

Independent peer-review and decision-making in the Academy of Finland

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Academy of Finland

- Research funding agency
- All disciplines
- Basic research
- Several funding schemes:
 - Post-doctoral researchers
 - Academy fellows, academy professors
 - Projects
 - Centres of Excellence

Organization

- Four Research Councils
 - University professors appointed by the Government (10 + 1)
- Administrative units

The process

- Applications are submitted
- Administrative units recruit the evaluators in collaboration with Council members
- Panels are recruited
- Panellists read the applications and write their pre-assessment each
- Panel meeting with consensus assessment
- Council members read the applications and assessments
- Desicions-making, collective desicions

Criteria

- Research plan
 - Scientific quality and innovativeness of the research plan
 - Feasibility of the research plan
 - Ethical questions
- Competence of the applicant / research team
 - Cooperation contacts for the research
 - Research environment

Innovations?

- Quality or policy?
- Expert panels or councils?
- Innovations = applications?

Risks?

- “Positive risks”
 - High quality but questions in feasibility.
 - High quality but researcher is entering new area; no previous publications on that field.
 - Multidisciplinary research with new team.

Decision-making

- Expert panels rate the applications: 1 - 6.
- Councils rank the applications.
- Science policy in ranking:
 - International collaboration
 - Social impact of research
 - Innovation potential
 - Risks
 - Young or senior? Gender balance?