



**ACADEMY OF FINLAND**

**ACADEMY PROGRAMME FOR DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH**

**2018–2022**

Programme memorandum

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## 1. BACKGROUND

The Academy of Finland and the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs have long-standing cooperation in the funding of multidisciplinary development research. Ministry funding for development research has come from the development cooperation budget, and cooperation has been channelled through its Department for Development Policy. Academy funding for development research has been made available through grants for Targeted Academy Projects, a funding instrument open to all Academy research councils and managed by the Research Council for Culture and Society. The grant is open for application each year in the September call. Calls were not announced in 2015 and 2016, however.

There has been a perceived need to create a stronger thematic and programmatic focus for the funding instrument and to strengthen research dissemination. In 2016 discussions were undertaken to elaborate new alternative funding options in the field of development research. The best solution emerging from these discussions was the Academy Programme concept. For this reason, the Academy of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs decided to launch preparations for a jointly funded Academy Programme for Development Research.

The programme steering group was chaired by Professor Kai Lindström (Research Council for Biosciences and Environment, Åbo Akademi University). The vice chair was Dr Kia Lindroos (Research Council for Culture and Society, University of Jyväskylä), and the group's other members were Professor Jorma Toppari (Research Council for Health, University of Tampere), Professor Sirkka-Liisa Jämsä-Jounela (Research Council for Natural Sciences and Engineering, Aalto University), Deputy Director General Riikka Laatu (Ministry for Foreign Affairs), Director of Unit for General Development Policy Sari Lehtiranta (Ministry for Foreign Affairs) and Professor Juho Saari (Strategic Research Council, University of Tampere). The group was charged with elaborating and specifying the title, content and objectives of the Academy Programme for Development Research; undertaking preparations for the call for research grants; and performing other tasks relating to the preparation, implementation and evaluation of the research programme.

## 2. AIMS

The aims of the Academy Programme for Development Research are to

- produce new research-based knowledge on issues of global development, the causes and mechanisms of poverty and inequality in developing countries, and to find ways to remove obstacles to development and to improve conditions for development
- strengthen and renew high-quality phenomenon-driven and problem-based development research in Finland in the long term
- support cooperation and research between universities and research institutes in Finland and in developing countries
- strengthen the research capacity of universities and research institutes in developing countries
- meet the objectives of Finnish development policy and the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals: to end poverty and to reduce inequality in the world
- disseminate new research-based knowledge for more informed decision-making and implementation, to make research-based knowledge more readily available among stakeholders and the general public, and to support improved application of research-based knowledge
- bring together scattered strategic research capacities in Finland
- promote interdisciplinary cooperation in the field of development research
- promote the international networking of Finnish development research.

### 3. RESEARCH THEMES

The Academy Programme for Development Research is intended to provide funding for multidisciplinary, phenomenon-driven and problem-based research that is concerned with issues of global development, that benefits developing countries' economic, social and ecological development, and that puts to good use Finnish knowledge and expertise. Its purpose is to work towards achieving the Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals as adopted by UN Member States (see Appendix 1).

Agenda 2030 is aimed at reaching environmentally, socially and economically sustainable development and at establishing peaceful societies throughout the world. The Agenda 2030 goals are universal, providing a framework for planning and policy direction in all committed countries. Industrial countries have committed themselves not only to implementing Agenda 2030 at home, but also to supporting poorer countries in achieving the Agenda goals.

The Finnish Government is committed to implementing Agenda 2030, and its development policy supports 11 of the 17 Agenda 2030 goals.<sup>1</sup> In its report, the Government says it is key to strengthen developing countries' economic foundations so that they can move forward with their development. The need for international support is greatest in the least developed countries, the most fragile states and those suffering from conflicts or climate and natural disasters. Finnish development policy is grounded in Finnish values and principles, most particularly in support for democracy and rule of law, gender equality, human rights and freedom of speech, a sustainable market economy and the sustainable use of natural resources, and the Nordic welfare state.

Supporting research and strengthening research capacities are considered key development targets in many developing countries, but local universities often have limited resources to undertake research. International research cooperation and improved research capacities can help bolster developing countries' competitive position. The Academy Programme for Development Research will contribute to strengthening developing countries' research capacities by providing funding to projects that support long-term cooperation between researchers and universities in Finland and in developing countries. International networking and cooperation are central to the effective dissemination and application of research results.

**The Academy Programme for Development Research has three main research themes:**

- **economic development in developing countries (jobs, livelihoods)**
- **creating a better-functioning society (welfare, health, education, human rights)**
- **food security, biodiversity, environmental health and natural resources.**

Eligible research projects are to address one or more of these research themes. Furthermore, it is required that research projects support the achievement of the Agenda 2030 goals and support the management of changes that will benefit poor people and promote equality primarily in least developed and fragile countries. In their research plans, applicants are required to identify which Agenda 2030 goals their project addresses and what impacts their project will have in developing countries.<sup>2</sup>

The Academy Programme for Development Research is human-rights-sensitive: all research plans are expected to reflect a human-rights-based approach and to incorporate cross-cutting objectives (gender equality, reduction of inequality, climate proofing).

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<sup>1</sup> [Government Report on Development Policy: One World, Common Future – Towards sustainable development.](#)

<sup>2</sup> For more details on Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, go to <http://yk.fi/sdg> (in Finnish).

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION REQUIRED OF PROJECTS

Projects approved for funding are expected to work in genuine cooperation with researchers and research institutes based in developing countries. At project level, the inputs of researchers from Finland and the developing country concerned should be as closely equivalent as possible. The Academy of Finland does not award funding to research sites in foreign countries, but projects approved for funding may use the funds granted by the Academy to hire researchers in a joint research project in a developing country. The Academy funding can – on certain conditions – be transferred to be administered at another site of research. The PI's site of research acts as the funding recipient. The funding can be transferred to sites that are mentioned in the original application, unless the Academy's decision says otherwise. By virtue of section 7 of the Finnish Act on Discretionary Government Transfers, the PI's site of research is obliged to conclude a contract for the use of the transfer, the control of the use and the terms with the other sites of research receiving Academy funding. The PI's site of research is required to assume full responsibility for the use of funding, even if funds have been transferred to be used at other sites. To transfer part of a discretionary government grant to be administered by a collaborator, it is required that the planned transfer has been described in the application (in the research plan). Furthermore, a researcher from a Finnish research site (a university, research institute, etc. based in Finland) can use the funds to travel or to return to Finland.

Research projects can be carried out in developing countries that, according to the OECD's Development Assistance Committee (DAC) definition, are eligible for official development assistance (ODA; see Appendix 2). The Academy Programme for Development Research encourages cooperation with least developed and fragile countries.<sup>3</sup> Rather than focusing on problems in one country or region, research can also take a broader perspective on development issues.

## 4. PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND TIMETABLE

The programme is intended to provide funding for multidisciplinary research in research teams and consortia and to support national and international cooperation and networking. A research consortium is a collaboration of independent fixed-term projects or teams based at different research sites and working under a joint research plan, combining different methods and research fields to achieve greater added value than is normally achieved from project collaboration. A consortium application is reviewed as a single application. For further information on consortium applications, go to [Guidelines for consortium application](#).

The maximum amount of funding granted to an individual research project is 600,000 euros and to a research consortium 1,000,000 euros for a four-year term.

The call is single-stage and applications can be submitted via the Academy's online services during the period from 1 September through to 16 October 2017. All applications will be checked for completeness after the deadline, and applicants will be contacted if additional information or documents are required.

### 4.1. REVIEW OF APPLICATIONS

Research projects must meet certain criteria to qualify for the Academy Programme for Development Research. They must

- address one or more of the specified research themes
- promote achievement of one or more Agenda 2030 goals
- support the management of changes that will benefit poor people and promote equality

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<sup>3</sup> So called fragile countries are listed on page 76 of the OECD States of Fragility 2016 report; see <http://www.oecd.org/dac/states-of-fragility-2016-9789264267213-en.htm>

- involve cooperation on an equal basis with researchers, universities and research institutes in developing countries in both project planning and implementation, primarily with least developed or fragile countries
- involve research cooperation that benefits both parties
- have a demonstrable impact in the partner country
- reflect a human-rights-based approach and incorporate the programme's cross-cutting objectives: gender equality, reduction of inequality and climate proofing.

The applications received will be reviewed by an international review panel in Helsinki in November 2017. The Academy uses the following criteria to evaluate the scientific merits of applications:

- scientific quality, innovativeness and novelty value of research plan
- project's alignment with the programme and its objectives
- competence of applicant/research team
- feasibility of research plan
- quality and strengthening of research environment
- international and national research collaboration and researcher mobility
- project's significance for promotion of professional research careers.

The scientific review process is described in more detail on the Academy website under [How applications are reviewed](#).

On completion of the review process, the programme steering group will study the results and submit its proposal on the projects recommended for funding. The final funding decision will be made by the Development Research Subcommittee, which is made up of the research council representatives who are on the steering group for the Academy Programme for Development Research. One key consideration is to create a cluster of projects that is best placed to further the programme's overall objectives. The major decision criteria are how the project is aligned with the programme, its societal relevance and impact, its contribution to the renewal of science, and the quality of research. Scientific quality is the single most important criterion.

The funding decisions will be made in January 2018. Funding is made available for a four-year term (2018–2022) commencing 1 February 2018. Three-year projects can only be funded in exceptional cases.

## 4.2. PROGRAMME FUNDING

The Academy Programme for Development Research is funded by the Academy of Finland and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and coordinated by the Academy. Total programme funding is 6 million euros. An additional, complementary call may be announced during the programme if the necessary funds are made available. The decision on any complementary calls will be made separately. Such calls may be organised on a bilateral basis with foreign funding partners, or on a wider basis through ERA-NET or EDCTP (European & Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership), for instance.

## 4.3. NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION, INTERACTION AND IMPACT

The cornerstones of the Academy Programme for Development Research are networking, interaction, communication and the dissemination of research knowledge. During its funding term, the programme will facilitate stakeholder collaboration with key national partners such as the Finnish Society for Development Research and the Finnish University Partnership for International Development UniPiD (incl. the FinCEAL project). It will also provide a platform for discussion and exchange with NGOs, foundations and decision-makers, and encourage cooperation with development researchers outside the programme. Other Academy

programmes and Strategic Research Council programmes will also provide opportunities for cooperation and synergy.

The Academy Programme for Development Research is inherently international by nature. Every project is expected to show an international focus and orientation. This will also be highlighted by the programme coordination team throughout the programme. The programme will seek cooperation with corresponding foreign research teams, researchers and research institutes and organisations, such as the European Association for Development Research and Training Institutes EADI. Collaboration with national and international partners is crucial with a view to achieving the goals set for the programme. As well as creating synergy benefits, this offers the potential of economic savings.

The Academy Programme for Development Research is designed to support long-term cooperation and to promote equal participation by researchers and research institutes from developing countries in the planning and implementation of research projects. The results should first and foremost meet the information needs of partners in developing countries. To ensure interaction and the effective dissemination of research results and application of knowledge, projects will be asked to attach to their application a separate interaction plan. This plan should describe the aims and means of interaction, the stakeholder groups, implementation and the research team's competency to promote societal impact. The interaction plan should also include the project's communications plan.

Projects selected for funding will be expected to demonstrate high scientific quality as well as high societal relevance and impact. To achieve maximum impact, it is essential that the research themes grow out of the developing countries' own needs and are possibly prompted by the initiative of the developing country partners themselves. Research plans must clearly describe the project's anticipated societal impact. Where possible, the project's impacts should extend to public administration in the developing country concerned: these ambitions should also be reflected in the project's research plan.

#### 4.4. PROGRAMME COORDINATION

Coordination of the Academy Programme for Development Research rests with the programme steering group and the programme manager, science adviser and project officer appointed by the Academy. Their role is to work closely with the research projects to facilitate achievement of the programme's objectives. A further aim of programme coordination is to generate value added that would not be achieved if funding were provided to a number of separate projects each going their own way.

The steering group is composed of members of the Academy's research councils, representatives of other funding agencies and other possible expert members. The steering group is charged with submitting to the programme subcommittee a proposal on which projects to fund; submitting proposals on possible additional calls; assuming responsibility for the final programme evaluation; and promoting practical application of the programme's results. The steering group will monitor programme progress, among other things via interim project reports and by attending programme events. In addition, the programme manager will provide regular updates on progress to the steering group. The steering group will meet 2–4 times a year.

Practical arrangements for coordination, including the organisation and administration of the call, communications, and organising the final evaluation of the programme, rest with the programme manager together with the science adviser and project officer. The role of coordination is to support and promote the development of the participating projects into a cohesive structure through active exchange of information, cooperation and various coordination activities. These activities include seminars, workshops, researcher training, public events and meetings, meetings with decision-makers, stakeholders and NGOs, participation in national and international events, communications, and the popularisation of science.

Coordination of the projects participating in the programme is expected to contribute to their mutual reinforcement and to help the programme generate new multidisciplinary research knowledge. For this reason, the projects' principal investigators will be required to commit themselves to the programme objectives and to work closely with one another during the programme. The PIs will be required to

- assume responsibility for and report on the project's scientific progress and its use of funds in accordance with the steering group's instructions
- ensure that the whole research team attends all meetings, seminars and workshops organised by the programme coordinators, and facilitate cooperation and exchange between research teams in the programme
- take part in producing reviews, syntheses and information material around the programme, and actively disseminate information about the programme's progress and results on both public and scientific forums.

During the programme, research projects will participate in events arranged together with end-users of research results and in other activities designed to disseminate information to stakeholders.

#### 4.5. FINAL EVALUATION

The Academy Programme for Development Research will be evaluated on its completion to assess implementation and outcomes. The scope and aims of the evaluation will be defined during the course of the programme, but it may consider such issues as the attainment of the programme's aims; the achievement of the intended impacts; national and international cooperation; and the exposure and publicity gained by the research undertaken.

All research teams funded under the programme will be required to submit a research report to the Academy of Finland upon project completion. The reports must include information on scientific publications produced in the project as well as on theses and doctoral dissertations completed within the programme.

### 5. APPLICATION GUIDELINES

The call for applications to the Academy Programme for Development Research is a single-stage call. Guidelines for preparing and submitting an application will be given in the Academy's September 2017 call text. For more detailed information on required appendices and other instructions, go to [Application guidelines](#) on the Academy website. **Please note the exceptional timetable. The non-negotiable deadline for applications is 16 October 2017 at 16.15.**

#### FURTHER INFORMATION

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## Appendix 1: Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals<sup>4</sup>

1. End poverty in all its forms everywhere.
2. End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture.
3. Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.
4. Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all.
5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.
6. Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all.
7. Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all.
8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all.
9. Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation.
10. Reduce inequality within and among countries.
11. Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.
12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.
13. Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts.
14. Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.
15. Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss.
16. Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels.
17. Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development.

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<sup>4</sup> Each SDG breaks down into a number of related targets.

## Appendix 2: DAC list of ODA recipients

**DAC List of ODA Recipients**  
Effective for reporting on 2014, 2015 and 2016 flows

Least Developed Countries	Other Low Income Countries (per capita GNI <= \$1 045 in 2013)	Lower Middle Income Countries and Territories (per capita GNI \$1 046-\$4 125 in 2013)	Upper Middle Income Countries and Territories (per capita GNI \$4 126-\$12 745 in 2013)
Afghanistan Angola Bangladesh Benin Bhutan Burkina Faso Burundi Cambodia Central African Republic Chad Comoros Democratic Republic of the Congo Djibouti Equatorial Guinea <sup>1</sup> Eritrea Ethiopia Gambia Guinea Guinea-Bissau Haiti Kiribati Lao People's Democratic Republic Lesotho Liberia Madagascar Malawi Mali Mauritania Mozambique Myanmar Nepal Niger Rwanda Sao Tome and Principe Senegal Sierra Leone Solomon Islands Somalia South Sudan Sudan Tanzania Timor-Leste Togo Tuvalu Uganda Vanuatu <sup>1</sup> Yemen Zambia	Democratic People's Republic of Korea Kenya Tajikistan Zimbabwe	Armenia Bolivia Cabo Verde Cameroon Congo Côte d'Ivoire Egypt El Salvador Georgia Ghana Guatemala Guyana Honduras India Indonesia Kosovo Kyrgyzstan Micronesia Moldova Mongolia Morocco Nicaragua Nigeria Pakistan Papua New Guinea Paraguay Philippines Samoa Sri Lanka Swaziland Syrian Arab Republic Tokelau Ukraine Uzbekistan Viet Nam West Bank and Gaza Strip	Albania Algeria Antigua and Barbuda <sup>2</sup> Argentina Azerbaijan Belarus Belize Bosnia and Herzegovina Botswana Brazil Chile <sup>2</sup> China (People's Republic of) Colombia Cook Islands Costa Rica Cuba Dominica Dominican Republic Ecuador Fiji Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia Gabon Grenada Iran Iraq Jamaica Jordan Kazakhstan Lebanon Libya Malaysia Maldives Marshall Islands Mauritius Mexico Montenegro Montserrat Namibia Nauru Niue Palau Panama Peru Saint Helena Saint Lucia Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Serbia Seychelles South Africa Suriname Thailand Tonga Tunisia Turkey Turkmenistan Uruguay <sup>2</sup> Venezuela Wallis and Futuna

(1) The United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/L.20 adopted on 4 December 2013 decided that Equatorial Guinea will graduate from the least developed country category three and a half years after the adoption of the resolution and that Vanuatu will graduate four years after the adoption of the resolution.

(2) Antigua and Barbuda, Chile and Uruguay exceeded the high income country threshold in 2012 and 2013. In accordance with the DAC rules for revision of this List, all three will graduate from the List in 2017 if they remain high income countries until 2016.

## Appendix 3: Application review form for Academy Programmes

Academy of Finland

Application evaluation form  
2017 Academy Programmes

Panel/Name of reviewer:  
Name of applicant:  
Title of proposed project:

Application number:

Please also write comments (not only numerical ratings) to each of the following sub-items.

The numerical evaluation of the sub-items and Item 1 (Quality of research plan), Item 2 (Competence of applicant(s), quality of research collaborations) and Item 4 (Final rating) is made with ratings ranging from 1 (poor) to 6 (outstanding).

1 = poor, 2 = fair, 3 = good, 4 = very good, 5 = excellent, 6 = outstanding

### 1 Quality of research plan

Rating (1–6):

#### 1.1 Project's relevance to programme

Sub-rating (1–6):

*Guiding question:* How does the application contribute to achieving the objectives of the programme?

#### 1.2 Scientific quality and innovativeness of research plan

Sub-rating (1–6):

*Guiding questions:* Is the project scientifically significant? Does the project have potential for breakthroughs or exceptionally significant outcomes? To what extent are the objectives ambitious and beyond the state of the art (e.g. novel concepts and approaches or development across disciplines)?

#### 1.3 Feasibility of research plan

Sub-rating (1–6):

*Guiding questions:* Are the objectives and hypotheses appropriately presented and is the research plan feasible (bearing in mind the extent to which the proposed research may include high risks)? Are the research methods and materials appropriate? Does the applicant acknowledge potential scientific or methodological problem areas, and how are alternative approaches being considered? Is the management of the proposed plan appropriate and well planned? Does the research environment support the project, including appropriate research infrastructures?

#### 1.4 Ethical issues and open access to research results

*Guiding question:* Are there any ethical issues involved and, if so, how are they taken into account? What is the intended level of open access to research results? Is the data management plan sufficiently detailed?

### 2 Competence of applicant(s), quality of research collaborations

Rating (1–6):

#### 2.1 Competence and expertise of applicant(s)

Sub-rating (1–6):

*Guiding questions:* What are the merits and scientific expertise of the applicant(s)? Are they appropriate and sufficient for the proposed project? What are the competences of the applicant(s) in terms of supervising PhD candidates/postdoctoral researchers?

#### 2.2 Research team, significance of research collaborations

Sub-rating (1–6):

*Guiding questions:* Does the research team bring complementary expertise to the project (if applicable)? Is the project involved in national and/or international research collaborations that can significantly contribute to the success of the project? Does the research project support researcher training?

#### 2.3. Researcher mobility

Sub-rating (1–6):

*Guiding questions:* How does the mobility plan support the research plan? Does the receiving organisation stand out in the respective field of research? Is the length of the mobility period appropriate and is its timing right for the project?

#### 2.4 Research consortium (if applicable)

*Guiding question:* If a consortium is involved, what is the significance and added value of the consortium for the attainment of the research objectives?

Academy of Finland

Application evaluation form  
2017 Academy Programmes

Panel/Name of reviewer:

Name of applicant:

Title of proposed project:

Application number:

### 3 Overall assessment

#### 3.1 Main strengths and weaknesses of project, additional comments and suggestions

Strengths:

Weaknesses:

Comments:

Please note that the final rating should not be a mathematical average of the sub-ratings.

#### 4 Final rating (1–6):