

Translation from Finnish

Legally binding only in Finnish and Swedish

Ministry of Education and Culture, Finland

Act on the Research Council of Finland

(922/2009; amendments up to 513/2026 included)

By decision of the Parliament, the following is enacted:

Section 1 (213/2018)

Administrative status

The Research Council of Finland is an expert organisation in science and research that operates within the branch of government of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Section 2 (213/2018)

Duties

The Research Council of Finland shall:

- 1) promote scientific research and the conditions for research and their utilisation by funding them and engaging in international cooperation;
- 2) act as an expert in advancing and implementing science policy;
- 3) execute other science policy expert tasks issued by government decree or assigned to it by the Ministry of Education and Culture.

In carrying out the duties referred to in subsection 1, paragraph 1, the Research Council of Finland shall ensure that due account is taken of research security and the risks related to it in the context of research projects, research cooperation and the utilisation of research results. When ensuring research security, the right of researchers to choose their research topic and research methods shall not be restricted. (212/2025)

Section 3 (212/2025)

Board

The operations of the Research Council of Finland are directed and supervised by a Board. The Board consists of a chair and at least five and at most seven other members. The chair and the members of the Board are appointed by the Finnish Government for a term of three years at a time, on presentation by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The members shall have experience in research work and sufficient science policy expertise. The Finnish Government appoints a deputy chair from among the Board members. The same person on the Board may be appointed for a maximum of two consecutive terms.

The President of the Research Council of Finland is responsible for the preparation, presentation and execution of matters which come before the Board.

Section 4 (482/2014)

Duties of the Board

The Board of the Research Council of Finland shall make the decisions on matters concerning:

- 1) the Research Council of Finland's general policies and objectives, taking into account the objectives agreed with the Ministry of Education and Culture;
- 2) coordination of the work of the councils and the Strategic Research Council; (212/2025)
- 3) the research fields of the councils and the promotion of research fields that are covered by two or more councils; (212/2025)
- 4) The Research Council of Finland's operating and financial plans, budget proposal and performance agreement;
- 5) allocation of appropriations for the scientific councils and for different purposes; (212/2025)
- 6) the rules of procedure;
- 7) the approval of the financial statements and annual report;
- 8) other matters of far-reaching or fundamental importance to the Research Council of Finland.

Section 5 (213/2018)

Councils (212/2025)

The Research Council of Finland has councils as laid down by a government decree that are responsible for:

- 1) granting funding for scientific research, research infrastructures and the development and utilisation of research capabilities;
 - 2) monitoring the impact and performance of the funding it has granted;
 - 3) planning the promotion of research together with the Research Council of Finland's other decision-making bodies;
 - 4) acting otherwise as provided in more detail in the rules of procedure.
- (212/2025)

The Finnish Government appoints a chair and no more than ten other members to the councils for three years at a time. The members of each council elect a first and second vice-chair from among their number. The councils shall represent versatile scientific expertise of a high standard. The same person may not be appointed as a member to a council for two consecutive terms. One person may be appointed chair or a member for a maximum of two consecutive terms if the person acts as chair for one of the two terms. (212/2025)

Before appointing the councils, the Ministry of Education shall hear the higher education institutions, major government research institutes, public authorities and corporate bodies representing research and development, major scientific societies and science academies.

Section 5a (212/2025)

Section 5a was repealed by Act 212/2025.

Section 5b (482/2014)

Strategic Research Council

The Strategic Research Council is a body established within the Research Council of Finland. The Strategic Research Council is responsible for:

- 1) submitting to the Finnish Government initiatives regarding key themes and priorities for strategic research;
- 2) designing strategic research programmes based on the Finnish Government's decision on themes and priorities;
- 3) selecting the projects to be funded based on a review of societal relevance, impact and research quality;

4) monitoring the funded projects and assessing their impact.

The Strategic Research Council consists of a chair and eight members appointed by the Finnish Government, on presentation by the Ministry of Education and Culture. The Strategic Research Council shall have distinguished scientists and scientific experts to represent end-users of research. In addition, the Strategic Research Council shall include wide experience of change management within administration, business and industry or other areas of working life, or research.

The Strategic Research Council members are appointed for a maximum term of three years, with a possible extension of a further three-year term.

Section 6 (212/2025)

Subcommittees of the Board

By decision of the Board of the Research Council of Finland, matters falling within the scope of two or more councils may be transferred to be handled and resolved by a subcommittee appointed by the Board. Only chairs and members of the Board, the councils and the Strategic Research Council may be appointed members of the subcommittees.

Section 7 (513/2025)

Specific eligibility requirements for the President

In addition to the provisions of section 8 of the Act on Public Officials in Central Government (750/1994), the President shall be distinguished scientist or scholar and have knowledge of the science and higher education administration.

Section 8 (212/2025)

Administration Office

The Research Council of Finland includes an Administration Office, which manages the administration of the Research Council of Finland and of its councils and Strategic Research Council. The Research Council of Finland is also responsible for the preparation of matters as well as the presentation and execution of decisions. The Administration Office makes decisions on matters that concern the Administration Office or minor changes to decisions of the bodies of the Research Council of Finland.

Section 9

Employer obligations of researchers operating with funding from the Research Council of Finland (212/2025)

Subsections 1 and 2 were repealed by Act 212/2025.

In an employment relationship with a researcher operating with funding from the Research Council of Finland, the employer may not act in a manner that may jeopardise the freedom of research or teaching. In addition to the provisions in Chapter 7 of the Employment Contracts Act (55/2001) on the termination of employment contracts as well as in Chapter 8 on the cancellation of employment contracts, the employment contract of a researcher operating with funding from the Research Council of Finland may not be terminated or cancelled on grounds that could be invoked and infringe on the freedom of research or teaching.

Section 10 (482/2014)

Title of Academician

Based on nominations made by the Research Council of Finland, the President of the Republic of Finland may confer the honorary title of Academician to highly distinguished Finnish or foreign scientists and scholars. The title of Academician can be held by no more than sixteen Finnish scientists and scholars at a time. The document by which the title is granted is free of charge.

Section 11 (482/2014)

Request for review

Decisions of the Research Council of Finland or the Strategic Research Council concerning research appropriations, grants or agreements are ineligible for review by appeal.

Decisions of the Research Council of Finland or the Strategic Research Council related to the awarding of grants referred to in the Act on Discretionary Government Grants (688/2001) are ineligible for administrative or judicial review. In other respects, the provisions of section 34 of the Act on Discretionary Government Grants shall apply to grants.

Section 12 (212/2025)

Further provisions and regulations

Further provisions on the Research Council of Finland's duties, Board, councils, subcommittees, Strategic Research Council and their operations, decision making, and staff are issued by government decree.

In so far as no provisions on matters shall be laid down by government decree, regulations on them may be issued in the rules of procedure approved by the Board of the Research Council of Finland or in the rules of procedure approved by the President concerning the Administration Office and its internal operations. The rules of procedure may delegate a body's powers to its chair or to the Administration Office in issues that are not matters of principle or do not have far-reaching effects. The rules of procedure may stipulate that the chair of the decision-making body decides on matters related to changes to a funding decision, if the decision does not involve significant exercise of discretionary powers. In the case of the Strategic Research Council, the delegation of powers may be made only on the proposal of the Council.

Section 12a (482/2014)

Disqualification

A member of a decision-making body of the Research Council is not disqualified from considering a matter solely on the grounds that they are in an employment relationship with a university or other research organisation that is a party to the matter. However, a member of a decision-making body is disqualified if they have presented a matter on the basis of their employment relationship or otherwise handled a matter in a corresponding manner.

Section 13

Entry into force and transitional provisions

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2010.

This Act repeals the Act on the Academy of Finland (378/1994) adopted on 27 May 1994, as amended.

Once this Act enters into force, the research posts based on public-service employment relationships with the Research Council of Finland are discontinued without notice. The

discontinuation of the posts and the public-service employment relationships are not subject to consent.

Persons who hold a research post at the Research Council of Finland at the time of the entry into force of this Act shall be employed in contractual employment relationships with the organisation in which their research posts are placed. Persons with fixed-term public-service employment relationships shall be employed in a fixed-term contractual employment relationship for the same fixed term. The Research Council of Finland makes the new funding decisions required for the remuneration of persons being transferred from research posts. The employees and the terms of the employment relationships are subject to the provisions laid down in legislation, or the provisions or regulations provided by virtue of legislation, and to agreements established in the collective agreement and in the employment contract.

Measures necessary for the implementation of this Act may be undertaken before its entry into force.

Entry into force and application of the amending acts:

482/2014:

This Act enters into force on 1 July 2014.

The term of the members of the Board and the Strategic Research Council of the Research Council of Finland appointed after the entry into force of this Act shall expire on 31 December 2018.

The limitation on terms laid down in section 3, subsection 1 of the Act does not apply to Board members upon the entry into force of this Act.

213/2018:

This Act enters into force on 1 May 2018.

The limitation on terms laid down in section 5, subsection 2 of the Act does not apply to members of the councils upon the entry into force of this Act.

212/2025:

This Act enters into force on 1 July 2025. However, the repealing of section 5a and section 4, subsections 2, 3 and 5, the heading of section 5 and subsections 1 and 2, sections 6 and 8 and section 12, subsection 1 of the Act do not enter into force until 1 January 2026.

513/2025:

This Act enters into force on 1 January 2026.