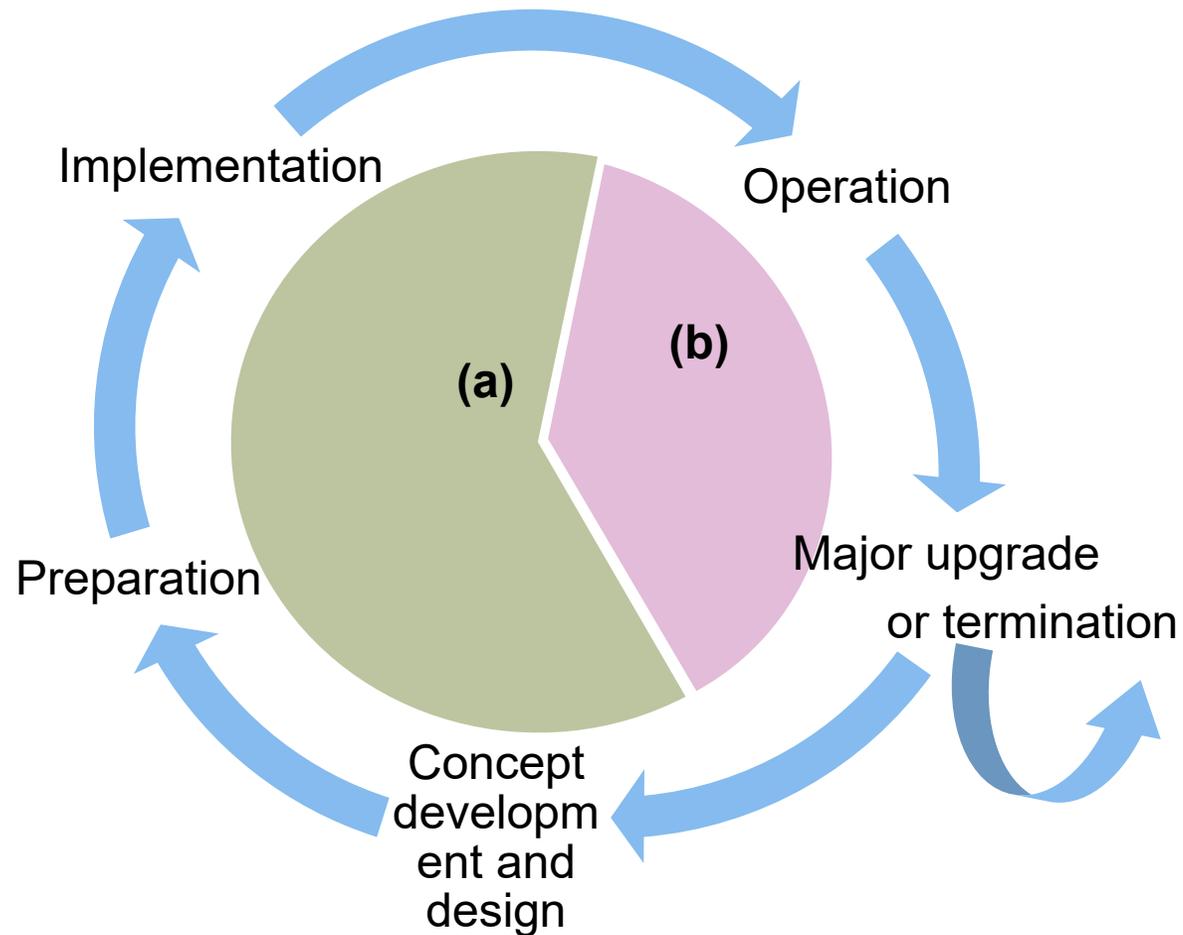
4 Operation of research infrastructure



Lifecycle of research infrastructure (ESFRI)



Life cycle phases of the research infrastructure



The action plan should describe the function and organisation of the research infrastructure in relation to its lifecycle stage.

(a): planning, construction and/or implementation stage

(b): operation and/or termination stage, or major upgrade

The description of the lifecycle categories and associated expectations can be found under A-Z for infrastructures.

Evaluation criteria

1. How the described development project matches the objectives of the call (main criterion) (new services for new user groups)
2. Scientific relevance of the research infrastructure and the quality, innovativeness and novelty of the R&D activities it supports
3. Feasibility of the development project described in the action plan
4. Operation and quality of the research infrastructure (incl. ownership, long-term financial plan, services and users, digitalisation and data management, risk management and responsible science, incl. equality and nondiscrimination aspects)

2026 Thematic Research Infrastructures: Call specific information

Call objectives

- In this call, the RCF will fund **local research infrastructures** that facilitate high-quality R&D activities.
- The aim of the call is to **promote regional vitality and ambitious R&D activity** by targeting research infrastructure funding at research organisations, such as universities of applied sciences, that carry out high-quality applied research.
- The funding will be targeted at **building and upgrading local research infrastructures of regional importance.**
- The funded research infrastructures **should**
 - **create conditions to achieve regional R&D objectives.** These objectives have been identified, for example, in ‘smart specialisation’ strategies and other strategies at regional level.
 - **encourage R&D actors to collaborate and promote the creation of innovations or other societal benefits from R&D.**
- The application **must include at least one regional collaborator**, who may be a current or potential new user of the research infrastructure, with whom the research infrastructure and its services are developed.

Funding to be applied for and applicant

- The RCF is prepared to fund research infrastructures under this call with a total of 30 million euros.
- In this call, the RCF will only fund **research infrastructures that are primarily intended for R&D purposes**, or R&D activity must be their primary use.
- The funding granted for an individual research infrastructure project comes to a **maximum of 2 million euros**.

The maximum funding for a consortium-based research infrastructure project is up to 3 million euros, and subprojects will be granted up to 2 million euros.

- The **funding period is four years**: 1.1.2027 - 31.12.2030

Eligible costs

Only costs that pass through the books of the site of the research must be included in the total costs.

Funding can be applied for to cover, for example, the following **development costs** for a new or existing research infrastructure:

- construction or substantial upgrading, for example, the purchase of equipment and systems
- development of data management
- building new technology and services and developing skills needed to deliver them
- **to a limited and justified extent**, salary costs where the job description of the person employed relates to the above-mentioned activities of research infrastructure development. For the costs to be eligible, the employee's tasks must be clearly specified on the budget tab and motivated in the action plan.
- the **salary costs of the responsible person** (in the case of a consortium application, responsible persons) for a maximum of 1.5 months/year

Eligibility to apply

- Research organisation can **participate with a maximum of three applications**
 - Participation can be **with an individual application or by participation in a consortium application**.
 - each application related to a separate research infrastructure >> a consortium application **cannot contain more than one subproject per organisation**.
- An **authorisation by the person designated by the research organisation is needed** to participate in the call
 - **Attach the letter of authorisation** from the organisation to the application. In a consortium, all parties attach their letter.
 - If you participate without a letter of authorisation, the application will not be processed.
 - If the research organisation authorises more than three research infrastructures to participate, only the first three applications to arrive will be processed.
- We will not process the application, If the research infrastructure:
 - is, or has been, on the **national roadmap** for research infrastructures, including international research infrastructure memberships and their national functions
 - **has recently received FIRI funding**, i.e. the research infrastructure has received funding from the FIRI 2019, FIRI 2020, FIRI 2021 or FIRI 2023 calls (incl. calls for research infrastructures outside the roadmap and the FIRI 2020: Research infrastructures as collaborative platforms call).
- The application **must include at least one regional collaborator**, who may be a current or potential new user of the research infrastructure, with whom the research infrastructure and its services are developed.

Appendices of the application

Appendices where you must use our templates:

1. Action plan **(mandatory appendix)**
2. Long-term financial plan **(mandatory appendix)**
3. Authorisation from the person designated by the applicant organisation to apply for funding under this call. **(mandatory appendix)**
4. The research security assessment **(mandatory appendix)**

Other appendices

1. Data management policy **(mandatory appendix)** using our instructions or the template provided by DMPTuuli.
2. Progress report **(case-by-case)** If the research infrastructure has ongoing RCF research infrastructure funding, a progress report shall be appended to the application.
3. The letter of collaboration **(mandatory appendix)** is requested from a collaborator who participates in the development project's cross-sectoral cooperation. The letter shall be written in English.

Make sure you have all the requested appendices when submitting your application!

The submission will not be successful if a mandatory appendix is missing

Do not mix the appendices between the two calls, make sure you have the right template for the call!

Evaluation criteria

1. Support for regional specialisation, regional added value and cooperation between R&D actors (main criterion)

2. Quality, innovativeness and novelty of R&D described in the action plan

3. Feasibility of the development project described in the action plan

4. Operation and quality of the research infrastructure (incl. ownership, long-term financial plan, services and users, digitalisation and data management, risk management and responsible science incl. equality and nondiscrimination aspects)

How to prepare the application



Responsible science

Responsible science is a mandatory part of the action plan

Describe how the research infrastructure takes responsible science into consideration on the research infrastructure level, not the level of the individual organisation(s) or only the development project!

Applications **will not be processed** if any one of the following four elements is missing:

1. description of the **dimensions related to gender equality and nondiscrimination** in the research infrastructure's activities, governance and collaborations, including the measures taken to promote equality and nondiscrimination
2. description of how **good scientific practice** is followed in the research infrastructure's activities
3. description of how **open access to research publications, outputs and research data** is ensured.



Research security

Research security is a mandatory part of the application

The application is not processed, if in the application, you have not identified and assessed the risks related to research security and, where necessary, presented an adequate risk management plan.

Research security is based on a legal requirement, the amendment of the Act on the Research Council of Finland:

- When carrying out the tasks, the Research Council of Finland shall ensure that **research security** and the **risks related to research projects, research collaboration, and the exploitation of research results** are appropriately taken into account.
- In safeguarding research security, **a researcher's right to choose their research topic and methods may not be restricted.**

Research security - Self assessment and risk management plan

A) Research security self-assessment:

- **Each applicant must fill in this section.**
- Answer all questions 1–4.
- Please note that answering “Yes” does not prevent you from receiving funding!

B) Risk management plan:

- **Applicant must fill in this section, if the answer to one or more questions in section A is “Yes”.**
- Answer all questions 1–3

Make the assessment for the development project you are applying for! (not for the entire hosting organisation(s) activities)

More information on research security

- [Read more about research security](#)
- [Self-assessment of research security](#)
- Contact the support services at your own organization
 - Your own organisation knows the context of your research, the risk management practices at your organisation etc.
- RCF can be contacted for general questions
 - We can't give guidance on the contents of your assessment, whether your assessment is sufficient, or whether a collaborator is risky etc.
 - Please use the questions and feedback form on our web page



Best practices in preparing your application

Best practices

- **Read the call text carefully**
- **Visit our AZ-pages for the call specific appendices and instructions**
 - (links from the call text will guide you)
- **Start early, submit early**
 - Remember: You can submit your application and supplement/update until the deadline
 - Take note of and respect your organisation's deadlines for budgets, etc.
- **Pay attention to your application's keywords and abstract**

Visit our A-Z- index for RI's

NOTE: the own section under A–Z index of application guidelines for research infrastructures! [Research infrastructures - Research Council of Finland](#)

Abstract



Progress report on research infrastructure



Data management policy



2026 call for shared-use research infrastructures



2026 call for thematic research infrastructures



How to get started

- **Start now!** All the material is available for you on our website.
 1. Check if you can apply
 2. Contact your organisation for the authorisation
 3. **Familiarise yourself with the call specific objectives**, you will need to reflect your application to these objectives
 1. Shared-use RI's: **Increasing the user base of research infrastructure and ensuring that it operates as part of national and international competence clusters or RDI ecosystems**
 2. Thematic RI's: **Region's smart specialisation strategy and/or other regional strategy and regional collaboration**
- Read the evaluation questions carefully before writing the action plan
- Start preparing the **action plan using our templates**
- Start preparing the **budget for the project with the help of your organisation**
- Check the **needed appendices** and start preparing them
- The call text links to the appendices and other general instructions

Contacts

- **Contact us primarily via the [helpdesk](#)** (select 'Application guidance, thematic calls').
- Technical issues with the online services? Contact us via the [helpdesk](#) (select 'Online services and other technical questions').
- Our telephone number (switchboard) is +358 295 335 000.

Thank you!

Q & A

Please indicate in the Q&A if your question is related to:

1. General aspects and application preparation
2. Shared-use research infrastructures
3. Thematic research infrastructures

